Cultural Competence For NSBS Employees With
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November 22, 2011

Circle of Safety

- Racism is sometimes suggested to be "America's Original Sin". Its tentacles infect us all with shame whether we descend from its original perpetrators or victims. Its presence is still palpably felt and even if we all understood it perfectly and were universally allied against it no one knows how many generations it would take for us to heal this land.

- Today's workshop takes us necessarily into the thick of that history. Let us consider for a moment how we need to tread in order to do this safely: What things should we consider?

Why Cultural Competence

- The world is changing. Canada, like the rest of the world is diversifying. As Racialized and Aboriginal Canadians gain increasing space in society, and as the need to be able to work with an ever interconnected world increases, everyone will need skills that we call Cultural Competence.

Why Cultural Competence

- As society diversifies their legal concerns diversify and so do the pool of lawyers. So the society that serves lawyers must also diversify and be culturally competent. Consider :

  We conclude that the reasonable persons contemplated by de Grandpre J., and endorsed by Canadian courts is a person who approaches the question of whether there exists a reasonable apprehension of bias with a complex and contextualized understanding of the issue in the case. The reasonable person understands the impossibility of judicial neutrality, but demands judicial impartiality. <u>The reasonable person is cognizant of the racial dynamics in the local community, and, as a member of the Canadian community, is supportive of the principles of equality</u> (R.v.S. (R.D.), [1997] 3 S.C.R. 484-1997-09-26,Supreme Court of Canada – Federal: Reasonable apprehension of bias – dealing with non-white groups – impartiality – evidence – credibility cited by 67 cases).

Cultural Competence: Definition

- Cultural competence refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures. Cultural competence comprises four essential capacities:

   A. We must understand our own cultural positions and how they differ from and are similar to others (critical cultural self-analysis)

   B. We must understand the social and cultural reality in which we live and work and in which our clients live and work

   C. We must cultivate appropriate attitudes towards cultural difference

   D. We must be able to generate and interpret a wide variety of verbal and non-verbal responses (client centred interviewing)

A) Understanding Cultural Difference (Nichols' Model)

Philosophical Perspective on Cultural Difference. Edwin Nichols (cf work of Jung)

Different world cultures developed out of differing physical environments.

These world views have differing constructs:

- Axiology (values)
- Epistemology (way of knowing)
- Logic (principles of reason)
- Process (practice of reason)

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE — DEVELOPED BY EDWIN J. NICHOLS, PH.D.

ETHNIC GROUPS / ETHNIC WORLDVIEW	AXIOLOGY	EPISTEMOLOGY			LOGIC	PROCESS
		APPLIED	PEDAGOGY	METHODOLOGY		
EUROPEAN / EURO-AMERICAN	**Member-Object** — The highest value lies in the object or the acquisition of the object	**One knows through Counting and Measuring**	**Parts to Whole**	**Linear and Sequential** — *-Assembly line-*	**Dichotomous** — *Either/Or* — *-Newtonian theory-*	All sets are repeatable and reproducible — *-Technology-*
AFRICAN / AFRICAN AMERICAN / LATINO/A / ARAB	**Member-Member** — The highest value lies in the relationships between persons	**One knows through Symbolic Imagery and Rhythm (function)** — *-Gladwell Blink-*	**Whole Holistic Thinking** — *-The BIG picture-*	**Critical Path analysis** — *-Cut to the chase-*	**Diunital** — *Union of opposites* — **Difrasismo** — *-Aztec thought-* — **The In Between** — *Ibn 'Arabi* — *-Quantum theory-*	All sets are interrelated through human and spiritual networks — *-Black church-*
ASIAN / ASIAN AMERICAN / POLYNESIAN	**Member-Group** — The highest value lies in the cohesiveness of the group	**One knows through Transcendental Striving** — *-Tree the forest-*	**Whole and parts are seen simultaneously** — *-To read a Chinese word-*	**Cyclical and Repetitive** — *-Stroke order in writing a Chinese word-*	**Nyaya** — *-The objective world is conceived independent of thought and mind-* — *-Chaos theory-*	All sets are independently interrelated in the harmony of the universe — *-Keiretsu-*
NATIVE AMERICAN	**Member-Great Spirit** — The highest value lies in oneness with the Great Spirit	**One knows through Reflection and Spiritual Receptivity** — *-Purification rites-*	**Whole is seen in cyclic movement** — *-Seasons-* — *-Medicine Wheel-*	**Environmentally experiential reflection** — *-Rites of Passage-*	**Great Mystery** — *-A set of 4 and a set of 3 form the whole-* — *-Super string theory-*	All sets are interrelated through the elements, plant, animal, and spiritual networks — *-White Buffalo-*

Traditional Ecological Knowledge

- Nichol's Model is consistent with a growing understanding and articulation of Aboriginal Traditional Ecological Knowledge: an Ancient and yet ever evolving body of knowledge, practice and belief which concerns itself with the inter relationship of all living things with and within their environment.

