



The Impact of Bias

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Participants will...

- identify how bias impacts relationships
- describe the Fundamental Attribution Error
- practice practical strength-based techniques to improve relationships

How would you define bias?

Bias: an inclination or preference that influences judgment from being balanced or even-handed.

Fundamental Attribution Error: The Judgments You Don't Know You Make

When we witness another person's behavior we are more likely to decide it is a result of their personality rather than consider additional circumstances that may have impacted the behavior

Called Fundamental Attribution Error

Easier for our brain to think "he's a jerk" than "oh, he must be having a really bad day, maybe he just got fired"

Fundamental Attribution Error: The Judgments You Don't Know You Make

Ask yourself these questions:

- Is there more to this situation than meets the eye? What might be going on "behind the scenes"?
- What might the other person be thinking?
- What are my personal values that I am applying to this situation? How do these values influence my judgment of the other person? Does this person share these values? How do I know?
- What are the stressors or other influences facing this person?
- What are the successes this person has achieved?
- If I were living their life, what might I do?

Strengths-based Vision

- Appreciating differences as strengths
- Looking past initial judgments to identify strengths
- Benefits
 - Relationship with Help Giver
 - Identify family assets which can be used to overcome barriers
 - See the family as more than just the problem behavior
 - Help the family to build confidence

Addressing Bias

Challenge yourself to identify Fundamental Attribution Error

Practice strengths-based vision

Identify a particular bias you have (towards a specific group of people, race, religion, etc) and work to resolve the bias

Practice Cultural Humility



Addressing a Specific Bias

1. Acknowledge and confront stereotypes
2. Find a support person and make a commitment to a change process
3. Become aware of and challenge your own "self-talk"
4. Increase your contact with the other group
5. Replace the negative "self-talk" with a positive
6. Learn how other groups see your own
7. Accept indecision, complexity, self-criticism, self-awareness and critical feedback
8. Develop strong communication skills
9. Value diversity
10. Take action



Cultural Humility

◦ Challenges us to learn from the people with whom we interact, reserve judgment and bridge the cultural divide between our perspectives in order to facilitate well being and promote improved quality of life.

◦ Frees the observer from having to possess expert knowledge in order to maintain knowledge based power, control and authority over matters about which diverse populations are more knowledgeable.

Tervalon, M. & Murray-Garcia, J., (1998)



Cultural Humility Values

- ✓ Openness
- ✓ Appreciation
- ✓ Acceptance
- ✓ Flexibility
- Entails a lifelong commitment to self evaluation and critique



Curiosity is the gateway to empathy.

-Thich Nhat Hahn



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