Cultural Competence ~ A Journey, Not a Destination

CATHOLIC CHARITIES
DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON

Presented by:

Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services

Learning Objective

- Understanding culture and cultural competence
- Cultural characteristics that make up a diverse community
- Self-reflection and self-assessment

- Tools for assessing personal and organizational culturally informed practices

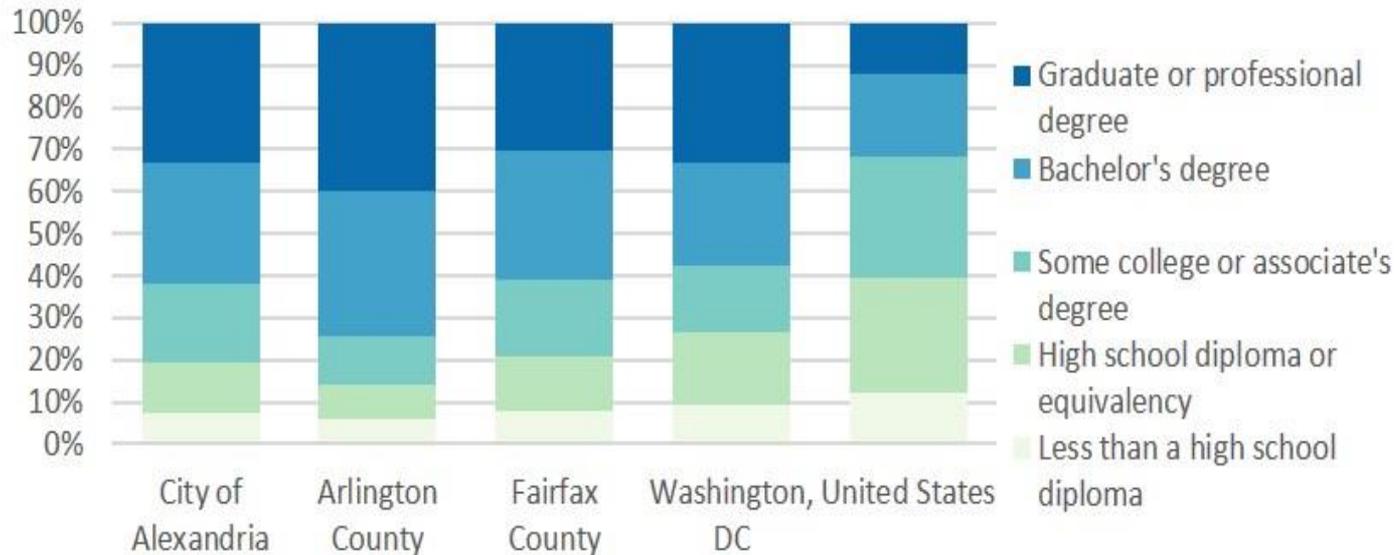# Arlington Co. City of Alexandria - Race and Ethnicity

Race and Ethnicity, by comparison geography

Sources: US Census Bureau 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates

-Education Attainment

Educational attainment, by comparison geography

Legend:
- Graduate or professional degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Some college or associate's degree
- High school diploma or equivalency
- Less than a high school diploma

X-axis categories: City of Alexandria, Arlington County, Fairfax County, Washington, DC, United States

Sources: US Census Bureau 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates

THE CULTURAL ICEBERG

SURFACE CULTURE

Food
Flags   Festivals
Fashion   Holidays   Music
Performances   Dances   Games
Arts & Crafts   Literature   Language

DEEP CULTURE

Communications Styles and Rules:

Facial Expressions   Gestures   Eye Contact
Personal Space   Touching   Body Language
Conversational Patterns in Different Social Situations
Handling and Displaying of Emotion
Tone of Voice

Notions of:
Courtesy and Manners
Frendship   Leadership
Cleanliness   Modesty
Beauty

Concepts of:
Self   Time   Past and Future
Fairness and Justice
Roles related to Age, Sex,
Class, Family, etc.

