Conceptual Framework of Cultural Competence

Don Coleman, LCSW & Terri Pellitteri, OT – 5/8/13
Exploring Tools

- Centering
- Dialogue
- Identifying Assumptions and Unconscious Bias
- Elements of Culture and Iceberg Theory
- Understanding Cultural Impact on Dimensions of Diversity
- Cultural Competence Continuum
- Culture Centered Ethics
Centering
CENTERING

• Meditative/Mindful Practices

• Compassion & Wellbeing

• Chinese Philosophy: Balance

• Unshaken by Surprise (Difference)

• Helps to Manage Fear

• Allows us to be Forgiving/Compassionate

• Key to Developing Authentic Relationships
Being Centered allows us to be More Available to Others.
Group Culture:
Culture of Learning
Suggestions:

1. Honor confidentiality
2. Unconditional respect to self/others
3. Control over level of disclosure; right to pass with dignity; Opt out and/or modify experience
4. Space for everyone to participate (in their own way)
5. Speak from own experience - “I” rather than “We”
6. Use of dialogue, not discussion/debate
7. Listen towards understanding/curiosity & not judgment (soft eyes)
8. OK to express emotions; or not
9. Let each person experience own learning (struggle)
10. Responsibility for own learning; ask for what you need
11. Reduce and/or eliminate the word … “but”
13. No Right Answers
Dialogue
One form of Communication.

Use When Interested in:
• Understanding our/others Values & Beliefs.
• Collaborations & Partnerships
• Creating Inclusive Environments
• Building Authentic Relationships

Key to:
• Developing Cross Cultural Skills
Debate Discussion

- To tell, sell, persuade.
- To gain agreement on one meaning.
- To evaluate/select the best.
- To justify/defend assumptions.

Adapted from The Dialogue Group, 2000.

Process

1. Throw opinions back & forth
2. Parallel process
3. Fragmented with pieces
4. Winners and losers
Dialogue

• To inquire.
• To unfold shared meaning.
• To integrate multiple perspectives.
• To uncover and examine assumptions.

Adapted from The Dialogue Group, 2000.

Process

① Interested in how pieces fit together to create whole
② Moves beyond individual understanding to build collective meaning & community
③ Both/And mentality (individual/community)
FOUR SKILL BUILDING BLOCKS OF DIALOGUE

• Suspend Judgment
• Identify Assumptions
• Listen with Curiosity
• Inquire & Reflect
Assumptions

Factors:

• Pay Attention to Own Internal Dialogue
  – Often where assumptions lay

• See Assumptions as Reality
  – Own ethnocentric worldview

• Use Assumptions to Manage Our Fears
  – Want to stay in control

• Power
  – Ability to define another’s reality
Use of Inquiry

Factors:

• Inquiry without curiosity leads to debate
• Don’t use inquiry when you know the answers
• At best parallel process
• Fooling self having dialogue, commitment, connection
Listen With Curiosity

Concepts:
- Ting & Eloquent Listening
- Ability to hold Multiple Perspectives
Question:

How do we stay in dialogue when others appear to be in debate?

• Retreat-to-Return
• Staying at the Table
What is Culture?
“Culture is the sum total of life patterns passed on from generation to generation within a group of people and includes institutions, language, religious ideals, habits of thinking, artistic expressions, and patterns of social and interpersonal relationships.”

*Hodge, Struckmann, and Trost 1975*
“…As noted, the term ‘culture’ is also applicable to the shared values, beliefs, and norms established in common social groupings, such as adults training in the same profession or youth who belong to a gang. …”

“The phrase ‘cultural identity’ refers to the culture with which someone identifies and to which he or she looks for standards of behavior (Copper & Denner, 1998). Given the variety of ways in which to define a cultural group, many people consider themselves to have multiple cultural identities.”

“…A key aspect of any culture is that it is dynamic: culture continuously changes and is influenced both by people's beliefs and the demands of their environment (Lopez & Guarnaccia 2000).”

Quotes from Surgeon General’s Report [www.surgeongeneral.gov]
“… Culture is [humanity’s] medium; there is not one aspect of human life that is not touched and altered by culture. This means personality, how people express themselves (including emotions), the way they think, how they move, how problems are solved, how their cities are planned and laid out, how transportation systems function and are organized, as well as how economic and governments systems are put together and function. However, like the purloined letter, it is frequently the most obvious and take-for-granted and therefore the least studied aspects of culture that influence behavior in the deepest and most subtle ways.”

Edward T Hall
Elements of Culture

- Customs & Traditions
- Social Group
- Emotional Expression
- Artistic Expression
- Social Relationships
- Communication
- Language/Symbols
- Values/Beliefs
- Religious/Spiritual
- Food/Clothing
- History/Political
- Institutions
- Norms of Behavior
- Codes of Conduct
- Actions
- Ideas, Habits of Thinking
Culture Shapes Our Thinking And Dictates Our Response to Dimensions of Diversity

• Important to know the ways in which culture helps us to value or devalue difference.

