

Advanced Clinicians' Training & Consultation Group

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The National Capacity-Building project is a project of The Center for Victims of Torture, and is made possible by the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Multicultural Issues in Service Provision

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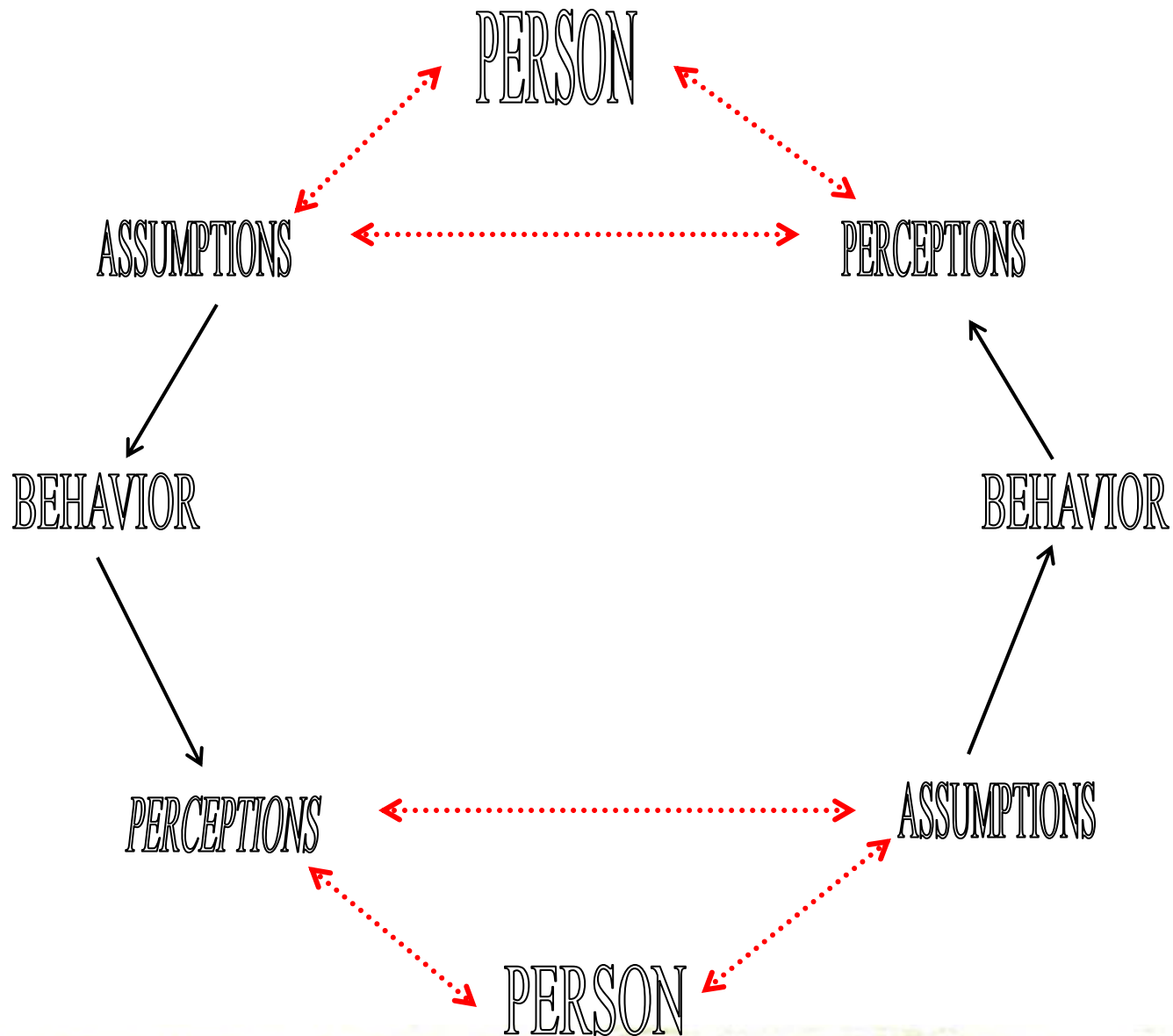
Advanced Clinicians' series: Multicultural Issues in Service Provision
Hawthorne E. Smith, Ph.D., Bellevue/NYU PSOT

Philosophic Framework

- Not a “cookbook” approach
- Not a simple study of the “cultural other”
- Relationship of people who are culturally different
 - Also consider assumptions of similarity and understanding

Real World Relevance

- Categorizing and pre-judging are part of the human experience
- Being cognizant of these processes is a crucial beginning step
- Getting beyond resistance
- What role do we play?



Complex Cultural Beings

- Multiple Reference Group Identities:
(A non-exhaustive list):
 - Race; nationality; ethnicity; social class; religion (or lack thereof); gender; age; SES; level of education; sexual orientation; urban v. rural; physical (dis)ability; linguistic group; trauma history?

External Salience

- The impact one's identities have on their history and experience of the world
 - Examples:
 - Rwanda
 - Northern Ireland
 - Mauritania

Existential Cultural Categories: Range and Variations

Human Nature	Bad	Good and Bad	Good
Human Relationships	Linear - Hierarchical	Collateral - Mutual	Individualistic
People and Nature	Harmony	Subjugation and Control	Power of Nature
Time Orientation	Past	Present	Future
Activity Orientation	Being	Being in Becoming	Doing

Personal Salience

- It is more important to know what sense someone makes of their reference group identities than to simply know what those identities are.

