

—RESOURCE GUIDE—
Key Practices in
Culturally Alert
COUNSELING
A Demonstration of Skills

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Introduction

This resource guide to the training video is meant for professionals in practice, students, and instructors. In it are explanations of the skills that are demonstrated in the video and suggested activities for trying out the skills.

❖ DEFINITIONS: CULTURALLY ALERT COUNSELING AND CULTURE

Culturally alert counseling is defined as a *consistent readiness to identify the cultural dimensions of clients' and counselors' lives and a subsequent integration of culture into counseling work.*

There is no one method for doing culturally alert counseling. Instead, culturally alert counseling consists of intentionally adapting existing methods to work with clients as cultural beings. Culturally alert counseling is a sensibility and a set of skills.

Culture itself is broadly defined here. Culture consists of *the attitudes, habits, norms, beliefs, customs, rituals, styles, and artifacts that express a group's adaptation to its environment—that is, ways that are shared by group members and passed on over time.* All human endeavors, from health to communication styles, are affected by culture.

What is especially important for counseling, of course, is the subjective dimension of culture: The attitudes, habits, norms, and beliefs in the above definition. Those internalized assumptions can drive clients' expectations about relationships, their career aspirations, and their self-esteem, to name just a few impacts of internalized culture.

Outline of Key Practices in Culturally Alert Counseling

The research literature on culture and counseling revealed the following key components for integrating culture into counseling. Three clusters of skills were identified: Accessibility Skills, Assessment Skills, and Intervention Skills.

All of these skills are described in these pages. Many, but not all, of them are demonstrated in the DVD.

1. Culturally Alert Accessibility
 - A. Be Approachable
 1. Place and Time
 2. Welcoming Atmosphere
 3. Cost
 4. Outreach
 - B. Adapt Language
 1. Client's First Language
 2. Inclusive
 - C. Show Trustworthiness
 1. Establish Rapport
 - Do Some Self-Disclosure
 - Use Humor
 - Share Safe Small Talk
 2. Lean Into Difference With Empathy
 3. Demonstrate Cultural Knowledge
 4. Broach Culture

2. Culturally Alert Assessment

A. Listen for Culture

1. Impact and Importance
2. Oppression

B. Practice Culturally Sensitive Diagnosis.

C. Use Tests With Cultural Awareness

1. Content, Validity, and Results

3. Culturally Alert Intervention

A. Address Internalized Oppressions

1. Emphasize Cultural Strengths
2. Do Liberation Counseling

B. Tailor Common Counseling Interventions to Culture

1. Practical, Problem-Solving Approach
2. Inclusion of Family and Community

C. Utilize the Narrative Approach

D. Engage in Advocacy

E. Recognize and Refer to Indigenous Healing Practices

1

Culturally Alert Accessibility



"You have to get in the door before you can rearrange the furniture."

Counselors cannot assume that clients can find them, afford them, understand them, or trust them. Being culturally accessible requires a conscious effort. Three ways for counselors to be accessible are

1. being approachable
2. adapting language
3. showing trustworthiness

A. *Be Approachable* in the following ways: place and time, atmosphere, cost, and outreach.

1. *Place and Time:* Many non-middle class, non-mainstream clients do not access counseling because of the location, the times

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services are offered, and/or difficulties with issues such as child-care or transportation.

- a. Have easily reached central or satellite locations.
- b. Make scheduling accommodations.

2. *Atmosphere*

- a. The physical counseling setting should be inclusive and welcoming, with culturally diverse décor, evidence of commitments to social justice, and hospitable front-line staff.

On the DVD, note the poster in the session with Gwen. Those types of artifacts communicate a cultural alertness, if the counselor knows what they represent and believes in what they might say.

3. *Cost*

- a. Clients with fewer financial resources cannot see very often private practitioners; offer pro bono counseling services and sliding fee scales.

4. *Outreach*

- a. Be familiar with and active in the communities in which clients reside; collaborate with leaders and/or indigenous healers in the community.
- b. Do proactive prevention work.
- c. Reach out to easily forgotten populations.

B. Adapt Language: in both the client's first language, in terms for cultural groups, and in the case of jargon.

Note in the DVD that Tammi is sensitive to Jose's inquiry regarding whether she speaks Spanish. Tammi offers to have a translator if that is important.

