

Understanding Cultural Humility: Working Across Cultures

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What is Culture?

- "Culture, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." (Tylor 1958 [1871]: 1)



- “[culture is] an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life" (Geertz 1973: 89)



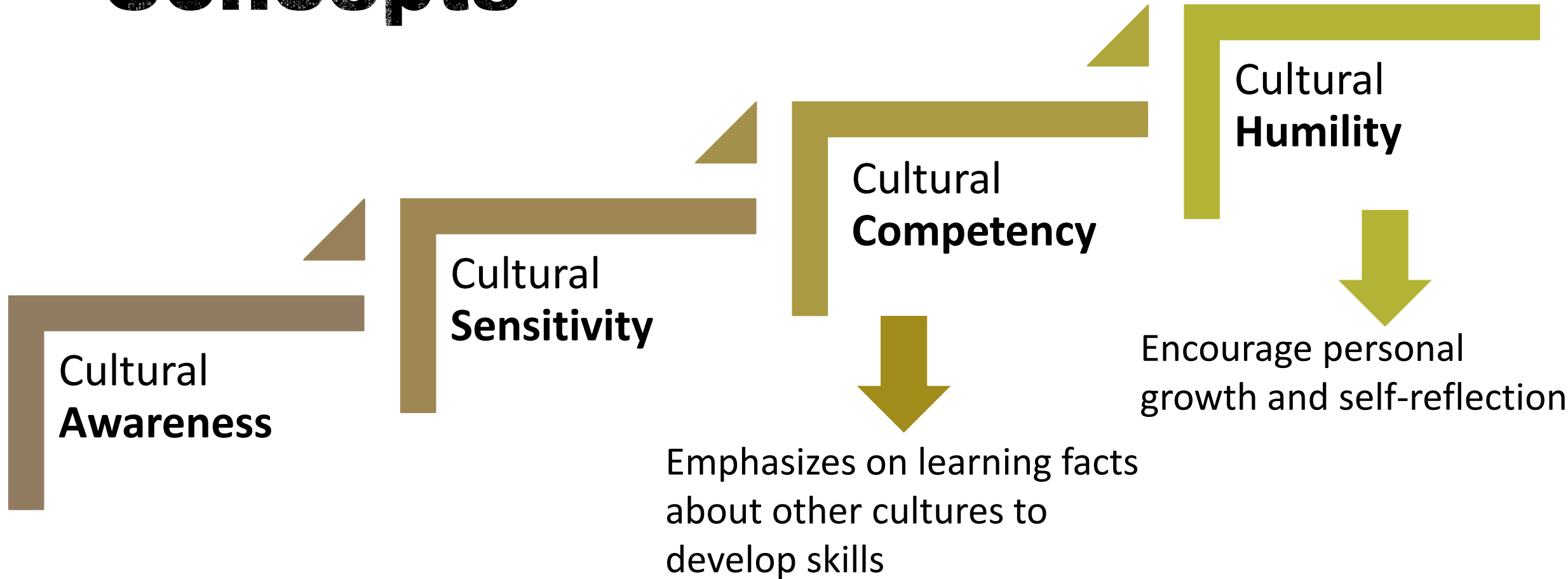
The culture in which you were born is just one model of reality.

**Other cultures are not a failed attempt at being you. They are unique
manifestations of the human spirit.**

~Wade Davis



Working Across cultures: Concepts



What is Cultural Humility?

The “ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the [person].”

Cultural Humility: Measuring openness to culturally diverse clients. Journal of Counseling Psychology.



Pennsylvania Home Visitors Competencies for Home Visiting Professionals

- Cultural Responsiveness: Home visiting professionals **acknowledge** and **respond sensitively** to cultural differences among families and seek to **integrate culturally responsive methods** into their work with the families they serve.
- Cultural responsiveness requires an **ongoing effort to understand** current culture-specific **information**, family **preferences** and **evidence-based practices** that support child and family development in the cultural context.



Cultural Competency leading up to Cultural Humility

Cultural Competency

- Culture is reduced to knowledge and “do’s and don’t’s”; we need to learn to become experts
- Implies that cultures are homogeneous
- Assumes you can become an expert in another culture when no one can



Cultural Humility

- An ongoing process of self-evaluation
- Willingness to learn from others and recognize each person’s cultural identity (Co-learning)
- Avoid generalizations and stereotypes





Source: Pittsburgh Post Gazette – Refugees Interactive

“We learn about culture primarily not by learning “facts” of another’s culture, but rather by changing our attitude. Our underlying openness to those who are culturally different is the key to cultural understanding”

McGoldrick et al., 2005 p.5



Implicit Bias



- . An implicit bias is a positive or negative mental attitude towards a person, thing, or group that a person holds at an unconscious level.
- . In contrast, an explicit bias is an attitude that somebody is consciously aware of having.

