

CREATING CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS

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Hi. My name is David Chiriboga, and welcome to Creating Cultural Competence in Behavioral Health Organizations. This class is designed to meet a challenge that a lot of practitioners and people who work with behavioral health issues face, where we have an increasingly diverse population, and it's really important to try to understand where they're coming from and what you can do to help them.

I became interested in cultural competence and behavioral health disparities because of the research I've been doing since the '70s on what creates problems for Hispanics and Asians and all kinds of diverse populations and began to realize that one of the big issues was access. Another was limited English proficiency, but beyond that, just a host of factors. And I also began to realize that who I was filtered my perception of what was best practice. And so I began to do research in the area because of that.

This class is organized around a couple of themes, and one of them is getting to know yourself. So we're going to start off by helping you understand what you're like, what the biases and cultural backgrounds you have that affect the way you see the world. Then we're going to be looking at organizations and how they work and also your client population, the kinds of things that may be affecting them and the reservations they may have, the miscommunications they may have about what you're trying to do.

And then we wrap it all up with some assignments where you actually have to take your knowledge and apply it to a particular situation. The takeaway from this course is knowledge about not only yourself and organizations, but how you can affect organizations and the climate they bring to bear in client services.

We're now going from beyond seeing multiculturalism in terms of just race and ethnicity and looking at diversity writ large, ethnic identity, personal identity, the intersection of all of the identities people have in your life, and of course the life of the practitioner who must provide services.