1. *Use of a translator*

- a. "Culturally skilled counselors take responsibility for interacting in the language requested by the client and, if not feasible, make appropriate referral."

When a client does not speak English, or speak it well, a translator can be used.

2. *Use of culturally inclusive language*

- a. Use clients' preferred terms and names.
- b. Use generic gender, sexual orientation, and religious terms.

Note in the DVD the counselors inquiring as to how the clients pronounce their full names. Watch Tammi also ask Arminda and Jose what term they use for their ethnicity.

C. Show Trustworthiness: Trust is especially crucial in cross-cultural counseling; "Many clients from cultural . . . groups that have historically been at the bottom of the class structure . . . have developed coping mechanisms that may make it difficult for them to trust counselors" (Kincade & Evans, 1996).

1. *Establishing rapport.* In cross-cultural encounters, rapport should be consciously attended to.
 - a. Do some self-disclosure: At some point in the early part of the relationship, share something of yourself.
 - b. Use humor.
 - c. Share small talk.

Note in the DVD that Tammi shares the origin of her name and her own view of being a woman with a work career. K. C. reveals her previous experience with clients who have a similar situation to Kim's.

2. *"Leaning in" empathically: "Really listen" to the cultural other.*
 - a. Actively hear the legitimacy of customs and ideas that are initially discomfiting to the counselor.

Note Tim's ability to work with Sherry, whose religious perspective he does not share. Also note Tammi's ability to hear Jose's disapproval of Arminda's working outside of the home, even though Tammi holds a different view of women's possible roles.

3. *Demonstrating cultural knowledge:* The counselor should not have to ask the client to completely educate her or him on the client's cultures.
 - a. Have a solid working knowledge about each cultural group with which you will have contact, especially in the areas of communication styles and cultural phenomena (e.g., terms, artifacts, values).

On the DVD, note Tim's sharing his knowledge of Christian teachings and scripture with Sherry. Also note Garrett's cultural literacy. Finally, see

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Tammi share a light story about a Puerto Rican frog. She also shows knowledge of traditional Latino/Latina gender roles.

4. *Broaching*

- a. Introduce the topic of cultural differences.

See the counselors in the video each inquire of the clients as to how it is to work with them, especially in the context of ethnic, racial, gender, and religious differences.

2

Culturally Alert Assessment



Overview and rationale of culturally alert assessment:

- Culturally alert assessment asks the counselor to have a “third ear” open for cultural dimensions.
- Examples of cultural factors in assessment:
 - Test-takers’ self-beliefs are affected by the culture of the test giver.
 - Diagnosis can be affected by skin color and dialect: When counselors are not aware of a client’s cultural identity, they tend to arrive at the correct diagnosis. When they know the cultural identity of a non-white client, their diagnoses tend to be more severe. The opposite is the case for middle-class counselors and wealthy clients, whose problems are underestimated (Hays, Chang, & Dean, 2007).

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- Culturally alert assessment comes in four forms:
 1. Listening for culture
 2. Cultural genogram
 3. Culturally sensitive diagnosis
 4. Culturally aware use of tests

Note: Only the first of these four dimensions of assessment are presented in the video.

A. *Listening for Culture*

1. Important because client self-report is the most reliable source of information on cultural factors (Rodriguez & Walls, 2000).
2. Do: Inquire about or reflect client statements about at least three topics:
 - a. the impact and importance of culture for a client
 - b. the experiences of oppression for members of non-dominant groups

Suggestions for Culturally Oriented Questions

I. Overall importance of culture and values

- “What place did a gender [and/or social class] script play in your career [or relationship] choices?”
- “Help me understand what you are going through as a(n) [Fill in ethnicity/race/sexual orientation _____] woman/man.”
- “In what way has your ethnicity influenced your life?”
- “Different people have different perspectives based on their experiences. In our [school, community, agency], we have a wide range of cultures. How do you feel that your culture affects your relationship with others?”
- “How do you think people perceive you as a result of your ethnicity [disability, sexual orientation, upbringing, etc.]? What is that like for you?”

