

Cultural Awareness, Sensitivity, and Competency: A Brief Overview

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What is Cultural Awareness?

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- Understanding that people come from different backgrounds (cultures)
- Self-reflection about your own values, attitudes, and cultural beliefs
- Recognize that people's different personal experiences may impact the way they understand and behave in certain situations



What is Cultural Sensitivity?

- You do not believe that one culture is better than others
- You recognize that cultures are different, but you don't assign value to one over another
- People who are a part of the dominate culture (usually Western Culture) may find this hard



What is Cultural Sensitivity?

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4 Stages of Cultural Awareness & Sensitivity

- **Parochial Stage**: People part of the dominate culture are not generally aware of any other cultures
- **Ethnocentric Stage**: People are aware of other cultures but believe their own to be superior and not willing to change behavior
- **Synergistic Stage**: People value differences in cultures and make conscious effort to understand their biases and take on new ways of thinking
- **Participatory 3rd culture Stage**: People understand the cultural behaviors of others and work together to create a shared culture that values each person's contributions

What is Cultural Sensitivity Important?

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- Lack of cultural sensitivity can make clients feel uncomfortable and can have serious consequences
- Cultural sensitivity requires that providers understand how someone's experiences and perceptions affects their:
 - Willingness to get care
 - Understanding of various treatment options
 - Discussion and conversations with care providers

What does it mean to be Culturally Insensitive?

- Spectrum of behaviors, from unintentionally offensive assumptions or comments (implicit bias and microaggressions) to intentionally prejudiced conduct (racist or other 'ist' statements, discrimination)

What does it mean to be Culturally Insensitive?



What does it mean to be Culturally Insensitive?

- *“My client is from XYZ country –I’m not going to understand anything that she says.”*
- *“Oh, you are so well spoken!”*
- *“Well, you don’t seem gay...” “You have a handicap? You seem so normal!”*

What is Cultural Competency?

- Organizational expectations that help people from different cultures work together
- Increasing employees' knowledge about cultural differences with seminars and workshops
- Identifying situations where specific cultural knowledge is necessary and providing training
- Provide continual feedback to help employees improve cross-cultural skills

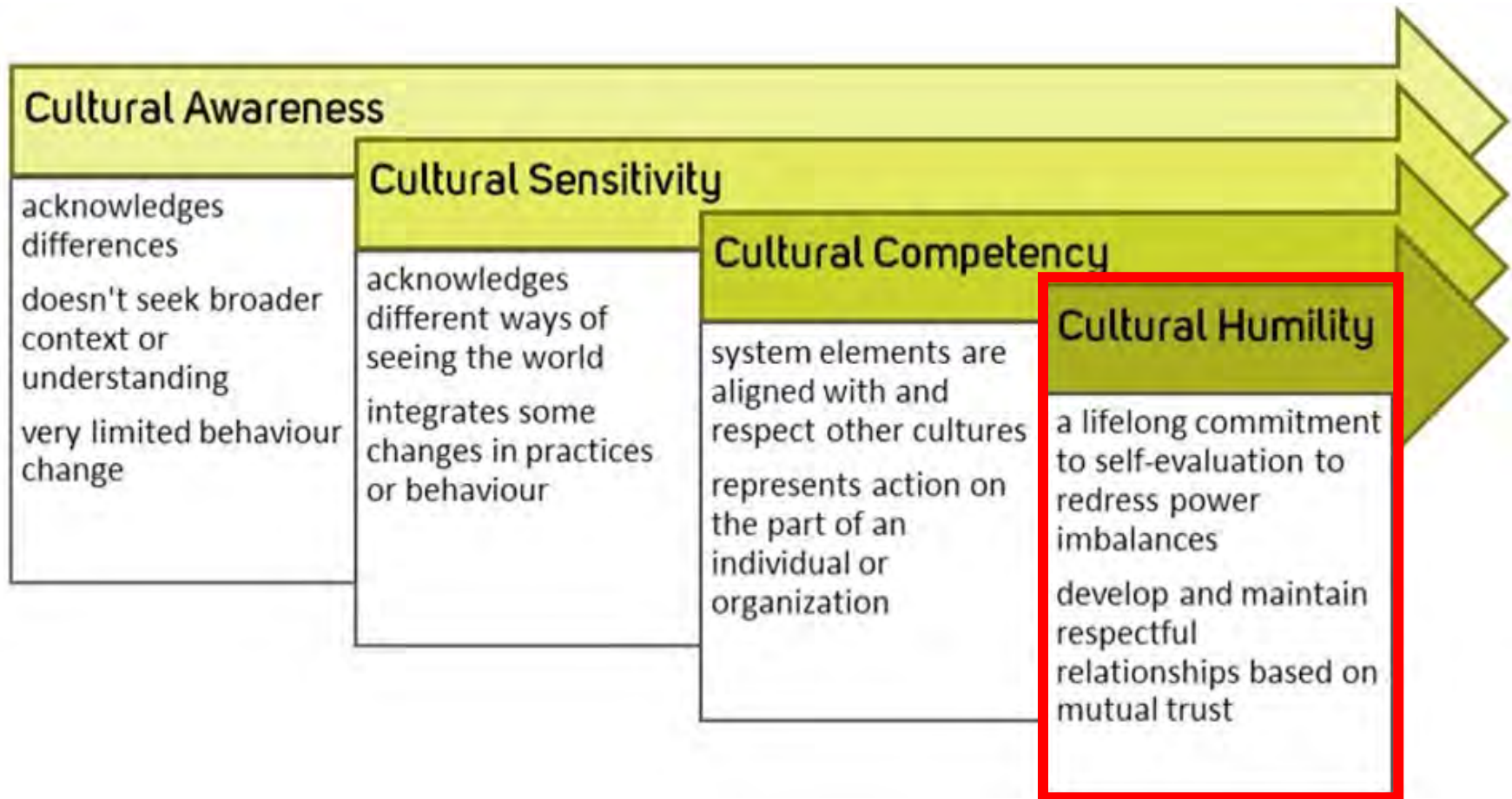


What is Cultural Competency?

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It's a Journey...



Discussion

Thank you!

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