

# Chapter Ten

## Working with Varied Client Populations

# Learning Objectives (slide 1 of 2)

- LO 1: Learn general guidelines to working with a wide range of clients, including:
  1. Individuals from diverse cultural/racial groups
  2. Individuals from diverse religious backgrounds
  3. Women
  4. Men
  5. Lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender individuals
  6. The homeless and the poor
  7. Older persons
  8. Children
  9. Individuals who are HIV positive
  10. The chronically mentally ill
  11. Substance abusers
  12. Individuals with disabilities

## Learning Objectives (slide 2 of 2)

- LO 2: Understand the limits of your competence, and know when to seek out supervision and when to refer to other helpers
- LO 3: Learn how to gain additional expertise in working with a variety of clients

# Working with Varied Clients (slide 1 of 12)

## The Role of Culture and Race in the Helping Relationship

- ✧ Although there are many differences between cultures and ethnic groups, these broad suggestions can be applied to all groups:
  1. Have the right attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills
  2. Encourage client to speak their own language
  3. Assess the cultural identity of the client
  4. Check that you are accurately interpreting nonverbal communication
  5. Use alternative modes of communication
  6. Assess the impact of sociopolitical issues on the client
  7. Encourage clients to share culturally significant and personally relevant items
  8. Vary the helping environment

# Working with Varied Clients (slide 2 of 12)

## The Role of Religion in the Helping Relationship

- ✧ Helpers need to understand the diversity of religious beliefs in America.
  1. Have the right attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills
  2. Determine the clients' religious background early in the relationship
  3. Ask the client how important religion is in their life
  4. Assess the client's level of faith development
  5. Do not make false assumptions
  6. Become familiar with religious beliefs, holidays, and traditions
  7. Understand that religion can affect a client on an unconscious level

# Working with Varied Clients (slide 3 of 12)

## **Role of Gender in the Helping Relationship (Gender-Aware Helping)**

- ✧ Respect the right of the clients to choose their own gender role, regardless of political correctness
- ✧ Common differences between men and women (See Table 10.1)

## **Guidelines for Helping Women**

1. Have right attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, and skills
2. Ensure that the helping approach being used has been adapted for women
3. Establish relationship, give up your power, demystify helping process
4. Identify social/political issues related to client's problems and use them to set goals
5. Use a wellness model and avoid the use of diagnosis and labels
6. Validate and legitimize a woman's angry feelings toward her predicament
7. Promote healing by learning about women's issues
8. Provide a safe environment as clients understand new connections with women
9. Provide a safe environment to help women understand anger toward men
10. Help clients deal with conflicting feelings between traditional and newfound values
11. Facilitate the integration of new identity
12. Say goodbye

# Working with Varied Clients (slide 4 of 12)

## Gender Aware Helping (Cont'd)

### Guidelines for Helping Men

1. Have right attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, and skills
2. Accept men where they are to help build trust
3. Do not push them to express feelings
4. Early in the helping relationship, validate the man's feelings
5. Validate the man's view of how he has been constrained by sex-role stereotypes
6. Develop goals
7. Begin to discuss developmental issues
8. Slowly encourage expression of new feelings
9. Explore underlying issues and reinforce new ways of understanding the world
10. Encourage behavioral change
11. Encourage integration of new feelings, ways of thinking, and behaviors
12. Encourage new male relationships
13. Say goodbye

# Working with Varied Clients (slide 5 of 12)

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Individuals

- ✧ Sexual orientation and sexual identity are determined early in life by biological factors.
- ✧ Although social factors may be an influence, choice is not an option.
- ✧ Heterosexism is still a problem, as hate crimes against LGBT people are still common.

## Guidelines:

1. Have the right attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills
2. Have a gay-, lesbian-, and bisexual-, and transgender-friendly office
3. Help LGBT clients to understand and combat societal forms of oppression
4. Have an affirmative and nonheterosexist attitude
5. Do not jump to conclusions about lifestyle
6. Understand the differences between gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals
7. Know about community resources that may be helpful to LGBT individuals
8. Know identity issues
9. Understand the complexity of sexuality
10. Understand the idiosyncrasies of different religious views regarding homosexuality
11. Recognize unique issues faced by LGBT clients



# Working with Varied Clients (slide 6 of 12)

## The Hungry, Homeless, and the Poor

- ✧ Approximately 580,000 people homeless each day in the United States.
- ✧ About 25% of those who live in poverty in a given year in the U.S. are children.

