Why Culture Matters in Recovery: Understanding Bias and Healthcare

Ohio’s 2017 Recovery Conference

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Vision

- Ohio’s Healthcare system actively provides culturally competent practices and interventions that will lead to optimal outcomes for individuals who seek services provided by these systems in the State of Ohio.

Mission

- To enhance the quality of care in Ohio’s Healthcare system and to incorporate culturally competent models of practice into the systems and organizations that provide services to Ohio’s diverse populations.
MACC Services

- Trainings
- Needs Assessments
- Statewide Conference and Regional Lectures
- Resource Library
- Faith and Community Outreach
- Cultural Audits
- Technical Assistance
Session Objectives

- Define and discuss culture, diversity and implicit bias
- Explore how they manifest in addiction and recovery
- Discuss the importance of being culturally competent
- Explore potential cultural challenges to recovery
What is Cultural Competence?

State of Ohio Endorsed Definition

Cultural Competence is a continuous learning process that builds knowledge, awareness, skills and capacity to identify, understand and respect the unique beliefs, values, customs, languages, abilities and traditions of all Ohioans in order to develop policies to promote effective programs and services. (2010)
Why Be Culturally Competent?

A lack of cultural competence can lead to health disparities. These disparities adversely affect neighborhoods, communities, and the broader society, thus making the issue not only an individual concern but also a public health concern.

Changing Demographics

- Ohio’s foreign-born population was 13.1% in 2014, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- 20.9% of families speak a language other than English at home.
- More than half of the nation's children are expected to be part of a minority race or ethnic group by 2018.
- The United States is projected to become a majority minority nation for the first time in 2050.

Benefits

- Clients more receptive to services
- Improved health outcomes
- Enhanced agency morale
National Geographic Determined What Americans Will Look Like in 2050
What is Diversity?

The presence of those elements that make us different.

(Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2002)

IDENTITY

Primary

- Gender
- Race
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Geographic Location
- Network

Secondary

- Marital/Relationship Status
- Communication Style
- Education
- Language/Accent
- Parental Status
- Tenure
- Industry
- Job Title
- Job Duties/Responsibilities
- Time
- Conflict Resolution
- Power/Authority Views
- Flexible or Structured
- Traditions
- Body Language
- Work Experience
- Department
- Company
- Network
- Appearance
- Personal Space

Cultural

- Individual or Team
- Mental/Physical Ability
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender
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Organizational

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What is Implicit Bias?

- Implicit bias occurs when someone consciously rejects stereotypes and supports anti-discrimination efforts, but also holds negative associations in his/her mind unconsciously.

- Implicit bias does not mean that people are hiding their prejudices (generational, education/economic status, racial, sexual orientation, etc.). They literally do not know they have them.

- This type of bias is pervasive.
Implicit Bias: Media Messaging

A young man walks through chest-deep flood water after looting a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005. Flood waters continue to rise in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did extensive damage when it...

Two residents wade through chest-deep water after finding bread and soda from a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina came through the area in New Orleans, Louisiana. (AFP/Getty Images/Chris Graythen)
Implicit Bias: Media Messaging

- **U.S. News**
  - Trayvon Martin was suspended three times from school
  - March 26, 2012

- **The Daily Beast**
  - Dylann Storm Roof is described as “as quiet and soft-spoken.”

- **New York Times**
  - Michael Brown was 'no angel' because he smoked, drank, and rapped
  - August 25, 2014

- **CBC World News**
  - Oregon shooter recalled as quiet loner close to his mother
Healthcare is a cultural construct, it arises from beliefs about the nature of disease and the human body, cultural issues are actually central in the delivery of health services treatment and preventive interventions.

Culture influences:

- How healthcare information is received;
- How rights and protections are exercised;
- What is considered to be a health problem;
- How symptoms and concerns about the problem are expressed;
- Who should provide treatment for the problem;
- What type of treatment should be given.
What is Culture?

Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a group of people, defined by a multitude of elements which include, but are not limited to:

- Dress
- Religion/Spirituality
- Rituals
- Food
- Celebrations
- Rites of Passage
- Values
- Family roles
- Public/social behaviors
- Language
- Decision-making processes
- Sexuality
- Health habits
- Age
- Disability status
- Socioeconomic status
Your Culture and Addiction

- Do "my people(s)" view themselves as defeated and deprived?
- Do we live life from a depressed and hopeless perspective?
- Do we view life as one great party where we strive to have as much fun as possible?
- Do we view all substances as sinful so that we need to abstain from them?
- Do we see ourselves as impoverished, oppressed, or at risk of extinction?
- In what ways has my culture shaped my attitude toward addiction?
- What are the norms of my culture toward intoxication?
Do you belong to a culture where families typically model moderate alcohol use?

- Italian, Spanish, French, Greek, Jewish and Chinese do not usually have significant alcohol problems. In these cultures, drinking does not typically occur for the sake of getting high. Rather, it occurs in the context of a meal, ritual, or celebration.

Do you belong to one of the heavy-drinking cultures where alcohol and drug abuse, is more the norm?

- Sub-cultures of Russia, Ireland, Scotland, and namely college campuses and fraternities
Conducting a cultural and social self assessment is key in the recovery process. This helps you understand the critical role (positive and negative) your culture will play in your recovery.

- Which beliefs and attitudes about addiction did I adopt from my culture?
- Which of these beliefs and attitudes have been helpful to my recovery?
- For those that are not, what cultural changes are needed to stop promoting addiction and to instead discourage it?
Hello
My name is
Change
“Culture is not static but is in constant flux, adapting and reforming. People will change their behavior when they understand the hazards and indignity of harmful practices and when they realize that it is possible to give up harmful practices without giving up meaningful aspects of their culture.”

(World Health Organization)
Cultural Change: The CARE Model

C. Consider...
A. Accept...
E. Execute...
R. Recognize...
Cultural Change: The CARE Model

**CONSIDER** if it is a positive or negative aspect of your culture

**ACCEPT** that you can or cannot change it

**RECOGNIZE** when it occurs

**EXECUTE** a plan to end or avoid it
Healthcare is a cultural construct

Implicit bias is pervasive and should be considered.

Your journey to recovery will be directly influenced by your culture.

Consider, Accept, Recognize and Executive to avoid cultural triggers.
Thank You!

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