Cultural Diversity and Humility

- Cultural diversity is a term used to describe cultural differences among people.
- While it is useful to be aware of the specific features of a culture or subculture, it is equally important to understand that everyone is unique and there are always differences in beliefs between individuals within a culture.
- Nurses should refrain from making assumptions about the values and beliefs of members of specific cultural groups.

- A better approach is to recognize that culture is not a static, uniform characteristic, but rather to understand that there is diversity within each culture and in each person.

The American Nurses Association (ANA) defines cultural humility as, "A humble and respectful attitude toward individuals of other cultures that leads one to challenge one's own cultural biases, to recognize that one cannot know everything about other cultures, and to approach learning about other cultures as a lifelong goal and process."

CONCEPT	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
STEREOTYPISM	The assumption that a person has the attributes, traits, beliefs, and values of a cultural group because they are a member of that group.	The nurse teaches an elderly patient's daughter how to schedule medical appointments online, assuming the elderly patient doesn't understand how to use a computer.
ETHNOCENTRISM	The belief that one's culture (or race, ethnicity, or country) is better and preferable than that of another.	The nurse downplays the patient's use of non-traditional medicine and tells the patient that traditional treatments are superior.

PREJUDICE	**The unfair and differential treatment of another person or group, denying them the opportunities and rights to participate fully in society.**	**A head nurse refuses to hire a candidate for a nursing position because she is pregnant.**
BIAS	**A prejudice or preconceived idea, often unfavorable, about a person or group of people.**	**The nurse does not give pain medication to a patient with a history of opioid addiction.**
AFFINITY	**An attitude, opinion, or disposition (positive or negative) toward a group or members of a group. Prejudice (or bias) can be a conscious attitude (explicit) or an unconscious attitude where the person is not aware of their prejudice (implicit).**	**A patient doesn't want the nurse to take care of him because the nurse has a tattoo.**

Ethical Considerations

- Justice, a principle and moral obligation to act based on equality and fairness, is a standard related to justice for all in society.
- ANA states that this obligation guarantees not only fundamental rights (respect, human dignity, autonomy, safety and protection), but also fairness in all operations of social structures.
- Social justice is related to respect, equality and inclusion.
- ANA defines social justice as equal rights, equal treatment and equal opportunities for all.
- ANA further states: “Nurses should model the profession’s commitment to social justice and health through action and advocacy to address the social determinants of health and promote well-being in all settings within society.”

- Social determinants of health are non-medical factors that influence health outcomes, including the conditions in which people are born, grow up, work, live, and age, and the broader sets of forces and systems that shape the conditions of everyday life.
- Health outcomes influenced by social determinants of health are called health inequalities.
- Race is a socially constructed idea because there are no true genetically or biologically distinct races. People are not biologically different from one another.
- Racism assumes that races are distinct from one another and that there is a hierarchy to race, implying that races are unequal.

- Culture can exert a powerful influence on a person's sexual orientation and gender expression.
- Sexual orientation refers to a person's physical and emotional interest or desire for others.
- Sexual orientation is on a continuum and is manifested in one's identity and behaviors.

Cultural Competencies

- The freedom to express one's cultural beliefs is a fundamental right of all people.
- Nurses understand that people speak, behave, and act in many ways because of the influential role that culture plays in their lives and their view of the world.
- Cultural competence is a lifelong process of applying evidence-based nursing in accordance with patients' cultural values, beliefs, worldviews, and practices to produce better outcomes for patients.
- Culturally competent care requires nurses to combine their knowledge and skills with awareness, curiosity, and sensitivity to the cultural beliefs of their patients. It takes motivation, time, and practice to develop cultural competence, and it will evolve throughout your nursing career.
- Competent nurses have the power to improve the quality of care, leading to better health outcomes for culturally diverse patients.

- Nurses who acknowledge and support the cultural values and beliefs of their patients are more likely to develop supportive and trusting relationships with their patients.
- This paves the way for optimal prevention of illness and injury and leads to positive health outcomes for all patients.
- Intercultural nursing incorporates the cultural beliefs and practices of individuals to help them maintain and regain health or cope with death in a meaningful way.
- Nurses have an ethical and moral obligation to provide culturally competent care to the patients they serve.
- The "Respectful and Equitable Practice" Professional Performance Standard established by the American Nurses Association (ANA) states that nurses should practice with humility and cultural inclusion.

- The ANA Code of Ethics also states that nurses should collaborate with other health professionals, as well as the public, to protect human rights, combat discriminatory practices, and reduce inequalities.

- In addition, the ANA Code of Ethics also states that nurses "tend to be aware of their cultural identifications in order to control their personal biases that may interfere with the therapeutic relationship.

- Awareness includes not only examining one's own culture but also examining perceptions and assumptions about the patient's culture.

- Nurses should have knowledge and understanding of how oppression, racism, discrimination, and stereotypes affect them personally and in their work."

The development of cultural competence begins in basic nursing education.

- Have you reflected on your upbringing and childhood to better understand your implicit biases and the ways in which you internalized the messages you received?
- Have you ever considered using language to avoid terms or phrases that may be derogatory or hurtful to other groups?
- How willing are you to give equal attention, care, and support to people regardless of culture, socioeconomic class, religion, gender expression, sexual orientation, or other "differences"?