CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Your employment in a Self-Determination arrangement is made possible through funding from the State of Michigan's Medicaid program. The source of SCCMHA's training requirements is Mid-State Health Network.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

❖ Give three examples of inclusive language.

❖ Distinguish between cultural humility, cultural intelligence, and cultural sensitivity.

❖ Describe diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

❖ Describe the importance of being able to work effectively within a culturally diverse workplace.

❖ Describe your awareness of your own cultural identity.

❖ Recognize the impact one's own cultural perspectives can have on individuals of other groups.

❖ Develop a personal plan to create and build alliances with people who are culturally different from yourself.

KEY CONCEPTS

Race: A group of people identified as distinct from other groups because of supposed physical or genetic traits shared by the group. Race is also defined as a group of people united or classified together on the basis of common history, nationality, or geographic distribution. Most biologists and anthropologists do not recognize race as a biologically valid classification, in part because there is more genetic variation within groups than between them.

Ethnicity: A social group that shares a common and distinctive culture , religion, language or the like. In sociology, ethnicity is a concept referring to a shared culture and a way of life. This can be reflected in language, religion, material culture such as clothing and cuisine, and cultural products such as music and art. Ethnicity is often a major source of social cohesion as well as social conflict. Ethnicity, unlike race, is not based on biological traits, except in the case of ethnic groups that recognize certain traits as requirements for membership. In other words, the cultural elements that define a particular ethnic group are taught, not inherited.

Culture: The arts, beliefs, customs, institutions, and other products of human work and thought considered as a unit, especially with regard to a particular time or social group and, these arts, beliefs, and other products considered with respect to a particular subject or mode of expression. Culture can also be defined as the set of predominating attitudes and behavior that characterize a group or organization.

Culture can be conceptualized to accommodate every identity that is significant, including skin color, race, ethnicity, religion, body size, socioeconomic status, sexual identity, gender identity, age, family constellation, caregiver status, citizenship status, addiction history, trauma survivorship, ability, and beyond. This inclusive definition of culture means that every relationship becomes cross-cultural in some way. Even a consumer who appears to be a lot like us has identities that we do not hold, and every consumer we perceive as different will ultimately have some identities we share.

Culture defines almost every aspect of our lives: how we nourish our families, how we respond to trauma, how we build our community networks. Sharing space with people from other cultures is more than tolerating each other's customs; it is valuing and affirming the ways people from different backgrounds enrich each other's lives.

Cultural Diversity: The variety of human societies or cultures in the world. The term can also refer to the respect different cultures have for each other's differences. Cultural diversity is often used to indicate the variety of human societies or cultures in a specific region or the world as a

whole. It also refers to the inclusion of different cultural perspectives in an organization or society.

Cultural Humility: A process of self-reflection and discovery in order to build honest and trustworthy relationships. Cultural humility is a lifelong process in which an individual not only learns about another's culture, but one starts with an examination of her/his own beliefs and cultural identities.

Cultural Intelligence: A person's capability to adapt as they interact with others from different cultural regions thus allowing someone to relate to and work effectively across cultures. Cultural intelligence is also known as cultural quotient (CQ).

Cultural Sensitivity: Being aware that cultural differences and similarities between people exist without assigning them a value – positive or negative, better or worse, right or wrong. Cultural sensitivity consists of a set of skills that enables a you to learn about, get to know, and treat with respect those who are different from you within your community.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI): The interdependent relationship, philosophy and culture of acknowledging, embracing, supporting, and accepting people of all racial, sexual, gender, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds, and other differences.

> **Diversity:** All the ways in which people differ: race, sex, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, religious beliefs, etc.
> **Equity:** The distribution of resources based on needs. Our society is disproportionate, and equity tries to correct its imbalance by creating more opportunities for people who have historically had less access.
> **Inclusion:** The act of welcoming, supporting, respecting, and valuing *all* individuals and groups.

Inclusive Language: A form of communication that avoids using words, expressions or assumptions that stereotype, demean or exclude people. For example, gendered language is commonly understood as language that has a bias towards a particular sex or social gender. In English, this includes using gender-specific terms referring to professions or people, such as business*man*, police*man*, or fire*man*. Or, assuming a women is a nurse rather than a physician when you meet her.

