



Cultural Considerations

Definitions of Culture:

- ❖ Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.
- ❖ Culture in its broadest sense is cultivated behavior; that is the totality of a person's learned, accumulated experience which is socially transmitted, or more briefly, behavior through social learning.
- ❖ A culture is a way of life of a group of people--the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next.
- ❖ How do you, your team, your community define culture?

Examples of cultural identifiers:

- Education,
- Gender identity and roles
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Spiritual practices
- Race, ethnicity, nationality and locality
- Socio-economic status/social Class
- Perceptions on Mental Health, etc.

The idea of cultural humility:

- ❖ An alternative to cultural competence, which assumes that one can learn or know enough, that cultures are monolithic, and that one can actually reach a full understanding of a culture - to which they may or may not belong.
- ❖ Cultural humility incorporates a consistent commitment to learning and reflection, and an understanding of power dynamics and one's own role in society. It is based on the idea of mutually beneficial relationships rather than one person educating or aiding another in attempt to minimize the power imbalances in client-professional relationships.
- ❖ Encourages lifelong learning with no end goal but rather an appreciation of the journey of growth and understanding.



How do we practice cultural humility individually and as a team?

- ❖ Explore your own culture – including cultural markers listed above as well as your perceptions of young people, mental health, and specifically, psychosis. After you're aware of your own strengths and biases, discuss them regularly with your team and in supervision.
- ❖ Develop among your community and EASA team a commitment to learn. Build trust and express overtly that you are willing to hear feedback when you've made a cultural misstep.
- ❖ Seek out learning opportunities and resources at every turn – identify the elders in a community to connect with, ask interpreters about cultural norms, and ask young people and families re: family traditions and what they want you to know about them.

Why is this important? When we practice cultural humility:

- ❖ We open ourselves to each individual and family story, never assuming that we know what it might be or how it may end based on our "competence." There is room for hope and genuine curiosity.
- ❖ We role model what we are often asking young people and families to do – learning, practicing, making mistakes, and asking others for knowledge and support.
- ❖ We are genuinely allowing young people and others to be the experts in their own lives and culture and sharing power by asking them to help educate us.

Resources for Reflection:

[How To Tell Someone They Sound Racist](#)

[TEDxHampshireCollege - Jay Smooth - How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Discussing Race](#)

http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability

http://www.ted.com/talks/thandie_newton_embracing_otherness_embracing_myself