

# **Cultural Competency in TBI: Where the Rubber Meets the Road**

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# Key Tasks

- Define cultural diversity
- Identify how diverse your world is
- Define cultural competency and efficacy
- Assess personal readiness to work cross culturally
- Introduce a process for identifying personal biases
- Four-point continuum for understanding minority disability disparities
- Four-phase process for integrating cultural competency into TBI work

# What Do We Mean by Cultural Diversity?

- Defining culture is the first step.
- Clearly defining culture is no easy proposition, as cultural experts, i.e., anthropologists, have studied it for decades, and these days many other academics have their ideas about culture as well, including philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, linguists, historians, political scientists, and economists (Atkinson, 2004).
- There are well over 100 definitions of culture (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952).
- However, many definitions are consistent with the view of culture by Lefley (2002); **it constitutes a sharing of values, beliefs, practices, and behavioral norms within a specific group of people, giving them a common identity.**

# What Do We Mean by Cultural Diversity? (Lewis, 2000)

- Defining diversity is the second step.
- Diversity includes those dimensions of an individual that speak to a qualitative difference in worldview or subjective reality.
- Common diversity dimensions are race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual orientation, disability, SES, educational background, political affiliation, etc.
- Cultural diversity then = those individual-level factors that mark differences in worldview that are shared in groups and that typically provide a group identity.

# How Diverse is Your World? (Lewis, 2005)

- For each question below, please answer honestly by indicating a primary diversity description for each response (i.e., indicate the predominant or numerical majority of the race, ethnicity or cultural orientation that fits your answer). Feel free to pick one or several diversity descriptors per question.
  1. Who are you married to or who do you date mostly?
  2. Who are your best friends?
  3. Who are you likely to invite to your home for dinner or on a holiday?
  4. Who do you socialize with on a regular basis?
  5. Who do you worship with?
  6. Who are you likely to eat lunch with on a regular basis at work?
  7. If your family took a vacation with another family, how would you describe the other family?
  8. Who is the ideal person for your son or daughter to marry (if you don't have children, pretend that you do)?
  9. Describe who you are least likely to fear in a dark alley.
  10. Describe the group with whom you are most comfortable working?
- Notice the diversity themes that seem to be pervasive in your responses to the ten questions above. If your descriptions in a majority of questions (at least six questions) match who you are, then your world is not very diverse even though we live in a pluralistic society. If your descriptions in a majority of questions do not match who you are, then your world is pretty diverse.

# Definition of Cultural Competency

- Cultural competency, according to Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992), consists of three skill sets for the counselor: (1) an awareness of own assumptions about human behavior, values, preconceived notions, limitations, and biases, (2) understanding of the worldview of clients who are culturally different without imposing negative judgments, and (3) the ability to develop and practice appropriately with culturally different clients.
- Sue (2001), in his work, *Multidimensional Facets of Cultural Competency* outlines three broad strategies: (a) acquiring specific race, ethnic, and cultural group information; (b) improving awareness, knowledge, and skill as per Sue's seminal work of 1982; and (c) multicultural organizational development to ensure that factors beyond the individual are addressed.
- Put more simply, cultural competency is effective use of many cultural lenses (Sue and Sue, 1990; Nunez, 2000).

# Definition of Cultural Efficacy

- There is a distinction between cultural competency and the concept of cultural efficacy as coined by Ana Nunez (2000).
- Nunez maintains that while striving for cultural competency is an admirable goal, it still is inherently ethnocentric because it assumes that the provider's cultural perspective is the norm and the client's point of view deviates from the norm.
- Instead, Nunez offers that cultural efficacy is more evolved because it operates from a perspective of ethno-relativism, i.e., neither the provider's nor service recipient's cultural orientation is preferred, and both are merely two perspectives among a myriad of other varied points of view.

# Are You Ready to Work Cross-Culturally? (based on the work of Thomas Parham)

Ethnocentric perspective	Culturally Aware	Culturally Sensitive	Culturally Competent
Counselor holds own group's attributes as the standards for all individuals served.	Counselor embraces concept of cultural pluralism, realizing there are many points of view.	Counselor identifies, examines, and confronts own biases and begins to address them.	Counselor begins to assess own practice to eliminate biased approaches and learns more about diversity.

# Identify Biases that Can Impede Your Cross-Cultural Effectiveness (Lewis, 2000)

1. Identify and describe the bias/issue.
2. Acknowledge how long you have been aware of the bias/issue.
3. Provide your personal hypothesis on why this is a bias/issue for you.
4. Determine the extent to which this bias/issue is permanent or amenable to change, and if amenable to change, what will modify it.
5. Evaluate how this bias/issue impacts you as a counselor.
6. Evaluate how this bias/issue could impact those you counsel.
7. Determine how you will mitigate the potential negative impact of the bias/issue on you as a counselor and the persons whom you counsel.
8. Decide how you will proactively monitor and mitigate the potential negative impact of the bias/issue on you as a counselor and the persons whom you will counsel in an ongoing manner.
9. Identify the lesson(s) you have learned about who you are as a result of having the bias/issue.
10. Describe the implications of the lesson(s) you have learned for your overall career development as a counselor.

## A Four-point Continuum toward Understanding Minority Disability Disparities (Lewis, 2004)

<p><b>Point 1:</b> Group's knowledge about the disability</p>	<p><b>Point 2:</b> Access to formal services</p>	<p><b>Point 3:</b> Nature and quality of the service experience</p>	<p><b>Point 4</b> Impact of services in terms of individualized benefit</p>
<p><b>Typical concerns:</b> -groups' understanding of etiology -groups' understanding of the typical course of disability</p>	<p><b>Typical concerns:</b> -interaction between formal rules of system/service entry VERSUS culturally driven help seeking behavior of group</p>	<p><b>Typical concerns:</b> -degree of utilization and/or engagement (dosage concerns) -ability of service to be viewed by group as trustworthy as well as culturally sensitive and competent</p>	<p><b>Typical concerns:</b> -service outcomes measured using objective and subjective indicators -outcomes adjusted for different severity levels at system entry -extent outcomes align with culture</p>

# Four-step Process for Integrating Cultural Competency into TBI Work (Lewis, 2006)

<b>Question</b>	<b>Goal of the Question</b>
1. What is cultural competency in the context of the TBI practice?	1. Define cultural competency relative to the TBI practice.
2. What strategy(s) could be utilized to appropriately address cultural competency in the TBI practice?	2. Develop and/or identify strategies to align cultural competency with the TBI practice.
3. To what extent could the strategy(s) identified in Step 2 be subjected to implementation monitoring?	3. Indicate a method to monitor the implementation of the cultural competency strategy from Step 2 to ensure fidelity to intent.
4. How much impact could the strategy(s) identified in Step 2 have in addressing cultural competency in an effective and sustained manner?	4. Determine if the strategy could produce any positive impact, and if so, the likelihood that it would be ongoing.  <small>(Four-step framework based on Stufflebeam's CIPP Model of decision-oriented educational evaluation, 1971, 2000)</small>