

When Our Bridges Don't Connect: Core Concepts for Understanding How Culture and Context Affect Clinical Intervention

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Talk Overview

- Present core concepts for enhancing diversity-informed practice.
- Understand how these concepts connect to research and practice.
- Use vignettes to think about how we can apply the core concepts to our work.

Surgeon General's National Action Agenda: Fourth Goal

Elimination of racial/ethnic and socioeconomic disparities in access to mental healthcare services (U.S. Public Health Service, 2000)

Core Concept: Engagement

- Our assumptions shape our experience of and our interactions with each other.
- Our assumptions are shaped by:
 - Personal history
 - Family history
 - Experience of our cultural group

Example: Diversity-Related Conflict

Rena walked slowly into her supervisor, Lorraine's, office. It had been three weeks since she'd seen Jesse and his mother Crystal. Things weren't going well. They'd missed several appointments. Rena was worried about Jesse. He was only 32 months old and might soon be expelled from his daycare. He kicked other kids, hit a teacher, and his speech was very delayed. The daycare thought he needed a different placement. Jesse was in need of serious intervention, but his mother just didn't seem to get it. Rena didn't understand Crystal. Why didn't she see Jesse's problems and recognize that he needed help? Why didn't she appreciate the fact that the services Rena was offering were free? Didn't she understand that without help, Jesse's problems might get worse? Rena had been trying her hardest to see Crystal and Jesse. She didn't know what else she could do. She wondered what Lorraine would say.

(Ghosh Ippen & Lewis, 2011)

Diversity and Engagement with Services

- High attrition rates from early intervention services (10-30% of drop-out in the first month of home visiting programs)
(Ammerman et al., 2006; Duggan et al., 2000; Gombay, Culross, Berhman, 1999)
 - Poor uptake and low retention related to aspects of diversity
 - Ethnicity
 - socioeconomic status
 - environmental context
- (Kazdin et al., 1995; Kummerer & Lopez-Reyna 2006; McCurdy, Gannon, Daro, 2003; McGuigan, Katev, & Pratt, 2003; Snowden & Yamada, 2005)

Core Skills

Core Knowledge

Knowledge about the experience (history), values, practices traditions. . . . of a particular group

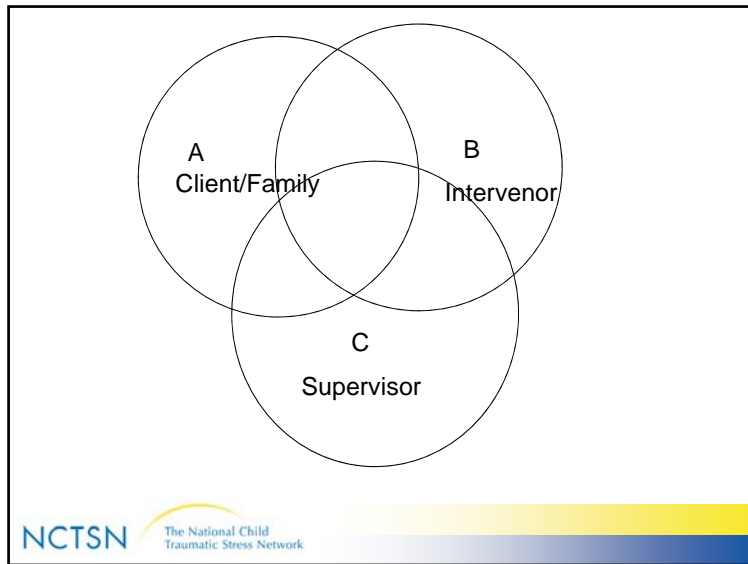
Core Concept

Framework to explore perspective and guide inquiry

What does this mean for you and your work?

In interactions with another person. . . .

- Knowledge
 - What is the history between your groups? How might this history affect current interactions?
 - How might your beliefs about each other's "group" (ethnic, socioeconomic, gender, geographic. . .) influence your interactions?
- Skill
 - Should you bring this up?
 - When?
 - With whom?
 - How?



Core Message

- The success of our interventions and systems depends to some degree on whether those we serve share our assumptions.