Stanford School of Medicine



- “Parents make choices, mostly implicit, about the best ways to take care of their infants and these choices tend to follow culturally recognizable patterns” (Harkness, Sara, et al,)

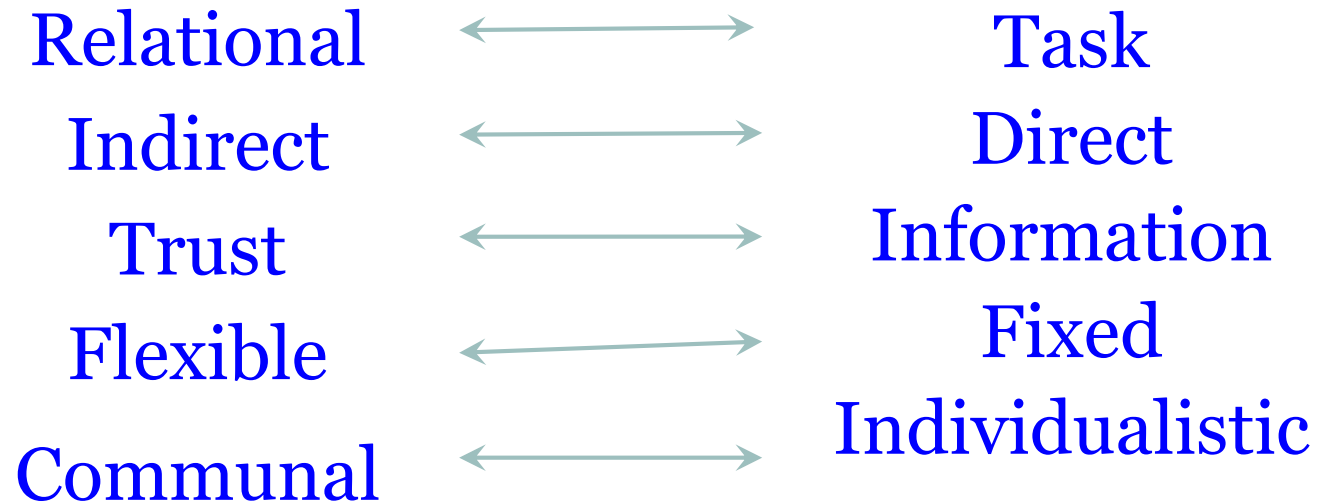


Babies documentary, 2010

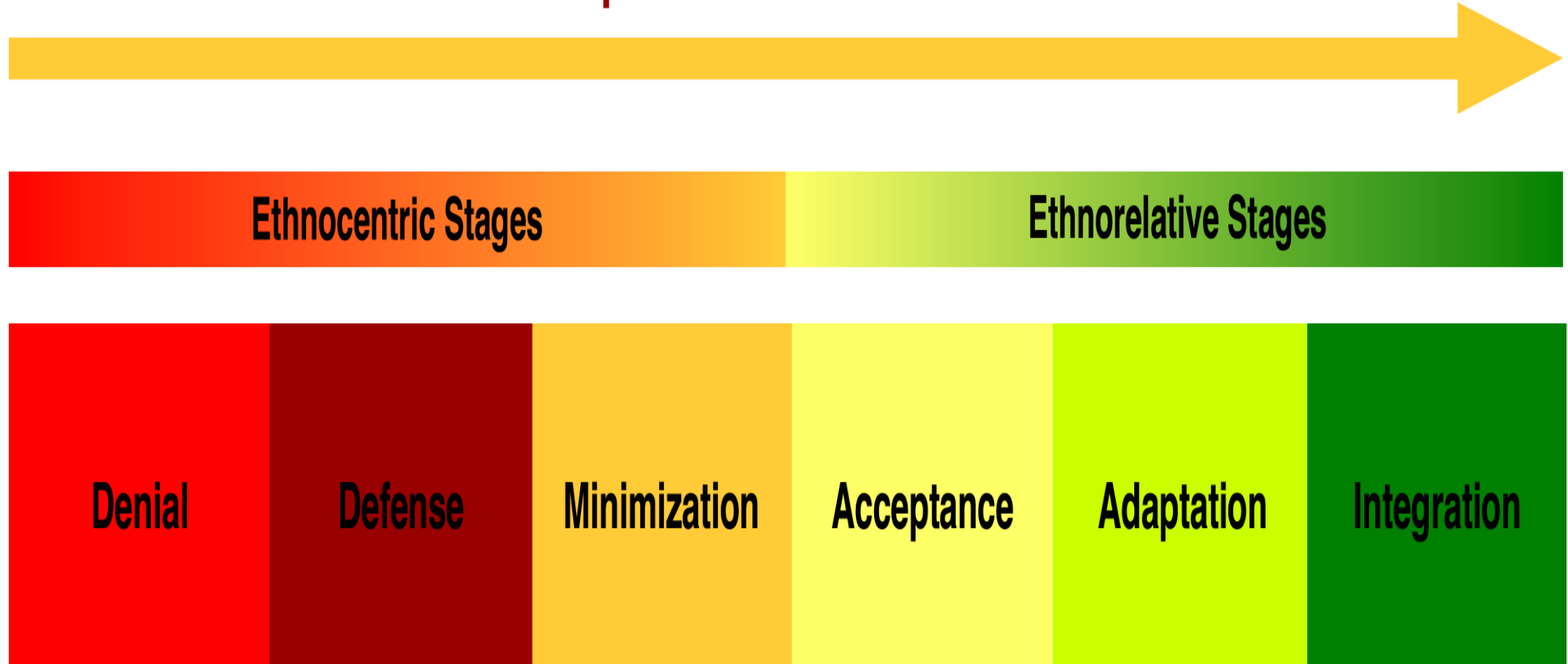
Why having conversations on implicit bias is important