• It is also important to observe the subtle dynamics in the mainstream culture (and/or our culture of origin) in order to understand how power and privilege is maintained and denied.
“Iceberg Theory”

of Culture
Dimensions of Diversity

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Partnership Status
- Physical Abilities
- Race
- Sexual Orientation
- Social/Economic Status
- Geographic location
- Religious/Spiritual
- Rural/Urban
- Work Background
- Military Experience
- Parental Status
- Family Structure
- Cognitive Ability
- Citizenship Status
- Etc.
DIMENSIONS of DIVERSITY

Culture shapes our thinking and dictates our response to these dimensions of diversity.
Dimensions of Diversity

• Diversity is not synonymous with difference; encompasses both differences & similarities.

• Discussion of diversity must specify the dimensions - eg: race, gender, sexual orientation, rural/urban, etc.

• Diversity refers to a collective (all inclusive) mixture of differences & similarities along a given dimension.

• Culture shapes out thinking and dictates our response to dimensions of diversity.

• Within each dimension of diversity there is a culture that prescribes ways of behaving, beliefs, values, skills, etc.
Cultural Competence

What does this mean?
Measures that we use to determine?
Implications?
Competence

The word **competency** is used because it implies having the **capacity** of functioning **effectively**.
Cultural Competence Continuum

BASIC LIFE POSITIONS

PROFICIENCY
D, I, B, Pre, C, P

COMPETENCE
D, I, B, Pre, C, P

PRE-COMPETENCE
D, I, B, Pre, C, P

BLINDNESS
D, I, B, Pre, C, P

INCAPACITY
D, I, B, Pre, C, P

DESTRUCTIVENESS
D, I, B, Pre, C, P
Cultural Destructiveness

Make conscious efforts to destroy cultures that are different from the them (because of values, beliefs, ethnocentricity, traditions, etc.).  

Coleman/Pellitteri 1999
Cultural Incapacity

- Unable to be useful or helpful to other cultures (because of values, beliefs, ethnocentricity, traditions, etc.).  
  
  *Coleman/Pellitteri 1999*
Cultural Denial [Blindness]

• Because of values, beliefs, ethnocentricity, traditions, etc… believes that color, culture and dimensions of diversity are unimportant because “all people are the same.” Coleman/Pellitteri 1999
Cultural Pre-Competence

• Realizes inadequacy of response to those who are different and attempts to improve approach to cultural difference, and other dimensions of diversity.

At this point have nice policies, but limited action.

Coleman/Pellitteri 1999
Cultural Competence

Characterized by a commitment to social and economic justice. “*Mutual adaptation to difference to create environments that are useful to all.*” Coleman/Pellitteri 1999

1. Valuing Difference
2. Cultural Self Examination
3. Cultural Knowledge
4. Cultural Skills
5. Adaptation to Services
6. Cultural Encounters
7. Inductive Learning
Cultural Proficiency

We are mindfully/willfully engaging in behaviors, values, traditions, etc. of our own that demonstrates a value for other dimension of diversity. Our organizing frame of reference is culture. *Coleman/Pellitteri 1999*

“Hold culture in high esteem and that is my organizing frame reference and the foundation.”
### CULTURAL COMPETENCE CONTINUUM - CHARACTERISTICS

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Cultural Destructiveness</th>
<th>II. Cultural Incapacity</th>
<th>III. Cultural Denial/Indifference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>I am unwilling to be useful or helpful to other cultures.</td>
<td>I believe that culture/color and dimensions of diversity are unimportant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;... &quot;We are all that is important.&quot;&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;... &quot;We take care of our own.&quot;&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;... &quot;All people are the same.&quot;&quot;</td>
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</tbody>
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*Characteristics include and are not limited to...*

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<td>• Believe I (my family, my group, etc.) is superior to, and have extreme biases against, those who are different.</td>
<td>• Individual/group is not consciously deciding to be incapacitated, they are simply taking care of their group. However, if the group reflects the dominate culture, the process alone results in institutional or systematic bias.</td>
<td>• Encourages assimilation and the suppression of difference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Overt message to those who are different is that they are not valued or welcomed.</td>
<td>• 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.</td>
<td>• Discomfort recognizing difference and ignores (or unaware of) cultural strengths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Others are perceives as nonentities, expendable and/or undeserving.</td>
<td>• Disproportionately apply resources to benefit their own group.</td>
<td>• Denies that culture and dimensions of diversity (gender, ethnic group, sexual orientation, etc) are significant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Harm to others is acceptable, appropriate, and/or justified.</td>
<td>• 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).</td>
<td>• Beliefs, policies, actions that assume world is fair and achievement is based on merit: &quot;should pull oneself up by own boot straps.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More of an absolutist worldview that highly values winning.</td>
<td>• Those who are different are segregated for their good.</td>
<td>• 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• More of a relativist worldview, (I’ll take care of my own) that highly values maintaining the status quo.</td>
<td>• Does not recognize the reality of power/privilege.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Believes what is useful for the dominate group is universally applicable and applies as such (one size fits all).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### IV Cultural Pre-Competence:
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. “Often have nice written policies, but limited action.” The operative word is “trying.”

