

# Who We Serve

## 2 Working with Diverse Populations



# Introduction

These slides contain content adapted from the Administration for Community Living's Person Centered Counseling Training Program. The content includes text and narration from online courses. To view original content or for more information, please visit [nwd.acl.gov](http://nwd.acl.gov) or contact [NoWrongDoor@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:NoWrongDoor@acl.hhs.gov).

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# Welcome! (1/2)

The No Wrong Door (NWD) system is designed to serve all people who may need any type of long-term services and supports regardless of their age, type of disability, income, or source of payer. That being said, everyone served in the NWD system is unique. They will represent different cultures, races, ethnicities, ages, disabilities, and lived experiences. They will have different needs and wants. In this lesson, you will learn about diversity, bias, cultural competence, cultural humility, and cultural reciprocity. Learning about diversity and culture will help Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals better engage with and listen to each person seeking services in the NWD system. Awareness and increased understanding of each person's diverse culture, background, and situation will help PCC professionals identify the services and supports they need.

# Welcome! (2/2)

## **Learning Objective**

After completing this lesson: You will be able to describe the practices of cultural competence, cultural humility, and cultural reciprocity. They will also be able explain how these practices, and a respect for diversity, can help PCC professionals better address the “to/for balance” for people being served in the NWD system.

# — The Importance of Diversity and Culture (1/3)

Diversity can be seen in groups of people where there are differences in such things as age, race, culture, beliefs, background, and experiences. Diversity adds richness to the human experience by introducing a person to new or different perspectives that they might not usually see. It's important that all services and supports provided through the No Wrong Door (NWD) system reflect the diversity of the people seeking services. Attention to diversity helps ensure that what's important to them and for them is addressed in the most meaningful and appropriate way.

# — The Importance of Diversity and Culture (2/3)

Culture can be defined as the way of life of a particular social group, nation, or people. That includes its shared knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, rules of behavior, language, skills, and worldview. Culture can also be influenced by sexual orientation, geography, age, type of disability, health status, and education, among other things. Cultures can be quite diverse, can change constantly, and can be expressed in many different ways. Members of the same group may express their culture differently. Subcultures can also exist, reflecting further variation in the expression of cultures.

# — The Importance of Diversity and Culture (3/3)

As a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional, being culturally sensitive includes understanding that culture can be an expansive and fluid notion. For example, for people with disabilities, culture might include shared language, social experiences, identities, histories, or experiences of being discriminated against. For others, the culture they relate to might change depending on the community, region, or country where they live. Keep this in mind whenever you use the term “culture” in your work.

# Assumptions and Biases (1/3)

Everyone makes cultural assumptions and generalizations whether they are aware of it or not. We learn about different groups and cultures from our families and communities, direct interactions, popular culture, and the media. All of these inform some of the assumptions and generalizations that we make. Cultural assumptions can lead to stereotypes, cultural biases, and even microaggressions based on age, race, disability, or gender. They can hamper a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional's ability to work with a person in identifying those services and supports that are important to a person and for a person. Therefore, it's important to try to understand the impact of these assumptions and to become more culturally aware and sensitive in your work.



# Assumptions and Biases (2/3)

Cultural assumptions can negatively impact and interfere with the work of PCC professionals in the following ways. They can:

- Affect the quality of communication with people being served.
- Create negative labels or beliefs about an entire group of people being served.
- Create stereotypes about populations being served. This is done by taking some of the attributes and characteristics of a specific individual and placing them on the generalized group they belong to.
- Cause PCC professionals to overlook and devalue people, their rights, and abilities.

# Assumptions and Biases (3/3)

- Lead to discriminatory actions, beliefs, and practices. These may be subtle or overt, but they can result in conflict with the person being served and a failure to serve them adequately and equitably.
- Lead to systemic discrimination in the form of organizational processes, policies, or decision-making that excludes and marginalizes certain groups.

As a PCC professional, any biases you have can also negatively affect how you interact and communicate. There are implicit and explicit biases.

# Cultural Competence (1/2)

Cultural competence is being knowledgeable, appreciative, and sensitive to a group's beliefs, values, traditions, expressions, ethnicity, culture, and race. In the No Wrong Door (NWD) system, you will be working with diverse individuals from many different backgrounds. It's important to try to be knowledgeable about their cultures and respectful and sensitive to their perspectives and life circumstances.

# Cultural Competence (2/2)

Keep in mind that no one can become an expert in all cultures. Becoming culturally competent is an ongoing process that you can practice. As a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional, it will help you work with all the different groups of people seeking services and supports through the NWD system.

# Cultural Humility (1/3)

As you have just learned, cultural competence begins with knowledge and understanding. Cultural competence also involves knowing how to use that knowledge to change behavior and attitudes. The practice of cultural humility is another way that Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals can work towards becoming more responsive to and culturally supportive of different groups of people.

