

**Cultural Humility in Child Welfare:
Ethnographic Interviewing**

California Common Core
December 31, 2018

Overview of the Day

- Welcome and Review of the Agenda
- Engagement Block and Key Concept Review
- Preparing for the Journey to Cultural Humility
- Attending to Culture in Child Welfare Interviews
- Ethnographic Interviewing with Cultural Humility
- Putting it all Together
- Learning in to Partner for Safety
- Practice Implications
- Wrap up

Learning Objectives

- Review the learning objectives
- Identify and underline one learning objective that you feel you have a good understanding of already.
- Identify and circle one learning objective that you want to focus on today.
- Share the objective that you will focus on during today's training.

Group Agreements

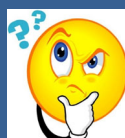


- Be collaborative
- Asks lots of questions-let us know what you think
- Be open to trying new things
- Be willing to make mistakes
- Maintain confidentiality
- Be responsible for your own learning
- Be respectful of divergent views
- Be willing to engage in courageous conversations
- Be willing to take comfort in some degree of discomfort (Put your toe in the water)
- Others?



Engagement Block and Key Concept Review

- Complete the Engagement Block Inventory individually



- How much do you know about the terms related to ethnographic interviewing?

The Common Cold

Answer the following questions and discuss your answers with a partner:

1. Think back to your childhood: What did your caregivers do when you had a bad cold?
2. Do you know what their caregivers did?
3. What do you do (or would you do) when you are caring for a child that has a bad cold?
4. Are there any similarities or differences in your answers?

Multicultural Guidelines for Communicating Across Cultures

- Try things on
- It's OK to disagree
- "I" statements work
- Intent and impact matter
- Think both/and, not either/or
- Process and content
- Confidentiality
- It's OK to be uncomfortable

Preparing for the Journey to Cultural Humility

What's in your Cultural Backpack?



What can you do to
minimize the
impact of the contents in
your backpack on your
practice?



Cultural Humility

A cultural humility perspective challenges us to **learn** from the people with whom we interact, reserve judgment, and bridge the cultural divide between our perspectives, in order to facilitate well-being, and promote improved quality of life. Such a perspective frees the observer from having to possess expert knowledge in order to maintain knowledge-based power, control, and authority over matters about which diverse populations are far more knowledgeable.

Tervalon, M. and Murray-Garcia, J. (1998)

Source: National CW Workforce Institute. Faller, Kathleen L. (Professor) & Ortega, Robert M. (Associate Professor) (2013, July 31). Leadership Academy for Middle Managers, Cultural Humility and Management in Child Welfare Services. [Video file]. Retrieved 6/6/2016 from <https://vimeo.com/71440920>

Cultural Humility Promotes:

- Continuous engagement in self reflection and self-critique as lifelong learners and reflective practitioners;
- Checking the power imbalances that exist in the professional-client relationship;
- Mutual respect, partnership, and advocacy with communities on behalf of the clients served and in which clients are embedded.

Source: National CW Workforce Institute. Faller, Kathleen L. (Professor), & Ortega, Robert M. (Associate Professor) (2013, July 31). Leadership Academy for Middle Managers, Cultural Humility and Management in Child Welfare Services. [Video file]. Retrieved 6/6/2016 from <https://vimeo.com/71440920>

Use of Power and Authority in CWS

- What power does your position as a child welfare social worker give you?
- How do you negotiate power given your own culture, gender and racial position?
- In what ways does your authority hinder and or help your relationship with children and families?

Knowing Who You Are

- https://youtu.be/SkP9JNl_m8Y

Knowing Who You Are Video Activity: Youth

Reflecting on the statements made by foster youth Olivia, Charles, Janelle, Kelvin, and Bryan

- What do they consider to be their race and or cultural identity?
- What made their CWS experience better or worse?
- What would you do to enhance engagement or communication with the youth?

Knowing Who You Are Video Activity: Birth Parent/Foster Parent

Reflecting on the statements made by birth parents Pam and Vivian, or Foster/Adoptive parents Dan and Jennifer, what would you do to enhance engagement/communication with either parent?