### V. Cultural Competence
Cultural Competence: Cultural competence is characterized by a commitment to social and economic justice. “Foster mutual adaptation to difference to create environments that are useful for all.”

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<th>Characteristics include and are not limited to...</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Expressed commitment to valuing diversity but no clear plan for achieving organizational cultural competence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Works at being inclusive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recognizes the need for consumer/family involvement and at same time often not sure how to integrate this voice/involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expressed commitment to human/civil rights and social justice, as we define them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Beginning to realize ethnocentric beliefs distort one’s vision about those who are different.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Beginning to question the validity of segregation and/or assimilation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Recommends the need for improved services to specific poorly served populations, with no action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 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.</td>
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### VI. Cultural Proficiency
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. “Optimal, universal, inclusive and proficient.”

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<td>Effective plan and demonstrated actions of individuals/organizational cultural competence, which includes and is not limited to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mindfully behave in a manner that demonstrates a value for diversity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Works at being inclusive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ceases to expect those who are different will suppress their difference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Willingness to stay engaged with others to integrate their values, beliefs and associated needs into decision-making and action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrated commitment to human/civil rights, social justice, as defined by the marginalized individual/group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Actively develops cross-cultural knowledge and skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Continuously looks outside of one’s own worldview to gain a more accurate understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mindfully engages in a mutually adaptive process, rather then segregate and/or require assimilation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Actively seeks input from specific poorly served populations and takes action to meet the defined needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adapts service delivery to meet the needs of a multi-cultural community.</td>
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</tbody>
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### VI. Cultural Proficiency
Realization that we (as individuals/groups) are both separate and also connected, which requires the following understandings.

- **Worldview** shifts from absolutism/ethnocentrism [separateness] ...to universalism [both separate/connected].

- **Attitude** shifts from judgments, cruelty, unforgiveness, selfishness, etc. [separateness] ...to compassion (kindness, generosity, gentleness) to self/others [both separate/connected].

- **Relationships** shift from stereotyping [separateness] ...to authentic [both separate/connected].

- **Policy** shifts from exclusionary [separate] ...to inclusionary [both separate/connected].

- **Practices** shift from destructive [separate] ...to constructive [both separate/connected].
Cultural Competence

**Competence**
– Ability to work effectively across cultures in a way that acknowledges and respects the culture of the person, organization, etc being served.

Word **Culture** is used because it implies the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of a racial, ethnic, religious, or social group.
Cultural Competence

Set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system or agency or among professionals and enable the system, an agency, or professions to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

…A developmental processes (no end point).
Conceptual System

...Philosophical assumptions and principles that influence our behavior. We so thoroughly believe and relay on them that we see it as “just the way it is”. Our conceptual system tends to shape our world view.

World View

...Way we (our group) come to view the world. This is a key area in which less visible aspects of culture and unidentified or unconscious assumptions come into play. Like culture, a world view in an integrated and dynamic system which affects our behavior in both obvious and subtle ways.
Continuum Thinking Shifts

- World View
  - Optimal
    - Attitude
      - Universal
        - Policy
          - Inclusion
            - Practice
              - Proficient
                - Relationships
                  - Authentic
                    - Destructive
                      - Exclusion
                        - Proficient
                          - Inclusion
                            - Universal
                              - Optimal
                                - Attitude
                                  - World View

- Stereotype
  - Destructive
    - Exclusion
      - Inclusion
        - Practice
          - Proficient
            - Relationships
              - Authentic
                - Destructive
                  - Exclusion
                    - Inclusion
                      - Universal
                        - Optimal
                          - Attitude
                            - World View

- Continuum Thinking Shifts

Culture Centered Ethics

Ethical Decision Making Questions:

• Who is at the table?

• What are the values driving this decision?

• Who is likely to benefit?

• Who is likely to be hurt?
Seven Element Model of Cultural Competence

- Valuing Cultural Diversity
- Cultural Self Assessment
- Obtaining Cultural Knowledge
- Cultural Skill
- Adaptation to Service Delivery
- Cultural Encounters
- Inductive Learning

Coleman & Gates, 1999
HOPES & HESITATIONS

What HOPES do you have in relationship to Cultural Competence?

What HESITATIONS do you have in relationship to Cultural Competence?
...Ability to Hold Multiple Perspectives.