

## Review of “*The Danger of a Single Story*”

I think it is important as a counselor to always remember that everyone is unique. Where a person comes from- how they were raised, their race, religion, beliefs, etc. are all unique to everyone. Just as unique as the individual is how they start their story regarding where they feel they belong in this world and how they arrived at this belief. As discussed in the video, how a story is interpreted is largely determined by who the storyteller is. The British invading Native American land is a different story told by the side of the Native American versus the story that we all grew up with where the pilgrims simply settled to build a better life.

A single story is one that only considers the point of view of that specific author, as opposed to including the views of anyone else in the narrative. As discussed in the video, this viewpoint too often comes from those in power and is thus only told from their perspective. This creates an incomplete story, so the counselor must be aware that there can be different interpretations from everyone involved in the story, not simply that of just the storyteller. This is how stereotypes are developed: When we as individuals watch the news or events from outside of our realm of personal experience, stereotypes begin to be shaped based on the narratives we are experiencing through the lense of others. This is also true within households. Stories from our parents about how they grew up are not stories we can accept as total truth because their viewpoints, just like ours, are a single story and therefore a limited perspective.

It is of utmost importance as a counselor and as an individual to understand our stories, and the stories of others, are filtered through a beautifully unique (but limited) perspective. Open mindedness is essential when listening to another person’s story, for they also come from a unique place filled with their own experience and thus their own possible bias or learned stereotypes. Throughout the video, Chimanda continued to point out not only the stereotypes of others in their single stories, but also her own stereotypes and her own single story of others. When talking about her house boy that her mother claimed was poor, it shut down any thoughts about how the family was other than poor, despite their own hardship. It is important that we always keep in mind the uniqueness of everyone, for their stories are their own, they are informed by only their experience, they can only tell their own story, for the story of others as we tell them cannot be from any perspective but our own. It is vital that we learn as much as possible about other cultures and attempt to understand the different stories that may be brought to us by these unique individuals to be as effective as possible.

### Reference:

Adichie C. (2009, July). *The danger of a single story* [Video]. TEDGlobal.  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story#t-779033](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story#t-779033)