Afrocentricity

There is a growing global and local understanding of the fundamental elements of African thought, culture and philosophy. Somewhat controversial, certainly not standardized, nevertheless its growing legitimacy has been established. Its hallmark is the assertion of a worldview that places all people of African descent at its centre, asserts a common culture, philosophy and history and critiques and perhaps even rewrites global history from this perspective

Differing World Views at a Glance

Questions upon meeting

European: What do you do?

Focus on person and objective function

Aboriginal: Where are you from?

Focus on spiritual connection with traditional land

African: Who are your people?

Focus on relationships between persons

B) Social, Cultural and Historical Context

- North American Diversity is fraught with complicated and tragic history
  - **Enslavement of Africans, Genocide of First Nations, Global strife resulting in trans-global immigration etc.**
- A local knowledge of how our racist history is a living legacy is necessary: Africville, Cornwallis

Africville

- To understand Africville, "you got to know about the church" [Africville Genealogy Society (1992). The Spirit of Africville. Halifax: Formac Publishing]

- The Seaview Baptist Church was established at Africville in 1849. Until its destruction in 1969, for 120 years it was the centre of social and spritual life of that community.

- Its covert destruction was the reigning shame of the Africville eviction fiasco. Unless one understands this, the true depth of feeling in the community over the current blunders in Africville cannot be understood.

Cornwallis

- As the celebrated founder of Halifax, Governor Edward Cornwallis was the defacto violator of earlier treaties made with the Mi'kmaq people.

- To add genocide to expropriation he also was responsible for placing a bounty on the scalps of Mi'kmaq, a frontier warfare tactic that was common among European colonial military leaders of the time.

- Without undestanding this history it is impossible to understand Mi'kmaq resistance to celebrating Cornwallis

C) Appropriate Attitudes

- Cultural competence requires that people actually *value* diversity, not just tolerate it. In a nation that acknowledges multiple founding peoples, that was built up on the foundation of ethnic/immigrant labour and whose future depends on immigration any other attitude should reasonably be seen as unacceptable.

D) Communicating Across Cultures

- Cross cultural communication is a complex study in cultural hermeneutics. In sociology: the context of a person's world view is necessary for the proper understanding and interpretation of behaviour and rhetoric

- Before meaningless, unnatural, non-human or immature behaviour and corresponding values are attributed to people of another culture, it is better to begin by doubting the adequacy of one's own judgment and knowledge

Elmar Holenstein

Cultural Competence: How?

- Pre service training/clinical Law programmes
- Conduct organizational assessment of Cultural Competence
- Develop organizational plan to increase Cultural Competence
- Employ and support culturally competent practitioners as agents of change.
- Make available systematic coaching/consulting
- Provide and support continuing education in Cultural Competence

Identifying our Values and Ways of Knowing Exercise

- Individually, reflect on the Nichols' Model. Consider which of the traditional world views' Values and "Ways of Knowing" most closely aligns with your own. If none, take a minute to describe your own Values and Ways of Knowing. (10 min)
- Now, find someone who most closely shares your world view and talk about how similar and how different the two of you are. (10 min)
- Now, find someone who is most different from you in your world view and talk about how similar and how different the two of you are. (10 min)
- Report Back (10 min)

Break Time!!

Acknowledging Cultural Incompetence

- Cultural incompetence often results in a hostile work environment. A hostile work environment exists when:
  - Discriminatory behaviour against a protected class exists in the environment
  - The behaviour constitutes a persistent pattern
  - The behaviour must be severe enough to disrupt the work of the targeted employee(s)
  - It is expected that the behaviour will continue if uninterrupted.

Acknowledging Cultural Incompetence

- A hostile environment may also be created structurally when a position exists within an institution that has an antagonistic role within the organization **or** when a person joins an organization from outside that organizations culture:
  - A quality control officer working in a mine
  - A civilian working in a para-military organization
  - A officer in an institution responsible for investigating claims of harassment or discrimination
  - A woman joining an all male organization

The Risk and Promise of Diversity

- Richness vs. Conflict
  - Edwin Nichols often recounts studies that show that different peoples think and approach problem solving differently. Diverse teams then, bring greater problem solving resources to difficult problems.
  - This same diversity asset however makes relations difficult as people work together with different frames of reference (even choosing where to go for lunch together can be difficult) (Supper at Marie's)
  - Acceptance of these dissonances is key to thriving as an organization
  - "You show me two people who agree on everything and I'll show you at least one idiot"

Complications

- Ex. Working on behalf of the less than Culturally Competent (how do we cope?)

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