

Gender, Culture and Race



Gender, Culture and Race- general



- The diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders must be tailored to individual circumstances, and at the same time needs to take into account age, gender, race, and culture.
- Mental health interventions and therapists that take these factors into account have the greatest chance of engaging people in treatment retaining them in treatment, and helping them to recover.



- Gender, culture, ethnicity, and must be considered in relationship to one another by a therapist who tries to understand a patient, their symptoms and their family.
- In addition, in order to be a competent therapist the therapist needs to take into account their own culture, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, life cycle stage, etc., in working with patients and families from different backgrounds.
- Therapists need to be aware of how their own factors interact with those of the patient and the patient's family.

The ADDRESSING framework-Hays



- Age and generational influences
- Developmental disabilities
- Disabilities acquired later in life
- Religion and spiritual orientation
- Socioeconomic status
- Sexual orientation
- Indigenous heritage
- National origin
- Gender

Gender



- Identity is influenced by prevailing environment, including social learning and gender roles.
- Gender roles and discrimination influence cognitive structures and behavior patterns.
- Children bombarded with messages of gender expectations.
- Gender roles deeply ingrained in personality.
- Males and females have different expectations for therapy.



- Psychological distress is often environmentally induced and culturally determined
- Disorders caused by
 - Sex-role stereotyping
 - Gender-role expectations
 - Role strain and conflict
 - Sexual trauma
 - Gender-related economics
- Women entering the workforce has helped break some long-held stereotypic views regarding the distribution of work and family responsibilities between husband and wife.
- Gender- sensitive therapy is directed at empowering clients, male and female, to move beyond prescribed sex roles based on bio-logical status to ones in which they can exercise choice.

Therapeutic Process



Therapist should:

- Be free of gender-defined roles & stereotypes
- Recognize reality and variety of sex discrimination and facilitate options for clients
- Be knowledgeable about current research
- Not use derogatory labels
- Not reinforce stereotypic dependency of women
- Respect the client's assertive behavior
- Recognize that abused or assaulted clients are victims of crimes
- Recognize the client's right to define sexual preference

Therapeutic Relationship



- Characterized by empowerment and egalitarianism.
- Therapist helps instill power, both social and individual, in patient.
- Relationship between therapist and patient should demonstrate equality.
- Treatment goals are derived and set in a collaborative environment between the therapist and the patient.

Culture and Race- Therapy



- Culture is shared, learned knowledge, attitudes, and behavior transmitted from one generation to the next.
- Culture affects individuals and families in different ways, some trivial, others central to their functioning.
- Traditional therapies are usually not appropriate for addressing the problems of minority groups.
- Due to the rapidly changing demographics there is a major need for cultural adaptation of interventions and therapist cultural competence.
- Efforts are being made to develop culturally sensitive therapies that recognize that the mainstream cultural outlook is not always in line with the outlook of other ethnic groups.

Defining Race & Ethnicity



- Race: category of persons related by common heredity or ancestry and whose features are perceived in terms of external traits
- All people have multiple groups, and not all members have same characteristics
- Avoid the myth of uniformity (all members of a group will have the same characteristics)
- Individual and families racial/ethnic background influence how they think, feel, work, relax, celebrate holidays and rituals, express anxieties, and feel about illness or life and death.
- Ethnicity patterns may be subtle but are very impactful and play a significant role throughout the family life cycle, for both the individual and the family.

Therapeutic Relationship



- Empathy, regard, and collaboration are the foundation of the therapeutic relationship.
- Therapy can be difficult if the therapist is of a different race and ethnicity thus racial/ethnic matching of therapist and patient may be preferred
- Meaning of “therapist” varies by culture
- Therapist adapts a multicultural outlook with patients and families-a culturally sensitive approach.
 - Therapists should expand their attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills to become more culturally competent.
 - Culturally competent therapists take client cultural histories into account before undertaking assessments, forming judgments, and initiating intervention procedures.

Cultural specificity in therapy



- Therapists need to take gender, social class position, sexual orientation, religion, and racial or ethnic identification into account when developing an understanding of an individual or a families development and current functioning.
- Therapists need to assess the individual and family's cultural networks, socialization experiences, communication styles, typical male- female interactive patterns, the role of the extended family, and similar culturally linked attitudinal and behavioral arrangements (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1993).
- Therapists need to try to distinguish between an individual's or family's patterns that are universal (common to a wide variety of families), culture- specific (common to a group, such as African Americans or Cuban Americans or perhaps lesbian families), or idiosyncratic (unique to this particular family) in their assessment of family functioning.

Therapy with LGBT Clients



- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, & transgender (LGBT) patients are considered to be a minority group.
- Homophobic attitudes toward LGBT patients continue to exist.
- Gay Affirmative Therapy celebrates and advocates for LGBT.

LGBT Therapy Guidelines: Attitudes



- Homosexuality is *not* indicative of mental illness.
- Recognize how therapist attitudes may be relevant to therapy and seek consultation or make referrals.
- Understand the ways social stigmatization poses mental health risks to LGBT clients.
- Understand how inaccurate or prejudicial views may affect patient's view.

LGBT Therapy Guidelines: Relationships and Families



- Be knowledgeable about and respect the importance of LGBT relationships.
- Understand the circumstances and challenges facing LGBT partners.
- Recognize families of LGBT may include people not legally or biologically related.
- Understand how same sex orientation impacts on patients' relationship with family of origin.

LGBT Therapy Guidelines: Issues of Diversity



- Recognize particular challenges experienced by bisexual individuals.
- Understand special problems and risks of LGBT youth.
- Consider generational differences within LGBT.
- Recognize challenges experienced by LGBT with disabilities.

LGBT Therapy Guidelines: Education



- **Therapists should:**
 - Support the education and training on LGBT issues.
 - Increase their knowledge of homosexuality via education, supervision, and consultation.
 - Familiarize themselves with mental health, educational, and community resources for LGBT