

Cultural Competency Training:

Overcoming Misconceptions to
Engage Men and Boys of Faith As Allies

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Agenda

1. Opening Question
2. Culture, Faith, Humility and Gender Justice by Mallika Kaur
3. Cultural Competency: The How of Dealing with Faith Based diversity in Domestic Violence Programming with Men and Boys by Dr. Denise Berte
4. Conclusion: Overcoming Misconceptions

Learning Objectives

- ❖ Participants will gain self-awareness about how cultural biases, including around boys and men of faith, can hinder our work and why we must strive for cultural humility
- ❖ Participants will gain cultural competence specific to GBV advocacy, learning how to address the needs of survivors within diverse faith contexts
- ❖ Advocates will be able to identify and address potential barriers rooted in faith-based misconceptions that survivors may face when seeking support or intervention

Opening Question:

To engage men of faith as allies, what are the common misconceptions by outsiders associated with your faith when it comes to addressing gender-based violence, and why is it important to dispel these misconceptions?



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Culture, Faith, Humility and Gender Justice



What is Culture?

- Historically thought to be a stable pattern of beliefs, values, thoughts, norms that are transmitted from generation to generation for successfully adapting to other group members and their environment.
- This is an outdated definition—it assumes rigidity and inflexibility and ignores evolution of cultures, including in faith communities.



Culture is...

- Shared, often unspoken, set of norms
- Every courtroom has a culture. Every police dept has a culture. Every city, every town...
- Using “culture” to mean “foreign” creates a barrier for the survivors and communities we seek to serve.



GBV is cultural: it is prevalent in almost all cultures



The “Culture” dog whistle: Stereotypes & gender violence

When I say “culture,” you hear:



What does Culture mean to you? It may be...

- Nationality
- Language
- Religion/faith system
- Sexual Identity
- Race
- Rural/Urban
- Age
- Food
- Many more...



Be attentive to diversity and subsets in cultures

For example, Nationality may be one way to define culture...

Or not:

- Different faith traditions—including persecuted groups
- Different languages
- Different non-verbal communications
- Views on hierarchy
- Privacy/boundaries
- Caste/class
- Race
- Economic status
- Immigration status



Knowing and Owning Our Privilege

- Self-assessment helps us check cultural biases, including against boys and men of faith.
- Such assessment and learning is a continuous process.
- It encourages us to pivot, repivot and be flexible.



The Challenge: "Culture" must neither be ignored nor overstated

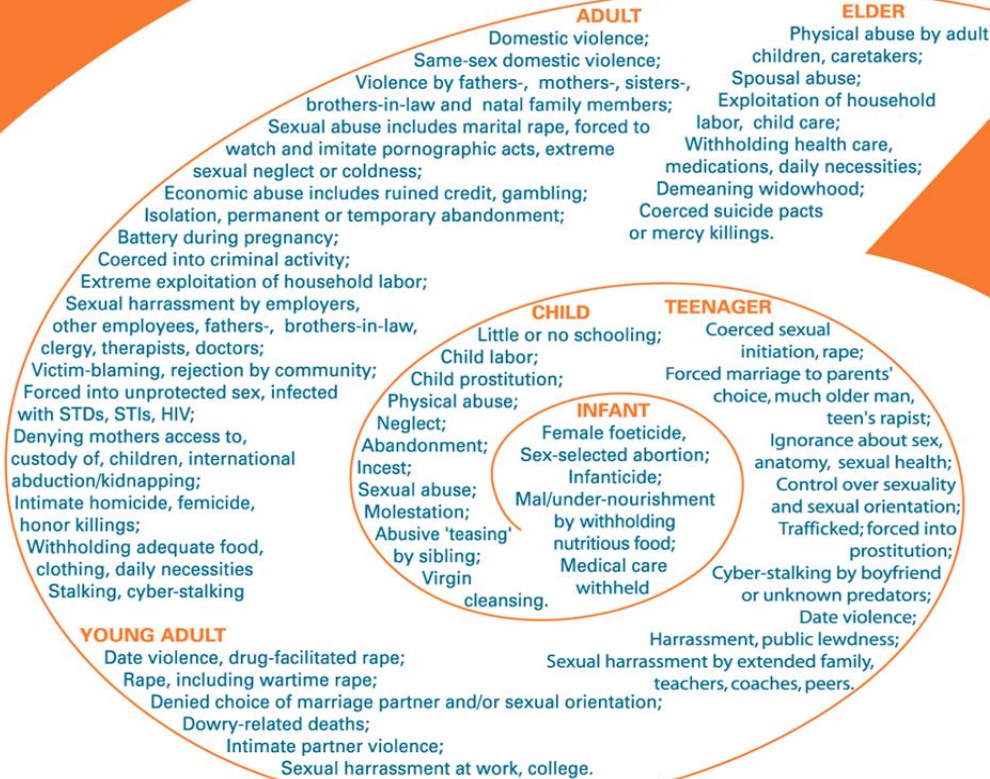


Cultural Reasons for Staying in an abusive situation...

