Cultural Competence and Emotional Health in the Workplace

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Explanations for Behaviors

Do you really understand what is driving a person’s behavior?
**Behavior & What Drives It**

- **Water Line**: What we see...
- **Values**: ...and what drives what we see
- **BEHAVIORS**: What we see...
- **VALUES**: ...and what drives what we see
- **BELIEFS**: What we see...
- **ASSUMPTIONS**: ...and what drives what we see

**Components & Levels of Culture**

- **Visible Culture (“above sea level”)**
  - Emotional loading low
  - Few misunderstandings
  - Food, music, language, architecture – learned cognitively
  - Courtesies, use of time, punctuality, eating behaviors, social interactions, shopping
  - learned by trial & error

- **Unspoken Rules (“partly below sea level”)**
  - Emotional loading high
  - Violations produce negative feelings
  - Touching, space, body contact, tone of voice, non-verbal communication – learned through modeling, usu. in early childhood

- **Unconscious Rules (“completely below sea level”)**
  - Emotional loading intense
  - Violations taken personally, affecting relationships
  - Source: Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning

**Culture**

*Some Definitions*

- Way of life of multiple groups in a society
- Prescribed ways of behaving
- Norms of conduct, beliefs, values & skills
- Sum of life patterns passed on through generations
- Integrated patterns of human behavior
- Particular group experiences

Cultural Identification

“Cultural identification may include, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, and national origin; migration background, degree of acculturation, and documentation status; socioeconomic class; age; gender, gender identity, and gender expression; sexual orientation; family status; spiritual, religious, and political belief or affiliation; physical, psychiatric, and cognitive ability; and literacy, including health, behavioral health, and financial literacy” (NASW Case Management Standards, 2013, p. 15-16)

Ethnocentrism

Judging another culture by own values & standards
- All people exhibit this at one time or another
- Inhibits trans-cultural relationships
- Why do we do it?
  - Enhances self-esteem
  - We are the center of our own world

Theory of Culture: 5 Dimensions

- Identity
- Hierarchy
- Gender
- Truth
- Virtue

Identity Dimension
Relationships Between Self and Others

**Extreme Individualism**
- Value: Individual freedom
- Distinction: Me vs. others
- Tasks more important than relationships
- Employer/employee relationship: Contractual terms
- Speech: Precise, explicit

**Extreme Collectivism**
- Value: Group harmony
- Distinction: Ingroup vs. outgroup
- Relationships more important than tasks
- Employer/employee relationship: Moral terms
- Speech: Imprecise, nonverbal


Hierarchy Dimension
Relationships Between Powerful & Less Powerful

**Extreme Low Power Distance**
- Value: Equality
- Distinction: Who responsible vs. not responsible
- Decentralization popular
- Hierarchical relationships: Boss consults subordinates, interdependence across power levels
- Speech: Anyone can take lead

**Extreme High Power Distance**
- Value: Status
- Distinction: Powerful vs. dependent
- Centralization popular
- Hierarchical relationships: Boss directs subordinates, subordinates want benevolent autocrat as boss
- Speech: Formal, acknowledges hierarchy


Gender Dimension
Relationships Between Men & Women

**Extreme Masculinity**
- Value: Winning, material success, progress
- Distinction: Man/woman
- Success valued, failure a disaster
- Conflicts resolved through argument
- Men should be assertive; women subservient & tender
- Speech: Loud, verbal, critical, argumentative

**Extreme Femininity**
- Value: Caring for others
- Distinction: Caring/needling care
- Play down achievements
- Conflicts resolved through compromise
- Everyone should be modest, soft-spoken & empathetic – male & female
- Speech: Soft, small talk, agreement, warm, friendly

What’s your dominant style? US?

### Truth Dimension

**One Eternal Truth vs. Context-Dependent Truths**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extreme Uncertainty Avoidance</th>
<th>Extreme Uncertainty Tolerance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value: Certainty</td>
<td>Value: Exploration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction: True/false</td>
<td>Distinction: Urgency vs. can wait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigid taboos about what is dirty, wrong, indecent</td>
<td>Ambiguous &amp; unfamiliar situations cause no discomfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech: Very verbal, well organized, somewhat loud &amp; emotional</td>
<td>Innovative, deviant ideas are tolerated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech: Not loud, imprecise, ask open-ended questions</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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### Virtue Dimension