II. Comfort level with the topic of culture

- “On a scale of 1 to 5, what is your comfort level in addressing issues of [race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc.]?”

III. Counselor interest in learning about the client's culture:

- "What would you like me to know about your experience in your culture?"

IV. The client's experience with cultural others, including experiences of bias:

- "What was your first experience with someone different from you?"
- "What has been your experience with other races [ethnic groups, etc.]?"

V. The local impact of culture, including oppression:

- "What has your experience as a(n) [Fill in ethnicity/race/sexual orientation] woman/man been at this [school/college/workplace/other institution]?"

In the DVD, note K. C.'s inquiring about Kim's family norms. Also note Garrett's reflecting Gwen's perceptions about being an African American woman in her workplace.

B. Incorporate a Cultural Genogram [Not demonstrated in the video]
= a visual representation of cultural influences on a client's life

Creating a Cultural Genogram

Adapted from A. B. Dunn, *Cultural/Gender Genogram Assignment*. Retrieved October 2006 from <http://pirate.shu.edu/~dunnadri/CPSY7615.html>

I. Defining One's Culture of Origin

1. Set up a chart on a piece of paper as you would a family genogram, with symbols of your choice to represent you and your family members.
2. Name the major group(s) from which you have descended that were the first generation to come to America. For example, an individual may have been born and raised in America, but if his or her grandparents were Irish and Greek, then the culture of origin consists of these two groups.
 - a. Select colors: A different color should be selected to represent each group comprising your culture of origin. The colors are used to identify the different groups and to depict how each group contributes to the cultural identity of each individual. For instance, if a female is half Swedish (yellow), a quarter Ugandan

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(Continued)

(red), and a quarter Venezuelan (blue), then the circle that identifies her on the genogram would be color coded half yellow, a quarter red, and a quarter blue.

- b. Identify intercultural marriages: Use a ~ symbol to represent intercultural marriages in the genogram.

II. Mapping Organizing Principles and Pride/Shame Issues

NOTE: To identify organizing principles and pride/shame issues, you may have to use several sources: personal knowledge/experience, interviews with members of that culture, review of reference materials.

Name the following:

- a. Organizing principles:

Organizing principles are fundamental constructs that shape the perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors of members of a group. (For instance, in Jewish culture, fear of persecution is an organizing principle.) Organizing principles regarding gender roles and gender relations should also be addressed.

List organizing principles of your ethnic groups.

- b. Pride/shame issues:

Pride/shame issues are the aspects of a culture that are sanctioned as distinctively negative or positive. They are similar to organizing principles in that they organize the perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors of group members. However, pride/shame issues punctuate behaviors as negative or positive, while organizing principles do not. (For example, educational achievement in Jewish culture is a pride/shame issue, because not achieving is seen as negative.) Pride and shame issues pertaining to each gender and gender relations should be discussed.

- c. Create symbols:

Symbols should be designed to denote all pride/shame issues and should be placed directly on the genogram to depict graphically the prevalence of pride/shame issues and to highlight their impact on family functioning.

- d. Cultural framework legends:

One cultural framework legend should be included for each group comprising your culture of origin. It should list the major organizing principles and pride/shame issues along with their corresponding symbols. The cultural framework chart will allow the interpretation of your pictorial genogram.

III. Questions to Be Responded To:

The following questions can be discussed with the client:

1. How was conformity to your family's/culture's gender norms rewarded? How was nonconformity punished?

2. What were your family's/culture's criteria for a successful woman?
A successful man?

3. Have there been conflicts between the gender norms of your family/culture and those of your peer group? If so, how have you handled those conflicts?

4. At this time, how would you describe the ideal male/female?

5. What are your family's beliefs and feelings about the group(s) that comprise your culture of origin? What parts of the group(s) do they embrace or reject? How has this influenced your feelings about your cultural/gender identity?

6. What aspects of your culture of origin do you have the most comfort "owning," the most difficulty "owning"? What aspects of your culture of origin's view of gender do you have the most comfort owning, most difficulty owning?

Questions for students of counseling:

1. What groups do you think you will have the most difficulty working with, the least difficulty?
2. What did you learn about yourself and your cultural/gender identity? How might this influence your work as a counselor?