## Guidelines

1. Have the right attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills
2. Focus on client's social issues (e.g., help clients obtain basic needs if necessary)
3. Know the clients racial, ethnic, and/or cultural background
4. Be knowledgeable about health risks
5. Be prepared to deal with multiple issues
6. Know about developmental delays and be prepared to refer
7. Know psychological effects
8. Know resources
9. Be an advocate and stay committed

# Working with Varied Clients (slide 7 of 12)

## Older Persons

- ✧ It is predicted that 20% of the population will be over 65 by 2030.
- ✧ This creates a serious need for people trained in the care of older adults.

## Guidelines

1. Have the right attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills.
2. Adapt your helping style to fit the client's various needs
3. Build a trusting relationship
4. Be knowledgeable about issues many older persons face
5. Know about possible and probable health changes
6. Have empathy for changes in interpersonal relationships
7. Know about physical and psychological causes of sexual dysfunction
8. Involve the client's family and friends

# Working with Varied Clients (slide 8 of 12)

## Children

- ✧ 20% of children from 8 to 15 years of age have had a “severe” mental disorder, and 13% of them have had a disorder within the past year.

## Guidelines

1. Have the right attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills.
2. Know the limits of confidentiality
3. Know developmental theory
4. Use appropriate counseling skills
5. Use alternative methods of communication
6. Don't lead the child
7. Know relevant laws
8. Know available resources
9. Practice appropriate closure

# Working with Varied Clients (slide 9 of 12)

## Individuals who are HIV Positive

- ✧ Approximately 1.2 million people are living with HIV in the United States; nearly 1 in 7 are unaware of it.
- ✧ In the world, 34 million children and adults are living with HIV.
- ✧ 650,00 Americans have died from AIDS since it was first identified.

## Guidelines

1. Have the right attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills
2. Know the cultural background of your client
3. Know the disease and combat myths
4. Be prepared to take on uncommon roles
5. Be prepared to deal with unique treatment issues
6. Deal with your own feelings about mortality
7. Understand ethical and legal implications of working clients who may pose a risk to others or are dealing with end-of-life decisions
8. Offer a “strength based” approach

# Working with Varied Clients (slide 10 of 12)

## The Chronically Mentally Ill

- ✧ 20-25% of Americans are diagnosed with a mental disorder every year.
- ✧ 26% of homeless people have severe psychiatric problems.

## Guidelines

1. Have the right attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills
2. Help clients understand his or her mental illness
3. Help client work through feelings concerning his or her mental illness
4. Ensure attendance
5. Assure compliance with medication
6. Assure accurate diagnosis
7. Reevaluate treatment plan and do not give up
8. Involve the client's family
9. Know resources

# Working with Varied Clients (slide 11 of 12)

## Individuals with Substance Abuse

- ✧ About 9% of Americans need help for a substance problem, but only 1% of them are actually receiving help.
- ✧ Substance problems can impact people of any sex, age, or socioeconomic status.

## Guidelines

1. Have the right attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills
2. Do an appropriate assessment
3. Gain knowledge about substance abuse
4. Build a relationship and stay committed
5. Be prepared to refer to a therapist
6. Be prepared to refer to rehab facilities or hospitals
7. Be prepared to refer to a self-help group
8. Include family and friends as needed
9. Stay in touch and stay committed

# Working with Varied Clients (slide 12 of 12)

## Individuals with Disabilities

- ✧ Approximately 56.7 million Americans have a disability (18.7%).
- ✧ Many different kinds of disabilities
- ✧ Federal rules offer the right to many services

## Guidelines

1. Have the right attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills
2. Have knowledge of the many disabling conditions
3. Help clients know their disability
4. Assist the client through the grieving process
5. Know referral sources
6. Know the law and inform your client of the law
7. Be prepared to do or refer for vocational/career counseling
8. Include the family
9. Be an advocate
10. Empower your clients

# Ethical, Professional, and Legal Issues/Effective HSPs

## ✧ **Making Wise Decisions**

- ✧ It is necessary to recognize the limitations of your own knowledge, and to actively seek ongoing training and supervision in working with diverse populations.

## ✧ **The Effective Human Service Professional**

- ✧ Cultural competence can be achieved in many ways
  1. Course offerings
  2. Workshops
  3. Immersion activities
  4. Supervision
  5. Case studies
  6. Discussion groups
  7. Role-plays
  8. Journaling
  9. Readings
  10. Videos



# Summary

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- ✧ General guidelines about working with a range of special groups of people
- ✧ Ethical, professional, and legal issues
- ✧ The effective human service professional seeks out training and knowledge