CULTURAL DIVERSITY + VALUES

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

PURPOSE

To encourage counsellors to consider their own cultural heritage, belief systems, and values related to differences, family, and parenting and to gain clarity on how this may impact counselling relationships with clients.

INSTRUCTIONS

Answering these questions may be a vulnerable process; be as honest as you can and honour any feelings of vulnerability as they arise. These questions are meant to start you on your journey of self-awareness. These may be used for journaling, meditating, or discussion.

- Culturally, how do I identify? Do I ascribe to the customs and traditions of specific cultures?
- What are the values associated with the culture(s) I feel most connected to? Do I find that I am aligned more with the majority or the minority where I live?
- How do I define family? What makes up a family unit? Where did I learn this from? Was it directly taught to me or did I learn it indirectly, by observing those around me?
- What are my beliefs about how healthy families should function, including different relationships within a family (parent–child, parent–parent, siblings)? What do I believe are the obligations and commitments that family members have toward one another?
- What do I believe about gender roles within a family? Within parenting?
- What do I know about the varied attitudes toward parenting, health, and mental illness in different cultures? Where do I get my information from? Is it a reliable source?
- Do I feel comfortable asking my clients questions about different cultures and faith traditions? If not, what might my hesitation be about?
- Where do I currently place myself on the spectrum of collectivist and individualist cultures? Is this similar to how I was raised? If not, what changed?
- When I do not agree with someone's beliefs or value system, how do I recognize that? What reactions do I tend to have? How does this play out in a counselling session? Am I able to demonstrate empathy and understanding in the face of this disagreement? (For instance, if I identify as an atheist or agnostic and am working with someone who ascribes to a specific faith tradition, can I support them in using faith-based interventions?)
- When is a time I might have knowingly or unknowingly imposed my own beliefs or ideas about how things should be on a client? How did I come to this realization?

* *This resource comes from our book, Counselling in Relationships: Insights for Helping Families Develop Healthy Connections*

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