INCLUSIVE TERMS	NON-INCLUSIVE TERMS
People with disabilities	The disabled, the handicapped
People without disabilities	Normal people, Healthy people, Able-bodied
People who are blind	The blind
They are indecisive/unpredictable	They are so bipolar
Hi all, folks, team, friends, everyone	Hi girls, guys, ladies, gentlemen
Partners/Spouses	Boyfriend, Girlfriend, Husband, Wife
Nibling	Niece, Nephew
Chair/Chairperson	Chairman
Humankind	Mankind
Toughen up	Man up
Best person for the job	Best man for the job
Sexual Orientation/Sexuality	Sexual Preference
Gender Identity	Decided to be a man or woman
A trans person or a transgender person	Tranny, Transvestite
Transitioning/Transitioned well	Sex change/Looks "better" as man/woman
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual	Homos, Homosexuals
Parents	Mother and Father

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Parenting	Mothering, Fathering
Parents/Guardians	Moms and Dads
Block list, Safe list, Allow list, Deny list	Blacklisted, White lists
Other racial groups	Colored people
Underrepresented groups People of color	Minorities
Mixed race, Biracial or Multiracial people	Half-Caste, Exotic
People from overseas	Foreigners
Black People, White People	The Blacks, The Whites
Socioeconomic status	Class
Has a mental illness	Mentally ill
Substance use disorder	Substance abuse disorder
People facing barriers	People struggling
People with low-income or no income people	The poor, ghetto
Survivors	Victims
People who misuse alcohol	Alcoholics
"I look messy, untidy"	"I look like a tramp"
"I drink a lot"	"I am turning into an alcoholic"
Older Person/People, Elderly Person/People	The Elderly, Old Man/Woman
An effective and diverse team	A young and diverse team
An experienced workforce	A middle-aged workforce
Proven experience is required	10 years' experience is required

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

At the beginning of the twentieth century, as steamers poured into American ports, their steerages filled with European immigrants, a British author named Israel Zangwill wrote a play whose story line has long been forgotten, but whose central theme has not. His production was titled *The Melting Pot* and its message still holds a tremendous power on the national imagination – the promise that all immigrants can be transformed into Americans, a new alloy forged in a crucible

of democracy, freedom and civic responsibility.[1]

The United States was traditionally called a melting pot because, over time, generations of immigrants melted together and abandoned their native cultures to become totally assimilated into American society. More contemporary views consider cultural diversity as positive and immigrants may be encouraged to maintain their traditions and their native language (as well as learn to speak English). This model of integration can be described as a salad bowl with people of different cultures living in harmony, like the lettuce, tomatoes and carrots in a salad.

Melting Pot
Assimilation

Salad Bowl
Pluralism
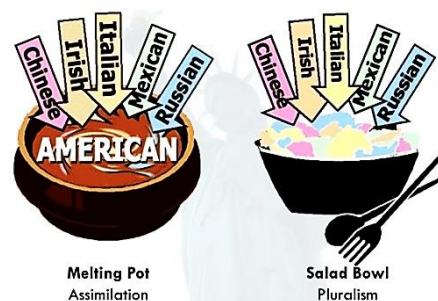
Some population groups in the United States suffer disproportionately from poor health, disease and limited access to health care. Cultural and social factors, such as poverty, racism, and other forms of oppression and discrimination can have a negative impact on mental health, general (physical) health, and well-being. Some of these are:

Ageism: Prejudice or discrimination based on a person's age.

Sexism: Prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination, typically against women, on the basis of sex.

Racism: Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior.

Heterosexism: Discrimination or prejudice against people who are sexually attracted to members of their own sex based on the assumption that heterosexuality is the normal sexual orientation.

Cissexism: Discrimination against individuals who identify with and/or present as a different sex and gender than was assigned at birth.

Ableism: Discrimination in favor of able-bodied people.

Antisemitism: Hostility to or prejudice against Jews.

Classism: Prejudice against or in favor of people belonging to a particular social class.

Colorism: Prejudice or discrimination against individuals with a dark skin tone.

Sizeism: Prejudice or discrimination based on a person's size.

The USA is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world.

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[1] Excerpted from: William Booth, One Nation, Indivisible: Is It History? *The Washington Post.* February 22, 1988. Page A1. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/national/longterm/meltingpot/melt0222.htm]

When a group or segment of our population is excluded or oppressed, everyone is impacted. For our communities and businesses to survive and thrive, each of us needs to be aware and sensitive to ALL of the members of our community. We need to respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, and faiths or religions in ways that recognize, affirm, and value the worth of individuals, families, tribes and communities, and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

