

Cultural Awareness in Diabetes Education

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Healthy Living Through Environment, Policy and Improved
Clinical Care

Goal and Objectives

GOAL: Understand the cultural factors that affect communication and understanding in diabetes education.

Objectives:

1. Define culture in general terms
2. Understand the importance of culture in diabetes education
3. Apply cultural relativity to understanding the patient's perspective when dealing with diabetes.

My Cultural Context

Who: Edwin Espinel

First generation Ecuadorian native

Tail end of the baby boomers

Seventh of 8 children

Father was a retired military officer

Raised in the era of disco, Abba, the Bee Gees, Elton John, AC/DC...

What/Where :

B.A. Economics & Social Sciences: University of Utah

Former U.S. Marine

Specialized trainer in various scientific-based interventions: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

Certified Trainer: Medical Interpreter Training Program – Utah Department of Health & Granite School District

Peer reviewer: Patient Centered Outcomes Research Initiative (PCORI)

Health Program Specialist: Utah Department of Health, EPICC, Environmental Nutrition, and Diabetes patient

“It’s more important to know what sort of person has a disease than to know what sort of disease a person has.”

— *Hippocrates*

“Care more particularly for the individual patient than for the special features of the disease.”

- *William Osler*

Culture

Generally linked to a person's national origin, language, holidays, food, music, sports, entertainment, dress, and so forth...

Additionally, each individual has a more complex personal culture, normally tied to his/her individual race and ethnicity, sexual orientation and general preferences

- Families that someone grew up with
- Languages spoken at home
- Religious values and practices
- And, economics.

Culture

Culture is all around us and it impacts our lives in profound ways:

- It determines how we perceive our world in the most fundamental levels.
- How we give meaning to what we see.
- How we interact and interpret the world.

Our worldview is the product of many cultural lenses

Cultural Awareness

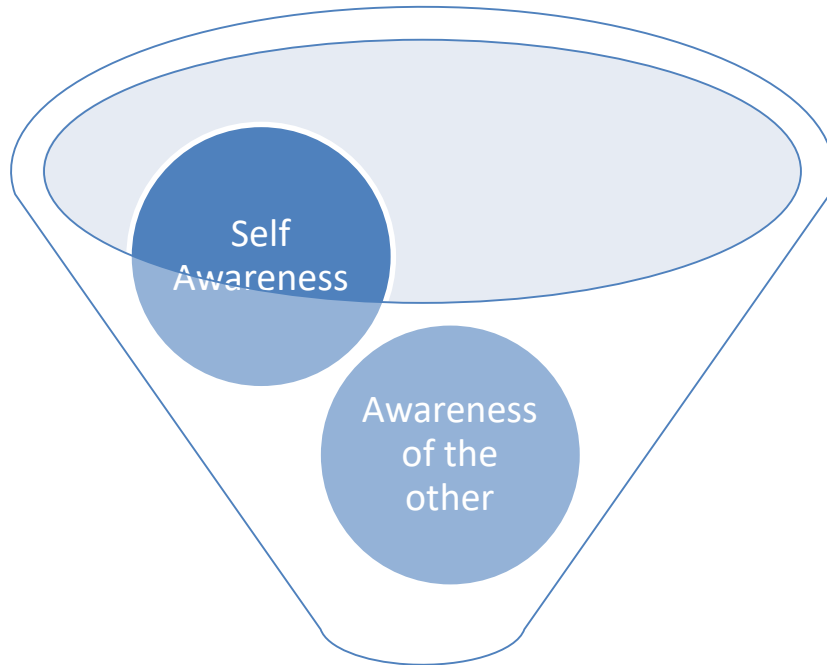
- Requires a degree of self analysis
 - An understanding of our own biases and idiosyncrasies
- An open mind to recognize others and their experiences
 - Individually, as a system and as a community
- The willingness to develop or acquire the skills to negotiate those differences and achieve understanding in our education efforts.

Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness of self and others result in cultural competence

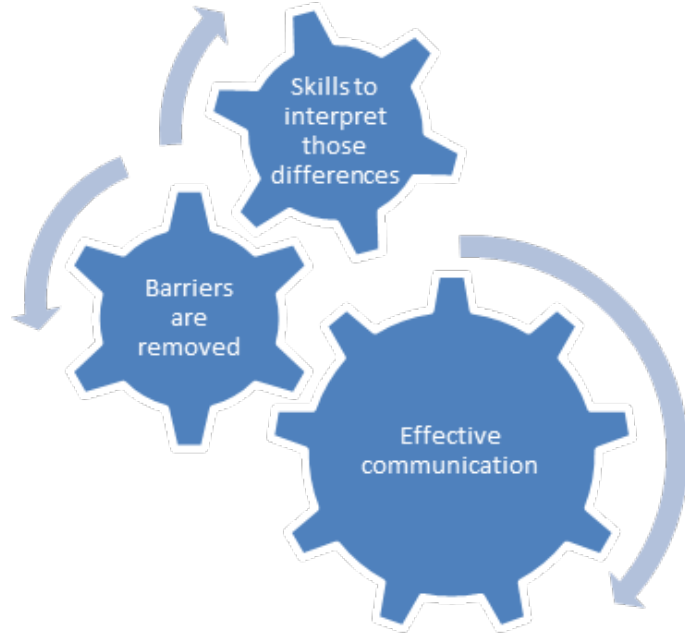
Cultural Competence

1. Understand our own culture and the values that drive our view of the world
2. Awareness that people from different cultures may see a situation from completely different perspectives
3. Awareness and understanding of those differences, and
4. Skill building to appropriately interpret these differences



Knowledge & Understanding
of the differences

Knowledge & understanding
of the differences



Clarification of cultural norms

What is “culture”?

Music

friends

Community

language

Food

nationality

weight

Ethnicity

disability

History

gender

immigration

skin color

family

Religion

race

political beliefs

Values

Practices

traditions

Assumptions



Culture is a shared set of

- belief systems
- values
- practices
- assumptions

which determine how
we interact with
and
interpret the world.



Why consider Culture in Diabetes Education?

Different views and beliefs lead to different understanding and expectations about

- Health and healing
- What is important
- Illness and how to treat it

Health Professionals

Being aware and have a clear understanding of the patient's cultural norms:

- Crucial to achieve the patient's understanding of his/her condition
- Important in order to attain the patient's buy-in when addressing cultural aspects that may make it difficult for the patient to navigate and adopt healthier behaviors
- It is essential to achieve the patient's understanding of the benefits of treatment and behavior modification

Health Professionals

Being aware and have a clear understanding of the patient's cultural norms:

- Helps professionals understand the patient's individual approach to treat his/her condition which in addition to provider's perspective:

Based on cultural beliefs or ideas about health and illness

Influenced by life experiences (family problems, emotions, environment)

May be influenced by the patient's active culture

Active Culture

A person's unique outlook, shaped by their individual life experiences

What Influences Active Culture?