SOURCES: Hardy, K. V., & Laszloffy, T. A. (1995). The Cultural Genogram: Key to training culturally competent family therapists. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 21, 227-237; White, M. B., & Tyson-Rawson, K. J. (1995). Assessing the dynamics of gender in couples and families: The gendergram. *Family Relations*, 44, 253-260.

C. *Practice Culturally Sensitive Diagnosis* [Not demonstrated in the video]

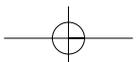
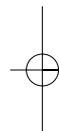
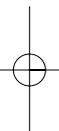
- Disorders are influenced by culture in their expression and in how a community treats them.
 - But: the same basic patterns of mental disorders have been found around the world (Westermeyer, 1987).
 - Consider diagnostic categories to be social constructions, not entities. They have been assembled through a process of consensus by Western psychiatrists, social workers, and psychologists.
 - Use these three steps to guide culturally alert diagnosis.
 - Assess client cultural identity and salience before diagnosing.
 - Consider local descriptions of mental distress.
 - Work through the *DSM* in an Axis IV-III-I-II order.
1. Assessing cultural identity and salience first
 - a. Utilize the culturally oriented questioning discussed previously before attempting a diagnosis. It may be that a client is mainly experiencing an acculturation problem, or external oppression.
 2. Recognizing cultural (“local”) terms for mental distress
 - a. The *DSM* now includes cultural descriptions of disorders as “folk categories.”
 - b. The culturally alert counselor should know, or learn about, such categories when working with specific populations.
 3. Utilizing the *DSM-IV-TR* with cultural alertness
 - a. First consider psychosocial and environmental problems, or Axis IV of the *DSM-IV-TR*, such as religious or spiritual problems, acculturation problem, or identity problem.
 - b. Next, weigh medical conditions (Axis III) that might contribute to, trigger, or be the source of distress.
 - c. Then consider clinical disorders (Axis I), with cultural expressions in mind (e.g., talking to spirits or hearing direction from a deity).
 - d. Finally, consider Axis II, personality disorders, with special care. Culture affects how personality is seen (e.g., what is narcissistic in an individualistic culture, what is dependent in a collectivist culture).

D. Use Tests in a Culturally Alert Fashion [Not demonstrated in the video]

- Tests can masquerade as universal when they are in fact culture-bound.
- Two dimensions of testing call for cultural alertness:
 - The nature of the tests themselves, or validity
 - The use of tests

The following questions should be asked of tests:

1. Regarding item validity:
 - a. Questions to ask:
 - Are the items relevant for the cultures being tested? Is the meaning of each item the same in all cultures that are being tested? Would the interpretation of variables remain the same when compared with the norms for all cultures studied? Does the test measure the same theoretical construct across cultures?
 - b. What to do:
 - If the test must be used, in the case where items on a test seem to be culture-bound, counselors should go over the specific items with clients instead of relying on simple summary scores.
2. Regarding the testing method:
 - Is the method of assessment (e.g., verbal questioning) comparable across cultures?
3. Regarding the use of tests:
 - Make sure tests are used to ensure equity. For example, when counselors see members of one ethnic group disproportionately placed in lower-level tracks, they must raise questions about such tracking.



3

Culturally Alert Intervention



Culturally alert intervention largely consists of adopting current counseling strategies to culture. Five groups of strategies were found in the literature review:

1. Addressing internalized oppression
2. Adapting common clinical interventions
3. Utilizing the narrative approach
4. Advocacy strategies
5. Indigenous healing practices

A. Challenge Internalized Oppressions

- Clients can be captives of cultural stereotypes.
- Such stereotypes can result in negative self-attributions and/or rigid behavior that is not helpful for the client.

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- Two methods of challenging internalized oppression are:
 - Strengths-oriented counseling
 - Liberation counseling

1. Doing Strengths-Oriented Counseling

Important because:

- Counseling often focuses on deficits.
- Non-dominant cultures (e.g., people of color, women, lesbian and gay persons, working-class and poor persons, non-Christians) have been treated as inferior.
- Even some elements of dominant cultures have been denigrated and can be reclaimed.