Cultural competence starts with self-knowledge and awareness about one's own culture as well as an awareness of one's own cultural worldview. It is necessary to gain cultural competence experience and knowledge of different cultural practices as well as being aware of one's attitude toward cultural differences.
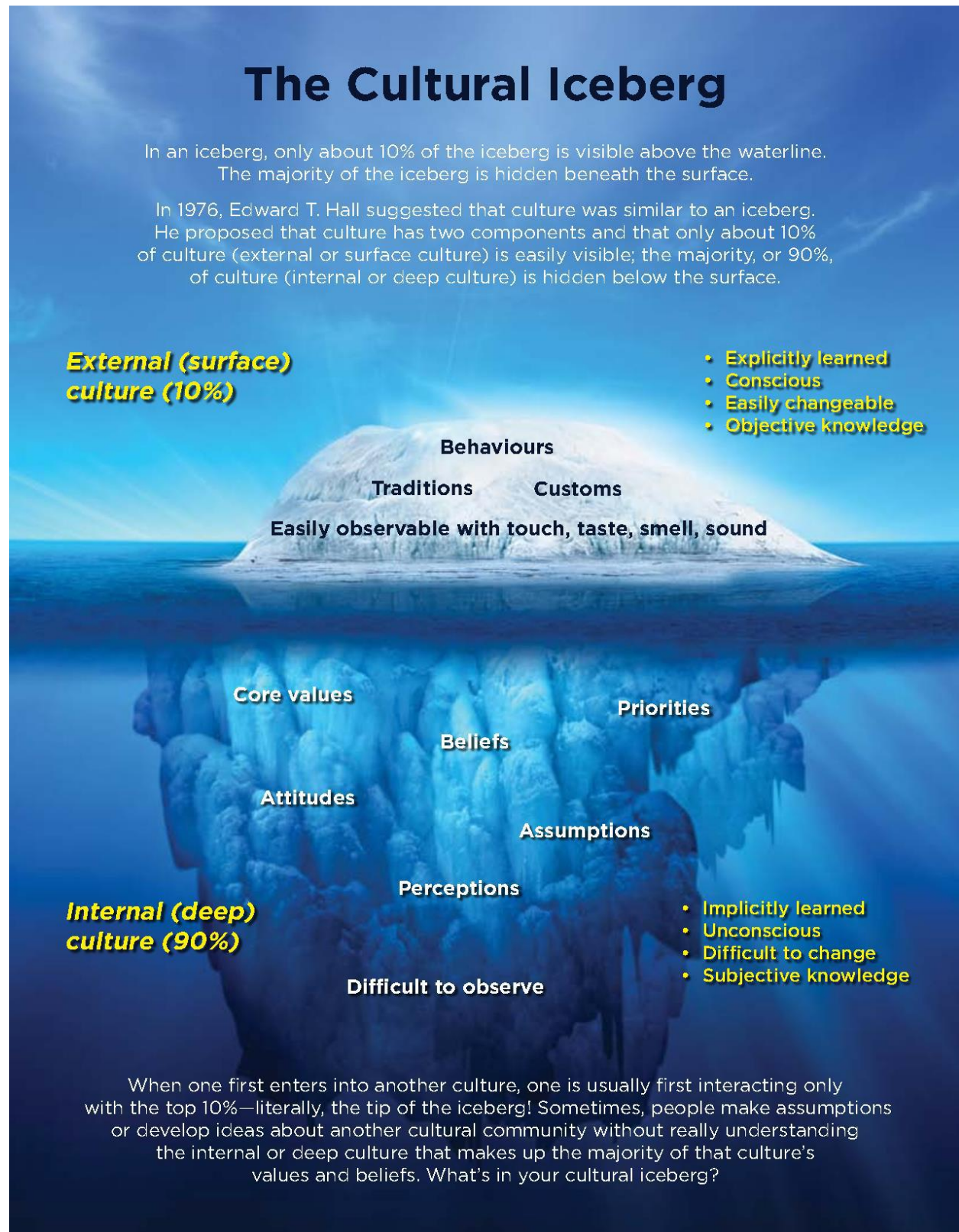
Approaching consumers with cultural humility means walking alongside consumers we serve to learn from them as the experts on their own lives, and to be willing to discover where our own identities have shaped our views of what is considered normal, healthy, or right.

There are many facets of culture and these manifest themsevles in many ways.

