

Tips for culturally competent practice: Do's and Don'ts

Do . . .

- Research country information prior to meeting the client.
- Assess the survivor's linguistic preferences, and find professional interpretation if needed.
- Consult with colleagues who have knowledge and/or experience working with people from this culture.
- Explore the survivor's cultural and spiritual beliefs about health and healing and allow these to inform your treatment planning.
- Collaborate with the survivor in developing his or her treatment plan.
- Explain your rationale for recommending certain services or treatment methods. Explore the survivor's level of familiarity and comfort with these practices.
- Facilitate an open dialogue for discussing culture, both the survivor's and your own. Point out commonalities and encourage mutual learning.
- Look for cultural strengths such as family and community support, faith and spirituality, traditional beliefs/sayings that help to keep the survivor hopeful and motivated.
- Inquire whether the survivor's beliefs are characteristic of her culture or specific to her family.
- Inquire whether the survivor utilizes traditional healing methods and whether these have been helpful.
- Look for and connect the survivor with resources in his local ethnic communities

Don't

- Assume that a characteristic found in one client from a given culture will be true for others from that culture.
- Refer clients to alternative healing resources that you are personally unfamiliar with.
- Provide services beyond your scope of training.
- Insist on providing a service or treatment method that the client is uncomfortable with.
- Depend solely on the client for your learning about his or her culture. Utilize other resources.