

Cultural Humility

Definition:

An attitude of respect when approaching people of different cultures. A commitment to active engagement in a lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique requiring the ability to move beyond one's own biases. Does not require mastery of lists of "different" or peculiar beliefs and behaviors supposedly pertaining to certain groups. A process that requires humility in how we bring into check the power imbalances that exist in the dynamics of communication. (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia 1998).

Cultural humility recognizes:

- ❖ The most serious barrier to culturally appropriate communication is not a lack of knowledge of the details of any given cultural orientation, but the failure to develop self-awareness and a respectful attitude toward diverse points of view.
- ❖ It's okay to have discomfort.
- ❖ It's okay to not know.
- ❖ It's good to ask.
- ❖ No one person is ever an expert in any cultures.
- ❖ Each person is an expert in his/her own experience.
- ❖ Complete cultural competence is not achievable but a life-long commitment to learning cultural competence is.
- ❖ Inter-cultural communication necessitates a re-distribution of power.
- ❖ Culture provides unstated sets of rules by which we operate, reward and punish.
- ❖ We are often unaware of how our culture/s inform our perception, cognition, emotions and actions and we can strive to learn as in an on-going manner how it does.
- ❖ We do not assume a hierarchy of skills and competencies; however, we have the capacity to change in response to humility.