History

Place

Family and friends

Primary language

Education

Religion

Disability

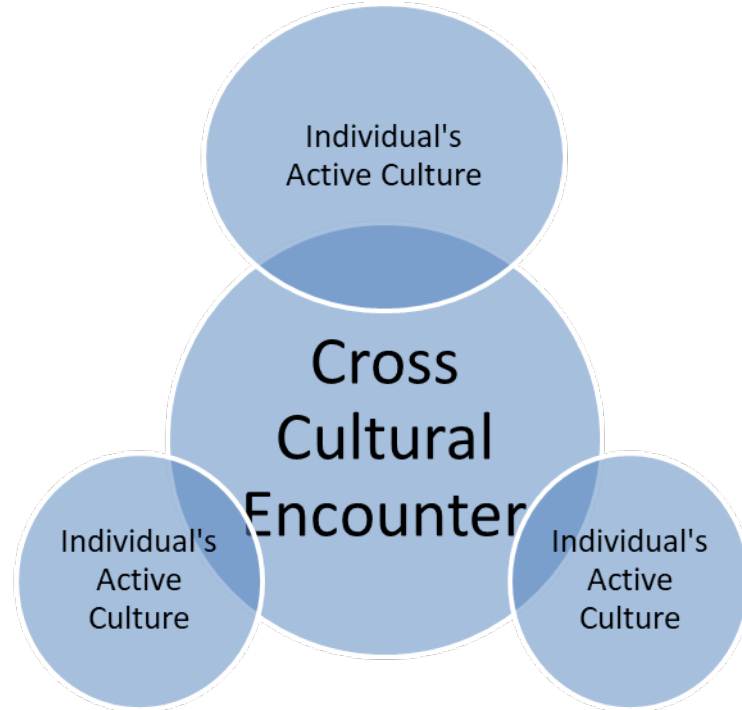
Economic experiences

Significant events

Sexual Orientation

Gender Identity

Daily Personal Experiences



Acculturation, assimilation and social class are three often-overlooked factors that greatly influence active culture.

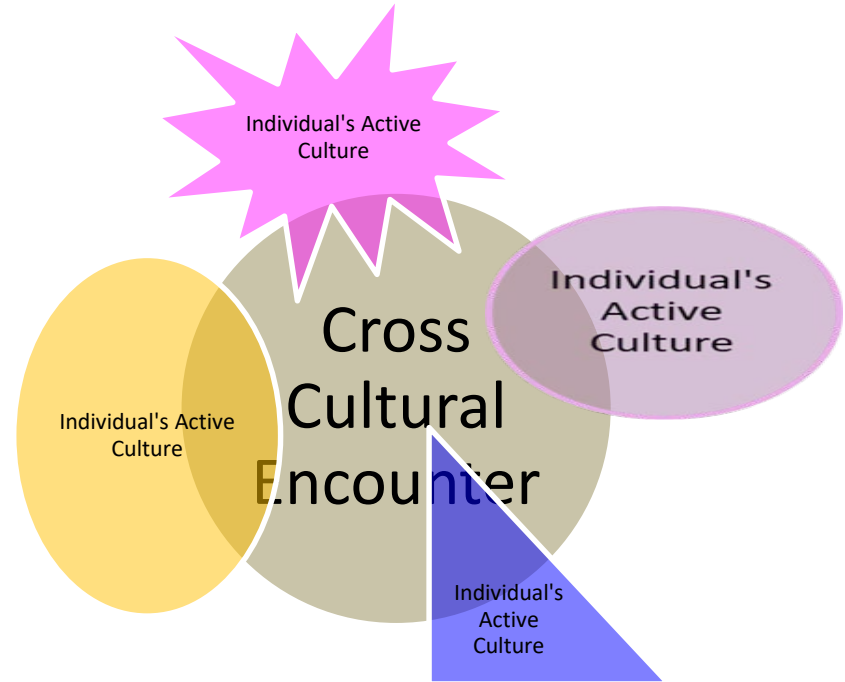
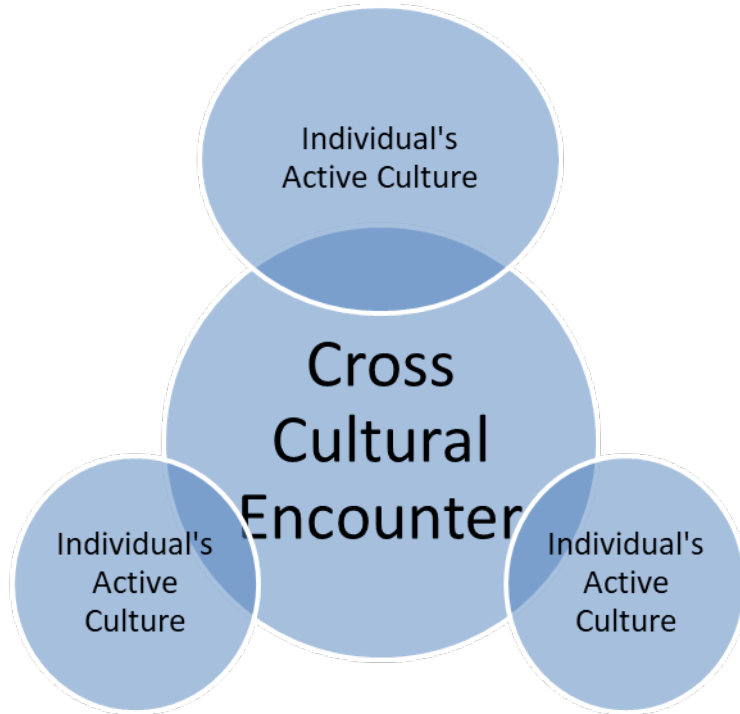
● **Acculturation** : cultural modification of an individual, group, or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture

Assimilation: the process of adapting or adjusting to the culture of a group or nation, or the state of being so adapted

1. Miller C, SenGupta I. *Bridging the Gap: A Textbook for Medical Interpreters*. 5th ed. (Louie R, Wynn J, Waghmare A, eds.). The Cross Cultural Health Care Program; 2017.
2. "Acculturation.", "Assimilations". Merriam-Webster.com. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 8 Jan. 2018.
3. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/assimilation>



Daily Personal Experiences



Nonverbal Communication Behavior May Vary Between Cultures

- Voice – tone, pitch, sarcasm
- Gestures and posture
- Eye contact
- Space – proximity to others
- Touch – frequency and nature of contact
- Time – importance of punctuality, acceptable excuses for lateness

What is a cultural bump?

When different expectations based on different cultural contexts result in misunderstandings

Cultural competence: the ability to function effectively in the context of cultural differences

Cultural Relativity

- Behavior must be evaluated and understood within the cultural context where it occurred

"I was told to come as a biker."



Generalizations

Generalization: a general statement or assumption based on past experience or general knowledge

- Useful to promote general understanding between the patient and the health care provider

Generalizations

- When could a generalization be useful?
- When can they be harmful?

- Remember active culture – not every member of a certain culture is the same

Generalizations and Stereotypes

Useful

- to anticipate cultural misunderstandings and stereotypes
- if they help anticipate possible barriers and challenges

Not useful

- A tool for making inaccurate and harmful assumptions
- If they lead to stereotypes that are incorrect and further increase misunderstanding

Generalizations and Stereotypes

Stereotype: an oversimplified image or idea of a person, culture, or concept

Delicate balance

Awareness of cultural generalities

being aware of potential individual differences



Unconscious or Implicit Bias

“As more health care organizations work toward achieving health equity, it is not enough to focus on intentional discrimination. We must also acknowledge implicit bias and address it.”

Unconscious or Implicit Bias

Unconscious bias: preferences and assumptions that influence peoples actions and thoughts unintentionally.

- How is bias experienced?
- What does it affect?
- Who does it disproportionately affect?

Unconscious or Implicit Bias

Unconscious bias: preferences and assumptions that influence peoples actions and thoughts unintentionally.

- It affects many individuals associated with vulnerable communities
- It may affect what the doctor and healthcare team may assume about the patient
- It will affect how members of a clinic staff interact with certain patients
- It may also affect the questions a doctor asks, as well as the treatment plan proposed.

Unconscious or Implicit Bias

- Patients may face bias based on:
 - assumptions about their race, ethnicity or religion
 - Immigration status, gender, weight
 - LGTBQIA individuals, the elderly, the disabled and incarcerated
- Patients from vulnerable populations may:
 - Feel less worthy than others
 - Notice differences in treatment offered

Questions?