At least three ways to evoke cultural strengths:

- a. Simply ask, "What positive qualities do you see in your ethnic group, gender, social class, sexual orientation, or religion?"

In the DVD, note K. C. asking Kim for the strengths of Vietnamese culture, such as interdependence in the family. Also see Garrett's asking about family and ethnic role models and helping the client to connect their strengths to herself.

- b. Use a cultural strengths inventory, such as: [Not demonstrated in the video]

Cultural Strengths Inventory

Name some of the strengths of your culture in the following domains:

In work: _____

In communication style and humor: _____

In interpersonal support (e.g., family, networks): _____

In leisure/recreation: _____

In the arts, literature, and entertainment: _____

In the community/neighborhood: _____

In cultural artifacts, places, or symbols that can evoke pride and strength: _____

In athletics: _____

Other areas of strength: _____

- c. Lead the client through a guided imagery using a positive cultural symbols activity:

Guided Imagery With Positive Cultural Symbols

This exercise is designed to help clients recognize and use strengths from their cultural background. When employed carefully, using concrete language, the exercise also can be effective with children.

1. *Inform your client as to your process and intent.* Rather than surprise the client, tell her or him what is about to happen and why it is potentially helpful.
2. *Generate an image.* Ask your client to relax and then to generate a positive image that can be used as a resource. Suggest that the image be related to cultural background. A black person might imagine a picture of an African or African American hero, a Navajo a mountain or religious symbol, an Arab the pyramids, a Chinese person Confucius, and so on.
3. *Focus on the image.* Ask the client to see the image in her or his mind. What does she or he see, hear, feel? Ask the client to locate the positive feelings in his or her body. Then identify that image and feeling as a positive resource that is always available to the client.
4. *Take the image to the problem.* Using relaxation and free association techniques, guide the client to the problem that has previously been discussed or to any problem the client chooses. Suggest to the client that he or she use the positive image to help work with the problem. It is important to stress to the client that the image may or may not solve the problem. If the problem seems too large, the image should be used to work on a small part of the problem rather than to solve it.

SOURCE: Adapted from Ivey, D'Andrea, Ivey, & Simek-Morgan (2002).

In the DVD, notice K. C. guiding Kim through this imagery activity in order to help her experience the strengths of her ethnic culture.

2. Incorporating Liberation Counseling
 - Liberation counseling (Ivey, 1995) consists of assessing the client's cultural identity and then helping her or him challenge both internal and external limitations.
 - It aims at enhancing a client's cultural identity development when the current identity is not helpful.

Here are the strategies to be used at each stage of cultural identity development:

<i>Cultural Identity Stage</i>	<i>Counselor and/or Client Activities That Might Promote Growth</i>
Naïve/Acceptant (client unaware of the effects of culture and of oppression)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage client to first describe her or his experience in concrete terms. 2. Point out discrepancies, as well as the cultural dimension of those discrepancies.
Naming and Resistance (client has acknowledged that she or he has learned some behaviors as part of enculturation and is beginning to be aware that they might affect her or his life situation)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help the client explicitly name the contradictions between herself or himself and aspects of society. 2. Encourage the client to gather resources so that she or he might have alternatives to the previous Acceptant stance.
Redefinition and Reflection (becoming aware of the internal responsibility to rethink socially prescribed roles)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Affirm the growth; support the client's movement. 2. Encourage multiple role models and contacts with members of one's group and allies from other cultural groups.
Multiperspectve Integration (client is now engaged in continually creating her or his cultural identity and is actively seeking multi-cultural experiences)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help the client take social action for herself or himself and others. 2. Affirm progress.

To see liberation counseling with clients in the Acceptant status, note in the DVD Tim gently allowing Sherry to describe the discrepancies between her experience of spousal abuse and her Acceptant interpretation of her religious culture. Also notice Tammi helping Arminda describe her experience and name discrepancies between the dictates of her culture and her needs. For the Redefinition and Reflection status, notice Garrett helping Gwen meet role models and make contact with allies from the dominant group.

B. Adapting Common Counseling Approaches to Culture

Six specific intervention topics have been named that should be addressed with culture in mind to be adapted to culture.

