# Respecting Client and Staff Diversity

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## Icebreakers

**Life experience bingo**: Create bingo cards with different cultural or personal experiences (e.g., “Has traveled to another country,” “Speaks more than one language”). Participants mingle to find people who match these experiences, promoting conversation about diverse backgrounds.

**Personal Reflection:** Invite participants to share a brief story about a time when they experienced or observed a cultural misunderstanding. Discuss what was learned and how similar situations could be handled better in the future.

**Show-and-Tell:** Ask participants to bring an item that represents their culture**, identity,** or background. Each person briefly explains the significance of their artifact, helping to build understanding and appreciation of different **backgrounds**.

## Example discussion prompts (in-class or online)

Watch Video: [Identity First vs. Person First Language](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ddcl-yA88MU&ab_channel=InformingFamilies) .Then, do your own research to find more examples of both types of language. In a short post or discussion, respond to the following: Give two new examples of identity-first language (e.g., “autistic person”) and two examples of person-first language (e.g., “person with autism”). New meaning, don’t post examples that other classmates have already provided. Which type of language would you use if you hadn’t yet had the chance to ask someone their preference? Why?

What would you do if someone corrected you on how they prefer to refer to their disability? Answer one of the two following questions: have you ever been labeled in a way that didn’t feel right to you? Or, has someone ever ignored or overlooked an important part of your identity? How did it make you feel? What could have made the interaction more respectful

Cultural Competency: “What does cultural competency mean in the context of your role? How can we improve our skills to better serve and work with clients and colleagues from diverse backgrounds?”

Implicit Bias: “What are some examples of implicit bias that might affect interactions with clients or colleagues? How can we become more aware of and address our own biases?”

Inclusive Language: “How can the use of inclusive language improve communication and create a more respectful environment? What are some examples of language practices to avoid or adopt?”

Handling Discrimination: “What steps should be taken if you witness or experience discrimination or microaggressions in the workplace? How can we support each other in addressing these issues?”

Adapting Practices: “How can we adapt our practices and policies to better accommodate the diverse needs of our clients and staff? What are some specific examples of adaptations that could be made?”

Cultural Sensitivity Training: “What are the benefits and limitations of cultural sensitivity training? How can ongoing education and self-awareness contribute to a more inclusive environment?”

Understanding Different Perspectives: “How can understanding different cultural or personal perspectives enhance team collaboration and client relationships? What are some methods to gain a deeper understanding of diverse viewpoints?”

Feedback **a**nd Improvement: “How can we create a feedback loop to ensure that our efforts to respect and include diversity are effective? What mechanisms can be put in place for continuous improvement?”

## Videos and links

* There are even more video links in the PowerPoint
* [Cultural Competency In Health](file:///C:\Users\mdaks\Downloads\•%09https:\www.youtube.com\watch%3fv=vHePY3J5wJs&ab_channel=HDIHealth&Wellness)

## Creating a Personal Healthcare Cultural Plan

45–60 minutes, in person, online, individually and optional for group discussion **Competencies**: 1,2,3,4, 5

**Materials:**

* Pen and paper or computer for writing
* Instructor-provided details about the requested areas for the care plan

**Instructions:**  
Imagine you are staying in a long-term care facility for six months. Your care team wants to ensure your experience is respectful, comfortable, and tailored to your needs. Create a personal healthcare cultural plan that will help the care team get to know you as an individual.

Include the following areas in your plan:

* Dietary preferences (e.g., allergies, religious restrictions, cultural comfort foods)
* Dress, are you usually hot or cold?
* Religious or spiritual practices (e.g., holidays, rituals, prayer times)
* Daily routines or traditions (e.g., hygiene preferences, sleep habits, celebrations)
* Communication styles (e.g., preferred language, eye contact, tone)
* Support systems (e.g., who you want involved in your care, family visits)
* Respectful care considerations (e.g., gender of caregiver, modesty, personal space)

Students may present their plans in a written document, audio recording, visual collage, or another approved creative format.

**Reflection:**  
After completing the activity, respond to the following prompts:

* What was easy and what was difficult about creating your plan?
* Why is it important for healthcare professionals to understand a patient’s cultural preferences?
* How might your values or needs be different from someone else’s, and what does that mean for working on a diverse team?

**The Culture Tree**

45–60 minutes, individual (in person or online), with option for group sharing

Competency: 2

**Materials:**

* Blank paper or drawing template
* Pens, pencils, or markers
* Optional: device for recording or typing explanation

**Set-Up/Instructions:**  
Step 1: On a piece of paper, draw a tree that represents your personal culture. Label and reflect on the three parts of the tree as follows:

* **Roots** – Where do you come from? What is your sense of belonging? Include your ethnicity, regional or family culture, religious identity, or any group you identify with.
* **Trunk** – What values support you? Identify values that are important in your cultural context (e.g., independence, hospitality, discipline, humor).
* **Leaves** – What can others see? List visible elements of your cultural background such as food, language, clothing, holidays, or communication styles.

Step 2: Choose one method to share your Culture Tree:

* Create a short video explaining your drawing
* Design a visual aide such as a digital collage or illustrated poster
* Write a short explanation of each part of your tree

**Reflection:**

* How does understanding your own cultural background help you understand others?
* Why is cultural awareness important when working with patients from different backgrounds?
* How might your values or visible culture be different from those of a future patient or coworker?