- *"What will people say"*
- Family reputation/ "Don't air dirty laundry"
- Ideas of what is normal in a marriage/relationship
- "The Good Wife" trap
- Honor and dishonor traps
- DV may just be one form of violence in their lifetime
 - Impacts resiliency/ reserves/ options

Lifetime Spiral of Gender

Developed by:
API Institute on
Gender-Based
Violence



“culture”?

“Usually when cultural explanations are given, a static and insular culture is blamed, detracting attention away from one’s limited access to services, or from the policies of the state.”

--Professor Leti Volpp,
ON CULTURE, DIFFERENCE, AND DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE,
11 Am. U. J. Gender Soc. Pol’y & L. 393 2002-2003



What is coded as “Culture” may more accurately be Structural Barriers

- Language barriers
 - Literal
 - Figurative/expressive
 - Body language
- Immigration Status Precarity
 - Do not have or do not know legal status
 - Have misinformation about system
 - Do not have possession of their documents
 - Shifting goalposts of immigration laws
 - Precarity due to trafficking/forced marriage/etc.

What is coded as “Culture” may more accurately be Structural Barriers

- Misinformation/Mistrust/Fear of agencies, including police and courts
- Biases in social services and nonprofit services
Intention and impact may be mismatched, may alienate the victim
 - Coming from a minority culture may result in exclusion or discrimination at mainstream agencies

Resist cultural essentialism/stereotyping

There is no **one** (essential) type of survivor within any cultural group.

No **one** type of Asian-American, or one type of South Asian American, or one type of Sikh American. etc.

Similarly, there is no **one** (essential) type of man/boy within any cultural group.

Statements that indicate **one** type of masculinity or that “all _____ men/boys” believe/do/say some(one)thing will be inaccurate, unhelpful, off-putting.



Strategies beyond Superficial Connections

**Asking rather than assuming

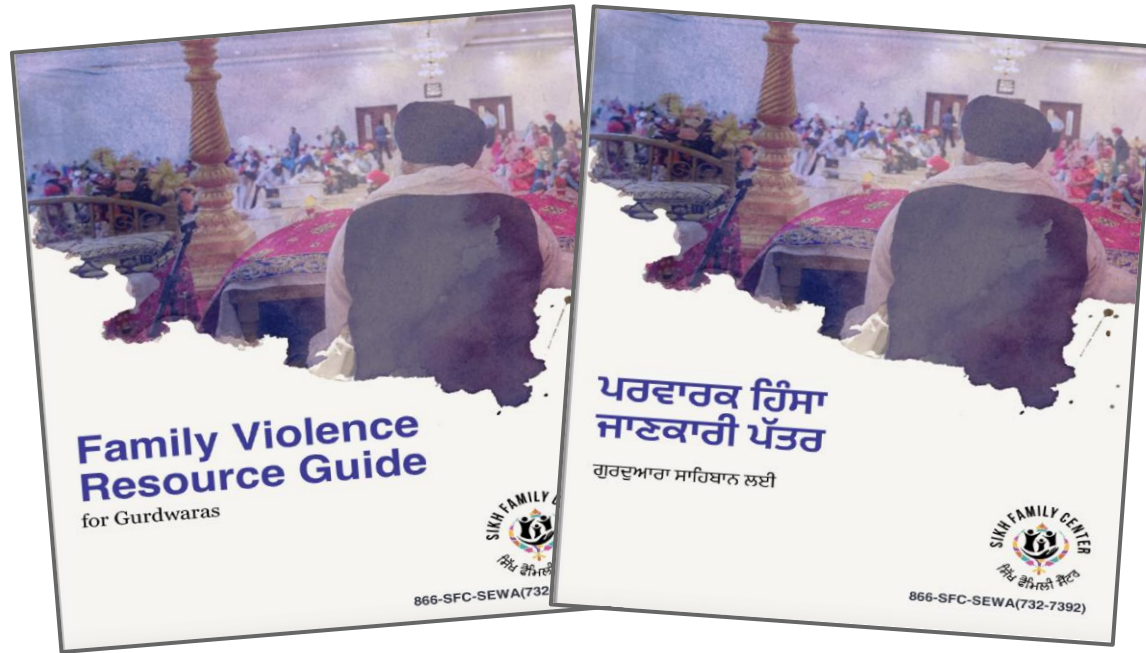
**Avoiding casting any belief as particularly “regressive” or “conservative” and focusing instead of the end-goal of anti-oppression

**Refocusing on shared commitments to anti-violence, rather than shared terminology or philosophy



Bring your Curiosity!

