



**LMU**

**D & I QUICK TIPS**

USEFUL REFERENCES IN  
THE PROMOTION OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION  
**CULTURAL HUMILITY & RESPECT**

**Everyone  
experiences  
the world  
differently.**

# Cultural Humility & Respect

## DEFINITION

**Cultural humility** is the “ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the [person]” (Hook, Davis, Owen, Worthington & Utsey, 2013). Practicing cultural humility is a way of **showing respect and being culturally responsive** to other people with social identities and cultural backgrounds different than your own.

## IMPORTANCE

[Responsiveness](#) to diverse experiences means considering that culture is multifaceted: It is not limited to race or heritage, but is characterized also by religion, language, roles of family, outward expressions, education, and other aspects of life upon which we place value.

Key to this is understanding how the dominant values in our society shape everyday experiences for everyone (e.g., societal standards for what is considered “normal” and “American” such as Christian symbolism during the [holiday season](#), expectations of formal and informal dress, etc.).

Practicing cultural humility fosters a deeper knowledge of others, validates others’ cultural identities, and leads to a more inclusive and productive work/educational environment, as well as encourage richer interpersonal connections with others.

Williams, LQ (2017). [How to Accept and Respect Other Cultures](#). Owlcation.

## A Practice of Cultural Humility at Three Levels

### INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

#### Self-Reflection and Awareness

- **of Self:** What are your cultural values and where does your identity stem from? How can you grow and gain greater self-understanding?
- **of Others:** How much do you know and understand about people with various identities different from your own? How do your feelings and implicit biases affect how you relate to others?

### INTERPERSONAL LEVEL

#### Respect and Openness

- **Recognize that others may experience reality in a different way than you do and resist imposing your values on others.**  
If you don’t perceive or encounter the same barriers, biases, or discrimination as someone else, it doesn’t mean it isn’t happening or real for them.
- **Resist the urge to dehumanize or objectify others.**  
Take care with language, humor, or satire that may mock, dismiss, or minimize the experience or identity of others.

### SOCIAL LEVEL

#### Solidarity and Accompaniment

- **Question the usual assumptions.** How are groups included or excluded in how questions are asked and what choices are made in various settings? How are groups portrayed, and from whose perspective? How do we address the broader social issues reflected in these patterns?
- **Follow, don’t lead, when the communities concerned are not your own.** Adopt the role of learner. Adjust your behaviors and follow the lead of the community in question. Recognize that others are experts in their own experiences and focus on strengths, not deficits.

## Cultural Humility: Terms to Know

**Cultural competence** is a set of congruent **behaviors, attitudes, and policies** that come together in a system, agency or among professionals and enable that system, agency or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (Cross et al, 1989).

**Cultural appropriation** is the act of adopting and using intellectual property, cultural expressions, practices, and symbols from a culture outside of your own **without understanding or respecting** the original culture and context.

**Interculturalism** is the support for **cross-cultural dialogue** and **challenging self-segregation tendencies** by sharing and learning across cultures with the aim of promoting understanding, equity, harmony, and justice in a diverse society.

More resources found on

<https://resources.lmu.edu/officeofinterculturalaffairs/resources/capacitybuilding/>



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