

Cultural Competence



**Fundamentals of Providing Services
to Survivors of Torture eLearning Series**



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Cultural Competence


OFFICE OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT
An Office of the Administration for Children & Families

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Welcome to the Cultural Competence Unit in the Fundamental of Providing Services to Survivors of Torture eLearning Series.







Slide 2 - Introduction




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 <p>"I refuse medical treatment. God will cure me of my condition when I fast and pray."</p> <p>-Survivor of rape and torture, AIDS patient</p>	 <p>"No! I don't want my wife to tell the immigration officials about her rape because it will ruin my family's reputation. I don't care if it will help strengthen testimony in our asylum case."</p> <p>-Survivor, asylum seeker</p>	 <p>Submit "My husband is gone. My son needs to beat his younger brothers and sisters so they learn to respect my son as the man of the family now."</p> <p>-Survivor</p>	 <p>"I will not sign the consent forms until I can consult with the elders of our clan."</p> <p>-Survivor, patient in need of life-saving surgery</p>
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Throughout the training,
Click the **Play** button  below to move to the next slide

In these examples, consider how the survivors' culture influences their perspectives and behaviors, and how you reacted to their decisions based on your own cultural framework. Do you agree or disagree with their choices? What are the values that come into play that might account for any differences in opinion that might occur between you and the survivor? Will you be able to help these individuals when there is a difference in values and world views?

"I refuse medical treatment. God will cure me of my condition when I fast and pray."

"No! I don't want my wife to tell the immigration officials about her rape because it will ruin my family's reputation. I don't care if it will help strengthen testimony in our asylum case."

"My husband is gone. My son needs to beat his younger brothers and sisters so they learn to respect my son as the man of the family now."

"I will not sign the consent forms until I can consult with the elders of the clan."



**Slide 3 - Lesson Objectives**

Hello, I'm Dr. Denise Berte and I will be presenting this lesson on cultural competence. As you have just seen in the previous survivor statements, cultural beliefs, norms and perceptions play an integral role in shaping the behavior of torture survivors and their families and impact our process in providing healing services. As you work with torture survivors, you will interact with individuals from many different cultures. Since healing practices are intimately tied with beliefs about the causes of illness, how it manifests, and how it should be treated, understanding culture and learning how to work with survivors in culturally competent ways plays an important part in your role as a provider. It is important to understand what culture is, its power in guiding social interactions, and to learn how to work with survivors in culturally competent ways, so that cultural interactions are potentially helpful, rather than detrimental. As we discuss all of these components within this lesson, you will be asked to reflect on how your learning can be used within your work with survivors.



**Slide 4 - Culture**

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Matsumoto defined culture as a “set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next.”

Matsumoto, D. (1996) Culture and Psychology. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole

The concept of culture seems so basic to human existence, yet when defined, it appears as complex and multi-dimensional as the many variations of human existence. Many people do not like to pin down a definition of culture for this reason. In 2000, Matsumoto defined culture as a “set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next.” Although this definition may appear simple, the complexity, dimensionality and fluidity encapsulated in the concept of culture are implicit within it.

Culture is related to nationality, ethnicity, geographic region, generation, life-styles, interests, and a multitude of other components. Culture is the lens through which we see the world, form opinions, make decisions, interact with others. Culture is subtle and we often don’t even recognize it, and yet it’s powerful in influencing every aspect of our lives. Culture does not cause outcomes but rather influences them. For example, culture does not cause illness, but influences how illness manifests or is experienced by the individual, how it is treated, and how the individual and others view the illness and its treatment. There is not a thought, a viewpoint, an action, a feeling that is not influenced by one’s culture, or multiple cultures. Culture establishes rules and expectations for human interactions. Thus, when people from different cultures interact, there can





be compatibility and understanding on some levels, and/or incompatibility and conflict on other levels; or there can be a merging and creation of a new culture or subcultures.