1. Practical, Problem-Solving Approach

- a. Be more directive and solution-focused with many non-Western clients and low SES clients. Be willing to give some advice. Do not use emotion-evoking methods at first, or at all. Communicate your expertise/authority in these matters.

Note the relatively directive problem-solving and solution focus approach that characterizes all four sessions in the DVD. In particular, Tammi, makes suggestions for action. Of course, all counselors must still use empathic responding as a foundation for clients' exploration of the meaning of their experiences.

2. Inclusion of Community and Family

- a. Include the community and family as a factor in the discussion with individual clients with those from communitarian cultures.

In the DVD, notice K. C.'s inclusion of family as central players in Kim's life, and suggestion that they be part of the solution.

C. Applying the Narrative Approach to Culture

- The narrative approach emphasizes the client's "storying" of her or his life and alternate, more helpful storying that can be done.
- Cultural stories can be helpful or problem stories.
- Help the client to externalize the cultural dimension of the problem into a cultural story about it and re-story, such as "The cultural story that I have been telling is. . . . And it is not a helpful story. . . . Its foundation is in my witnessing this version of life. . . . My better judgment is. . . . A different cultural story is. . . . I have found better witnessings in this story. For example, I saw people in my culture engage in these positive behaviors."

In the DVD, note Tim's helping Sherry find new foundations for a new story—one about protecting children and acknowledging her own needs while recognizing Biblical principles.

Summary of the Narrative Approach

1. The problem story.

- A. *Frame the cultural dimension of the problem as a cultural story and give the problem story a name.*
- B. *Probe the consequences of the problem story by encouraging the client to evaluate its effects. Ask the client the following:*
 - “How is this problem affecting and/or interfering with your life/relationship(s)?”
 - “What has the problem talked you into/convinced you of about yourself and others?”
 - “Does the problem have you doing things that go against your better judgment?”
 - “What is your better judgment?”
 - “Are you comfortable with the effects or not? Which effects are most distressing?”
- C. *Look for the foundations of the problem story.*
 - “When did you first hear that [fill in the theme of the problem story]?”
 - “How did you get recruited into these ways of thinking/feeling/acting?” (including ethnic, religious, gender, and social class bases for the story)
 - “How come you had a vision that experience had to be like this?” OR “. . . that your identity had to be this one?”
 - “Have you witnessed these ways of being in others?” “If so, who/whose?”
 - “Did these witnessings influence your ways of being?”

2. Re-storying. (Reclaiming the foundations of the old story in new ways.)

- “How can you know that things could be different from the original problem story you told?” (Probe for cultural foundations for a new story; e.g., people in the client’s life or awareness who demonstrate a different story.)
- “What is an alternative story?” “When did you witness such an alternative story for your [gender, ethnic group, social class, etc.]?”
- Help the client decide whether the alternate story is positive or negative and ask the client, “Why is it positive or negative?”

D. Advocacy

- Advocacy defined: the act of promoting the welfare of individuals or groups who lack the power to defend their rights.
- Some causes for advocacy:
 - At times, institutions can be unwilling to consider grievances and can be secretive, keeping information from clients about services.

- Many clients are uninformed and/or feel powerless when services are denied them.
- Two major types of advocacy:
 1. Individual Empowerment and Advocacy
 - For example, client strengths searches, teaching clients about inequities, speaking to a child's teacher

In the DVD, Garrett helps empower Gwen as an African American woman in a white male organizational environment.

2. Effecting Change on an Organizational or a Systemic Level
 - For example, promoting a mentoring program for new employees
 - Some advocacy roles:
 - Spokesperson, supporter, pleader, defender, empowerer, intercessor, proponent, change agent, mediator, collaborator, monitor, petitioner, coordinator, ombudsperson, expediter, promoter, protector, instigator, investigator, exposé
 - The difficulties of advocacy:
 - Advocacy can be a particularly difficult role for counselors. Counselors are often not inclined, by personality style or training, to engage in political and institutional advocacy. Many counselors are primarily attracted to the interpersonal and emotional dimensions of experience. Advocacy therefore requires many counselors to "stretch" beyond their comfort zone.
 - Advocacy can also be difficult in that it may be received negatively by those in power. Power does not cede its privilege easily and the work can be taxing.
 - Questions that bring up the potential for advocacy:
 - What are the beliefs, assumptions, and values behind a particular policy, structure, action, or orientation?
 - If we act according to the identified beliefs, who prospers? Who loses? Who is disempowered or dehumanized?
 - What do the disaggregated data show us in terms of patterns of inclusiveness and/or oppression?
 - How can we make a given situation more equitable and democratic?

