

HUMILITY:
 Learning From Our Leaders to
 Practice With Cultural
 Awareness

Sandra Y. Herrera-Spinelli, MSW, LISW, LCSW
 Doctoral Candidate at Walden University

How it all started...

- VIDEO

Current Practice Standards & Resources

- 2015 NASW revised the Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice
<https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=PonPTDEBm4%3D&portalid=0>
- Jan. 2018 NASW released the revisions to the Code of Ethics
<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>
- Sept. 2018 CSWE released Specialized Practice Curricular Guide for Trauma-Informed Social Work Practice
https://www.cswe.org/setattachment/Education-Resources/2015-Curricular-Guides/2015EPAS_TraumaInformedSW_Final-WEB.pdf?_zs=kP0U1&_zl=HWR75

Cultural Humility and Intersectionality in Mental Health treatment

- Interviewed 17 clinical social workers across the New Mexico
- 16 social workers had 10+ experience
- Ages from 34-81 years, with a mean of 52.4 years
- Three (17.6%) participants were male & 14 (82.4%) were female.
- Seven of the participants identified as White (41.2%);
- Four as Hispanic (23.5%);
- Two as Black (11.8%)
- Four as two or more races (23.5%). From the participants that identified as two or more races, two identified as Native American and White, one Native American and Hispanic, and one Hispanic and White.

Definitions

- Cultural humility is the awareness of the power and privilege present in relationships and the self-monitoring to address the power imbalances (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998).
- Intersectionality theory explains multiple cultural identities (i.e., gender, race, poverty) intensify the client's experience of oppression, discrimination, and domination by society (Crenshaw, 1989).

Theme #1 Genuine Interest in the Client's Culture

- Inquiring about the client's culture
- Allowing the client to speak their language
- Allowing the client's family to participate in mental health Ask about details

Quote

- I have a client that is Mexican, and his grandparents speak only Spanish, and he slips, and he speaks a lot of Spanish. So the other day he was coming out of the day room it was around dinner time, and he was like, "Cuando nos van a dar de cenar" and... one of the Hispanic staff members, that's what pissed me off is like, "What?" And he was like "Cuando vamos a cenar?". And [staff] was like, "I don't understand you. You need to speak that in English." And I said, "He's asking you when dinner is going to be served." And he was like, "Oh, I understood him." And I said, "Well then why are you having him repeat it?"

Allow family to be part of the client's treatment...



Theme #2 Unconditional Positive Regard

- Empowering clients
- Building relationship
- Non-judgmental attitudes
- Trauma-informed practice.

Quote

- You love your clients with all your heart and soul. Unabashedly, love them with all your heart and soul. And she said, "But I don't even like him when he comes in, and I wish he wouldn't come in." "I know. He's a sonofabitch, and you really don't like him so here's what you do. You say [to yourself] if I loved with all my heart and soul, what would I say next? What would I want to know?"

Theme #3
Empathic Understanding

- Understanding culture is part of the client's narrative
- The client's experience is multilayered and complex
- Trauma influences the client's experience
- The social workers' personal experiences with discrimination and oppression.

The social workers' personal experiences with discrimination and oppression.

- VIDEO

Theme #4
Therapist Congruence

■ Self-Awareness

a) know your biases, b) know your limitations, c) be comfortable in your own culture, d) know your privilege

■ Self-Reflection

a) notice blind spots, b) don't take it personally, and c) cultural appropriation

Self-Reflection Activity

WATCH OUT FOR
Cultural Appropriation

Critical Self-Awareness

- In critical self-awareness, the social worker explores personal experiences with privilege and reflect on possible inappropriate use of power in the client-social worker relationship
- (Azzopardi & McNeill, 2016; Fisher-Borne et al., 2015).

Challenges

- Agency structure
- Insurance companies
- Continuing education
- Government bureaucracy
- Research not culturally diverse
- The political climate

Unexpected Findings

- Only six participants (35.3%) were familiar with the terminology of cultural humility
- The high frequency of “trauma” or “trauma-informed” in the data

A Call to Action

Thank You!

Wellness From Within, PC
<http://www.wellnessfromwithin.com>
Sarah@WellnessFromWithinPC.com


