

The background is an abstract watercolor painting. It features a mix of vibrant green and deep blue tones. The colors are blended together, with some areas appearing more saturated and others more washed out. There are visible brushstrokes and some darker, more textured areas, particularly on the left side where the colors seem to meet and create a sense of depth. The overall effect is organic and artistic.

**Cultural Competency:
Honoring Human Diversity
in Our Profession
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Human beings are all different, so the health solutions they choose will be different according to their gender identity, cultural background, sexual orientation, and age.

How will we navigate these differences
as we assist them, with care and
compassion?

How do the regions where people live, whether urban, rural or tribal; the political affiliations, beliefs or frustrations they may be experiencing during this unprecedented time in our nation; and the languages they do or do not speak impact how we will assist them?

How can we grow our skillset with cultural competency when we are doing your work?

... We will deepen our knowledge of inclusivity, and become more skillful with the practice of inclusivity.

Diversity just IS here when we all walk into the room! We are each different; all we have to do is show up, diversity appears!

Inclusivity is what we have the potential to do with that: How do we cultivate the habits & language to include each person, honoring what they bring; the boldness to be willing to tune our profession towards fairness, equity, even social justice?

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“If I didn't define myself for myself, I would be crunched into other people's fantasies for me and eaten alive.”

— [Audre Lorde](#)

“When I discover who I am, I'll be free.”

— [Ralph Ellison](#)

I shared my multiple identities with the group, then asked them to write down theirs, on an index card & then come & hang it on an Identities Gallery ...

Dominant/Non-Dominant Identities

Males

Cis Gender People

Able Bodied People

White people

US-born citizens

Heterosexual folks

Those who live in cities

Females

Transgender People

People w/ Physical & Mental
Limitations or Differences

People of color & biracial
people

People who are
undocumented, & immigrants

Homosexual, bisexual, queer
& questioning folks

Those who live in rural &
tribal areas

Scenarios in Your Profession ...

Let's say you are speaking with someone on the phone and you're not sure of the gender they perform in their daily lives. How do you help them, since you have a form where you have to write down only "male" or "female?"

Practice speaking to your partner in entirely non gender binaried language. Can you leave "he" & "she" out of one entire phone call?

Let's say you're helping people who are undocumented, or they are immigrants: how do you help them if they are afraid to reveal their documentation status?

Scenarios in Your Profession ...

How do you help folks with mental illness when they have non-dominant identities? What are the best Colorado resources for helping figure out how to do that with care & compassion?

Let's say you're helping a lesbian woman, & you yourself are not a lesbian woman & cannot begin to imagine what her unique healthcare needs might be. Who could you ask for support?

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Scenarios in Your Profession ...

What about regional variations -- rural vs urban Coloradoans, tribal Coloradoans ... transportation can be a challenge in certain areas & can interrupt people in their process of having their health care needs met.

How about political affiliation? Some love or hate the Affordable Care Act, some love or hate Trump or Obama. Healthcare is a basic human need, but at this point in time it is very politicized. How will brokers & assisters speak with a person whose political affiliation differs from theirs, without getting thrown off course?

Dyads

1. Describe a recent time from your life when you felt INCLUDED.

2. How could you change one thing about the way you do your work, in order to be more inclusive?

Skillful active listening

- Hearing someone into awareness of choice
- Being heard and understood by another: how that feels
- Listening can change *you* and allow you to be more open

DEBRIEF:

How did it feel to be listened to like that?

What did we hear in the story, when we REALLY listened with care?

What does this show us about active listening?

Empathy

Compassion

Empathy is about feeling other people's pain, & feeling their pleasure
To empathize is to put yourself in their shoes

Compassion is a cognitive understanding of how another person is feeling
To have compassion is to have concern for another

Tips to stay connected in empathy:

Breathe.

Feel your body.

-- Psychology Today

Winding Down

1. In what ways has this workshop given you insight about your own profession?
2. In what ways are you different from the people you assist?
3. In what ways are you like the people you assist?



THANKS!

Thank you for
being here today

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