Attitudes toward:
Elders   Adolecents   Dependents
Rule   Expectations   Work   Authority
Cooperation vs. Competition
Relationships with Animals   Age
Sin   Death

Approaches to:
Religion   Courtship   Marriage
Raising Children   Decision-Making
Problem Solving

Culture

"The shared values, traditions, norms, customs, art, history, folklore, and institutions of a group of people."

- Socio-Economics/ Class
- School/ Education
- Language/ Literacy
- Race/Ethnicity /Nationality/ Country of Origin
- Gender/ Gender Identification
- Family/ Relationship Status
- Generation/ Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion/spirituality/Faith/Belief System
- Occupation/ Profession
- Physical Ability/Disability Status

Cultural Competence

The provision of services and information in appropriate languages at appropriate comprehension and literacy levels, and in the context of an individual's cultural beliefs and practices. Using appropriate and effective communication which requires the willingness to listen and learn from members of diverse cultures.

"Culturally competent practice is a long-term developmental process. Proficiency is not achieved after a brief workshop."

(Tripp-Reimer, 1999)

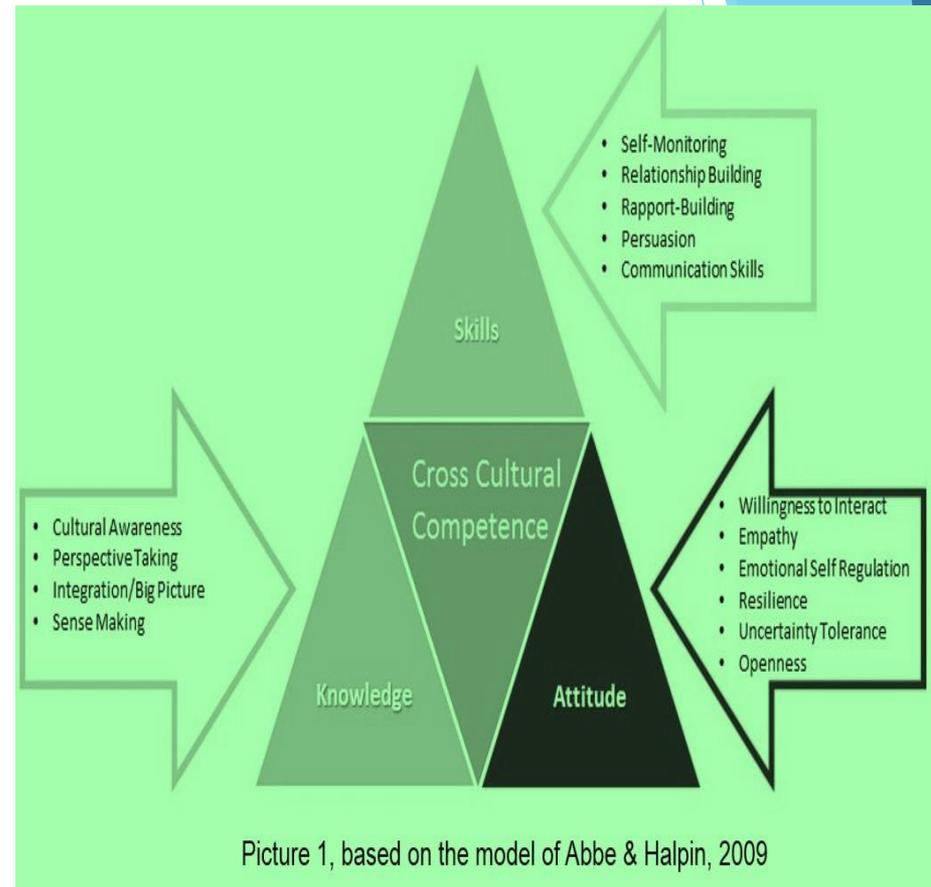# A Journey Not a Destination

Attitudes

An opportunity for increased awareness of your own bias and attitudes while accepting, valuing and utilization of; and an openness to learn about general beliefs, practices, traditions, languages, religions, histories, and needs of individuals and the cultural groups to which they belong.

