

## CULTURAL COMPETENCE CONTINUUM - CHARACTERISTICS

*(Adapted from Terry L. Cross, et., at., 1989), Coleman/Pellitteri 2000 & Updated 2/4/13*

<p><b>I. Cultural Destructiveness</b>          I make a conscious effort [use my power] to destroy cultures that are different from my own or from what I think will work best for others.</p> <p>..... <i>“We are all that is important.”</i></p>	<p><b>II. Cultural Incapacity</b>          I am unwilling to be useful or helpful to other cultures.</p> <p>..... <i>“We take care of our own.”</i></p>	<p><b>III. Cultural Denial/Indifference</b>          I believe that culture/color and dimensions of diversity are unimportant.</p> <p>..... <i>“All people are the same.”</i></p>
<p><i>Characteristics include and are not limited to...</i></p>	<p><i>Characteristics include and are not limited to...</i></p>	<p><i>Characteristics include and are not limited to...</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believe I (my family, my group, etc.) is superior to, and have extreme biases against, those who are different.</li> <li>• Overt message to those who are different is that they are not valued or welcomed.</li> <li>• Others are perceived as nonentities, expendable and/or undeserving.</li> <li>• Harm to others is acceptable, appropriate, and/or justified.</li> <li>• More of an absolutist worldview that highly values winning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual/group is not consciously deciding to be incapacitated, they are simply taking care of their group. However, if the group reflects the dominant culture, the process alone results in institutional or systematic bias.</li> <li>• Stuck in a mindless position; simply not aware of our behavior that maintains this incapacitated state, however outsiders will experience subtle messages that some cultures (groups) are neither valued or welcomed; at best may be tolerated.</li> <li>• Disproportionately apply resources to benefit their own group.</li> <li>• Residual effects of incapacitation may be lower expectations for some cultural, racial, ethnic groups (and/or other dimensions of diversity such as gender, sexual orientation, age, etc).</li> <li>• Those who are different are segregated for their good.</li> <li>• More of a relativist worldview, (I'll take care of my own) that highly values maintaining the status quo.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages assimilation and the suppression of difference.</li> <li>• Discomfort recognizing difference and ignores (or unaware of) cultural strengths.</li> <li>• Denies that culture and dimensions of diversity (gender, ethnic group, sexual orientation, etc) are significant.</li> <li>• Beliefs, policies, actions that assume world is fair and achievement is based on merit: “should pull oneself up by own boot straps.”</li> <li>• Institutional attitudes that refuse to take responsibility for the impact of their behavior/actions on others and often blame individuals/families for the perceived failures.</li> <li>• Does not recognize the reality of power/privilege.</li> <li>• Believes what is useful for the dominant group is universally applicable and applies as such (one size fits all).</li> </ul>

<p><b>IV Cultural Pre-Competence:</b> I realize that my responses to cultural difference are more often than not culturally destructive and I am trying to understand how to respond culturally competently/proficiently. <i>“Often have nice written policies, but limited action.” The operative word is “trying.”</i></p>	<p><b>V. Cultural Competence</b> Cultural Competence: Cultural competence is characterized by a commitment to social and economic justice. <i>“Foster mutual adaptation to difference to create environments that are useful for all.”</i></p>	<p><b>VI. Cultural Proficiency</b> Cultural proficiency means that I hold culture in high esteem and that it is my organizing frames of reference and the foundation by which I understand relationships between individuals, groups, organizations, systems, etc. <i>“Optimal, universal, inclusive and proficient.”</i></p>
<p><i>Characteristics include and are not limited to...</i></p>	<p><i>Characteristics include and are not limited to...</i></p>	<p><i>Characteristics include and are not limited to...</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressed commitment to valuing diversity but no clear plan for achieving organizational cultural competence.</li> <li>• Works at being inclusive.</li> <li>• Ceases to expect those who are different will suppress their difference and at same time is not sure what to do when difference is expressed – resulting in movement towards the status quo.</li> <li>• Recognizes the need for consumer/family involvement and at same time often not sure how to integrate this voice/involvement.</li> <li>• Expressed commitment to human/civil rights and social justice, as we define them.</li> <li>• Beginning to realize ethnocentric beliefs distort one’s vision about those who are different.</li> <li>• Beginning to question the validity of segregation and/or assimilation.</li> <li>• Recommends the need for improved services to specific poorly served populations, with no action.</li> <li>• Maintains a parental attitude towards the marginalized group; positive outcomes are associated with how close the marginalized group can approximate the dominate group in terms of language, appearance, values and beliefs.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Effective plan and demonstrated actions of individuals/organizational cultural competence, which includes and is not limited to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mindfully behave in a manner that demonstrates a value for diversity.</li> <li>• Participants in rigorous/on going self examination into the manner in which culture/heritage influences perceptions, attitudes and behavior about (and towards) those who are culturally different.</li> <li>• Works at being inclusive.</li> <li>• Ceases to expect those who are different will suppress their difference.</li> <li>• Willingness to stay engaged with others to integrate their values, beliefs and associated needs into decision-making and action.</li> <li>• Demonstrated commitment to human/civil rights, social justice, as defined by the marginalized individual/group.</li> <li>• Actively develops cross-cultural knowledge and skills.</li> <li>• Continuously looks outside of one’s own world-view to gain a more accurate understanding.</li> <li>• Mindfully engages in a mutually adaptive process, rather than segregate and/or require assimilation.</li> <li>• Actively seeks input from specific poorly served populations and takes action to meet the defined needs.</li> <li>• Adapts service delivery to meet the needs of a multi-cultural community.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Realization that we (as individuals/groups) are both separate and also connected, which requires the following understandings.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Worldview</b> shifts from absolutism/ethnocentrism [separateness] <i>...to universalism [both separate/connected].</i></li> <li>• <b>Attitude</b> shifts from judgments, cruelty, unforgiveness, selfishness, etc. [separateness] <i>...to compassion (kindness, generosity, gentleness) to self/others [both separate/ connected].</i></li> <li>• <b>Relationships</b> shift from stereotyping [separateness] <i>...to authentic [both separate/connected].</i></li> <li>• <b>Policy</b> shifts from exclusionary [separate] <i>...to inclusionary [both separate/connected].</i></li> <li>• <b>Practices</b> shift from destructive [separate] <i>...to constructive [both separate/connected].</i></li> </ul>