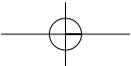
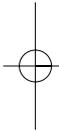
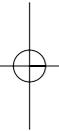
Examples of Situations With Potential for Advocacy

- School/agency décor and events that do not represent people of color or are not accessible to persons with disabilities
- African American males receiving disproportionately harsh sentences and being overrepresented in jails and prisons (as well as receiving a disproportionate number of discipline referrals and harsher consequences in schools)
- One religion being over-represented in a public display or in an organization's symbols, décor, or invocations
- Schools in lower socioeconomic status neighborhoods and/or with a higher percentage of people of color having fewer resources, inadequate facilities, and a higher percentage of under-qualified teachers
- De facto segregation in public school activities or in parent-teacher associations, for example, due to the cost of extracurricular materials and private lessons or leadership being an exclusive domain of folks from the dominant and privileged culture
- Inadequate services for students with learning disabilities or those who are lower-achieving
- An inordinate percentage of students from dominant groups in counselor training programs and/or special education
- Counselors choosing to work in affluent agencies and schools and/or running exclusive practices for only dominant group and/or affluent clients
- Student harassment, for example, anti-gay slurs, without prevention programming or school policies that are enforced or have effective consequences
- Imbalance in academic tracking, such as racial imbalance in special education, advanced classes, and in gifted and talented programs
- The absence of a ramp at an entrance to a building or nearby curb
- The exclusion of students, women, younger staff members, or support staff from decision making
- African Americans being diagnosed for schizophrenia at twice the rate of whites, and Latinos/Latinas at a 50% greater rate, regardless of income or education levels

- How can we encourage a diversity of views and alternatives?
- Who is included in the decision-making process (e.g., hiring, selection, policy making)?
- Persuasion: A basic method used in advocacy
Five steps:
 - State the problem. ("Students are failing English composition at high rates." "There is not enough diversity in our entering class.")
 - Discuss the problem. Present the facts. Control emotions. ("Students lack the basic skills and are not confident in their writing. We are open admissions.")
 - State the action desired. ("I would like there to be a tutor assigned to your class to review assignments. Also, might you have a corrected pre-submission of a writing assignment?")
 - Involve the other person in trying to solve the problem. ("What do you think we can do about the problem?")
 - Summarize and restate.

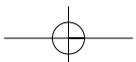
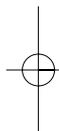
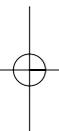
E. *Indigenous Healing Practices*

- Even if the counselor herself or himself does not utilize such practices, she or he can know and appreciate the practices from clients' viewpoints.
- The counselor can consult with and refer to indigenous healers and selectively support such complementary practices.



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About the Author

Garrett McAuliffe has worked as a counselor educator, counselor, and school teacher for over 35 years. In his professional life, he has worked toward ensuring equity in society through his counseling, teaching, and writing. He is committed to empowering learners and has taught in the public schools of New York City and counseled at the community college and university levels in Massachusetts, where he also served as the director of Learning Assistance Programs at Greenfield Community College. Since 1988, he has been a counselor educator at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. His work has been dedicated to improving the lives of all learners. He grew up in a tightly connected extended family in a multiethnic neighborhood in New York City, and is the grandchild of Irish immigrants. He received his Bachelor of Arts magna cum laude in English literature, with Highest Honors, from Queens College of the City University of New York, in 1971. He was named to Phi Beta Kappa for his academic performance at Queens College in 1971. He took from his undergraduate education both a love of ideas and words and a desire to turn ideas into social and personal change actions. Toward that end, he pursued his graduate counseling studies at the University at Albany and at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, receiving his doctorate in 1985. His dissertation was named the Outstanding Dissertation in the Nation for that year. In his time at Old Dominion University, he has produced five books, over 40 articles, over 25 book chapters, and two training videos. His great love continues to be teaching, in all of its forms.

