Multicultural Perspectives and Diversity Issues

Chapter 4
Psychology 475
Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling
Listen to the audio lecture while viewing these slides

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

The Need for a Multicultural Emphasis

- Multicultural Terminology:
- Culture (can be associated with):
  - Racial or ethnic group
  - Gender
  - Religion
  - Economic status

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

More culture associations

- Nationality
- Physical capacity or handicap
- Affectional or sexual orientation

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

Culture can include

- Demographic variables
  - age
  - gender
  - place of residence

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

Status

- Status variables
  - social
  - educational
  - economic background

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

Culture can also include

- Formal and informal affiliations
- Ethnographic variables:
  - nationality
  - ethnicity
  - language
  - religion
More multicultural terminology

• Ethnicity: a sense of identity that stems from common ancestry, history, nationality, religion, and race.

More terminology

• Minority group: has come to refer to any category of people who have been discriminated against or subjected to unequal treatment and oppression by society largely because of their group membership.

More terminology

• Minority:
  1. national, racial, linguistic, and religious groups
  2. women, the aged, homosexuals, bisexuals, and people with disabilities

More terminology

• Multiculturalism: any relationship between and within two or more diverse groups.

More terminology

• Multicultural Counseling: any counseling relationship in which the counselor and the client belong to different cultural groups, hold different assumptions about social reality, and subscribe to different worldviews.

More terminology

• Diversity: individual differences such as age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and physical ability or disability.
More terminology

- Diversity-Sensitive Counseling: concept that includes age, culture disability, education level, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, residential location, sexual orientation, and trauma.

More terminology

- Culture-Centered Counseling: a three-stage developmental sequence from multicultural awareness to knowledge and comprehension to skills and applications.

More terminology

- Stereotypes: generalizations about individuals who are identified as belonging to a specific group.

More terminology

- Racism: a pattern of behavior that, because of race or culture, denies access to opportunities or privileges to members of one racial or cultural group while perpetuating access to opportunities and privileges to members of another racial or cultural group.

Premises of Multicultural Counseling

- All cultures have ways of coping with problems.

More premises

- All counseling can be regarded as multicultural if culture is defined broadly to include:
  - Race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, social class, sexual orientation, and disability.
More premises

• People seek counseling largely because of problems of social-cultural conditions.
• Traditional counseling was developed in the West to cope with psychological distress.
• All cultures have developed ways of dealing with human problems.

The Problem of Cultural Tunnel Vision

• Traits exhibited by culturally encapsulated counselors:
  • Defines reality according to one set of cultural assumptions

More traits of culturally encapsulated counselors

• Lack of sensitivity to culture variations among individuals
• Unwilling to challenge one's assumptions of a particular culture

More traits of culturally encapsulated counselors

• Fails to consider other viewpoints and makes little attempt to understand the behavior of others
• Is trapped in one way of thinking

Challenges of Reaching Diverse Client Populations

Counselors have Professional Responsibility to:

• Be aware of and deal with the biases, stereotypes, and assumptions that are part of their practice
• Be sensitive to client's values and world view
Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

More Counselor Responsibilities

• Develop treatment strategies that take into account the social, cultural, historical, and environmental influences of culturally different clients

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

Learning to Deal with Cultural Pluralism

• Multicultural competence is a developmental process that requires continual education and training.

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

Counselors must recognize their limitations and:

• Seek consultation
• Seek continuing education
• Make referrals to a professional who is competent to work with a particular client population

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

Ethic Codes in Multicultural Counseling

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

Western Vs. Eastern Values

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

Challenging Counselor’s Stereotypical Beliefs
Assumptions about Self-Disclosure

- Self-disclosure is essential for the therapeutic process to work.
- Some would contend that this assumption ignores the fact that in some cultures self-disclosure is taboo.

More Assumptions about Self-Disclosure

- Self-disclosure is a characteristic of a healthy personality.
- Counselors need to understand that there are a variety of ways for clients to make themselves known besides talking about private aspects of their lives.

Assumptions about Assertiveness

- Clients are better off if they can behave in assertive ways.
- Some traditional counseling practices may act as barriers to effective multicultural helping.

Assumptions about Self-Actualization and Trusting Relationships

- It is important for the individual to become a fully functioning person.
- Mainstream Americans are more likely to form quick relationships and talk more readily about their personal lives than do other cultures.

Assumptions about Non-Verbal Behavior

- Many cultural expressions are subject to misinterpretation:
  - Personal space, eye contact, handshake, dress, formality of greeting, perspective on time

Assumptions continued

- In some cultures silence may be a sign of respect and politeness rather than a lack of desire to speak.
- It is important to pay attention to subtle changes in nonverbal communication so the counselor is able to understand the true meaning of silence.
Addressing Sexual Orientation

- Discrimination of ANY KIND is unethical and unacceptable
- Check your values and attitudes concerning homosexuality

Value Issues of Gay and Lesbian Clients

- Homosexual and bisexual clients have unique counseling needs:
  - Struggles with concealing their identity and "coming out"
  - Loss of friends due to AIDS
  - Fears of becoming HIV infected

Specialized Training in Counseling Gay and Lesbian Clients

Counselors lack cultural awareness about a specific group are ethically required to:

- Seek supervision and consultation
- Make a referral to a trained professional
- Receive specialized training about this population

Matching Client and Counselor

- Learn to understand the client’s “inner dialog”
- In order for counselors to learn to work with clients who differ from them in gender, race, culture, they must:
  - Have training in multicultural perspectives

Matching Client and Counselor continued

- Have an agreement with the client to develop a working therapeutic relationship
- Be flexible in applying theories and techniques to specific situations
Matching Client and Counselor continued

• Be open to being challenged and tested
• Be aware of your own value systems

Characteristics of the Culturally Skilled Counselor

• Involves three dimensions:
• I.
  • a. Deals with practitioner's attitudes and beliefs about race, culture, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.

Characteristics continued

• b. The need to monitor personal biases.
• c. A positive view toward multiculturalism.
• d. Understanding how one's values may get in the way of effective helping.

Characteristics continued

• II.
  • a. A culturally competent practitioner is knowledgeable and understanding of their own worldview.
  • b. Possesses specific knowledge of the diverse groups with whom they work.
  • c. Has a basic understanding of sociopolitical influences.

Characteristics continued

• III.
  • Deals with skills, intervention techniques, and strategies necessary in serving diverse client groups.

Our Views on Multicultural Training

• Students should become involved in a self-exploratory class to help identify their cultural and ethnic blind spots.

• Students should take a course in multicultural issues.
Multicultural Training continued

- Multicultural perspectives should be integrated throughout a student’s curriculum.
- Ongoing professional development related to multicultural counseling.

Multicultural Training continued

- Go out into the community and interact with diverse groups of people who face a myriad of problems.
- Counselors should open themselves to people in other cultures through reading and travel.