## Cultural Humility (2/3)

According to Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998), cultural humility involves constant self-evaluation and self-reflection to help increase awareness of your biases. This includes practicing humility. That means not only knowing that there is much to be learned from others, but also being open to learning from them. Another feature of cultural humility is working to fix the power imbalances that exist between people. As a PCC professional, part of your job is recognizing that the people you are working with are the experts on their own lives. They understand their own strengths and needs. Although you will have knowledge and expertise in areas they will not, it's just as important for you to learn from them. You can work together to minimize power imbalances.

## Cultural Humility (3/3)

Lastly, cultural humility aspires towards assistance and advocacy that extends beyond the individual to the community (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). Biases and power imbalances also have to be addressed at the larger community or organizational levels. Part of cultural humility is knowing that you can learn from the strengths of any community and its members.

# Cultural Reciprocity (1/2)

In 2012, Beth Harry and Maya Kalyanpur, both professors of special education, published *Cultural Reciprocity in Special Education: Building Family–Professional Relationships*. In this book, they outlined the concept of cultural reciprocity. In a recent interview, they described cultural reciprocity as “...the process of becoming aware and understanding these subtle, deep-seated values in our professional beliefs and practice so that we can explain them to families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who might not share these same values.... It not only helps us as professionals to identify our values and differences in families' values, it also helps families to understand these differences and make informed decisions.”



## Cultural Reciprocity (2/2)

Cultural reciprocity is a two-way process. Practicing cultural reciprocity means that Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals question why a particular recommendation or service was offered to a person seeking services in the NWD system. Reflecting on your cultural assumptions can help you realize there are multiple viewpoints and ways of accomplishing a goal. Cultural reciprocity can help bridge social and cultural gaps between the PCC professional and the person being served.

To learn more, go to this interview with Harry and Kalyanpur:

<http://archive.brookespublishing.com/author-interviews/kalyanpur-72315-interview.htm>

# Four Steps to Cultural Reciprocity (1/3)

Everyone brings their own sets of beliefs, values, and cultural assumptions to the table. That includes the Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional and the people who come to the No Wrong Door (NWD) system seeking services. The process of cultural reciprocity can help you meet the needs of diverse populations more effectively by cultivating a better understanding of culturally diverse backgrounds

# Four Steps to Cultural Reciprocity (2/3)

Here are four steps you can follow to use cultural reciprocity in the NWD system:

1. Stop and identify self: The PCC professional identifies the cultural assumptions they have that may inform the interactions with the person being served.
2. Take time to gather and learn: The PCC professional explores how the person being served understands and views the concepts and issues raised during their interactions.
3. Exchange views with respect: The PCC professional acknowledges their cultural assumptions with the person being served. That starts a dialogue on both differences and possible commonalities, helping the person understand the cultural basis for person-centered thinking and planning.
4. Participate and collaborate: The PCC professional and the person being served reach an agreement on goals and recommendations that are appropriate and culturally sensitive for the person.

# Four Steps to Cultural Reciprocity (3/3)

The process of cultural reciprocity can incorporate some of the practices involved in both cultural competency and cultural humility. The focus of cultural reciprocity is to make sure the person seeking services is able to express themselves. This is important even if their goals, needs, and desires are different from the concepts and approaches used in the NWD system. This may require additional time, patience, understanding, openness, and mutual respect from both the PCC professional and the person. It's worth the time because it leads to more effective communication and services.

# Benefits of Cultural Reciprocity

There are several beneficial outcomes to effectively using cultural reciprocity in your work as a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional. Cultural reciprocity goes beyond awareness of others' differences, to awareness of your own culture and differences. It also helps you become aware of the more subtle kinds of differences that might not be immediately obvious or visible. Cultural reciprocity also has universal applicability, which means that it can be used in any situation where people are communicating and working together. It avoids stereotypical solutions, since each person is seen in the context of their unique wants, needs, and lived experiences. Lastly, cultural reciprocity ensures that both the person and the PCC professional are empowered. It ensures that everyone involved gains more knowledge and understanding of themselves and each other.

# Conclusion and Lesson Review (1/2)

- Long-term services and supports provided through the No Wrong Door (NWD) system should reflect the diversity of the people seeking services so that what's important to them and for them can be addressed in a meaningful way.
- Cultural assumptions can lead to stereotypes, cultural biases, and microaggressions, all of which can hamper a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional's ability to serve a person effectively.
- Cultural competence, cultural humility, and cultural reciprocity are all practices that can help bridge cultural gaps between a PCC professional and the person being served.

# Conclusion and Lesson Review (2/2)

## Learning Objective

After completing this lesson, you will be able to describe the practices of cultural competence, cultural humility, and cultural reciprocity. They will also be able explain how these practices, and a respect for diversity, can help PCC professionals better address the “to/for balance” for people being served in the NWD system.

## Reflection on Learning Objective

Directions: Review the objective(s) on this page. Write down your answers to the following questions.

1. What did you learn in this lesson that you felt was important?
2. What will you do differently because of the content in this lesson?