Knowledge

The process of acquiring knowledge about other cultures and different worldviews, understanding the values, beliefs, practices and problem-solving strategies of culturally and ethnically diverse groups enables the individual to use appropriate and effective communication requiring a willingness to listen to and learn from members of diverse populations.

Skills

Based on knowledge gained, skills represent the ability to systematically collect culturally relevant information and apply cultural competence as the ability to think, feel and act in ways that acknowledge, respect and build upon ethnic, [socio]cultural, and linguistic diversity"

- Self-Monitoring
- Relationship Building
- Rapport-Building
- Persuasion
- Communication Skills

Skills

Cross Cultural Competence

- Cultural Awareness
- Perspective Taking
- Integration/Big Picture
- Sense Making

- Willingness to Interact
- Empathy
- Emotional Self Regulation
- Resilience
- Uncertainty Tolerance
- Openness

Knowledge   Attitude

Picture 1, based on the model of Abbe & Halpin, 2009
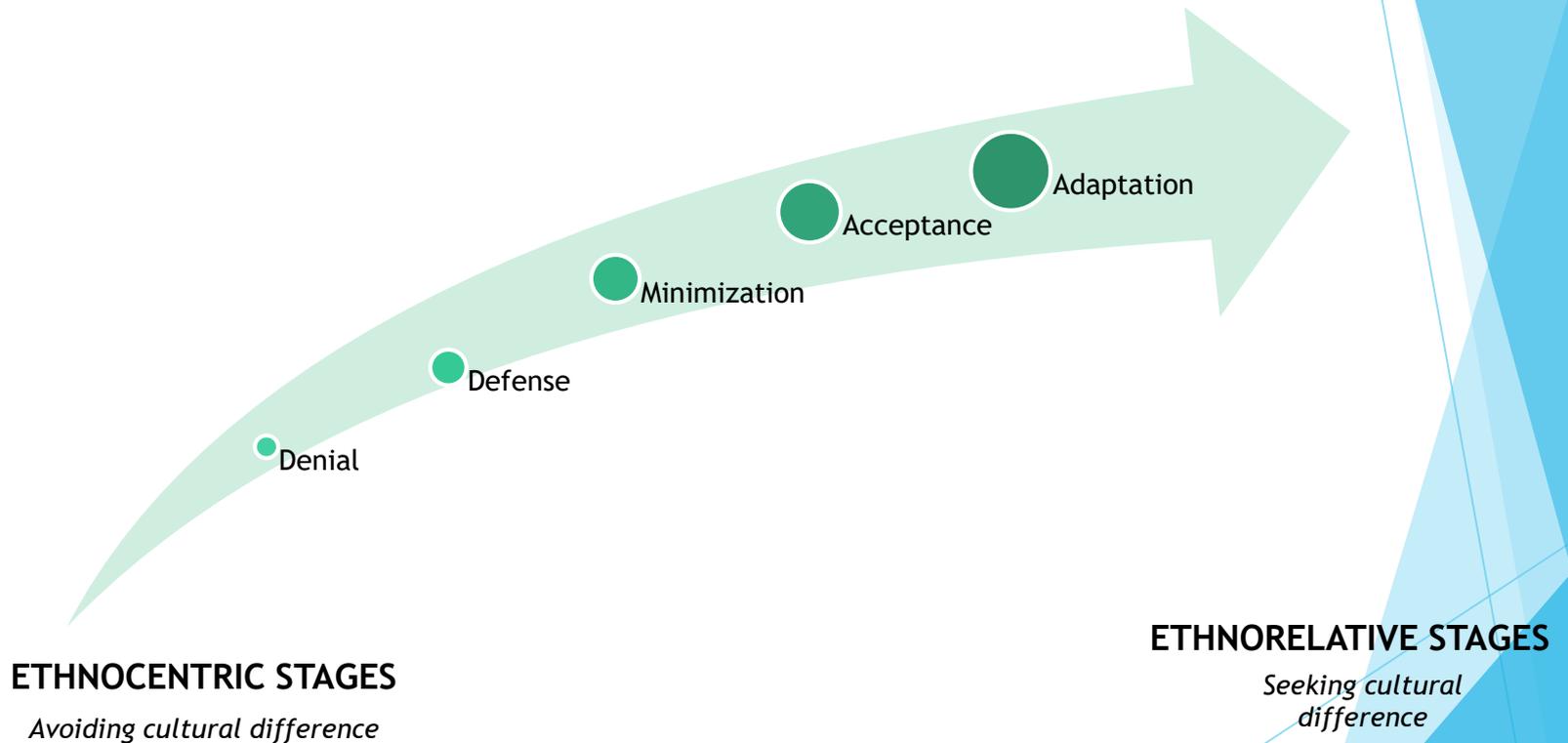
Generalization

