Module 4

Cultural Humility & Responsiveness

Cultural Humility in Healthcare

- Ability to relate one's own culture to the foreign culture
- Ability to question rather than judge
- Ability to respect and negotiate rather than disagree with

Ability to relate one's own culture to the foreign culture

How?

- Become aware of your own cultural style
- Know the facts about the cultures you most commonly relate to
- Identify ways to modify your behaviors appropriate to the other culture
- Respond to the other culture using your modified behavior

Ability to question rather than judge

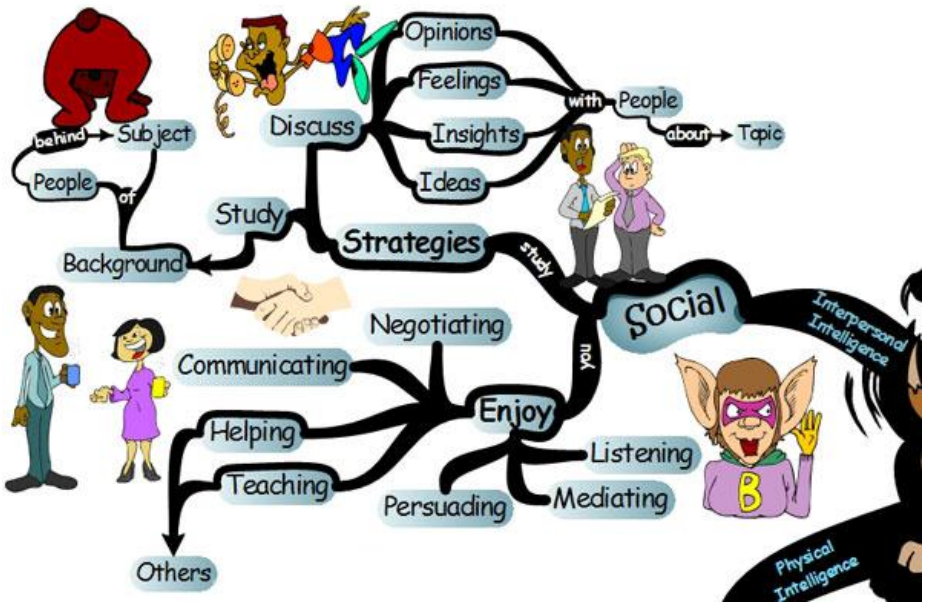
How?

"Assess & Explore; don't Assume!"

Ability to respect and negotiate rather than disagree with

How?

"Be Pro-active!"



Case Study #1

Juan González is a 72-year-old male patient from El Salvador in the Intensive Care Unit. He has had a severe cerebral hemorrhage and has been kept in a medically induced coma for the past few days. Dr. Kramer, Juan's neurologist, has now decided that a procedure is needed where two holes are drilled in the base of Juan's skull, and tubes will be inserted that run down his neck to relieve some of the pressure on his brain.

Adelina González, Juan's wife, is the only family member in the room when Dr. Kramer and a nurse enter to get the informed consent signed. They use a telephonic interpreter, as Adelina's English is very limited. Upon being asked to sign the consent, Adelina vividly refuses and walks away from the doctor and nurse and starts crying inconsolably. The doctor explains that this procedure must be performed as soon as possible, but Adelina's crying increases even though the doctor encourages her to sign the form in a gentle and compassionate manner.

1. *What is your first guess as to why Adelina may be crying after being asked to sign the consent?*

2. *What family values might there be that are not in sync with what Adelina is being asked to do?*

3. *What steps would you follow to demonstrate Cultural Humility that would meet both Adelina's expectations and Dr. Kramer's goal for achieving the best patient outcome?*

Case Study #2

Mr. Abraham Mayers, an 82-year-old African American man, has just arrived at the local community hospital Emergency Department complaining of strong abdominal pains. During the initial assessment in Triage, the nurse asks: "When did this pain begin first, Abraham?" He immediately tenses up and from then on the nurse senses a certain level of mistrust.

1. *What do you think may have caused the patient's tension?*

2. *If you were the nurse, what would you have done to remedy and regain the patient's trust?*

3. *How could you have avoided the problem to begin with? Give some specific examples.*

Working with People from Different Cultures

- Assess, don’t assume
- See the individual, not a type of person
- Confirm
- Listen to the person’s perspective and elicit information
- Consider that all interactions are bi-cultural (at least)
- Identify your own attitudes
- Recognize that a cultural background will influence behaviors