Faith culture as source of strength & opportunity



**Ask about role models of egalitarianism and forwarding human rights from within the faith's history and tradition (ask about their detractors, historically and currently)

**Ask about revolutionary stories of culture-change work undertaken by ancestors in the community; offer this as gentle reminder that culture has been and can again evolve.

**Ask about services within faith centers and religious circles (also safety check for any pre-conditions to receiving services)



Because it is 2024...

Cultural Competence

→ *Cultural Humility*

Cultural Humility

- About individual & institutional praxis.
 - Language matters: "poor woman"/"helpless victim" versus a community member who needs some extra support right now.*
 - Behavior matters: "saving" versus supporting empowerment.*
- Characterized by genuine curiosity and respect for difference.
 - Listening before Leading
 - Resisting a rush to problem-solving
- About continuous self-assessment, re-pivoting, being thoughtful—not overthinking.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY:
THE HOW OF DEALING WITH FAITH BASED
DIVERSITY IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
PROGRAMMING WITH MEN AND BOYS

Dr. Denise Ziya
Berte

Peaceful Families
Project

- **Cultural Competence** describes the ongoing processes that individuals, organizations, and systems use to respectfully respond to the needs of the full range of individuals who access the service.
 - It involves creating systems of care that address beliefs, lifestyles, and desired outcomes of the diverse populations that may use your services.
 - It addresses multiple levels of organizational structure including staff, language accessibility, thoughts, attitudes, mission, acceptance, knowledge and action at the level of program design, policies, and outcomes.
 - It is a spectrum and a process. It goes on through activities and time.

WHAT IS CULTURAL COMPETENCE



WHAT DO WE THINK ABOUT FAITH?

Many US Based
Providers
believe that
faith is
something
practiced in the
home privately
and shouldn't
be addressed
in an outreach
or intervention
service.



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HOW ARE PEOPLE OF FAITH REPRESENTED?



Radicalized

Crazy

Not Educated

Traditional

Conservative

Oppressive to women and children

Condone violence

Serious, against fun

etc.

SO HOW ARE PEOPLE OF FAITH DIFFERENT?

- People of faith are distinct from the secular community in multiple levels from superficial styles of dress to deep beliefs about systems of morality and right and wrong



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THAT MAY LOOK LIKE.....

- Different Clothes
- Different foods/
restrictions
- Different family structure
- Different beliefs about
gender roles
- Different definition of
success
- Different emphasis on
formal education
- Different life goals
- Different relationship with
money
- Different customs of child
rearing
- Different belief about
individual rights
- Different definitions of
normal
- Different values and ideals
or morality (right and
wrong)

INTERSECTIONALITY



People of faith also differ from each other by:

Race

Faith Tradition

Religiosity

Gender

Cultural

Ethnicity

Class

Nationality

History

Education

Immigrant Status

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FIELD AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE

A
CULTURALLY
COMPETENT
FIELD HAS:

DIVERSE PROFESSIONALS representing the full range of clients that we serve (How do we recruit, hire, train and support professionals from faith-based communities?)

DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES addressing a variety of beliefs, needs, issues and obstacles to service that potential clients face.

DIVERSE STRATEGIES that address, reach, and lead to positive treatment results for the entire participant population (What specialized programs are needed in our community? What methods work best with each group?).



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WE HAVE HISTORY



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Originating from the Women's Liberation Movement in the 1970s, the US Domestic Violence Field initially focused on educated, mainstream, middle to high SES females.

Interventions like criminalization, shelters, and survivor independence didn't always meet the diverse needs of marginalized groups, including POC, communities facing police violence, poverty, discrimination, immigrant victims, and religious minorities.

Imported interventions often overlooked unique challenges in different communities, leaving some feeling excluded from the conversation

In response, many communities have established their own organizations and interventions tailored to their specific experiences.