Aspects of Culture	Mainstream American Culture	Other Cultures
Sense of Self & Space	Informal handshake.	Formal hugs, bows, handshakes, kisses (both cheeks).
Communication & Language	Explicit, direct communication. Emphasis placed on content/meaning.	Implicit, indirect communication. Emphasis placed on context.
Dress & Appearance	"Dress for Success" ideal. Wide range of accepted attire.	Dress is seen as a sign of position, wealth and prestige. Subject to religious rules (e.g., burkah, hijab).
Food & Eating Habits	Eating is a necessity – fast food.	Dining as a social experience. Subject to religious rules (e.g., Kosher, Halal).
Relationships, Family & Friends	Focus on nuclear family. Responsibility for self. Value on youth; age seen as an impairment.	Focus on extended family. Loyalty & responsibility to family. Age = status & respect.
Values & Norms	Individual Orientation. Independence. Preference for direct confrontation of conflict.	Group/collective orientation conformity. Preference for harmony.
Beliefs & Attitudes	Egalitarian; challenging of authority. Individuals control their own destiny. Gender equity.	Hierarchal; respect for authority and social order. Individuals accept their destiny. Different roles for men women.
Mental Processes & Learning Styles	Linear, logical, sequential. Problem-solving focus.	Lateral, holistic, simultaneous. Accepting of life's difficulties.
Time Consciousness	Linear and exact time consciousness. Value on promptness (time=money).	Elastic and relative time consciousness. Time is spent on enjoyment of relationships
Work Habits & Practices	Emphasis on task. Reward is based on individual achievement; work has intrinsic value.	Emphasis on relationships. Reward is based on seniority. Work is a necessity.

In 1976 Edward T. Hall developed the iceberg analogy for culture. Some aspects of culture are visible and many others can only be suspected, guessed, or learned as people grow to understand cultures. Like an iceberg, the visible part of culture is only a small part of a much larger whole.

The Cultural Iceberg

In an iceberg, only about 10% of the iceberg is visible above the waterline.
The majority of the iceberg is hidden beneath the surface.

In 1976, Edward T. Hall suggested that culture was similar to an iceberg.
He proposed that culture has two components and that only about 10%
of culture (external or surface culture) is easily visible; the majority, or 90%,
of culture (internal or deep culture) is hidden below the surface.

External (surface) culture (10%)

- Explicitly learned
- Conscious
- Easily changeable
- Objective knowledge

Behaviours
Traditions   Customs
Easily observable with touch, taste, smell, sound

Core values   Priorities
Beliefs
Attitudes
Assumptions
Perceptions

Internal (deep) culture (90%)

- Implicitly learned
- Unconscious
- Difficult to change
- Subjective knowledge

Difficult to observe

When one first enters into another culture, one is usually first interacting only
with the top 10%—literally, the tip of the iceberg! Sometimes, people make assumptions
or develop ideas about another cultural community without really understanding
the internal or deep culture that makes up the majority of that culture's
values and beliefs. What's in your cultural iceberg?

STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE CULTURAL DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Begin by asking yourself the following questions:

- ✓ In what ways am I privileged?
- ✓ How is my lens different from the other person's?
- ✓ Am I making any assumptions about the other person?
- ✓ What can I learn from each person I meet?
- ✓ How might the way I physically interact with people affect the other person?
- ✓ How do I know if the other person understood what I said?
- ✓ How can I develop a better understanding of people who have different identities than me?
- ✓ Have I identified the consumer's specific needs?
- ✓ Where do I have room to grow in my cultural understanding of the consumers I serve and the people I work with?
- ✓ How can I meet the person "where they are"?
- ✓ Am I able to communicate with the consumer in their preferred language?
- ✓ Do I accept and respect that male-female roles in families may vary significantly among different cultures?
- ✓ Do I accept that religion and other beliefs may influence how consumers and families respond to illness and disability?
- ✓ Do I accept that different cultures may present and resolve their issues in a variety of ways?

Then, work to increase your cultural sensitivity by:

- ✓ Appreciating and respecting cross-cultural diversity in your behavior, practices, and attitudes.
- ✓ Using inclusive language in written and verbal discussions.
- ✓ Obtaining and using cultural knowledge by seeking information and consulting with experts. Don't ask or expect consumers to educate you about their culture or customs. Instead, go out of your way to research and learn about community members and their needs.

✓ Doing your homework and becoming aware of cross-cultural standards of etiquette (including body language). Find out which gestures and phrases are considered taboo and do not use them. Learn cultural customs about eye contact, physical contact and hand gestures as they pertain to any community or group with whom you are working closely.

✓ Not making cultural assumptions. Everyone has different expectations, cultures aside. Do not simply transfer an experience with one person within a culture to another. When in doubt, ask the person what they prefer.

✓ Speaking clearly and in a steady and unrushed pace. While someone may be fluent in your native language, it is important to remember that it may not be the person's first language. Speaking at a steady pace will help ensure understanding.