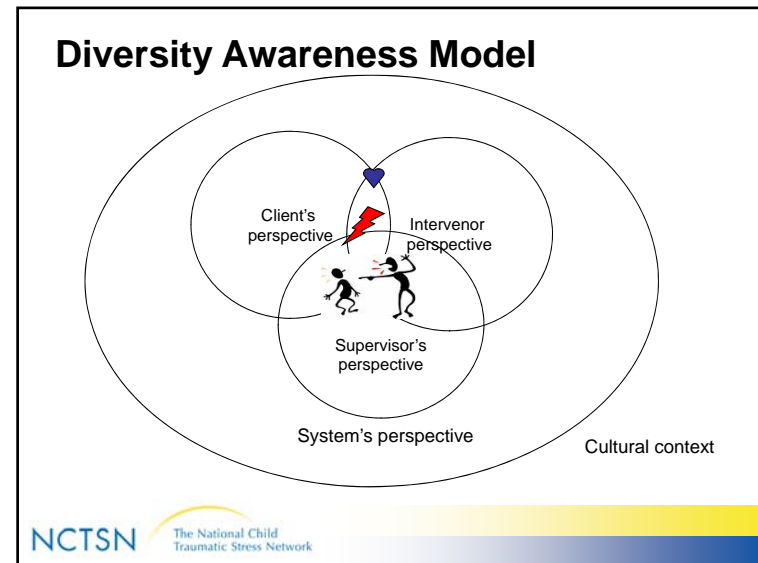
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What does this mean for you and your work?

- How might each person in the interaction answer the following questions?
 - Is there a problem?
 - Why is there a problem?
 - What can be done?
 - Who should intervene to address the problem?
 - What is a good outcome?
- What happens when we don't agree?

García Coll & Meyer, 1993

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Identifying Diversity Related Conflicts

- Strong affect (your's or clients)
- Loss of perspective
 - Desire to label or pathologize, “other”
 - “I don’t understand why s/he would do that?”
 - “It makes no sense to me”
- Non verbal cues signaling lack of agreement
- Direct, “logical” course is failing

Fundamental Attribution Error Othering versus Understanding

- Why do people do what they do?
 - Overestimate internal and underestimate external factors
 - Not considering the situation/context as a factor in determining behavior
- What words may signal this error?
 - Defensive
 - Resistant
 - Intrusive
 - Borderline
 - Controlling

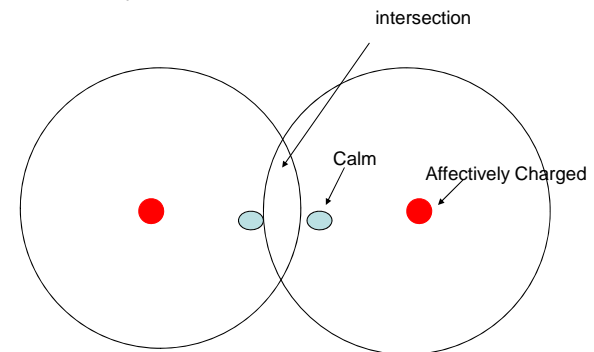
Core Concept

- Our emotions influence our ability to see another person’s perspective.
- When our emotions are charged we are more likely to lose perspective and go back to what we “know.”

Basic intervention principal:

When affect is charged, the first affect to regulate is your own.

Affect and Ability to Tolerate Difference



Adapted from Anne Fadiman, 2008 Grand Rounds San Francisco General Hospital

Affect and Perspective

When we are angry, we are. . .

- More likely to see people rather than situations as responsible for a problem (Keltner, Ellsworth, & Edwards, 1993)
- Less likely to trust others (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005)
- More likely to make judgments based on stereotypes (Bodenhausen, Sheppard, & Kramer, 1994; DeSteno, Dasgupta, Bartlett, & Cajdrie, 2004; Tiedens & Linton, 2001)

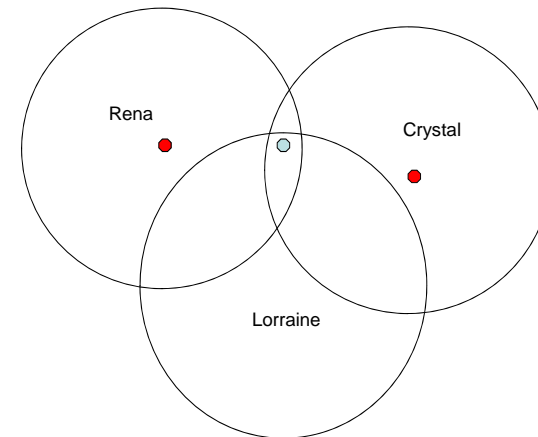
- Positive affect is associated with increased flexibility in thinking and action (Fredrickson, 2001).

What does this mean to you?