**Slide 5 - Culture Encompasses**

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Culture

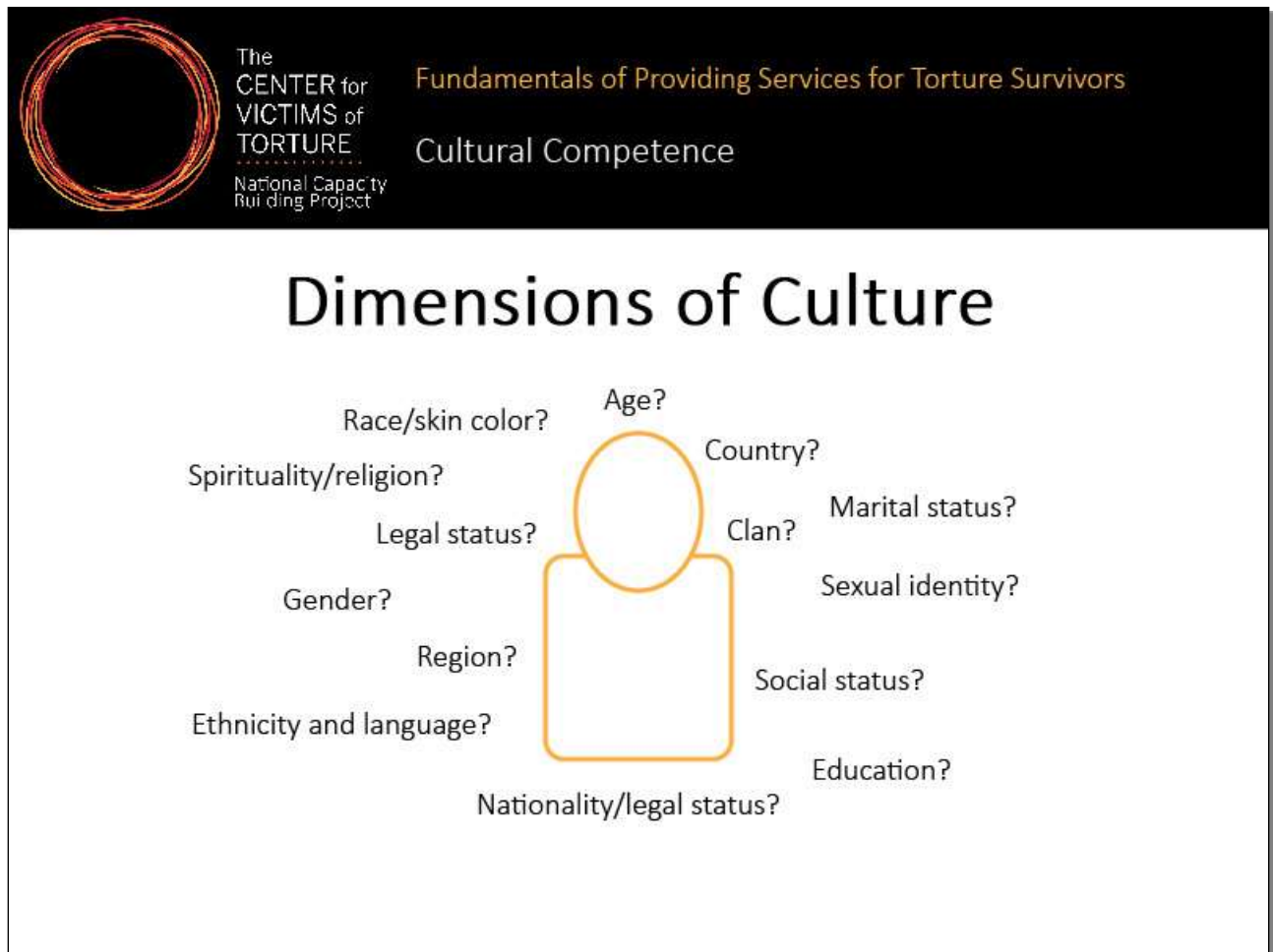
- Core beliefs and values
- Life goals
- Views of human nature
- Interpersonal relationships
- Relationship between humans & nature
- Time
- Activity

Culture encompasses a set of often unexplored core beliefs, values, life goals, and perspectives that determine much of our daily lives. Culture sets the blueprint by which we view the world and categorize our experiences. Culture determines what we believe about human nature. For example, people are basically good or not, relationships - as in, family is primary, or men are the head of the household, man's relationship to nature - control over it, or coexist harmoniously with it, time - focusing on the past, focusing on the present or future, and activity - doing versus being. Whether one believes hard work pays off, education is the road to success, or children should be seen and not heard, is dependent frequently, on one's cultural influences.





Slide 6 - Dimensions of Culture




Let's say you are working with a female Somali torture survivor. What do you know about her? What country was she living in before coming to the United States? Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea? Is she a citizen of that country? How did her legal status affect how she was treated? Is she from a majority or minority clan? Is she from an urban or a rural area? What language or languages does she speak? What social class is her family from? How much education did she receive? Was her family supportive of her education? What is her religion? What is her age and marital status? Each of these variables will impact her cultural identity, and thus her viewpoints, values, beliefs, interpersonal behaviors, and how she is treated by others. Change any one of these factors and she would have a different cultural identity. When we keep these various dimensions of culture in mind, we stay aware of the complexity of culture, which helps us to avoid developing stereotypes of people from a certain ethnicity or country.





Slide 7 - Dimensions of Culture Pt 2




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Dimensions of Culture





Answer the following questions in your journal:

- 1 How have these variables shaped how you see the world and the decisions you make?
- 2 What are the similarities and differences? Are there any values between you that might clash?
- 3 How might your cultural identity affect how you see the Somali woman described, and how she sees you?

We often take our own cultural perspective for granted, as if it's just the way things are. Working with survivors from different cultures makes us more aware of our own culture. Take some time now to think about your own identity in terms of each of these dimensions. Please read the questions and write down your thoughts in your journal.

Answer the following questions in your journal:

1. How have these variables shaped how you see the world and the decisions you make?
2. What are the similarities and differences? Are there any values between you that might clash?
3. How might your cultural identity affect how you see the Somali woman described, and how she sees you?



**Slide 8 - Interaction of Culture**

Culture is based in generational experience, social class, educational level, political reality and other dynamically changing life experiences. Because of the fluid and ever evolving nature of culture, there is no cookbook for understanding specific cultures. Consider gender roles, or even hairstyles in the United States between 1950 and 2000 to see how dramatically 'culture' can change in a relatively short period of time. Culture is something we do, it is performed and active - not static. Culture constantly interacts and intersects with social, political, economic, and other factors within the ever-changing societies in which it emerges.

Renato Rosaldo, a Chicano anthropologist, noted:

"Culture is creative and unpredictable, and because it is creative, it has its distinctive tempo, and it permits people to develop timing, coordination, and a knack for responding to contingencies. These qualities constitute social grace, which in turn enables an attentive person to be effective in interpersonal politics of everyday life." Thinking about it in this way highlights the importance of the relationship that you develop with each survivor you work with in a flexible manner that evolves through communication and respect.