**Living for Now vs. Preparing for Future**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extreme Long-Term Orientation</th>
<th>Extreme Short-Term Orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value: Long-term benefits</td>
<td>Value: Saving face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction: Does/does not serve a purpose</td>
<td>Distinction: Proper/improper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrift, saving, focus on ideals</td>
<td>“keep up with Joneses” &amp; social demands at whatever cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapt traditions to modern context</td>
<td>Traditions respected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech: Direct, focused, ask questions about implications of actions</td>
<td>Speech: Talk a lot, especially about past</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


http://geert-hofstede.com/countries.html

Another Way of Looking at Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linear-Active</th>
<th>Multi-Active</th>
<th>Reactive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task-oriented</td>
<td>People-oriented</td>
<td>People-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organized planners</td>
<td>Big picture organizers</td>
<td>Looks at general principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominated by timetable</td>
<td>Timetable unpredictable</td>
<td>Reacts to others’ timetable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germans, Swiss, N American (majority)</td>
<td>Latin Americans, Arabs, Africans</td>
<td>Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, Finns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of these views fits with your own view?


Culturally Competent Practice

“A set of academic and interpersonal skills that allow individuals to increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities, within, among, and between groups. This requires a willingness and ability to draw on community-based values, traditions, and customs and to work with knowledgeable persons of and from the community in developing focused interventions, communications and other supports.”


Cultural Competence

“The process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and other diversity factors [including, but not limited to, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, and family status] in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each” (NASW, 2007, pp. 12–13)
Components of Cultural Competence

**INTRAPERSONAL**
- Skills in discerning personal norms, beliefs & values

**COMMUNITY**
- Integration of community values, beliefs & norms among different groups

**INTERPERSONAL**
- Skills, Behaviors & attitudes to work effectively in cross-cultural situations

**ORGANIZATIONAL**
- Policies that institutionalize effective practices to serve all groups in community

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**Cultural Sensitivity**

- Can anyone be "competent" across all cultures?
- Humility is critically important.

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**Trans-Cultural Understanding**

- What seems logical, sensible, important & reasonable may seem irrational, stupid & unimportant to an outsider.
- Apprehension, loneliness lack of confidence are common when coming into another culture.
- When talking about another culture, we tend to talk about differences, not similarities.
- Differences often seen as threatening and described in negative terms.
- Sometimes acceptance of another culture comes only after being critical of it.
Trans-Cultural Understanding

Consider personal observations & reports of other cultures with great deal of caution.
- Consider as “door into” relationship only.
- Make up your own mind.
- Learning subtleties requires experience, study
- This is continuous, not discrete process.
- Stereotyping inevitable without prolonged contact & study
- Generalizations may be legitimate & useful for macro practice, but should not be applied to individuals.

Some Cultural Norms in Communication

What are your cultural norms in the following areas, and what emotions do you feel when interacting with someone who doesn’t share those norms...
- ... getting to the point
- ... saving face
- ... taking turns in communication
- ... making personal observations about the other person

Privilege

- Take advantage of opportunities to learn how privilege has affected your life
- National Conference for Community & Justice of Metropolitan St. Louis-(NCCJSTL) Anytown and ALLY programs
Emotionally Healthy Work Environments

- Get on the right bus
- Get in the right seat
- Know yourself!
- Helpful to understand your own style

KNOWING YOURSELF:
WHAT GIVES YOU ENERGY?
5/23/2013

Thou shalt not should thyself
Don’t should on me

Harry: “The Sorting Hat only put me in Gryffindor, because I asked not to go in Slytherin.”
Prof. Dumbledore: “Exactly. It is our choices that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.”

Your life is determined by your choices, not your circumstances.
Michael Josephson
www.josephson.com | www.authorization.org

SHOULD
Self-Care Techniques
Four Elements

What methods would work best for you

- Physically?
- Emotionally?
- Cognitively?
- Spiritually?
To Escape Criticism: Do Nothing Say Nothing Be Nothing

Think About What Matters: Needing Help

When you're drowning, you don't say 'I would be incredibly pleased if someone would have the foresight to notice me drowning and come and help me,' you just scream.

John Lennon

Focus on Feelings
- Focus on your own feelings first
- Accept them, take a deep breath, then...
- Focus on the individual's activity later, then...

Focus on Behaviour
- To build trust, Hess...

Focus on being responsible
- And all to account

Focus on Respect
- Focus on Future

An Overview