- Research has shown that:
 - Racial disparities negatively impact low-income children's educational opportunities (Burchinal, et al, 2011).
 - Black preschoolers are 3.6 times as likely to receive one or more suspensions relative to White preschoolers. (Gilliam, et al. 2016)
- Teachers' unconscious biases on ethnic differences affects their relationship with children and how they assess them academically (McGrady & Reynolds, 2012).
 - Teachers have been shown to hold positive implicit biases toward White students and negative biases toward non-White students (The Kirwan Institute, 2015)

Culture = An Intersectional and Flexing Continuum



Experience of Difference



Cultural Detective.
Retrieved from
blog.culturaldetective.com



Case Studies: What can we do?

- Ecuadorean
- Congolese
- Bhutanese
- Syrian



Family Challenges to Integration

- **Internal**
 - Language and Cultural Context
 - Intergenerational Conflict
 - Gender Role Changes
- **External**
 - Fear of Services
 - More Traumatic Experience
 - Barriers to accessing services



Barriers to Access Services

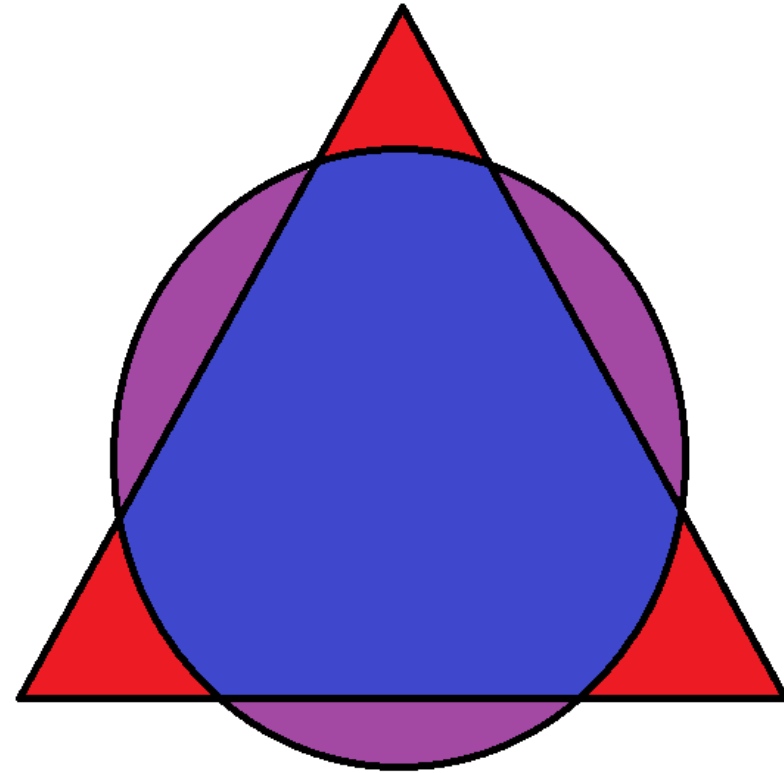
- Lack of appropriate, culturally sensitive intake path and service provision
- Resources (transportation, child care, elder care)
- Interpretation
- Limited cultural competency training
- Cultural misunderstanding of body language



Cultural competent & humble in home workers are a critical to provide services that flex around a family's culture.

They provide an opportunity for discussion to create new cultural variations when concepts do not reconcile across cultural systems.

Examples: Hygiene, Discipline, Gender Roles, Public Benefits, Medical Insurance



Best Practices

- Use personal reflection. Ask questions to find out what you don't know about a family's culture framework. Practice cultural humility.
- Educate yourself and gather information about a cultural group. Use resources to find your own gems of knowledge. Develop culture competency.



Best Practices

- Use local cultural moderator and partners
 - Ethnic organizations
 - Community based organizations
 - Faith based organizations
 - Local advocates, volunteers, non-profit leaders



Questions?



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Resources

- Ongoing Learning
 - Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services <http://www.brycs.org/>
 - Culture Orientation Resource Exchange <https://coresourceexchange.org/>
 - Office of Minority Health (CLAS Standards)
<https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=2&lvlid=53>
- Program to help connect immigrant families to services
 - Immigrant Services and Connections Program 412- 742-4200 <http://isacpittsburgh.org/>

