

Cultural Humility:

Developed initially for physician training (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998), it has been expanded to the social work field (Ortega & Coulborn Faller, 2011; Schuldberg et al., 2012). Humility in this sense is not being weak or submissive but having a sense that one's own knowledge is limited as to what truly is another's culture. We are limited because we have unconscious stereotypes of others and tend to use stereotypes as a "safety net" to help explain behavior (Ortega & Coulborn Faller, 2011). We are also limited as we can't know everything about every culture and because our clients are complex humans who intersect in a variety of cultures, be they race, gender, class, age, work status, disability status, etc. Cultural humility is about accepting our limitations. Those who practice cultural humility work to increase their self-awareness of their own biases and perceptions and engage in a life-long self-reflection process about how to put these aside and learn from clients (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). The social worker is not the expert but the learner and the self-reflection process enables the social worker to determine what attitudes and values keeps him or her from learning from the client (Ortega & Coulborn Faller, 2011). Clients are approached humbly and are viewed as collaborators in the helping process. Clients teach us about their unique places at the intersections of their different cultures and the role of the social worker is to be willing to learn about their experiences. Ortega and Coulborn Faller (2011) write that it is this openness (humility) to learn that "frees" social workers from having to be experts and feel that they must know everything about various cultures.

Source: <http://socialwork.sdsu.edu/insitu/diversity/cultural-humility-a-lifelong-practice/>

Workshop Discussion Guidelines:

1. * Listen actively -- respect others when they are talking.
2. *Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing ("I" instead of "they," "we," or "you").
3. *Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions, but refrain from personal attacks -- focus on ideas.
4. *Participate to the fullest of your ability -- community growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice.
5. *Instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your own spin on her or his experience, share your own story and experience.
6. *The goal is not to agree -- it is to gain a deeper understanding.
7. *Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses -- they can be as disrespectful as words.¹

¹ *11-17 of the ground rules adapted from <http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/activities/groundrules.html>