- A GENERALIZATION is a beginning point. It indicates common trends, but further information is needed to ascertain whether the statement is appropriate to the particular individual.

- Generalizations may be inaccurate when applied to specific individuals, but when applied broadly, can indicate common behaviors and shared beliefs. (Of course there are always differences among individuals.)

Stereotype

- A STEREOTYPE is an ending point. No attempt is made to learn if the individual in question fits the statement. Stereotyping can have negative results.

- If I meet Rosa, a Mexican woman, and say to myself, "Rosa is Mexican, she must have a large family." I am stereotyping her. But if I think Mexicans often have large families and then ask Rosa how many people in her family, I am making a generalization.

# Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

HOW WE EXPERIENCE DIFFERENCE

Adaptation

Acceptance

Minimization

Defense

Denial

ETHNOCENTRIC STAGES

Avoiding cultural difference

ETHNORELATIVE STAGES

Seeking cultural difference

Adapted from Landis, Bennett and Bennett (2004)

Cultural Belief and Value System

Predominant American Culture

- Individual, Independence, Autonomy, Self-reliance, Autonomous decision-making

- Egalitarian – everyone has an equal opportunities

- Youth – Physical Beauty

- Competition, Achievement, Materialism

- Reason & Logic, Doing & Active

- Mastery over nature. Latest Technology
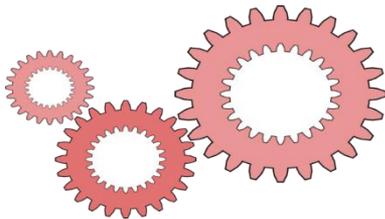
Patterns seen in other cultures

- Family, Interdependence, Interconnectedness, Family decision-making.

- Hierarchical – some deserve more honor or power than others because of their age, their gender, their occupation, or their role in the family.

- Age – Wisdom

- Cooperation, Harmony, Relationships

- Meditation & Intuition, Being & Receptive

- Harmony with Nature, Natural, Traditional

Cultural Belief and Value System

Predominant American Culture

- Master of my Fate.
- "I am the master of my destiny" Optimism
- Internal Locus of Control: life events and circumstances are the result of one's actions.
- Future Orientation:
- "Prepare today for tomorrow and reap success."
- Punctuality = "Clock Time"
  - "Time waits for no one."
  - "Time flies." "Time is money."
  - Being on time is a sign of courtesy and responsibility.

Patterns seen in other cultures

- Fate is my Master.
- "Fate is responsible for my destiny. Fatalism.
- Eternal Locus of Control: beyond one's own control and rests in the hands of fate, chance, other people or God.
- Present Orientation:
- "Live for today and let tomorrow take care of itself."
- Past Orientation: Tradition
- "People Time"
  - Time is flexible – indefinite
  - "Time starts when the group gathers."
  - Time Walks. El Tiempo ando.
  - Being on time can be a sign of compulsiveness and disregard for the people one was with before the appointment time.

Unconscious Bias

- What is Unconscious Bias?
  - Automatic associations without:

    Awareness

    Intention

    Control

These often conflict with our conscious attitudes, behaviors, and intentions.

https://www.ted.com/talks/yassmin_abdel_magied_what_does_my_headscarf_mean_to_you?language=en

You are not responsible for your first thought. But you are responsible for your second thought and your first action…that is where your **power** lies.