Slide 9 - Culture and Healing



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Culture and Healing



Neutral third party

Devise culturally appropriate ways to help parents

Advocate for parents' wishes

Healing practices vary across the globe, and are intimately tied with beliefs about the causes of illness, how it manifests, and how it should be treated. Hence, culture plays an important role in the healing process. Some cultures attribute spiritual rather than biological causes for illnesses. A classic example of this is portrayed in Anne Fadiman's beautifully written book, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, the tale of a young Hmong girl who was diagnosed with epilepsy by her American doctors, but whose parents believed suffered from "soul loss" because her spirit was scared away by the loud banging noise of a door slamming shut.

Furthermore, according to Hmong culture, the young girl's seizures were positively interpreted as being precursors to having gifted healing powers of a shaman, or a traditional spiritual healer. Because the girl's parents and medical professional were at odds in terms of their beliefs about her illness, the causes and significance, and their respective treatment efforts also clashed, often with disastrous results. Some of these conflicts were never resolved, but what proved helpful was an introduction of a neutral third party, a social worker who went into the girl's home regularly and was able to gain the family's trust. She was able to devise culturally appropriate ways to help the parents with medication compliance, as well as to advocate for the parent's wishes with the medical and social service systems.





Slide 10 - Culture and Healing Pt 2



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Culture and Healing

- The goal of all services is healing
- Explore survivors' beliefs about what ails them and what they need to heal
- Encourage survivors to collaborate with you in their treatment planning



In providing services to torture survivors, the goal of all services is healing, whether through the alleviation of legal/social obstacles, or the enhancement of medical, psychological, and spiritual well-being. Belief systems play a powerful role in healing, and are important to explore with survivors of torture in the process of planning services. You may or may not find that Western-based medical and mental health treatment practices are culturally acceptable to some clients. Variables such as the individual's social class, education level, and degree of exposure to Western culture will likely be influential to whether they are amenable to the approaches we are utilizing with mainstream American clients. Our Western-based training may for example, subscribe to antidepressant medication and talk therapy as the most effective treatment for clinical depression. However, some survivors may be opposed to taking medication and prefer herbal, spiritual or other healing methods from their own traditions, or may rely on community elders for guidance in resolving problems. In fact, many of our Western-based treatment methods have not been tested for efficacy across the various populations from which we see torture survivors.

Furthermore, it is important not to assume or stereotype individuals from particular cultural backgrounds - for example, assuming that all Asians are amenable to acupuncture, or that all Latinos seek *curanderos* for





healing. Many survivors come from cultures which have incorporated elements of the Western perspective. Some of my most “psychologically minded” survivor clients who participated well and benefited from psychotherapy, were from rural regions of Central America or Africa. Showing respect for the individual’s beliefs about healing by collaborating with them in developing their treatment plans, can be a healing process in and of itself.





Slide 11 - Culture and Spirituality



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Culture and Healing

- The goal of all services is healing
- Explore survivors' beliefs about what ails them and what they need to heal
- Encourage survivors to collaborate with you in their treatment planning



Culture and Spirituality

- They are inter-related because both are influential to the values, beliefs and viewpoints of individuals and groups
- Explore the role spirituality plays in a survivor's cultural identity
- Explore how religion and spirituality can be a source of strength and solace

Culture and spirituality are inter-related because both are influential to the values, beliefs and viewpoints of individuals and groups. Spirituality could be considered a distinct dimension of culture that has to do with faith and belief in the extraordinary. Among certain ethnicities, one can find various spiritual or religious practices, which distinguish one group from another. In many cultures, spiritual or religious practices play a prominent role and are closely aligned with the belief systems, customs and rules of social engagement among its members. In other cultures, a secular perspective is more prominent and spirituality plays a lesser role. And of course within any country or culture, there will be wide variation among individual members. Thus it is important to explore the role that spirituality or religion plays with each individual survivor, and not make assumptions.

Cultures can also influence how religion is practiced. For example, among Muslims, variation exists between how Islam is practiced in Saudi Arabia as compared to Iraq or Afghanistan. The degree to which Muslim women cover themselves - from head-to-toe covering burkas, to the simple head scarf - varies across regions and is an example of cultural variations of a religious practice. Some cultures emphasize a specific aspect of a religion, such as the special reverence that Mexican Catholics show towards the Virgin Mary.





Many survivors of torture have cited their faith, religion, or spirituality as a primary source of strength and solace to which they turned to endure their torture experience and its related traumas. Survivors who are able to find meaning to their suffering, often through their spiritual and religious beliefs, have found this useful in their healing. There are three archived webinars related to spirituality and healing services for torture survivors that expand on these concepts and can be accessed through Healtorture.org. They are listed in the resource section of this module and I encourage you to use them.