✓ Not asking more than one question in a sentence. Separate questions to avoid unnecessary confusion. Speak in short sentences and stick to one topic at a time.

✓ Avoiding the use of slang. Slang or jargon often does not translate between languages.

✓ Using both verbal and nonverbal communication techniques. Use visual aids, gestures, and physical prompts in interactions with people who have limited English proficiency.

✓ Asking open-ended questions. Allow the person to freely share his/her thoughts in a way that feels natural and show support if the person is struggling with English.

✓ Listening actively and check for understanding often. Repeat what you are hearing to ensure information is having the intended effect and meaning. Do not assume your messages are being understood.

✓ Expecting that misunderstandings may occur. Be prepared to revisit topics; messages may get lost in translation.

✓ Appreciating the fact that people of different cultures speak in different tones. The tone of someone's voice may not accurately reflect the intention of their communication.

✓ Offering language assistance to individuals who have limited English proficiency and/or other communication needs. Family and friends should *not* be used to provide interpretation services because confidentiality is breached when family members or friends are used as interpreters.

✓ Asking each person for their preferred pronouns, even when you feel sure of their gender. Normalizing the concept of preferred pronouns can help communities become more aware and accepting of gender-nonconforming people.

✓ Recognizing and accepting that individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds may desire varying degrees of acculturation into the dominant culture.

✓ Understanding and accepting that family is defined differently by different cultures (e.g. extended family members, fictive kin, godparents).

✓ Avoiding imposing values that may conflict or be inconsistent with those of cultures or ethnic groups other than your own.

✓ Accepting and respecting that male-female roles in families may vary significantly among different cultures (e.g. who makes major decisions for the family, play and social interactions expected of male and female children).

✓ Considering age and life cycle factors in interactions with individuals and families (e.g.,

the high value placed on the decisions of elders or the role of the eldest male in families).

✓ Recognizing and understanding that beliefs and concepts of health and well-being vary significantly from culture to culture. Understand that religion and other beliefs may influence how people and families respond to illnesses, disease, disability and death.

✓ Understanding that traditional approaches to disciplining children are influenced by culture and that families from different cultures will have different expectations of their children for acquiring toileting, dressing, feeding, and other self-care skills.

In sum, when working with consumers always be alert to cultural diversity in its many forms including, but not limited to:

✓ Family structure and roles

✓ Important events in the life cycle

✓ Roles of individual family members

✓ Rules of interpersonal interactions

✓ Communication and linguistic rules

✓ Rules of decorum and discipline

✓ Religious beliefs

✓ Standards for health and hygiene

✓ Food preferences

✓ Dress and personal appearance

✓ Perceptions of work and play

✓ Perceptions of time and space

✓ Explanations of natural phenomena

✓ Attitudes towards pets and animals

✓ Artistic and musical values and tastes

✓ Life expectations and aspirations

✓ History and traditions

✓ Education and teaching methods

✓ Holidays and celebrations

✓ Attitudes about sex, sexuality and sexual orientation

Practice Cultural Humility

❖ Commit to an ongoing process of compassionate self-awareness and inquiry, supported by a community of trusted and cognitively-diverse colleagues; seek others' perspectives. Make a commitment to continually exploring your own cultural identities, including how society has valued them and how you have internalized those values, and question how your identities impact your beliefs as well as the stereotypes and biases you hold.

❖ Be open and teachable. Strive to see cultures as consumers see them, rather than as you have come to know or define them. Become a student of the consumer by prioritizing the consumer's perspective and experience, rather than imposing your own story and meaning. What is normal to you may not be what is normal for the consumer. Notions of success, health, family, love, and so many others are culturally-influenced, and you have a much greater chance of assisting consumers when you make the effort to understand their perspective. A related aspect is having the willingness to admit when you have made a misstep, whether with colleagues or consumers. To be teachable means to be open to making mistakes, even to welcome them as part of the learning process. We cannot grow without taking risks, and we cannot take risks without making mistakes.

❖ Always consider the social structures that have helped shape reality as consumers experience it. No one exists in a vacuum. Your behavior, beliefs, and perception of yourself and others are intimately bound to and shaped by your environment. Always consider the ways that the systems with which consumers interact have shaped their lives, their belief systems, their relationships, their sense of self, and the conditions that have brought them to SCCMHA for services. Always recognize the power dynamic present in the system, whether real or perceived, between yourself and the person you are speaking with, and do whatever you can to equalize it.

No one is exempt from having biases.

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