



MOSAIC/Melting Pot: Providing Services to Diverse Older Adults

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Objective of Cultural Competency in Health Services

- To establish a collaborative partnership between the health professional and client/community in order to provide a variety of services which are culturally sensitive and relevant to the client/family/community; this may mean altering/modifying/changing our assumptions, practices, theories, interventions to be culturally relevant.
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Why Important?

- Ethnic minorities represented 16.1% (1999) and will increase by 81% to over 25% of the older population by 2030 (AARP, 2000)
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Culture

- The set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to another
 - What happens when we use what we see as “beliefs” about client’s culture?
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What works well in cultural competent service delivery?

- Pedersen's (1988) Multicultural Awareness Knowledge and Skills Model
- **Awareness:** What is my awareness of my own cultural identity/ies? How aware am I of other's cultural identities? What is the **dynamic** when I am in a relationship with this person? family?
- **Knowledge:** What knowledge do I have about the culture? Is it accurate? Where can I find resources to increase my knowledge?
- **Skills?** What effective cultural skills do I have to assist negotiating a helping relationship and provide relevant culturally-relevant services to client/family?

Help Seeking Behavior

- Refers to verbal or nonverbal solicitation of assistance, guidance, support to resolve issue/problem
 - Research indicates many ethnic members rely on their own native/local support systems (Boyd-Franklin, 1989; McGoldrick, Pearce & Giordano, 1995; Smith, 2003)
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Help Seeking Attitudes

■ European Americans

- Individualism
- Internal locus of control and responsibility
- Independent
- Emotion expression ranges based on ethnicity (e.g, German vs. Italian)
- YAVIS(young/attractive/verbal/intelligent/successful) helper models

■ African Americans

- Extended family/non-blood kin
 - Maternal helpers—the Grandmother
 - Religion/Spirituality central (The Black Church)
 - African Diaspora: tribes; West Indies
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Help Seeking Attitudes

- Native Americans
- Harmony with Nature
- Role of Elder and consultation
- Tribal influences
- Health Wheel/Circle
- Asian Americans
- Collectivistic
- Interdependent
- Hierarchy is important in family system—elder male, then elder son in decision making
- Emotional symptoms expressed physically
- Consult with Medical Professionals

Help Seeking Attitudes

- **Hispanic(Latinos/as)**
 - Familismo
 - Compadrazco
 - Personalismo
 - Higher Power (si Dios quiere)
 - Santos
 - Folk illnesses:
Curanderos/Santeros/Es
piritista
 - Multiracial
 - Be aware that many will not identify with one race or ethnicity
 - May see another identity as most salient (e.g., gay/lesbian, nationality, age)
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Recommendations

- **European Americans**
 - Don't assume "White culture" is same—explore ethnicity and family problem solving
 - YAVIS model may not work here either (e.g., materially poor families)
 - **African American**
 - **Consider racial and ethnic match and client's comfort**
 - **Establish egalitarian relationship**
 - **Be aware of history/racism/discrimination/cultural impacts on comfort with disclosing information/engaging in relationship with you**
 - **Assess positive assets**
 - **Goal setting/time limited approaches**
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Recommendations

- Asian Americans
 - Role of expert is important
 - Emphasize thinking/educating vs. emotion expression
 - Careful not to pathologize interdependent relationships
 - Consult with cultural supports/authorities
 - Latinos/Latinas
 - Begin service in formal way/then move to informal verbal/nonverbal interactions
 - Address adults with Mr. & Mrs.
 - Follow hierarchy with greetings (adults, then kids)
 - Flexibility with time frame
 - Start with platicar (personable small talk)
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Recommendations

- Native Americans
 - Include Elder/native resources
 - Explore harmony/disharmony and identify goals/resources to bring restore harmony
 - Multiracial
 - Explore how client self-identifies vs. assuming
 - Be careful not to stereotype negatives
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Summary

- Recognize this is a dynamic and continual learning process and be open/flexible and modify your service delivery to fit the needs of that client
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