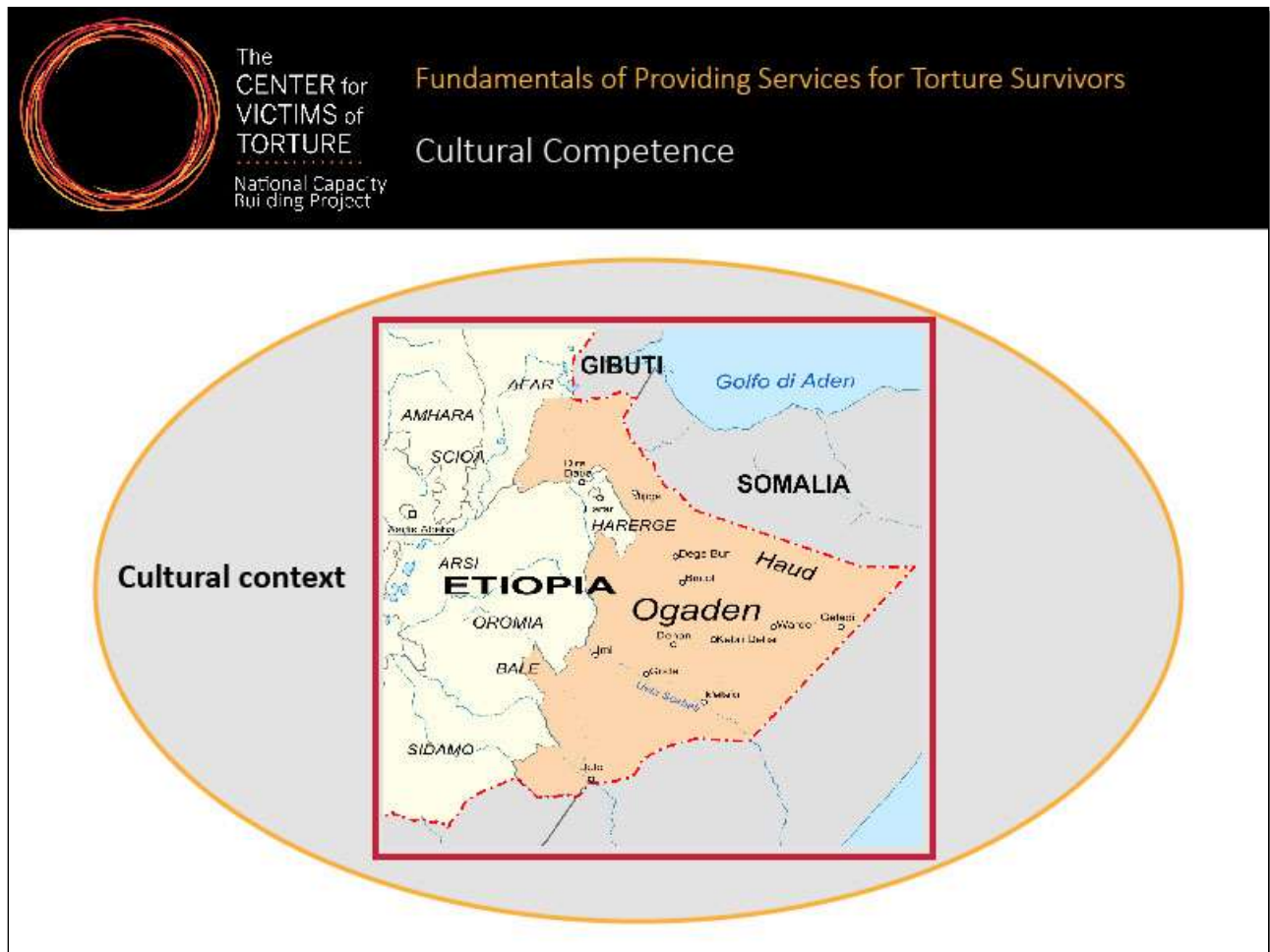
**Slide 12 - Next: Dynamics of Culture**

Now that we've discussed culture and the importance of cultural competence, let's turn to the dynamics of culture influence your work.





Slide 13 - Cultural Context



Culture plays a salient role in the experiences of torture survivors, both in their homelands and in the host countries where they seek refuge. The impact of trauma needs to be understood within a cultural context in which it occurred. For example, all members of a particular ethnic or religious minority may be subject to suspicion and persecution by the government or dominant social groups, and this can deeply affect their cultural identity. Chaldean Christians in Iraq, Tamils in Sri Lanka, people of mixed Hutu-Tutsi parentage in Burundi or Rwanda and indigenous people in Guatemala are only a few examples. Chaldeans in Iraq, for example, have a long, rich history that precedes the rise of Islam in the region. Hence, they find their persecution for religious and political reasons to be particularly painful. At the same time, they draw on the cultural resources of religious faith and their traditions of a strong family network for strength and solace in coping with the traumas of torture and persecution.

Social and political unrest, particularly if it is longstanding, can affect the cultural context of various segments of the populations in which it occurs. War, genocide, torture, and conflict between disparate political or religious factions of a society, can influence the beliefs, values, viewpoints and behaviors of affected individuals and groups. Thus it is important to be aware that the trauma itself, especially if pervasive, can





become ingrained into the cultural milieu of societies in which torture occurs. For example, the Ogaden region of Ethiopia is inhabited by ethnic Somalis. For decades that region has been a territorial battle ground between Somalia and Ethiopia. Currently a part of Ethiopia, Ogaden's Somali residents are not granted citizenship, and find themselves caught in the middle of the violent conflict between the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) - a militant separatist group of Somali guerrillas fighting for an independent state - and the Ethiopian military trying to suppress them. Thus, what has evolved over the years within the culture of Ogaden are expectations of violence, powerlessness, mistrust of authority, and a strong clinging to one's own clan or family. The perspectives, beliefs and world views of the Ogaden people are hence impacted by their social standing within a society. While other elements of Somali culture continue to thrive among the Ogaden—such as the language, food, spiritual practices, allegiance to family and hospitality towards guests – the political reality of Somalis in Ogaden render their culture different from that of Somalis in Somalia.

When survivors of torture leave their homelands seeking refuge, they become immersed in a new and different culture of the host country. Furthermore, taking on the status of refugee, asylee or “new immigrant”, has cultural implications as well. For example, as refugees in the United States, Chaldeans often report that they feel discriminated against because of their Middle Eastern background. This will be discussed in the next slide. This reaction is a result of a process called acculturation.



**Slide 14 - Acculturation Definition**

Acculturation is the process that occurs when an individual is immersed into a new culture and has to renegotiate a cultural identity, taking into account both his or her original culture, and the new dominant culture. Berry proposed that the process is bidirectional, whereby the individual adopts - or fails to adopt - the new culture, while at the same time retains, or fails to retain, his or her original culture.