- Recognize when your affect is charged
- Understand ways to regulate your own affect
- Understand how affect affects intervention (both the way you intervene and the way others respond)

Core Concept

- Reflective practice is critical to integrating a diversity-informed approach



What does this mean to you?

- When you are affectively charged do you have someone you can talk to?
- Do you feel safe enough to really talk not only about the client but about how the client is affecting you?
 - To talk about your feelings?
 - To talk about where the feelings come from?

Once you are regulated, how do you understand their perspective?

- Are you safe?
- Is treatment safe?
- Does your model fit their context?
- Does your model fit their cultural beliefs?
- Is there a better model given their cultural beliefs?

Discourse with Traveling Thunder Gone, 2007

- Precolonial history
See there was no alcohol in this continent 500 years ago. There was no drugs. There was no problems – no domestic problems, no social problems. Everything was good because everybody lived according to customs and teachings. And there was no jails, no hospitals. There was no prisons, no insane asylums. There was none of that stuff because everybody lived according to a strict custom. It would be considered like moral. Everybody had their morals them days. And . . . If you didn't listen to the morals of the societal conduct of living. . Well you were kicked out of the tribe. You were banished, they call it, and that was considered a fate worse than death.

Discourse with Traveling Thunder Gone, 2007

- Colonial Incursion
. . . But when the Whiteman came, they.. . Forced the people, the Indian people, to get rid of their way. Their religious spiritual beliefs. They forced them to trade their economy, which was based on the barter system, and on living off the land – the wildlife, fish, . . . And herbal medicines. They forced them to change that. And then they not only did that, they annihilated them. Then they turned around and forced their culture on them – their religion, their beliefs, their foreign ways onto them – by taking all the young people out of homes and putting them away in boarding schools. . .and forcing the Whiteman's teachings on them. Such as history. They changed history, rewrote history to suite themselves to justify the bad things they did to the Indian people. It's genocide. That's what it was: Genocide. Wiping out a whole people so they could benefit.

Discourse with Traveling Thunder Gone, 2007

- View on Psychotherapy – Under what conditions would he consider referring his loved ones to the mental health clinic a the local HIS facility. That's kind of like taboo. You know, we don't do that. We never did do that. . . I guess it's like a war, but they're not using bullets anymore. They're using sophisticated modern technology. . . [It's] like ethnic cleansing, I guess you could say. They want to wipe us out. Wipe the Indian reservations so they could join the melting pot of the modern white society. And therefore the Indian problem will be gone forever. I guess you could make a choice. Where do I want to end up? An I guess a lot of people want to end up looking good to the Whiteman, I guess. Then it's be a good thing to do: go the the white psychiatrists, you know, in the Indian Health Service and say, "Well go ahead and rid me of my history, my past, and brainwash me forever so I can be like a Whiteman. And I don't know. I guess that'd be a choice each individual will have to make. . . I don't like it myself.

Discourse with Traveling Thunder Gone, 2007

- Era of Postcolonial Revitalization
And then, after we looked around and realized that. . . We left something behind. . . We started going back up to the hills so fast. We started going back to the mountaintops to fast. We started going to the sweat lodges to pray and to sweat. We started going to the elders to learn. . . Regain. . . What we were missing. We never was happy, you know, living like a Whiteman. . . I would give the credit to the Creator, and to the spirit world, for pitying the people to allow us to get [our ceremonial traditions] back. To me what the ceremony does is you put up a sacrifice, and effort. And what you're doing is you're calling on the Creator, the spirit world, and the grandfather spirits for something. For life, or for good health, or for a . . . good clean mind. An alcohol and drug free mind. Or you're calling on the spirit world for guidance you know. Or for survival even. Even survival.

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Discourse with Traveling Thunder Gone, 2007

- Analysis of the Discourse
- What is the problem? Historical trauma
 - Why is there a problem? Whiteman
 - What can be done? Ceremonial sacrifice by individuals and communities will move the Creator to give the gift of a good clean mind and good health. Through ritual we connect/reconnect to powerful beings that guide us.
 - Who should intervene to address the problem? Not the Whiteman. Ask an elder who knows the ancient traditions for guidance. Bring the elder a little gift – it's the traditional way to ask for guidance.

Discourse with Traveling Thunder Gone, 2007

I would say if the Indian Health service was really interested in helping the Indian people, they better learn some culture and some traditions and some respect first before they want to help them. Because... They're liable to do more harm than they are good. If they're gonna force their white ways and white beliefs on [us].

