

Say what?

You know what they say about assumptions



Hey Aidan, the meeting venue could use a little "flair," why don't you take the lead on decorating?



Oh, you've got to be kidding me! He did not just tell the gay guy to add a little "flair".

Making assumptions about people based on the groups they belong to is a sign of unconscious bias. We all carry unconscious bias and sometimes our well-meaning interactions can damage relationships with our coworkers and those whom we serve.

Curious about the impact of assumptions?

To learn more, go to: www.dshs.wa.gov/dao/campaign.shtml

DSHS is committed to Diversity and Inclusion



Transforming lives

Cultural Humility in the Workplace

Cultural humility requires that we step back and allow others to define their own identity and culture, instead of assuming we know about their values, beliefs, and behaviors based on groups we think they might belong to. It's an approach that allows each of us to remain teachable.

The three tenants of cultural humility are:

- Lifelong learning and critical self-reflection.
- Recognizing and challenging power imbalances.
- Accountability. Recognize that we can't know all there is to know about a person's heritage, culture and identity; be interested in and committed to listening and learning.

Lifelong learning and critical self-reflection: Challenge our own biases, both the conscious and the unconscious; actively listen and learn from others.

Power imbalances: Those of us who do not experience power imbalances must work to even see that they exist. "It is like asking fish to notice water," Says Francis E. Kendall, Ph.D. Imbalances exist throughout the social service world. Recognizing those imbalances and working to lessen those helps us to become stronger champions for the people we serve and better coworkers.

A few of the imbalances include:

- Adult-youth
- Social worker-client
- Educated-uneducated

Many other imbalances are based on race, sexual orientation, gender, age, and others.

Accountability: We must continually challenge ourselves and DSHS to provide fair, equitable and respectful treatment of everyone.

Cultural humility is the difference between telling you what I "know" about your people, your life and your experiences and asking you to share your story in a way that feels honoring, heard and healing.

For more information about reflections on cultural humility go to:

<http://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/newsletter/2013/08/cultural-humility.aspx>



Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services

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