

**Cultural Competency Training
CPO Conference
Memramcook, New Brunswick**

Prepared by

Robert S. Wright, MSW, RSW

Social Worker in Private Practice

www.robertswright.ca

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9:00am Welcome and Introductions

Who is Robert?

Social work clinician/administrator

Clinical training at & employee of Washington State Penitentiary.

Former executive director, Child & Youth Strategy

Registered social work private practitioner (NS, NB – pending)

Clinical member of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA)

Former race relations coord. -Dartmouth district school board

Co-author: Prevention and treatment of addictions among North Americans of African descent.

Who are You?

Because of time constraints I will not ask everyone to introduce themselves. I will however ask that in this highly interactive session you state your name and where you are from and your role when you address the whole group.

9:15am Drawing a circle of safety

Issues of race and culture are highly charged in North America. It is my hope that in this session individuals will allow each other space to ask their sincere questions without the fear of being judged and accused. Similarly, people may also feel that the subject matter is so close to them that they need to be assured that they are not being singled out or expected to have all the answers . . .

What can we do to ensure that we conduct the day in a way that ensures your safety?

What we need to get out of the day.

I will attempt to tailor this day to meet your expectations . . . So tell me . . . What do you need to get out of this day in order for it not to be a complete waste of your time?

The Issues . . .

The last portion of the day will be spent in discussing those specific issues related to cultural competence and diverse populations that are most pressing in your daily work. In a group this size perhaps we could generate 10 such issues for final group discussions. Working from the previous slide, let's build a list of issues. If there is an issue you'd like to address that is so sensitive you don't want to speak it out loud . . . Write it down and put it in this "Issues Box". At Break time I'll finalize the list.

The Presentation . . .

Cultural Competence: Why?

As Racialized and Aboriginal Canadians gain increasing space in society, the need for public servants to be able to understand, value, and appropriately respond to their needs increases accordingly (the moral rationale).

Culturally Competent CPO: Why?

Principles of cultural competence are being recognized legally as foundational knowledge and reasoning that persons bring to the project of justice administration. Consider the following slide:

Culturally Competent CPO: Cont.

We conclude that the reasonable persons contemplated by de Grandpre J., and endorsed by Canadian courts is a person who approaches the question of whether there exists a reasonable apprehension of bias with a complex and contextualized understanding of the issue in the case. The reasonable person understands the impossibility of judicial neutrality, but demands judicial impartiality. The reasonable person is cognizant of the racial dynamics in the local community, and, as a member of the Canadian community, is supportive of the principles of equality (R.v.S. (R.D.), [1997] 3 S.C.R. 484-1997-09-26, Supreme Court of Canada – Federal: Reasonable apprehension of bias – dealing with non-white groups – impartiality – evidence – credibility cited by 67 cases). (The legal rationale)

Culturally Competent CPO: Why?

The overrepresentation of people of African descent and Aboriginal persons within criminal justice statistics is one of the most controversial issues within the criminal justice literature (Blumstein, 2005; Wortley, 2003). The controversy lies in the fact that either of the obvious and simplistic answers for the state of affairs is unacceptable: Either there is something inherently and criminally wrong with Black and Aboriginal peoples (Cao, Adams & Jensen, 2000), or there is something fundamentally racist about the criminal justice system (Fairbanks, 1987).

All persons employed in the field of corrections need to have the capacity to competently engage these issues (the functional rationale).

Cultural Competence: Definition

Cultural competence refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures. Cultural competence comprises four essential capacities:

- A. We must understand our cultural differences and similarities**
- B. We must understand the social and cultural reality in which we work
- C. We must cultivate appropriate attitudes towards cultural difference
- D. We must be able to generate and interpret a wide variety of verbal and non-verbal responses.

A) Nichols' Model for Understanding Cultural Difference

Philosophical Perspective on Cultural Difference. Edwin Nichols (cf. work of Jung)

Different world cultures developed out of differing physical environments.

These world views have differing constructs:

- Axiology (values)
- Epistemology (way of knowing)
- Logic (principles of reason)
- Process (practice of reason)

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

DEVELOPED BY EDWIN J. NICHOLS, PH.D.