Examples of Personal Relevance Affecting an Interaction

Assumptions of Similarity

- Not always best to assign refugees to clinicians from their home country or culture;
 - Potential for a “Collusion of Silence”
 - Stigma; or negative beliefs about the quality of services
 - Examples:
 - Russian and Haitian clients that rejected referrals to Russian and Haitian clinicians respectively.
 - Dr. Smith perceived as successful Black man or a sell-out by other Black American clients
 - Differences among clients with similar backgrounds

More Interpersonal Dynamics

- Self-perceptions may be totally contradicted by client's perceptions of you
 - Ex. Mauritanian slavery case
- Perceptions can be projected onto others
 - Lawyers may talk about a "good case or bad case"
 - "Professional appearance"

Mediating Factors

- Role and history
 - Are the person's cultural groups valued or devalued?
- Perceived opportunities and hierarchies
 - Perceived positions of power or disadvantage
- Immigration
 - Push v. pull issues
- Political Strength of the Community
 - i.e. Cubans v. Haitians in Miami
- Acculturation
 - Integration; Assimilation; Separation; Marginalization
- Trauma

Acculturation Attitudes

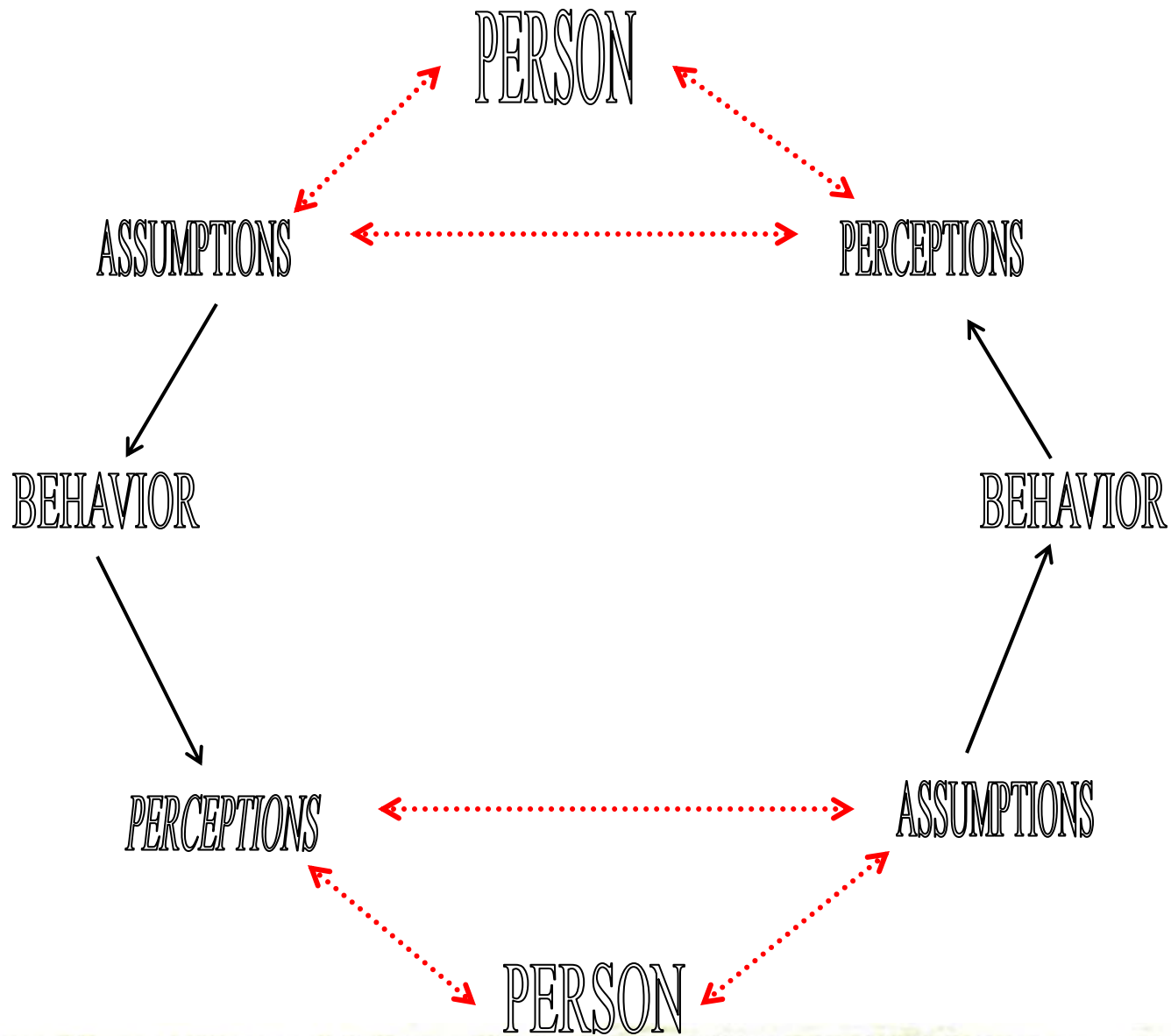
	Identifies with original culture's values	Detached from original culture's values
Identifies with new culture's values	Integration	Assimilation
Detached from new culture's values	Separation	Marginalization

The Power to Define

- Important in all areas of functioning and service provision
 - Educational choices
 - Career choices and behaviors
 - Decisions regarding substance use/abuse
 - Sexual risk-taking behaviors
- Examples:
 - LES student - resisting the Bloods
 - "A billion Blacks, a billion different ways to be Black"
- Personal v. Societal Conceptions
 - South African example

Self-Knowledge as Service Providers

- Complex racial/cultural beings;
- Multiple reference group identities
- Our baggage/strengths/preconceptions are brought into the room
- “Cultural Competence” is more of a process than a place





Questions & Discussion