HEALTH AND ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS AND CULTURAL COMPETENCY



Culturally Competent Organizations must be based in diverse leadership including planning, recruitment and hiring of diverse staff at every level.

Culturally Competent Organizations recognize obstacles that separate their services from needed communities including prejudice, treatment practice, as well as more hidden biases.

Culturally Competent Organizations look to increase their knowledge and expertise in serving different groups. They proactively plan and search for ways to be more relevant to diverse groups.

Culturally Competent Organizations evaluate their programs and strategies to ensure that their participants are reaching the sustainable goals that make an impact in their lives.

WHY BOTHER?

INDIVIDUAL TREATMENT SUCCESS: Our services will be more effective if they are planned and completed with diversity in mind.

COMMUNITY WELL BEING: Our services will make a difference in the lives of individuals and the community as a whole is we can serve all sectors of the population with critical needs.

ECONOMICS: There may be a financial gain if we serve diverse populations that may have access to varied funding sources.

UNITY: Serving equally all citizen's will increase a feeling of identity and augment our strength as a society.

WELL-BEING OF STAFF: We are more comfortable when we are addressing issues in way sense for our clients

CROSS MODEL OF STAGES OF CULTURAL COMPETENCY



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Cultural Destruction: Diversity is undesirable. We need to eliminate differences. The “Melting Pot”. Mainstream is best.

Cultural Incapacity: Lack the skills to understand diversity. Assume the majority culture is right without question.

Cultural Denial: We are all alike and should be treated the same. No acknowledgement that they others may disagree.

Pre-Competence: Realize there is difference but only deal with it superficially. Separate programs no internal look.

Competence: Accept, appreciate, and accommodate difference. Value diversity and examine their own at all levels. The “Fruit salad”.

Advanced Competence: Advocate for diversity at every level. Look for underserved groups and the ways to increase challenging themselves in the area of diversity.

Generally there are five steps to creating cultural competency in an organization:

Have a well-defined service and know the community you serve best

Become aware of underserved populations in your area and research characteristics

Become aware of the client's barriers to your services and

Build connections in that community to include them and learn from them

Challenge your own institution on diversity issues

Mediate and advocate for the group within your community

WHERE DO WE START?

ROLLING UP OUR SLEEVES

Define

Define vulnerable diverse groups in your community

↓
Explore, understand
and value

Explore, understand and value the differences between groups

↓
Recognize

Recognize the various levels and complexity of diversity

↓
Encourage

Encourage conversation, sharing, learning and teaching between groups

↓
Let

Let the group you are trying to serve be your guides, teachers, and experts as to what they need at every level

↓
Collaborate

Collaborate with individuals and associations that already exist within this group

↓
Raise

Raise issues of advocacy in your own institution and community

↓
Create

Create process to include and expand your services for diverse groups

AND THE OUTCOMES ARE.....



Better outcomes

Increased utilization of services

More professional level of programming

Improved reputation of the organization

More funding

Better staff retention

Etc., etc., etc.

WHAT GETS IN THE WAY?

- Denial
- Fear of Change
- Time Limitations
- Lack of Trust
- Knowledge
- Limitations in outreach
- Desire for a quick fix
- Minimal motivation
- Creativity



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MEASUREMENT



How do we know if we are being culturally competent (as individuals and as organizations)?



How do we test the concept of cultural competence?



All evaluation and measurement must take the perspective of the other group or it will be irrelevant



How do we test cultural competences difference in treatment outcome?

AS INDIVIDUALS.....



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Respect is not the same as tolerance. It is not “no judgment” but positive judgment. Respect must be based on knowledge and familiarity with the other person’s reality. Respect takes time and experience.

Reciprocity looks at the balance of power and creating a place we you are equally valued , understood, and heard. We can not truly become a partner with someone who we feel is less then us. Charity is not the same as justice.

Responsiveness is when we make actual changes in what we do and think regarding diversity but also ourselves. It relies on us becoming less sure, less comfortable and asking the questions of why not? It means that we need to say “maybe” more and “I know” less. True responsiveness takes more time, exploration, and negotiation.

Closing Question:

To move towards cultural competence, how can advocates practice cultural humility when addressing misconceptions to engage men of faith?



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QUESTIONS
&
DISCUSSION

Upcoming Programs

- February 29, 2024 | 1 PM EST: Navigating Intersection Identities: LGBTQ+ Teens and Teen Dating Violence Prevention
- Monthly Office Hours
(Occurs every 2nd Thursday of the month at 1:00 PM EST)