This more contemporary model contrasts with the older models of Assimilation from the 1960's and 1970's which proposed that the process was unidirectional, in which the individual has to leave behind his or her original culture in order to acquire a second culture. Berry proposed that assimilation is not one, but one possible outcome of the process, and that the individual develops his or her affiliation with each culture simultaneously, and not one at the expense of the other.

The torture survivors that you serve are undergoing the acculturation process as soon as they begin interacting with American society. Berry proposed various stages, as well as outcomes, of acculturation. He further proposed that the individuals differ in the process, in the extent to which they adopt or leave behind each culture, and in the outcomes of the process. Acculturation is a fluid and evolving bidirectional process,






and thus the same individual can vary in his or her own outcome at different times or stages in the process. You'll want to pay attention to where individual survivors you work with fit within this varied tapestry.





Slide 15 - Acculturation Outcomes



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Acculturation

What

“Acculturation is a bidirectional process by which an ethnic individual adopts or fails to adopt the beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors of the majority culture, while retaining or failing to retain his or her native or ethnic identity.”
—Berry, J.W. (1980)

Outcomes

- Assimilation
- Separation
- Segregation
- Integration
- Marginalization

—Berry, J.W. (1980)

Assimilation: Rejection of one’s original culture in favor of the majority culture

Separation: Individual withdraws himself from the majority culture by his own choice or volition

Segregation: Individual is forced to separate from the majority group.

Integration: Individual incorporates elements of both cultures.

Marginalization: Individual is unable to identify with either culture.


Berry proposed the following possible outcomes of acculturation:

Assimilation refers to the rejection of one’s original culture in favor of the majority culture. Separation is when individuals withdraw themselves from the majority culture by their own choice or volition. Segregation results when the individual is forced to separate from the majority group. Integration refers to when the individual incorporates elements of both cultures. Marginalization occurs when the individual is unable to identify with either culture.





Slide 16 - Acculturation Factors



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Acculturation

What

“Acculturation is a bidirectional process by which an ethnic individual adopts or fails to adopt the beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors of the majority culture, while retaining or failing to retain his or her native or ethnic identity.”
—Berry, J.W. (1980)

Outcomes

- Assimilation
- Separation
- Segregation
- Integration
- Marginalization

—Berry, J.W. (1980)

Factors

- Nature of torture experience can influence acculturation rate
- Acculturation process may vary dependent upon interactions with majority culture and ethnic communities
- Individual family members acculturate at differing rates

For torture survivors, the element of forced relocation and specific factors of torture may affect the manner and rate with which the individual adjusts to the host culture and their experiences of acculturation. Psychological consequences of trauma and relocation, such as posttraumatic stress symptoms, culture shock, and worries about family members left behind, can impact the survivor’s adjustment to his or her new home.

Furthermore, the individual’s experiences with their interactions with both the majority culture and their own ethnic communities in the host country could influence their progress and outcomes in the acculturation process. For example, some torture survivors may relocate to areas in the U.S. where others from their national or ethnic communities reside, such as Somalis in Minneapolis, Iraqis in Michigan, Cameroonians in Washington DC, Central Americans in Los Angeles, and Tibetans in New York. Others find themselves isolated from their cultures of origin. Interactions with members of their own ethnic group may be positive or negative. For example, an asylum seeker may feel indebted to others from their ethnic or national community who have supported them while their legal status prohibited them from working. On the other hand, they might feel fearful of those from their country who have a different political or ethnic identity and fear that gossip within the community could threaten the safety of their family members back home. Meanwhile, other





survivors may meet no one from their own country, but find helpful and supportive members of the host culture.

Another variable is that individual family members, or even spouses, may accept or reject host culture values and norms at differing rates, potentially causing conflict between them. For example, refugee children often acculturate at faster rates due to their daily exposure to the majority culture at school, and their cognitive receptivity to new ideas as dictated by their developmental stages. Their parents can become dependent upon them for their superior English language skills, for interacting in the majority community. Hence, a shift occurs within the family. Normal power differentials between parents and children may result in conflicts within the family. Parents worry about children losing traditional culture, while children may be eager to fit in with peers and embarrassed about their differences.





Slide 17 - Next: Developing Cultural Competence



How does one go about developing cultural competence?





Slide 18 - Cultural Competence



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Cultural Competence

Cultural Competence requires:

- Open-mindedness
- Respect
- Inquisitiveness
- Humility
- Flexibility
- Perseverance
- Dedication
- Persistence
- Innovation

Cultural Competence: Counseling Model

“Cultural competence is the service provider’s acquisition of awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society (ability to communicate, interact, negotiate and intervene on behalf of clients from diverse backgrounds), and on a organizational/societal level, advocating effectively to develop new theories, practices, policies, and organizational structures that are more responsive to all groups.”

Adapted from Sue, D.W. & Torino, G.C. (2005). Racial-cultural competence: Awareness, knowledge and skills. In R.T. Carter (Ed.), *Handbook of racial-cultural psychology and counseling* (pp. 3-18). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Now that we have a better understanding of culture and how culture affects our understanding of, and work with, survivors of torture, let’s turn to the question of how to provide culturally appropriate care to survivors. Let’s begin by defining cultural competence, first from the standpoint of individual providers, and secondly from an organizational perspective.

Here’s a definition adapted from the multicultural counseling literature. “Cultural competence is the service provider’s acquisition of an awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to effectively communicate, interact, negotiate and intervene on behalf of clients from diverse backgrounds, and on an organizational/ or societal level, to advocate effectively for theories, practices, policies, and organizational structures that are more responsive to all groups.” This process is significantly aided by attitudes such as open-mindedness, respect, inquisitiveness, humility, flexibility and perseverance.

