



CONNECT

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CULTURAL HUMILITY IN MENTAL HEALTH

By: Cedralia Ellis, MSW, LCSW

We have all experienced the impact of mental health, whether it be direct or indirect. It is a complex state of being that is influenced by our life experiences and cultural differences. These experiences and differences shape our view of the world and how we navigate life's ups and downs. As a social worker, I have learned two people can have the same traumatic experience. Yet, the outcomes can be very different due to influencing factors such as supports, social status, race, environment, and culture.

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DIVERSITY EQUITY & ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

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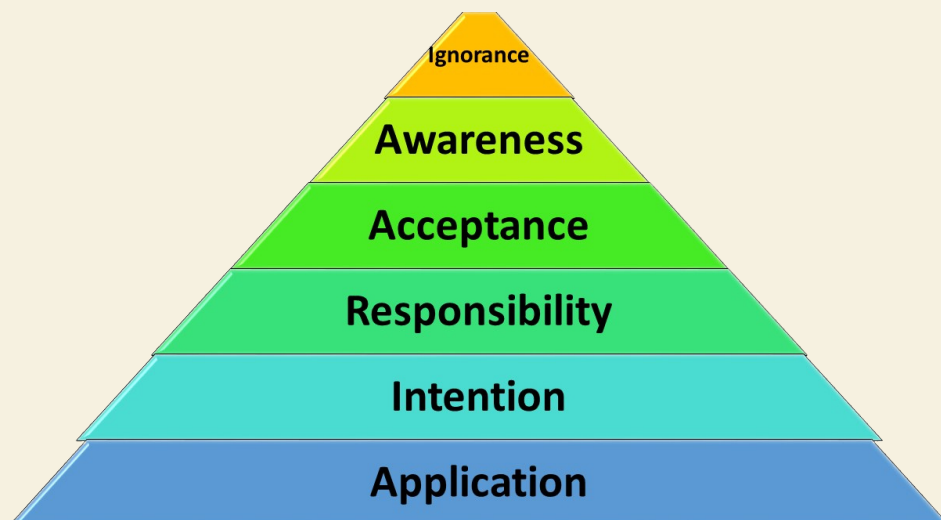
Cultural Humility in Mental Health

As we celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month, it is vital to acknowledge the importance of cultural humility in Mental Health. Cultural humility is “a lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and critique, to redressing power imbalances” (journals.sagepub.com). As employees who work in the behavioral health field, we must move past cultural competency and practice cultural humility to transform our healthcare system. To say we are culturally competent is to say we have mastered a task which leaves little room for continued growth, but as a behavioral healthcare provider, we must commit ourselves to learning and growing across our careers and lives.

Seeking services for a mental health need is often a very intimate, scary, and lonely time. During this time, a person not only wants to feel heard, but also understood and accepted for their differences. Our differences are how we self-identify, and it tells a story of our life’s journey. As beautiful as this may sound, the word “different” is often seen in a negative light. It can sometimes feel more comfortable to gravitate toward common shared traits than to acknowledge and embrace differences.

An individual’s lived experience is diverse, complicated and rich, and what it takes to live a healthy life is uniquely different for everyone. Truly understanding a person requires an individual to move beyond their frame of reference and commit to being open, vulnerable, and intentional on this journey. Just like any recovery process, practicing cultural humility is a process of many steps; ignorance, awareness, acceptance, responsibility, application, and intention.

My charge to all behavioral health employees is to commit to growing in cultural humility. Be honest with where you are and set small growth goals. Self-reflection helps to illuminate our own biases and deficiencies. Everyone progresses at different rates and being hard on yourself will hinder your growth process. Remember, there is no rush, as this is a lifelong journey with many twists and turns. Shifting our perspectives on how we see and provide services will enable us to truly meet the needs of the clients we serve, will help to heal the whole person, and will slowly result in us shedding our own personal biases.



OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

May is Older Americans Month, and the DEE is measuring age not by birth dates but by their chronological age at SOUTHWESTERN. We invited all employees who have been here more than 40 years to help us celebrate. We are honoring two Southwestern employees, Linda Taylor and Heather O'Neil, for their service and dedication. Take a few minutes to read their responses to the questions below. Experience is a great teacher!



Communities of Strength

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

MAKE YOUR MARK: MAY 2020

Engage at every Age



LINDA TAYLOR



Q: What was your first job at Southwestern?

A: Worked at Child Guidance Center, now Barker office. Did schedules, appointments, reception, and billing (which we did by hand).A general fill in the blank worker.

Q: How many offices have you worked at over the years?

A: Three

Q: Tell us about a time on the job where you had to laugh at yourself.

A: Almost daily. I try to find something of humor every day about myself that I laugh at. It keeps me grounded during the tough days and lifts my mind.

Q: Fill in the blank: My coworkers would say that I'm the most _____ person at the office.

A: Fun and uplifting.

Q: What are the biggest changes that you've seen at Southwestern over the years?

Programs within the center. Seems with each evolution of the Center our programming changes to more community and need based programs. Even though the old faithful programs are still here in spirit, we constantly reach for ways to progress and evolve. This being said of course our technology always.

Q: What is something that has stayed the same at Southwestern the entire time you've worked here?

A: Consistency of availability. Our center provides services round the clock. Although this availability has revolutionized to total care now, in the old days, we always had staff that was available to our patients.

Q: What is the reason you've stayed at Southwestern so long?

A: Always the patients. Just today I had a patient tell me that I had made a difference in his life. That one person validates the reason I stay. I have been privileged to work with so many amazing children and adults over the years that have become my work family and friends.

Q: If you could go back in time, what advice would you give yourself on your first day of employment?

A: RUN, HA HA!! Not sure what that advice would be. Maybe expect and give respect on your job. Always be the person you are not what others prefer you be. Be outspoken (not me) and speak up for yourself and others. Be genuine, be honest, be loyal. These things should be a given on any job for both employee and employer. And most important to me is to enjoy my job.

HELEN O'NEIL



Q: What was your first job at Southwestern?

A: My first job at Southwestern is my same job I have now.

Q: How many offices have you worked at over the years?

A: Only the best one – The Posey Office!

Q: Tell us about a time on the job where you had to laugh at yourself.

A: No particular time, I still do this often.

Q: What are the biggest changes that you've seen at Southwestern over the years?

Switching to an electronic medical record for sure.

Q: What is something that has stayed the same at Southwestern the entire time you've worked here?

A: The hard work and dedication I see from fellow co-workers to provide the best care available for our patients.

Q: What is the reason you've stayed at Southwestern so long?

A: I like my job, I believe in our mission and I've been very luck to have some really good, caring coworkers that help get you thru just about anything.

Q: If you could go back in time, what advice would you give yourself on your first day of employment?

A: To take the job again and enjoy the journey!

A Glimpse into the Asian Culture

Many people are unaware and do not always acknowledge the rich learning opportunities of being open to different cultures. The Asian population is full of customs and traditions that are handed down from generation to generation by family and society. A person with Asian heritage is someone whose family originates from Asia. In the Asian culture, it's all about pride and bringing honor to the family and the family name. If you look at medical statistics based on race, the Asian population is very low across the board. Why? They believe that if you seek help for mental health, you will bring shame to your family and embarrass them. If you seek treatment for substance use or even try to put a loved one in a nursing home, you will embarrass your family. They firmly believe family takes care of family. My grandmother is 99 years old and lives with my uncle and aunt, who care for her. Since she is mobile and can care for herself with a little help, they keep her at home. They took care of my grandfather the same way. They hired a live-in personal assistant for him, and now she has one. He lived to be 100.