Cultural Barriers to Self-Sufficiency: A Case Study

- Due to war and conflict, women had limited access to education and employment outside the home.

- Families may have expectation that spouse will learn English first, and care for young children before entering the workforce.

- Spouse may speak on behalf of wife when communicating with service providers.

Challenges for Newcomers:

- Language barriers
- Transportation barriers
- Knowledge of the local workforce
- Recognition of qualifications earned abroad
- Relevant work experience
- Caregiving responsibilities within the family
- Access to childcare options
- Socio-cultural restrictions

Bigger Challenges ...

- Social isolation

- Financial instability

- Limitations in contributions to family

- Naturalization

What can we do … DIFFERENT?

- ❖ 'One size fits all approach' does not work
- ❖ Respect culture but challenge cultural stigmas
- ❖ Shift to a tri-pronged approach is crucial
    - ❑ **Inclusive**
    - ❑ **Holistic**
    - ❑ **Customized**
- ❖ Develop unified message that promotes women's empowerment

Strategies to Approach Clients

❖ May include husband and family in discussion but guard the boundaries

❖ Present the idea of facilitating women's access to activities as a mandated right and an added benefit

❖ Share success stories

❖ Be open, flexible

Equal Opportunities – The Message

- Present a positive role model for clients with regards to courtesy and care

- Take account of the differences and particular needs of clients

- Ensure that all services are fully accessible to all clients

Equal Opportunities - The Policy

- ❖ All staff are aware of and responsible for delivering message and implementing policy

- ❖ Semi-annual review to ensure effectiveness

- ❖ Promote policy publicly among all stakeholders

- ❖ Outcome: MRS female placement rate exceeding placement rate for males.

A Trauma-Informed Approach
Source: Nancy Murakami, LCSW. Bellevue/NYU

- ❖ Awareness and acknowledgment of:
  - The high rates of traumatic experiences
  - The broad impact of traumatic experiences
  - The silencing and shame around traumatic experiences

- ❖ Recognition of:
  - The importance of empowerment and safety for the survivor
  - The resilience of someone with a trauma history
  - The impact of the trauma work on service providers

Common Manifestations for Refugees

- Missing appointments or being late to appointments
- Asking numerous questions
- Lack of compliance
- Memory issues
- Not answering calls
- Anger at the provider
- Extreme concern over seemingly small things

- Asking multiple providers for the same things
- Sharing different information with different providers
- Lack of trust for provider or interpreter
- Unwilling to compromise
- "Clinging" to perceived extreme cultural norms

Source: Nancy Murakami, LCSW. Bellevue/NYU

Takeaways

Organizational Level

▶ Language access interpretation and translation services to meet needs of customers

▶ Mission statements with references to inclusion and cultural diversity

▶ Reviewing policies and procedures for service delivery with cultural considerations

