

# Cultural Competency in Counselling and Employment

Bridging HR & Mental Health in the Workplace

Pathways to Prosperity Conference

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# Introduction

Why would counselling Newcomers be different than counselling people from the Mainstream Population?

What makes Newcomers unique in their mental health needs in general and in the workplace?

What are we doing to support these unique needs?

What are the gaps in service delivery?

# Acculturation

Assimilation

- Adopt host culture over origin culture

Separation

- Reject host culture and preserve origin culture

Marginalization

- Reject both host culture and origin culture

Integration

- Adopt host culture and maintain origin culture

# Considerations

- Individualistic or Collectivist culture
- Traditional Roles & Responsibilities
- Impact of Migration on Traditional Roles
  - E.g. work, professions
- Family Dynamics
  - Decision makers
- Values & Beliefs
- Language Barriers/Challenges

# Considerations (cont'd)

- What is their communication style per their culture? e.g. eye contact, facial expressions; tone of voice, handshake e.g. Muslim men and women not shaking hands with the opposite sex
- Infusing cultural sensitivity and empathy in our practice
- Underemployment – how this affects Mental Health
  - credential verification
  - not utilizing skills
  - education not being counted
  - no “Canadian” experience



# Other

How much of the client's presenting concerns relate to their cultural identity?

Terminology – some therapeutic words we use in our everyday practice, may not exist in their first language

Intersectionality (e.g. female identifying newcomer who is LGBTQ+2S or trans, or is a newcomer with disabilities)

What is their unique identify and experience?

# Thank You!

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