Another unique thing about the Asian culture is their love of rich colors! Almost everything you see in Taiwan is built around the WOW factor. From Taipei 101 to the many parks within the cities. Flower gardens are always full of color, and due to believing in balance and harmony, everything is in pairs. Their buildings and infrastructures are very impressive, and the temples are so full of color! The buses, subways, taxis, and high-speed rail make this island very easy to get around. Yes, there are automobiles there, but most people use scooters and bikes as the cost of gas is very high. Food is constantly sold whether it is at a day market, night market, or out of one of the many little eateries throughout every city. Imagine having fresh produce and fresh meat at your fingertips EVERY DAY!



By: Kris Beauchamp

On October 10th the Asian community celebrates their independence which is Chinese Independence Day. They also celebrate several other days we do not, such as the moon festival, solstice festivals, Chinese New Year, a lantern festival, and a tomb sweeping festival, to name a few. Certain foods are eaten depending on the occasion. For instance, during the moon festival, you have a moon cake. For the Chinese New Year, you gather and eat steam dumplings, and the host passes out red envelopes with "lucky" money in them. They also believe in the Chinese zodiac and do not use the zodiac we do here.

Funerals in China are uniquely different than those in America. Red is the color of choice for most celebrations; however, you are not allowed to wear bright colors, and red is an absolute no-no at a funeral. Your rank in the family depends on what color ribbon you wear on your sleeve during mourning and what you do at the funeral service. It's an island, space is at a premium, so everyone is cremated.

Traditions and symbolism are significant in Asian culture. Here are some significant facts about the culture:

- The number 4 is unlucky to them.
- Bowing is a sign of respect.
- Boys are held in higher regard than girls because they can carry on the family name.
- Asians firmly believe in the spirits of their ancestors who have passed before them and in good and bad spirits.
- Slowly more and more of the island is becoming bi-lingual friendly.



MAY IS JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH! EVEN FOR THOSE OF US WITHOUT A PERSONAL JEWISH HERITAGE, THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ABOUT AND CELEBRATE AN IMPORTANT PART OF AMERICA.

JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH WAS FIRST OBSERVED IN 2006. SINCE THEN, IT HAS SERVED AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS OF JEWISH AMERICANS. SO, IF YOU'RE READING THIS AND THINKING, "BUT I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT JEWISH AMERICAN HISTORY," TAKE TIME OUT THIS MONTH TO CHANGE THAT.

FREE VIRTUAL TOUR OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF JEWISH HISTORY

[HTTPS://WWW.NMAJH.ORG/VIRTUAL-MUSEUM/](https://www.nmahj.org/virtual-museum/)



IT'S A GREAT RESOURCE FOR PERUSING SOME FASCINATING EXHIBITS WITHOUT A FACE MASK OR ADMISSION FEE.

YOU CAN ALSO EXPAND YOUR VOCABULARY BY LEARNING A NEW YIDDISH TERM EACH DAY WITH THIS YOUTUBE SERIES:

[HTTPS://M.YOUTUBE.COM/PLAYLIST?LIST=PLNQJ6YI0VKJKRXXIQQYYUUTEHWLQCPJL51C](https://m.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNQJ6YI0VKJKRXXIQQYYUUTEHWLQCPJL51C)



IN ADDITION, THERE ARE A HOST OF OTHER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE ONLINE. JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH IS ONLY 31 DAYS OUT OF THE YEAR, BUT THERE IS SO MUCH TO EXPLORE. WHY NOT START NOW?

Impact of Social and Economic Inequities on Gun Violence

By: Jessica Thomas, BA, MHA

In 2011 our family moved back to Evansville, where my husband, Andre, became the new Bosse High School, football coach. It was the head coaching opportunity we had been waiting for, and it allowed us to be closer to family in what we believed to be a safer and slower-paced environment to raise our children. Andre taught in Orlando, Florida, for four years before we moved back to the Midwest. In those four years, we did not attend one funeral or candlelight vigil for a student. Once back in Evansville, that changed and attending funerals.

