Cultural Wealth: An Assets-Based Approach to Post-traumatic Growth

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Today’s agenda
- Structure of workshop
  - Reflection Activity
  - Part 1. What we already know.
    - Problems
  - Part 2. What are we missing?
    - Identity
    - Jewels – cultural wealth
  - Part 3. How do we fix it?
    - Culture in the therapy room
    - Q & A

Today you will...
- Understand the deficits in counseling when all of culture is not infused into the treatment and treatment planning.
- Identify cultural assets (jewels) and learn how to implement them during the therapy hour and in treatment planning.
- Learn how to introduce race or ethnicity into the therapeutic relationship.

What have you learned about other cultures?
- Oppression – ways in which a group has been denied access to privileges owned by the dominate group.
- Deficits – ways in which a group is lacking a key characteristic or material that is considered by the dominate group to be a necessary part to make the group whole.
- Risks – ways in which the group behaves that the dominate group believes will increase the risk of dying by violence, becoming incarcerated, poverty, et cetera.

Reflection Activity
You are given a task of planning a festival celebrating the largest ethnic group in your city.

What would you include in your festival?

What’s Missing in Multicultural Competencies?

"...Whereas multicultural counseling competency is required across all counseling specialties, counselors gain knowledge, personal awareness, sensitivity, dispositions, and skills pertinent to being a culturally competent counselor in working with a diverse client population. (ACA code of ethics, section C.2.a., 2014)
Part 1 – What we already know

Problems

Intergenerational Trauma
Poverty
Oppression
Discrimination
Deficits
Risks

What other problems have you learned about?

Part 2 – What are we missing?

Identity
Jewels (Wealth)

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<th>Identity</th>
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<td>Gender</td>
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<td>Age, etc.</td>
<td>Stories, etc.</td>
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What is collective memory?

- “Collective memory specifies the temporal parameters of past and future, where we came from and where we are going, and also why we are here now. Within the narrative provided by this collective memory, individual identities are shaped as experiential frameworks formed out of, as they are embedded within, narratives of past, present and future.” (Eyerman, 2001)

Intergenerational Trauma Transmission

Patterns of Parental communication – affective and emotional symptoms transmitted over generations

- distrust of the world
- impaired parent function
- chronic sorrow
- inability to communicate feelings
- an excess concern for danger
- pressure for educational achievement
- separation anxiety
- lack of entitlement
- unclear boundaries
- interpretedness within a narcissistic family system

How does intergenerational trauma influence racial identity development?
Racial Identity Development in Children (Derman-Sparks)

Age 2
Children begin to distinguish themselves from others. They enjoy being unique.

Age 4
Children begin to explore what it means to be from their race.

Age 5
Children begin to explore what it means to be from their race, considering their own physical characteristics.

Age 6
Children become more aware of their race and consider how it affects their identity.

Age 7-8
Children continue to develop their racial identity and are aware of societal influences.

Age 9-10
Many attitudes have solidified. Children are able to recognize their own racial identity and consider how it affects their life.

Part 2 - Recap
- We have acknowledged that we often don’t know more about a culture than the problems of that culture.
- This limited knowledge leaves out other parts of culture that are important for conceptualizing the whole person.
- Individual identity is formed by collective memory.
- Intergenerational trauma is held in the collective memory.
- When intergenerational trauma is transmitted it influences how a person sees themselves both within the group and between the group and the larger society.

Part 3 – What to do
How do we move beyond just considering the problems a community has encountered and embrace the other rich parts of their culture and infuse them into therapy?

First, we must know what the good parts are!