From an organizational perspective, cultural competence requires dedication, persistence and innovation.



**Slide 19 - How to Develop Cultural Competence**

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Cultural Competence

How to develop cultural competence

Develop awareness of one's own assumptions, values and biases.

Develop understanding of worldview of culturally diverse clients.

Develop appropriate strategies in culturally appropriate care.

Click each button to learn more

When you are done, click Continue

Continue

Adapted from Sue, D.W. & Sue, D. (2008). *Counseling the Culturally Diverse: Theory and Practice*, 5th Ed. (pp. 46-48) Hoboken, NY: Wiley & Sons.

Noted psychologists and multicultural counseling researchers Derald Wing Sue and David Sue, proposed a three-pronged approach to developing cultural competence.



**Slide 20 - --Awareness of Your Culture**

The slide features a dark header with the logo of 'The CENTER for VICTIMS of TORTURE' on the left, which includes a circular graphic of orange and red lines. To the right of the logo, the text 'National Capacity Building Project' is visible. The main title of the slide is 'Fundamentals of Providing Services for Torture Survivors' in orange, followed by 'Cultural Competence' in white. The main content area is white and contains the title 'How to develop cultural competence' in bold black text. Below this is a rounded rectangular box with a red border containing the heading 'Develop awareness of your own culture' and a bulleted list of five points. At the bottom of this box is a yellow button labeled 'Close' and a link that says 'Click the button to return to the list'.

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Cultural Competence

How to develop cultural competence

Develop awareness of your own culture

- What are your assumptions, values, and biases?
- Values can be inherent to your culture
- Awareness of your cultural biases help you to be open minded
- Do not assume that others share your values
- Do not impose your cultural biases on others

Click the button to return to the list

Close

The first step is for the provider to become aware of his or her own culture. Each of us brings into the professional relationship, our own set of assumptions, values and biases shaped by own cultural influences. The term “bias” should not be perceived as a negative here, but as a model of thinking that each of us possesses. As we explored earlier, many factors influence the lens through which you see the world and the frame of mind with which you make decisions and interact with others.

Unless we consciously think about it, we can easily assume that some of the values we hold are common to all human beings, rather than inherent to our cultural bias. Consider for example the following ideas: women should have equal rights and opportunities as men; once someone reaches the age of 18, they become an adult and should make their own decisions on how to live their lives; individuals should strive to develop to the fullest their own unique abilities and interests; if someone has a problem with me, he should come talk directly to me about it. Do you agree with these statements? Do they apply across cultures? Can you see the cultural biases in these assumptions? Awareness of one’s own cultural biases helps us to be open-minded towards clients from other cultures, to not assume that they share our values, or impose our own cultural biases in helping them.



**Slide 21 - --Understanding Worldview**

The slide features a dark header with the logo of 'The CENTER for VICTIMS of TORTURE' on the left, which includes a circular graphic of orange and red lines. To the right of the logo, the text 'National Capacity Building Project' is visible. Further right, the title 'Fundamentals of Providing Services for Torture Survivors' is displayed in orange, followed by 'Cultural Competence' in white. The main content area has a white background with the heading 'How to develop cultural competence' in bold black text. Below this, a rounded rectangle with a red border contains the sub-heading 'Develop understanding of worldview' in bold black text. Underneath the sub-heading is a bulleted list: '• Become educated about other cultures' and '• Take steps to learn about different cultures'. At the bottom of this rounded rectangle, the text 'Click the button to return to the list' is shown next to an orange button labeled 'Close'.

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How to develop cultural competence

Develop understanding of worldview

- Become educated about other cultures
- Take steps to learn about different cultures

Click the button to return to the list

Close

Sue and Sue's second step in developing cultural competence, is to become educated about other cultures and develop an understanding of worldviews that may be different from our own. This does not mean to learn everything about every other culture, nor to necessarily agree with other viewpoints. It means to take steps in learning about other cultures rather than going in blindly.



**Slide 22 - --Develop Strategies**

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Cultural Competence

How to develop cultural competence

Develop appropriate strategies in culturally appropriate care

- Some general strategies coming in next slides
- Learn from experience and practice
- Providers need to adopt strategies that fit their methods
- Remember there are differences within cultural groups

Click the button to return to the list

Close

The third step is learning strategies and tactics in providing culturally appropriate care. Some general strategies will be briefly discussed in the next slides. However, learning specific strategies comes best from experience and practice and each provider must adopt strategies that fit their own ways of operating. Furthermore, remember that there are wide individual differences within cultural groups.



**Slide 23 - How to Develop Cultural Competence Pt 2**

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Cultural Competence

How to develop cultural competence

- Develop awareness of one's own assumptions, values and biases.
- Develop understanding of worldview of culturally diverse clients.
- Develop appropriate strategies in culturally appropriate care.
- Conduct a self-assessment of your own cultural values.
- Investigate other cultures by interacting with people, media sources, participating in cultural events.
- Consult with other professional who have knowledge and experience in working with people from this culture.

Click each button to learn more


When you are done, click Continue

Continue

Adapted from Sue, D.W. & Sue, D. (2008). *Counseling the Culturally Diverse: Theory and Practice*, 5th Ed. (pp. 46-48) Hoboken, NY: Wiley & Sons.

Click each button to learn additional ways to develop cultural competence. When you are done, click continue.




**Slide 24 - --Conduct Self-Assessment**

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Cultural Competence

How to develop cultural competence



Conduct a self-assessment of your own cultural values


- Can you identify how many generations your family has lived in this country?
- Can you trace the ethnic origins of your family?
- How have the values and traditions brought over by your ancestors affected the values you hold today?
- What values did your family members instill in you?
- Can you identify some values inherent to the majority culture of America?
- Can you compare and contrast these to your own set of values?