▶ Policies and procedures to review the current and emerging demographic trends

▶ Monitoring utilization and outcomes by diverse communities

▶ Feedback loops

Takeaways

▶ Be aware of cultural norms

▶ Ask questions

▶ Listen

▶ Be flexible

▶ Tailor and customize services and manner of service delivery

▶ Learn about the culture, holidays, customs and traditions of client population

▶ Practice humility

Success Stories
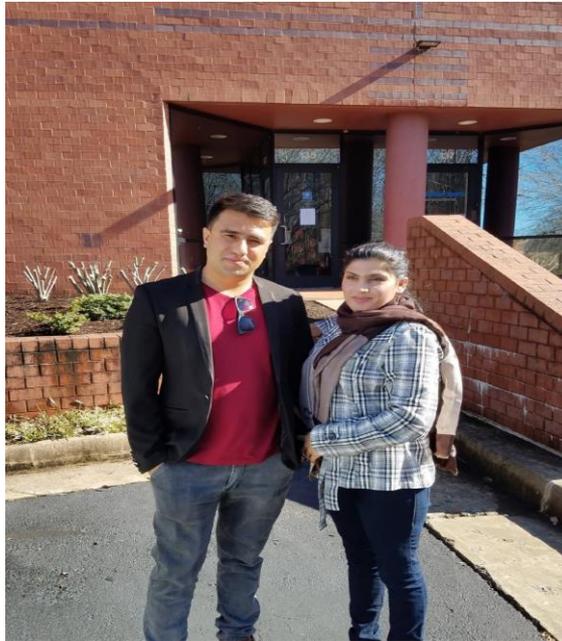
Source: Getty Images

*"She can attend ESL class and I will watch the baby."*

And your journey continues....

- Recognition of our own personal biases and reactions to persons from different minority, ethnic and socio-cultural backgrounds.

- Be open to discuss family dynamics, culture, social, ethnic and lifestyle considerations and their impact on your clients/customers.

- Expressing respect and tolerance for cultural differences and their value or; appreciation of how one's personal cultural values, assumptions and beliefs influence the services you provide.

Cultural Humility

- An attitude of respect when approaching people of different cultures that entails engagement in a process of self-reflection and self-critique requiring an ability to move beyond one's own biases.

(APCE Standards 2005)

Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less.
~ C. S. Lewis
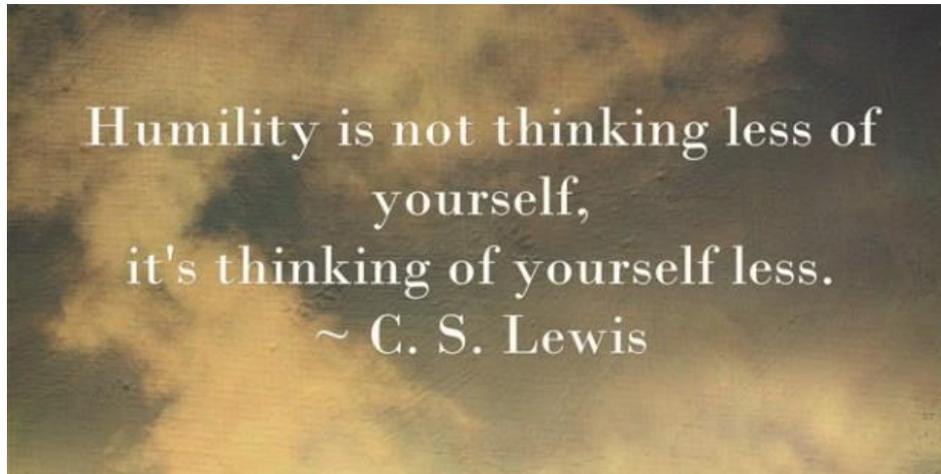
Resources

- **Switchboard** - Resource hub for refugee service providers in the United States. Tools and materials, learning opportunities, research, and technical assistance on resettlement-related topics. From employment, education, and health, to monitoring and evaluation, Switchboard's focus areas reflect real-world needs. https://switchboardta.org/about/

- **Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange** –Country of Origin backgrounders and resources for cultural orientation https://coresourceexchange.org/cultural-orientation-resources/

- **Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS)** BRYCS aims to strengthen the capacity of refugee-serving and mainstream organizations across the U.S. to empower and ensure the successful development of refugee children, youth, and their families. In providing technical assistance and maintaining the nation's largest online collection of resources related to refugee and immigrant children and families, BRYCS increases public awareness and facilitates knowledge building, information sharing and collaboration among a diverse group of service providers, including child welfare, schools, refugee resettlement agencies, and ethnic and community-based organizations.

Resources

- **<u>Building Bridges – Tools for Developing an Organization's Cultural Competence</u>**

- Assessment for improving cultural competence in the workplace looking at:

    -Organizational Environment

    -Public Relations/Working with the Community

    -Human Resources

    -Service Delivery

http://lafronteraaz.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Building_Bridges.pdf

Project Implicit-Implicit Bias Test

https://www.tolerance.org/professional-development/test-yourself-for-hidden-bias