ETHNIC GROUPS ETHNIC WORLDVIEW	AXIOLOGY	EPISTEMOLOGY			LOGIC	PROCESS
		APPLIED	PEDAGOGY	METHODOLOGY		
EUROPEAN EURO-AMERICAN	Member-Object The highest value lies in the object or the acquisition of the object	One knows through Counting and Measuring	Parts to Whole	Linear and Sequential <i>-Assembly line-</i>	Dichotomous <i>Either/Or</i> <i>-Newtonian theory-</i>	All sets are repeatable and reproducible <i>-Technology-</i>
AFRICAN AFRICAN AMERICAN LATINO/A ARAB	Member-Member The highest value lies in the relationships between persons	One knows through Symbolic Imagery and Rhythm (function) <i>-Gladwell <u>Blink</u>-</i>	Whole Holistic Thinking <i>-The BIG picture-</i>	Critical Path analysis <i>-Cut to the chase-</i>	Diunital <i>Union of opposites</i> Difrasismo <i>-Aztec thought-</i> The In Between <i>Ibn 'Arabi</i> <i>-Quantum theory-</i>	All sets are interrelated through human and spiritual networks <i>-Black church-</i>
ASIAN ASIAN AMERICAN POLYNESIAN	Member-Group The highest value lies in the cohesiveness of the group	One knows through Transcendental Striving <i>-Tree the forest-</i>	Whole and parts are seen simultaneously <i>-To read a Chinese word-</i>	Cyclical and Repetitive <i>-Stroke order in writing a Chinese word-</i>	Nyaya <i>-The objective world is conceived independent of thought and mind-</i> <i>-Chaos theory-</i>	All sets are independently interrelated in the harmony of the universe <i>-Keiretsu-</i>
NATIVE AMERICAN	Member-Great Spirit The highest value lies in oneness with the Great Spirit	One knows through Reflection and Spiritual Receptivity <i>-Purification rites-</i>	Whole is seen in cyclic movement <i>-Seasons-</i> <i>-Medicine Wheel-</i>	Environmentally experiential reflection <i>-Rites of Passage-</i>	Great Mystery <i>-A set of 4 and a set of 3 form the whole-</i> <i>-Super string theory-</i>	All sets are interrelated through the elements, plant, animal, and spiritual networks <i>-White Buffalo-</i>

Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Nichol's Model is consistent with a growing understanding and articulation of Aboriginal Traditional Ecological Knowledge: an Ancient and yet ever evolving body of knowledge, practice and belief which concerns itself with the inter relationship of all living things with and within their environment.

Afrocentricity

There is a growing global and local understanding of the fundamental elements of African thought, culture and philosophy. Somewhat controversial, certainly not standardized, nevertheless its growing legitimacy has been established. Its hallmark is the assertion of a worldview that places all people of African descent at its centre, asserts a common culture, philosophy and history and critiques and perhaps even rewrites global history from this perspective

Differing World Views at a Glance

Questions upon meeting

European: What do you do?

Focus on person and objective function

Aboriginal: Where are you from?

Focus on spiritual connection with traditional land

African: Who are your people?

Focus on relationships between persons

B) Social, Cultural and Historical Context

North American Diversity is fraught with complicated and tragic history

- **Enslavement of Africans, Genocide of First Nations, Global strife resulting in trans-global immigration etc.**

A local knowledge of how our racist history is a living legacy is necessary: *Africville, Cornwallis.*

C) Appropriate Attitudes

Cultural competence requires that practitioners actually *value* diversity, not just tolerate it. In a nation that acknowledges multiple founding peoples, that was built up on the foundation of ethnic/immigrant labour and whose future depends on immigration any, other attitude should reasonably be seen as unacceptable.

D) Communicating Across Cultures

Cross cultural communication is a complex study in cultural hermeneutics:

Black inmate in GP at WSP

Aboriginal student in inner city junior high school

Muslim student in men's dormitory

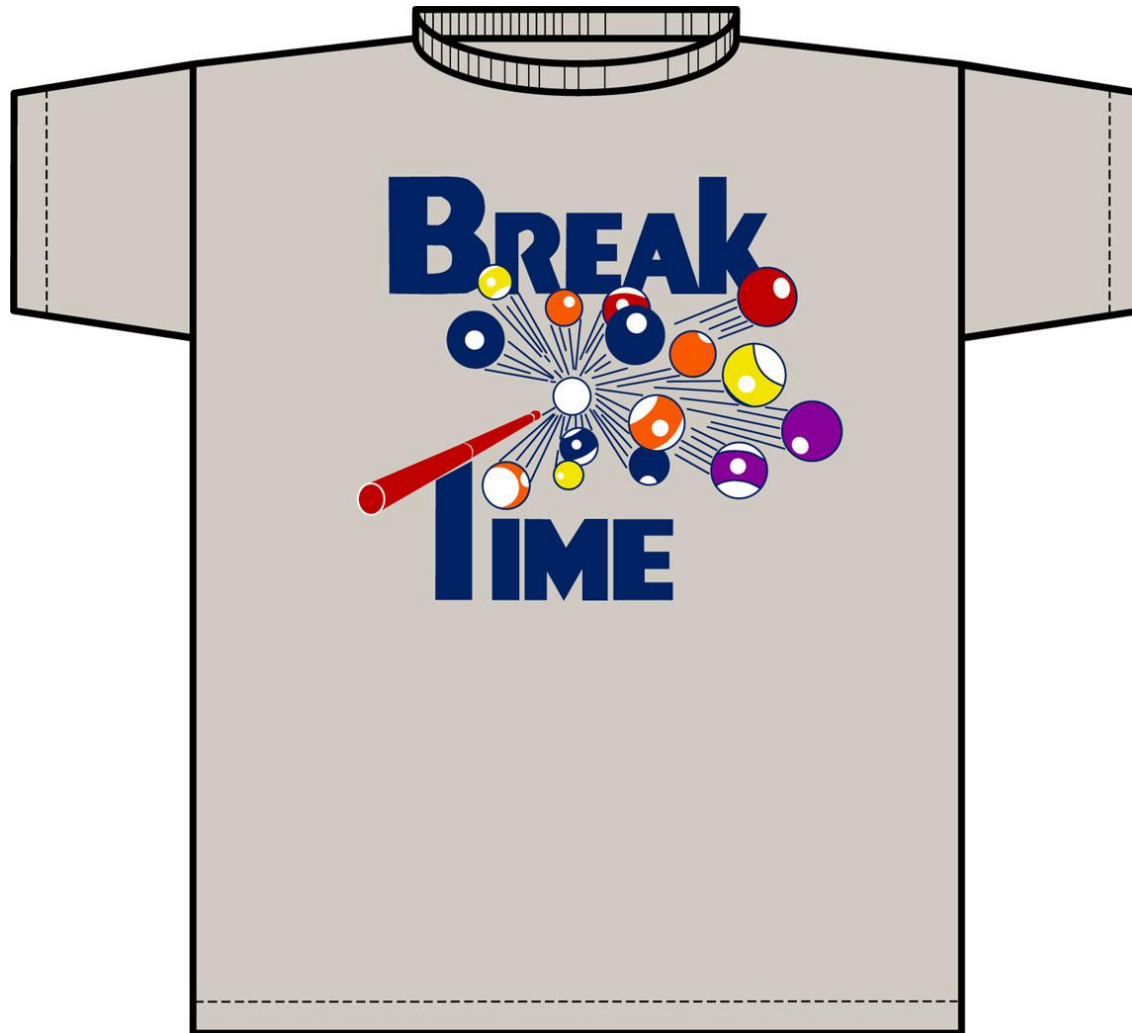
Before meaningless, unnatural, non-human or immature behaviour and corresponding values are attributed to people of another culture, it is better to begin by doubting the adequacy of one's own judgment and knowledge

- **Elmar Holenstein**

10:15am Understanding your own cultural world view

Exercise: Consider Nichol's chart and how it describes culture in terms of values (what's most important to us) and ways of knowing. Take 10 minutes and think about what your values are and how you come "to know" things. Write down key words to describe each.

10:30am Break **



10:45am Resume Exercise

SAME

Find the person in the room whose values and ways of knowing most closely align with yours. Once everyone is paired up we'll report back from where we're standing.

DIFFERENT

Now go find the person in the room whose values and ways of knowing are most different than yours. Once everyone is paired up we'll report back again from where you're standing.

So what was that like . . .

What differences did you notice between the person you shared values with vs. the person with whom you differed most?

11:00am Set up – Second Exercise

How this works:

I have written down a single issue on each one of these papers. Rather than assign people to groups, I will ask that people simply come forward and choose an issue they'd like to discuss. Once you've chosen an issue, announce it. Others will join you if they wish to discuss that issue. If the group grows to larger than 8 . . . Simply copy the issue on a second sheet and divide the group in half. If you decide you want to talk about an issue that is not listed, come forward and grab a piece of paper, write the issue on it and announce that you will host that conversation.

Once the groups are identified

Discuss the issue:

Be substantial and not superficial.

Be realistic and practical.

If possible, identify one action item that you will share with the rest of the room that you would lead or join if undertaken.

12:00noon LUNCH!!!



1:00pm Report Back

What will we take away from this day . . . ?

What are the 10 things we need to do . . . ?

1:30pm Wrap up and Final Q&A

Animal, vegetable, mineral . . .

Robert will take any question!

Thank you and farewell!