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CULTURAL DIVERSITY & AWARENESS



PERSPECTIVE....



You Are
HERE





You Are Here!



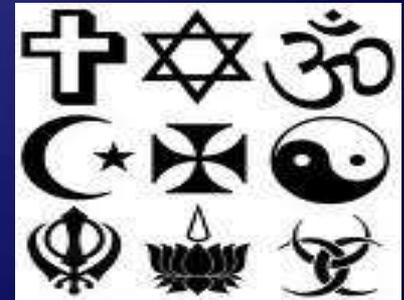
GOALS



- ❖ Identify & acknowledge your own cultural heritage, including biases & subjectivity & how it impacts your attitude when providing care.
- ❖ Describe the various components in culture.
- ❖ Identify and demonstrate appropriate cultural sensitivity in your approach to providing care.

CULTURE

- ❖ Set of values, beliefs, attitudes, languages, symbols, rituals, behaviors and customs of a group of people.
- ❖ Learned and shared.
- ❖ Dynamic and changing.



ETHNICITY

- ❖ Classification of people based on national origin or culture.
- ❖ Examples: African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, Irish American, etc.



CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- ◆ Differences based on cultural, ethnic and racial factors.
- ◆ “Melting Pot” vs. “Mosaic” approach.
- ◆ Must be considered when providing care.
- ◆ Recognize and appreciate the characteristics of all patients.



AREAS OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- ❖ Family organization
- ◆ Language
- ◆ Personal Space
- ◆ Touching
- ◆ Eye Contact
- ◆ Gestures
- ◆ Health care beliefs
- ◆ Spirituality
- ◆ Religion

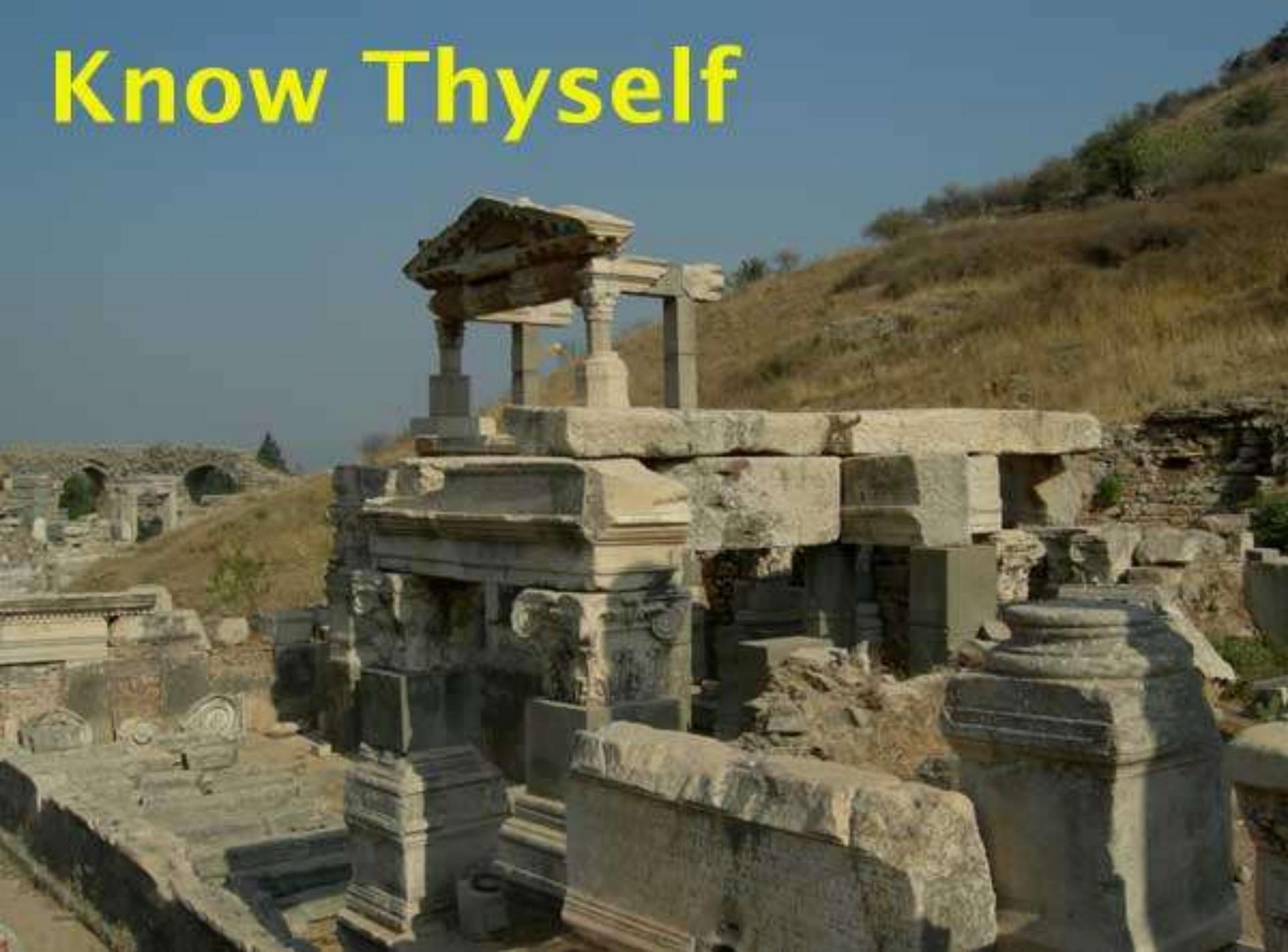


CULTURAL DIVERSITY IMPACTS BELIEFS

- ◆ Birth
- ◆ Death
- ◆ Health
- ◆ Illness
- ◆ Health Care



Know Thyself



WHO ARE YOU?