Candlelight vigils for students became a regular occurrence for my husband, knowing not only the victim and their family, but sometimes knowing the shooter and their family as well. Losing students became the norm, and every summer the list gets longer. So, as it turned out, Evansville, Indiana was not the safer and slower-paced environment we had imagined. By the end of 2020, alone, there were 15 homicides, 7 of which were unresolved. Of those 7, 6 were young, black men who, like so many others, died from gun violence.

National news is soaring with information and outrage for black people being killed, but the deaths of young, black men and women in our own community are going largely unnoticed. Black males ages 15 – 34 make up 2% of the US population but account for 37% of all firearm homicide victims. Community gun violence resonates with many due to the public and personal nature of the offense. Gun violence thrives in underserved and under resourced neighborhoods, and as a result, those communities are directly impacted by the adverse health effects of gun violence. These are the same neighborhoods being impacted by social and economic inequities and suggests that these factors may be a root cause of the gun violence in those neighborhoods. As we forge our way through Mental Health Awareness Month, ask yourself how gun violence is impacting the overall wellness and mental health of our community and the individuals we serve. Did you know these incidents of gun violence had occurred in our city? Do you know someone impacted by these losses? Have you been impacted?

EPD asking for tips in Sunday homicide

Evansville teen who died in weekend shooting is remembered as 'fun-loving'

LOCAL

17-year-old shot outside Evansville apartment complex

Abbey Doyle Evansville Courier & Press
Published 8:58 a.m. CT Feb. 7, 2021 | Updated 11:29 a.m. CT Feb. 7, 2021

8 shootings, 2 deaths: Wave of gun violence has swept over Evansville in the last month

Jon Webb Evansville Courier & Press
Published 9:31 a.m. CT Mar. 24, 2021

- **March 22:** A person is shot at the Marathon station.
- **March 18:** Police find 47-year-old [Donald Ray Brigham](#) lying in the road in the 1400 block of Parrot Street, suffering from a gunshot wound. He later dies at Deaconess Midtown.
- **March 15:** A 22-year-old man gets shot in the leg after an argument at an apartment on Denby Avenue. Police arrest an 18-year-old man.
- **March 14:** Keshon L. Hensley, 23, dies from multiple gunshot wounds in the 2200 block of Sunburst Avenue. No one has been arrested.
- **March 1:** A man is shot in the shoulder. Police also find multiple bullet holes in a home on Linwood Avenue. A 24-year-old man is arrested.
- **Feb. 25:** A ricocheted bullet grazes a mother's stomach after gunshots crash through the front window of her home on Shanklin Avenue. Her sleeping children aren't hurt. No arrests have been made.
- **Feb. 24:** A 15-year-old absorbs gunshots to the leg and abdomen in the 500 block of South Bedford Avenue around 1:45 a.m. Police haven't ID'd any suspects.
- **Feb. 23:** A man tells police he was in town to pick up a friend when five unidentified people walked up to his car on South Denby Avenue and started shooting. His injuries aren't life-threatening.

Coroner: Death of man in Evansville being investigated as homicide

How Can We HELP?

As mental health professionals, we can assist clients with their trauma and assess other areas associated with gun violence:

- Complete the ACE assessment with all new clients
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Antisocial behavior
- Depression
- Stunted cognitive and emotional development
- Risky alcohol and substance use
- High rates of chronic disease
- Increased likelihood in engaging in violence

We can advocate for funding in areas such as:

- Trauma Informed Care training and education
- Investments in violence interventions and prevention programs
- Job training and youth development programs
- Access to healthcare
- Community and youth centers

We can volunteer by

- Mentoring a kid through the various mentor programs Evansville offers
- Assisting with initiatives to clean up our lower income Evansville areas
- Work one afternoon a month at a community center or after school program providing a workshop
- Tutor a young person
- Donate to programs directly working with at risk youth