Click the button to return to the list

Close

Individuals vary in the level of awareness they have of their own culture. Some researchers say that people who identify with minority cultures may be more aware of their own culture, because they are frequently reminded of its contrast to the majority culture in daily interactions. Consider these questions: Can you identify how many generations your family has lived in this country? Can you trace the ethnic origins of your family? How have the values and traditions brought over by your ancestors effected the values you hold today? What values did your family members instill in you? Can you identify some values inherent to the majority culture of America? Can you compare and contrast these to your own sets of values? These are not simple questions to answer, and may take some deep reflection. Developing such awareness is part of the process of developing cultural competence. We need to be aware of our own cultural biases in order to know when we might be imposing them on clients from another culture.



**Slide 25 - --Investigate Other Cultures**

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Cultural Competence

How to develop cultural competence

Investigate other cultures

- Research media resources (books, internet, videos)
- Meet with people who are from other cultures or have worked within them
- Expose yourself to art, books, music, food, and cultural events
- Learn the language
- Develop friendships with people from diverse backgrounds
- Remember to be curious and respectful

Click the button to return to the list


Close

I am certain you can think of many ways to educate yourself about other cultures, from investigating a variety of media resources - books, internet, and videos - to meeting with people from the other culture or who know about it or have worked within it, exposing yourself to the art, literature, music, food of that culture, attending cultural events in your area or even learning the language. Language is rich with cultural concepts and nuances. One of the best ways to learn about other culture is through developing friendships with people from diverse backgrounds. Be curious and respectful towards learning about cultures unfamiliar to you from colleagues, neighbors, the families of your children's friends and other friends and acquaintances.





Slide 26 - --Consult Other Professionals




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Cultural Competence

How to develop cultural competence



Consult with other professional with knowledge and experience in working with people from this culture

- Before meeting with a survivor from another culture ask “who do I know who has worked with people from this culture?”
- Other professionals will be familiar with the types of challenges you will face
- Remember that this is an ongoing process
- Learn by sharing experiences with other professionals

Click the button to return to the list

Close

One of the most important strategies in developing professional cultural competence, is to consult with professionals in your field or related fields, who have knowledge and experience in working with individuals from that other culture. One of the first questions you should ask before meeting with a survivor from an unfamiliar culture, is “who do I know who has worked with people from that culture?” Other professionals will likely be more familiar with the types of challenges you will face in working with these individuals in your field. Remember that developing cultural competence is an ongoing process. There is always something to be learned by sharing experiences with other professionals.



**Slide 27 - Components of Cross-Cultural Treatment**

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Cultural Competence

Components of Cross-Cultural Treatment

1. Scientific mindedness
2. Dynamic sizing
3. Culture-specific expertise

Sue, S.(1998). In search of cultural competence in psychotherapy and counseling. *American Psychologist*, 53, 440-448.

So, how does one develop cultural competency in the context of providing services? Psychologist Stanley Sue described three necessary components for providing appropriate cross-cultural care. While they were developed with psychological services in mind, they may apply across disciplines. These include:

Scientific mindedness – this means forming hypotheses rather than conclusions about the status of culturally different survivors. To say, not automatically applying theories from one’s own culture to another. To be able to do this one needs to know one’s own cultural biases and not assume or impose solutions based on one’s own values and perspectives.

Dynamic Sizing – this means knowing when to generalize and be inclusive, attributing beliefs and behaviors to the person’s culture, and when to individualize and be exclusive, attributing to individual or family characteristics. Dynamic sizing means learning how to tease out the difference between universal truths - things are true for everyone, group truths - things are true for some groups, and individual truths - things are only true for that individual.





Culture-specific expertise is acquiring knowledge about specific cultures. This is an important component of cross-cultural learning, but keep in mind that you are obtaining pieces of the puzzle, rather than the entire picture, because it is impossible to know everything about every culture. Learning what questions to ask and how to ask them, is just as critical as finding the answers, because that's an important part of how relationship and trust are built.



Slide 28 - Kleinman's 8 Questions

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Cultural Competence

Kleinman's 8 Questions for Cross-Cultural Assessment

Understanding the problem

- 1) What do you think has caused your problem?
- 2) Why do you think it started when it did?
- 3) What do you think your sickness does to you? How does it work?
- 4) How severe is your sickness? Will it have a short or long course?
- 5) What kind of treatment do you think you should receive?

Understanding patient goals and cultural meaning

- 1) What are the most important results you hope to receive from this treatment?
- 2) What are the chief problems the sickness has caused?
- 3) What do you fear most about the sickness?

Kleinman, A. et al. (1978). Clinical lessons from anthropologic and cross cultural research. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 88, 251-258.

Click to open Kleinman's 8 questions in a new tab.

After reviewing Kleinman's 8 Questions for Cross-Cultural Assessment:

- 1 What plan of action will you use to help you include them in your practice?
- 2 Who are you going to solicit to support and encourage your progress?

Arthur Kleinman, a renowned medical anthropologist, who worked extensively with Asian patients in the 1970's, outlined a set of questions to ask culturally diverse patients in order to gain an understanding of the individual's cultural perspective on his or her own illness. These questions were illustrated in Anne Fadiman's *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, mentioned earlier.

Although these questions refer to "sickness", the questions can be adapted for use in understanding and planning many scenarios, including physical or psychological symptoms and social or situational problems. Please pause the lesson, and click on the link to read Kleinman's Questions, then record your answers in your journal.