Ethnographic Interviewing

- The goal of ethnographic interviewing is to appreciate experiences and worldviews of people who are different
- Ethnographic interviewing involves assuming the role of a "learner" rather than the expert with the Family's serving as a cultural guide and the practitioner assuming a position of "informed not-knowing" while the family educates the practitioner about their lives using the family's own words to accurately describe their experience.

University of Minnesota Center for advanced Studies in Child Welfare Practice Notes, "The Contribution of Ethnographic Interviewing To Cultural Competent Practice" (2001) p.1-5.

Ethnographic Approach

- Way to lean in and engage people of different cultures and allow them to guide you on the journey to exploration of their lived experience
- Way to recognize that the culture of each youth/family is unique
- Key to unlocking their uniqueness is to allow the family to become our cultural guide into their view of the world
- Provides us with a glimpse through the family members cultural lens and a view of how they see themselves in that world

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Example of Differing World Views

A father who does not reside in the family home but maintains contact and visits regularly with his children provides a glimpse into his world. The children were subsequently removed from the mother after CPS responded to a referral of general neglect and the home was condemned by local code enforcement and found to be uninhabitable. The father asserted that he was unaware of the living conditions as the visit exchanges occur as quickly as possible outside of the family home. The father has been sober for the past several years. As the mother lived in a neighborhood with a lot of drug and gang activity, the father never left his car to avoid any opportunity for conflict with the mother or anyone in her neighborhood. The father's commitment to staying drug free and avoiding any type of conflict does not fit with the belief that he should have reasonably known the conditions in the home were deplorable. Utilizing the father's view of his world, he was being a responsible and caring parent by managing the visit exchanges in this way.

Stages of the Ethnographic Interview

Step 1:

Setting the Stage

- Set the tone with friendly conversation and be genuine.
- State the explicit purpose and goal of the interview. Tell your cultural guide what you are doing!
- Express your interest in understanding their culture.

California State University, Fresno, Child Welfare Training (1997) Culturally Sensitive Practice an Ethnographic Approach. Fresno: Author

Stages of the Ethnographic Interview

Step 2:

Expressing Ignorance

The practitioner should state their own lack of knowledge about the family's culture. This establishes the Family as expert on their experiences, as well as that of a cultural guide during the conversation. The practitioner's willingness to express their ignorance may also encourage the Family to talk more freely.

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Step 2: Expressing Ignorance Cont.

To support the ability to express ignorance, practitioners are invited to utilize core practice elements in the California Core Practice Model to explore and engage families. If we are not intentional in our practice approach our fears of offending someone by inquiring or exploring (Exploration & Engagement) issues surrounding race will hold us hostage. It is imperative that practitioners:

- Express ignorance and acknowledge that we lack sufficient cultural information regarding others
- Recognize the Family as the expert on their lived experience, and utilize their guidance during the interview process

Step 3: Open-Ended/Global Questions

- Are general in nature
- Planned and prepared in advance
- At this stage of the interview, the practitioner is developing empathy and understanding for the Family's lived experience and story
- Each Family is treated as a stranger, with unique experiences to be discovered

University of Minnesota Center for advanced Studies in Child Welfare Practice Notes, "The Contribution of Ethnographic Interviewing To Cultural Competent Practice" (2001)p p.1-5

Step 3: Open-Ended/Global Questions Cont.

There are 2 types of open-ended/global questions :

- Questions regarding the Family's perception of how their community views the definition of problems, group role norms, rituals, help seeking and problem resolution styles
- Questions regarding how the Family relates to community cultural values and norms of behavior

University of Minnesota Center for advanced Studies in Child Welfare Practice Notes, "The Contribution of Ethnographic Interviewing To Cultural Competent Practice" (2001)p p.1-5

Step 4: Cover Terms

- A linguistic label used to identify some important aspects of the youth or families experience. A cover term literally "covers" a range of culturally significant meaning which may be critical to assessment or treatment. A cover term is the language "window" to the cultural reality of another person.
- Cover terms are words that are used frequently by the Family. Practitioners also use jargon, which widens the cultural gap between them. By seeking to learn cover terms and understand their meaning, the practitioner can narrow this gap.
- Practitioners need to recognize the power and significance of language. Language can be used to label and limit marginalized groups. They can also be used to bring about understanding of other cultures.