What is cultural wealth?
Yosso (2005) defined community cultural wealth as "an array of knowledges, skills, abilities and contacts possessed and used by Communities of Color to survive and resist racism and other forms of oppression"
Putting it all together

Historical/Intergenerational Trauma
- Oppression
- Discrimination
- Limited access to resources

Intergenerational trauma is present at conception
Begin to develop group identity in infancy based on experiences
Almost satisfied by adolescence

Situational/Lifetime Trauma
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Community Violence
- Grief/Loss

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Example

Asset-based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy – based on ABCDE model of change

1. Activating Event: Slavery, genocide, oppression
2. Thoughts that arose: I am not good enough
3. Feelings from thoughts: Humiliated and helpless
4. Evidence to challenge beliefs: None
5. Different way to look at the situation: None

Path to change with CBT with Intergenerational Trauma

Activating Event – Slavery, genocide, oppression
Thoughts that arose – I am not good enough
Feelings from thoughts – Humiliated and helpless
Evidence to challenge beliefs – None
Different way to look at the situation – None

One quick note
- The CBT model used during this presentation is for example only.
- Each clinician/provider should be responsible for ensuring that this is appropriate for the client with which they are working.
- The above information can be used with almost any therapy model.
- Please review the ACA code of ethics, section C.2.a. which provides the parameters that counselors are to work within, specifically regarding competency and multicultural counseling.
Jewels

Ancestral Assets

Griot

A member of a class of traveling poets, musicians, and storytellers who maintain a tradition of oral history in parts of West Africa.

More Ancestral Assets

• Tamboros – Used in some Latinx/Hispanic cultures as part of celebrations and fighting for justice.
• Adinkra symbols – Symbols originating in Ghana that represent concepts. These symbols are native to the Ashanti Kingdom.
• Libations – a drink poured out in a religious/spiritual ceremony or in honor of a deceased person.
• History! – Storytelling, research, literature, genealogy
• Food customs – traditions, celebrations
• Music (listening and creating) – Rap, Jazz, Drumming, Gospel*, beat-boxing

Culturally Adapted Games and Activities

• Revised - Do you know scale?* 
• Genogram with historical events – Great Migration, Civil Rights,
• Choosing an ancestral name
• Change names in a story
• Poetry (reading and writing)
*This is an alteration of the original “Do you know scale?” by Marshall Dike and Robyn Fivush, PhD.

Identity Restoration

How to introduce race or ethnicity into the therapeutic relationship
Thoughts about...

- Oppression
- Pathologizing
- Clinical supervision modeling cultural context
- Countertransference

Is not about matching, is about learning, sharing and being part of the same reality.

Is not mental illness, is oppression!

Don’t reinforce stereotypes.

History is integrated in who we are.

Learning a language is not just learning the alphabet, meanings, and grammar but also the cultural customs.

Language does not define identity.

You just do it when you have to.

It is a call and response action.

Walking into therapy

We are here today to put ourselves in a situation of having a client with a different culture/race from us.

Questions for reflection

- Should the topic of race be specifically addressed?
- If it is, how do we start the conversation? and how will your therapeutic choices impact the relationship? and the therapy?
- Why race matters in therapy? How often do we bring race as therapist?

I have a client that have different culture/race than mine

Should I bring up “race” as a topic?

Always bring it in!

Is it because you feel uncomfortable?

You can start working on discovering your identity and look for your space in the spectrum of culture
NO

Is it because you don’t consider it important?

It is always important. It is necessary to figure out why you’re feeling this way. Maybe there is a story behind it, or you have not been exposed.

NO

Is it because you don’t feel ready?

No worries! You can talk to your supervisor or colleague. Find podcasts, books, documentaries, or anything that educates you. Tell your client anyway.

NO

Is it because you don’t think you have enough answers?

No one has all the answers! You can always share and learn from your client’s experience.

YES

You are important in this process

You can start acknowledging your own culture, identity, and what you may have experienced in your life.

YES

Give yourself permission to feel the sensations in the room with your client

You can ask how client feels about that difference between the culture/race of each other.

YES

Be playful, let your curiosity come into the room

You can do an activity to look for and acknowledge your similarities and differences.
YES

Minimize the power differential

You are creating a safe space and bringing your humbleness, honesty, and own experience

Why is it always good to bring up race/culture into therapy?

Diversity
Connection = Trust
Better quality of therapy

Experiences
Questions

References and Further Study


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Thank You!