Racism and Mental Health

Coker, T.R. et al. (2009)

- 5147 5th graders enrolled in public schools in Los Angeles, California, Birmingham, Alabama, and Houston Texas
- Asked: Have you ever been treated badly because of your race or ethnicity also have you ever been treated badly because of the color of your skin?
- 15% said yes
- Perceived racism related to symptoms of depression, conduct disorder, ADHD, ODD

Caughy, O'Campo, Randolph, & Nickerson, 2002 Racial Socialization

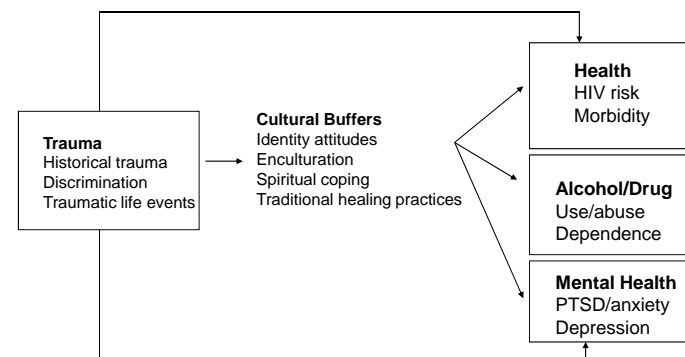
- What do we tell our children and when do we tell them?
- Interviews with parents of African American preschoolers

Racial Pride	89%
Spirituality	74%
Bias	67%
Mistrust	65%

Parents who shared messages related to the promotion of pride, spirituality, and mistrust reported fewer behavior problems

Alternative Treatment Models

Indigenist model of trauma, coping, and health outcomes for American Indian women (Walters & Simoni, 2002)



Diversity Training: Core concepts Trauma

- Trauma can disrupt critical relationships that support development and critical tasks of development.
- Trauma is an epidemic
- No ethnic or socio-economic group is immune to trauma, but those in poverty are at highest risk. Ethnic minorities are more likely to live in poverty

Core Concept

- Theoretical models represent a worldview.
 - Thus all are biased by our perspective
 - When we intervene with those who do not share our perspective, our theories may not hold true.
 - When we intervene with those who do not share our perspective, we may be blind to aspects of their lives central to their well-being.

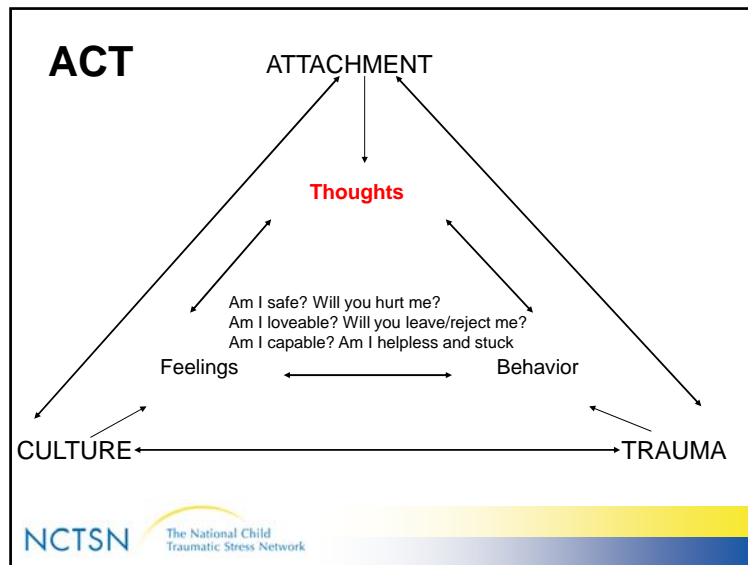
Theories are defined as unproven assumptions.

Diversity Training: Core Concepts Context

- No behavior or belief can be viewed separate from its context
- Most behavior makes sense if you understand the context
- It is best not to attempt to alter a behavior or belief without understanding its context

Core Concept

- Key forces that shape perspective include
 - Attachment
 - Culture
 - Trauma



Emotion Socialization (Cole, Tamang, & Shretha, 2006)

Participants: Two groups in Nepal

- Brahmans (Hindu)
- Tamang (Buddhist)

Methods: Interviews w/ elders & observation of interactions w/ children

Findings

- Shame
 - Tamang – teach and nurture
 - Brahmans – Ignore (75% instances of shame)
- Anger
 - Tamang disapprove, rebuke or tease child
 - Brahmans- teach, nurture or coax child to feel better

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