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Step 5: Descriptors

- The culturally meaningful information associated with a cover term. A Descriptor is supplied to explain to cultural outsiders an "insiders" view of some aspect of his or her culture.
- Descriptive information from cultural guide in response to inquiries about cover terms. Blocks of information systematically collected and used to build a composite portrait of selected cultural characteristics as reflected in the context of the individual.
- A practitioner can learn what meaning the Family gives to cover terms by asking descriptive questions.
- Descriptors are words used to explain cover terms and give outsider an insider's view. They provide information about what actually happened, how it was done, under what circumstances and what feelings were evoked.

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California State University, Fresno, Child Welfare Training (1997) Culturally Sensitive Practice an Ethnographic Approach.
Fresno: Author

Putting it all Together Part I

Using the "Collision of Two Cultures: Treatment Case with a Hmong Family" handout, walk through each step of the ethnographic interview utilizing the family case scenario and develop questions/statements to show how/what the interview would look like.

- Working in small groups, develop questions/statements to be used for all 5 steps of the ethnographic interview process with this family.
- Designate a group member to capture the questions/statements that are developed for each step of the ethnographic interview.
- Utilize flip chart paper or a sheet of paper to capture your questions/statements in preparation for the large group report out.
- During the group report outs please listen carefully for questions/statements that you would like to use in your ethnographic interview with the family. Utilize the Ethnographic Interview script worksheet to record the questions/statements that you will use at each step of the interview process with the family.

Ethnography

- A branch of anthropology dealing with the scientific description of individual cultures.
- Ethnography is a means to achieving culturally congruent social services.
- Ethnography allows the practitioner to achieve effective and culturally appropriate communication which is necessary to engage clients. It provides the opportunity to take into account the context of ethnically diverse clients and seek to understand their experiences and perceptions.

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California State University, Fresno, Child Welfare Training (1997) Culturally Sensitive Practice an Ethnographic Approach. Fresno: Author

Putting It All Together Part II

- Using the "Collision of Two Cultures: Treatment Case with a Hmong Family" scenario, and the script of questions/statements prepared for each step of the ethnographic interview process, work with a partner and role play the ethnographic interview with the family member(s) of your choice.
- One person will be the interviewer, one person will be the family member (the interviewer should identify the family member they would like to interview). The roles will rotate in 15 minutes to give both partners the opportunity to complete an ethnographic interview.
- Be sure to move through each of the 5 steps.
- After 15 minutes switch roles so both partners have the opportunity to complete the ethnographic interview with a family member.

Hmong Treatment Case Ethnographic Interview Debrief

Share with the larger group your answers to the following questions:

- 1). What worked well about this interview process?
- 2). What concerns you about this process?
- 3). Reflecting on the interview, what would you do differently?

Incorporating Ethnographic Interviewing & Cultural Humility Into Practice

- The social worker needs to be flexible to invite the family to talk about what is important to them.
- Social workers should learn about families both as individuals and as a member of their culture or ethnic community.
- Families are in a better position than workers to offer suggestions and solutions that meet their needs and make sense within their cultural context.
- Social workers are learners of the family's culture, and experts on the problem solving process.
- Social workers should look for important themes within the Family's story, and then facilitate the family's understanding of these themes.

Thornton, S & Garrett, K.J. (1995). Ethnography as a bridge to multicultural practice. *Journal of Social Work Education*. 31 (1), 67-74.

Practice Implications

- Share an example of how you currently incorporate cultural humility into your practice?
- What challenges will you have incorporating cultural humility into your practice?
- What can be done to over come the challenges?

Transfer of Learning

"As a result of this training, when I return to work I plan to..."

Reflections

- What's one thing you heard today that you value and makes sense to you?
- What are you already doing to put that into action in your work?
- What else would you like to do more of in your work with families?

Thank You!

- Please complete your transfer of learning sentence
- Please be sure to complete your evaluation