"I Am An American"

*I am an American.
That's the way most of us put it, just matter of factly.
They are plain words, those four.
You could write them on your thumbnail,
or you could sweep them clear across this bright autumn sky.
But remember too that they are more than words.
They are a way of life.
So whenever you speak them, speak them firmly;
speak them proudly; speak them gratefully,
I am an American.*

BRIDGING THE GAP

- ❖ As responders we operate within the atmosphere of Western medicine.
- ❖ Our understanding and beliefs regarding health, illness may differ from those we serve.
- ❖ Our understanding and beliefs regarding disasters may differ from those we serve.

WESTERN MEDICAL CULTURE

- ◆ Omnipotence of technology (belief)
- ◆ Diagnostic procedures maintain health (practice)
- ◆ Charting, use of medical jargon (habits)
- ◆ Promptness, compliance (likes)
- ◆ Tardiness, non compliance (dislikes)
- ◆ Certain procedures attending birth/death (customs)
- ◆ Physical exam, surgery (rituals)

CULTURAL ASPECTS TO CONSIDERED

Symbolic Objects

- ❖ Spiritual or religious items of clothing: habits, veils, ritual underwear, medals, burqua, chador, tallit, etc. *Ask before touching.*



Is it a hijab or a burqa?

The practice of veiling in Islam typically refers in English to the whole range of practices from covering the hair to concealing all of the skin on a woman's body. Here are the most well-known versions:



REUTERS

Chador

Typically black, it's a loose, flowing piece of material draped over the head and held shut underneath the chin with a free hand.



AP

Niqab

Almost always black, it leaves nothing but a slit for the eyes showing, and is usually worn with a shapeless black robe and black gloves. Usually it's sign that the individual is a follower of the strict Salafist school of Sunni Islam.



MELANIE STEYSON FREEMAN - STAFF

Burqa

Frequently blue, the tent-like garment hangs from the head and falls to below the ankles. Though it has a slit for the eyes, this is covered up with a tightly woven mesh piece, leaving no skin exposed.



SCOTT PETERSON/GETTY IMAGES

Hijab

Common throughout the Muslim world, it describes a range of hair coverings from loose scarves draped over the head and under the chin and then pinned, to elastic "sport" hijabs for use when exercising.

LANGUAGE



- ◆ Always use surnames until given permission.
- ◆ Use a soft tone of voice.
- ◆ Refrain from jargon.
- ◆ Introduce yourself first. Immediate conversation is considered rude in some cultures.
- ◆ Refrain from criticism or confrontation.
- ◆ Just because someone nods "yes" does not mean they understand.



FAMILY & KINSHIP STRUCTURE

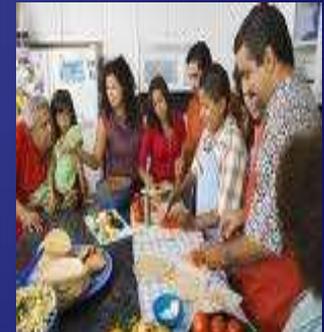


- ❖ Is the head of the family male or female? Old or young? Nuclear or non?
- ❖ Be careful not to burden children who interpret for their family.
- ❖ Does everyone have input into decisions? Only the head of the family?
- ❖ What role does gender/age play?



FOOD RITUALS

- ◆ How important is food?
- ◆ Is eating together as a family important ?
- ◆ Special dietary needs?
- ◆ Cultural dietary needs?
- ◆ Religious restrictions/guidelines?
- ◆ When are normal meal times?
- ◆ Breastfeeding norms ?



NON-VERBAL CLUES

- ◆ Should you shake hands? Bow?
- ◆ Can you talk to the opposite gender?
- ◆ Can you touch, especially the opposite gender?
- ◆ What are your hands saying?
- ◆ Is your body in tune with what you wish to convey?



CONCEPTS OF TIME



- ◆ Individuals who are past –oriented value tradition and may be reluctant to try new procedures.
- ◆ Present-oriented people focus on what is happening now and may be unconcerned with the future. May show up late or not at all.
- ◆ Future- oriented people may be caught up in “what if “ of the future rather than focusing on the present moment.



SPIRITUALITY & RELIGION

- ❖ Spirituality can be religious, non-religious, or both.
- ❖ Spirituality involves finding meaning in one's life and experiences.
- ❖ Encompasses person's philosophy of life/world view/inner belief system.
- ❖ Expressed via concepts about God/Higher Power.

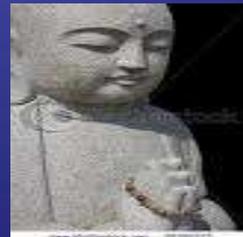
RELIGION



- ❖ The externals of a belief system: church, prayers, traditions, rites, rituals, etc.



- ❖ Triggers which can lead to a spiritual focus/crisis can include physical factors, emotional experiences/ transitions, near death experiences of self or a loved one.



MULTICULTURAL CARE TIPS

- ❖ Don't treat others as YOU would want to be treated. Try to learn how THEY want to be treated.
- ❖ Different is different; it's not right or wrong. We are all just amazingly and fascinatingly different.
- ❖ When in doubt... ask, even it feels uncomfortable. People generally really appreciate being asked about themselves.
- ❖ It's *not* about you.

FINAL THOUGHTS



- ❖ Being culturally sensitive and competent does NOT mean knowing everything about every culture.
- ❖ It is a respect for differences, eagerness to learn, and a willingness to accept that there are many ways of viewing the world.



QUESTIONS



REFERENCES

- ◆ A Quick Guide to Cultures and Spiritual Traditions; Wintz and Cooper 2003
- ◆ Light Our Way: A Guide for Spiritual care in Times of Disaster; NOVAD 2006
- ◆ How to Be a Perfect Stranger, 4th Edition