You can see how these eight questions will provide an entry into the survivor's experience of life and cultural perspective. Having asked them, you can begin to assess differences from your own expectations and assumptions, formulate and test hypotheses (scientific mindfulness), and determine where you can provide education and information, and negotiate how to work collaboratively with the survivor.



After reviewing Kleinman's 8 questions for cross-cultural assessment:

1. What plan of action will you use to help you include them in your practice?
2. Who are you going to solicit to support and encourage your progress?



**Slide 29 - Next: Organizational Cultural Development**

Having discussed cultural competence at the level of individual providers, let's now examine it from an organizational perspective.



**Slide 30 - How to Develop Your Organization**

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Cultural Competence

Cultural Competence: Organizational Model

1. Have a defined set of values and principles, and demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies and structures that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally.
2. Have the capacity to:
 - value diversity
 - conduct self-assessment
 - manage the dynamics of difference
 - acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge
 - adapt to diversity and community contexts they serve

Adapted from the National Center for Cultural Competence

The National Center for Cultural Competence outlines these requirements for cultural competence in organizations. From an organizational standpoint, cultural competence involves establishing a defined set of values and principles regarding diversity and cross-cultural effectiveness. It requires that organizations have the capacity to value diversity, conduct self-assessment, manage the dynamics of difference, acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge and adapt to diversity and the cultural context of the communities that they serve. Organizations should incorporate the above in all aspects of policy making, administration, practice, service delivery, and systematically involve consumers, key stakeholders and communities.

Cultural competence is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period of time. Both individuals and organizations are at various levels of awareness, knowledge and skills along the cultural competence continuum. Again, it is helpful to think of cultural competence as an ongoing process that varies in degrees, rather than a definitive state of either having, or not having, cultural competence.





Slide 31 - How to Develop Your Organization Pt 2

How to Develop Culturally Competent Organizations

- Refer to the National Standards on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS), of the HHS Office of Minority Health.
- Explore cultural, historical, political, and religious traditions represented by the survivors your program serves.
- Identify ethnic and religious leaders and resources and develop collaborative relationships with them.
- Hire culturally diverse staff at all levels.
- Make cultural competence a goal for every staff member.
- Let each survivor serve as his or her own cultural expert.

Click to open CLAS in a new tab.
Click Box

For more information regarding standards of cultural competence at the organizational level, you can also refer to The National Standards on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) from the HHS Office of Minority Health: <http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=2&lvlid=53>
Click on the document icon below to go onto this website.

There are many ways to create a service environment that recognizes and respects a variety of cultures, religions and life experiences. It is important to acquaint your organization with representative survivor communities—these include ethnic-specific community organizations and religious leaders—and develop collaborative professional relationships with them. Consult with these resources to inform your services at every level.

Hiring culturally diverse staff at all levels can enrich your organization's diversity. However, do not assume that these staff members are necessarily experts on their own cultural heritages, as cultural awareness and acculturation levels can vary among staff members as well. In other words, having ethnically diverse staff on board is not sufficient to ensure cultural competence within the organization. Each staff member from top





down should continue to aspire towards improving his or her own cultural competence to ensure that this is a priority within the organization.

Don't forget to allow each survivor to educate you about their particular and unique cultural context.



**Slide 32 - Next: Applying Your Learning**

Now let's apply the cultural concepts learned in this lesson to a real-world scenario.



**Slide 33 - Identifying Issues & Resources**

At this point, we would like you to listen to Mohamed's story. Please go to the next slide to listen to it in its entirety. You can also click the document icon to open the story in a new browser tab.

While you are listening think about the following questions, then record your answers in your journal.

1. Identify one issue that may be "taboo" in a religious context for Mohamed and his family. How could this effect their treatment?
2. Identify three sources unique to Mohamed's cultural, linguistic, and religious community that could be utilized to reinforce professional services.



**Slide 34 – Mohamed’s Story**

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Cultural Competence

Mohamed’s Story

Mohamed is a 45-year-old Iraqi man and is a Shiite Muslim. He is married and is the father of three children – a 14-year-old son, a 12-year-old daughter, and a 9-year-old son. Mohamed was trained as an engineer in Iraq and worked in a government ministry for 10 years before he was persecuted, detained, and tortured for his opposition to Sadaam Hussein’s regime. Mohamed was detained for 14 months in an Iraqi prison during which time he experienced beatings, electrical shocks, and sexual torture. Upon Mohamed’s release from prison, he went into hiding and was able to flee to Saudi Arabia where he lived in a refugee camp for three years. After Mohamed’s flight from Iraq, his wife and children were targeted and threatened and his wife was detained and tortured for six months in an attempt to get information about Mohamed. During this time, the children were taken into hiding by extended family members.

[Narration of Mohamed’s Story]



**Slide 35 - Summary**

Congratulations! You have completed the Cultural Competence lesson. Developing cultural competence can seem like an overwhelming task, given the diversity of cultures from which survivors come, and the complexities of providing culturally appropriate care. It is also true that our similarities, as humans, as men or as women, as mothers or fathers, sisters or brothers, are powerful human bonds that allow us to connect with the survivors we serve and to provide a healing presence. There are no definitive tools or measures of cultural competence. Respect, openness, curiosity and humility form the foundations of cross-cultural understanding. A process of continual analysis, professional development, and experiential learning, can help to ensure that you and your organization make continued progress along the continuum of cultural competence. Thank you.



**Slide 36 - Lesson Assessment**

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Cultural Competence

Congratulations on completing the Cultural Competence lesson!

Following is a short assessment

- 5 questions
- Score >80% to earn Certificate of Completion
- Take the quiz as many times as you need to pass
- Certificate will be emailed to you within 7 business days
- Take as much time as you need
- Good luck!

Begin Assessment

