

**CULTURAL HUMILITY
IN ADVOCACY:**
**NAVIGATING SYSTEMS
WITHOUT LOSING SURVIVORS**

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PFA CHILD-RELATED RELIEF FACILITATOR

- JD, Widener University School of Law
- BA, DeSales University
- 20+ years in DEI, child welfare, family court, and community-based services
- Focused on cultural humility, equity, and systems collaboration
- Passionate about improving how families experience systems
- Enjoys travel, family, and community connection

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PFA COMPLIANCE COORDINATOR AT FAMILY COURT

- Graduate from the University of Delaware
- Bachelor of Arts in Sociology & Women and Gender Studies
- Concentration in Domestic Violence Prevention & Services
- Minor in Politics and Social Justice
- Delaware Alliance Against Sexual Violence Executive Board Member
- Domestic Violence Task Force Secretary
- Lover of travel, family & friends, and thrifting

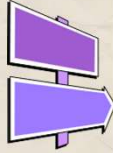
OVERVIEW:

Description:

- Learn advanced skills in applying cultural humility, trauma-informed practice, and equity-centered strategies to survivor advocacy
- Interactive exploration of how power, culture, and systemic bias shape survivors' access to safety, justice, and services
- Advocacy within and alongside legal systems
- Advocate wellbeing and sustainability as a facet of positive survivor outcomes

Learning Objectives:

- Apply cultural humility principles to advocacy scenarios involving courts and legal systems
- Identify systemic and cultural barriers that disproportionately impact marginalized survivors
- Strengthen cross-system collaboration using equity-centered communication and advocacy tools
- Learn about court innovation and advocacy






OUR AGREEMENTS



1 Keep an open mind.	2 As we share, we ask all to be mindful that we all see and hear through a lens of our own experience.	3 Presume positive intent of all, we all came today with shared purpose of learning and growing from and with one another	4 You may feel a bit uncomfortable at times- go with it.	5 Take care of yourself.
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Pause • Reflect • Reframe

PAUSE <i>What am I reacting to?</i> 	REFLECT <i>What assumptions might I be making?</i> 	REFRAME <i>What else might be true?</i> 
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SHARED LANGUAGE FOR THIS SESSION:



Cultural Humility: A lifelong practice of self-reflection, respect, and awareness of power and bias.

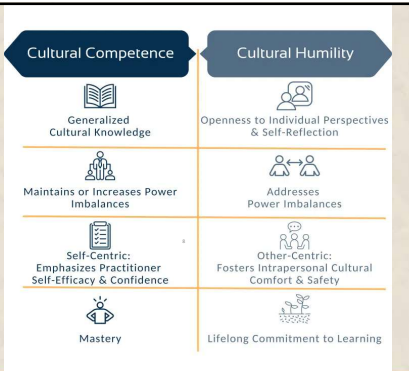
Culture: Shared values, beliefs, and ways of living that shape how people experience the world.



Power: The ability to influence decisions, resources, and outcomes.

Empowerment: Supporting people in having voice, choice, and control over their own lives.



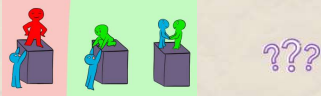


SELF-REFLECTION & LIFELONG LEARNING



Reflection isn't a checkbox, it's an everyday pause button.

RECOGNIZING & CHALLENGING POWER IMBALANCES



- Where does power show up in your role—even when it’s not obvious?
- How do power dynamics shape engagement with survivors and families?
 - What changes when power is acknowledged instead of ignored?

Power is always present. The question is how we use it.


MICROAGGRESSION, MICROASSAULTS, MICROINSULTS, AND MICROINVALIDATIONS SPECIFIC TO SURVIVORS

Microaggressions: A comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group
 Example: “You shouldn’t wear your hair like that”

Microassaults: Overt forms of discrimination in which actors deliberately behave in discriminatory ways, but do not intend to offend someone or may think that their actions are not noticed or harmful
 Example: “Well at least you weren’t drunk”

Microinsults: Communications that convey rudeness, insensitivity, and demean a person’s racial heritage or identity
 Example: “All black men cheat”


Microinvalidations: Communications that exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of certain groups
 Example: “Your sexuality doesn’t matter; we serve all humans here”




IMPLICIT BIAS AND MICROAGGRESSIONS

Confronting microaggressions/bias in the workplace:

- Importance in consistency of confronting bias



Implicit Bias Harvard Test:



IMPLICIT BIAS & PERSONAL TRAUMA: HOW THEY SHOW UP IN PRACTICE

What's happening beneath the surface:

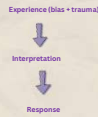
- Implicit bias = automatic assumptions shaped by experience
- Personal & vicarious trauma = emotional filters that influence reactions

How it can show up in advocacy work:

- Interpreting behavior as "noncompliant" or "difficult"
- Reacting quickly instead of responding intentionally
- Over-identifying or sharing personal experiences in ways that blur professional boundaries

Interrupting the pattern:

- Pause: What am I reacting to?
- Reflect: What assumptions might I be making?
- Reframe: What else might be true?



MUTUAL PARTNERSHIPS & RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS



Partnerships grounded in respect, voice, and shared understanding—not assumed equality of power.



Who's not in the room when key decisions are made?

POLITICS VS. POLICY ~~~~~

POWER VS. RULES ~~~~~

How does this affect partnerships made in advocacy?



EXAMPLES OF MUTUAL PARTNERSHIPS & RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS



Partnership example: DV organization partners with an LGBTQ+ organization

- How do both organizations communicate priorities and collaborate respectfully?
- How does a new non-profit show respect to pillar non-profits?
- How can a “box” or “label” that an organization is tied to affect partnership efforts?

ORGANIZATIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL EXAMPLE

INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY



What is one policy, practice, or norm in your workplace that could better support equity and accountability?

DISRUPTING THE INSTITUTIONAL FUNNEL/HIERARCHY

- Organizational power and control
- Allyship beyond the individual level
- Support in protesting hierarchical standards and socialization

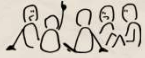


APPLYING A CULTURAL HUMILITY LENS

In your groups, discuss:



- What questions do you have for the individual?
- What power dynamics are present in this scenario?
- How could cultural humility shift what happens next?
- What belief or assumption might you need to rethink?
- What could the system, advocate, or survivor do differently or more intentionally?



FINAL REFLECTION

What is one insight you're taking with you?

What is one assumption you may approach differently?

What is one action you can apply in your work?



THANK YOU! PLEASE SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK!



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SOURCES:

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CULTURAL HUMILITY
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WORLD PSYCHIATRY, "PARENTING AND CHILD MENTAL HEALTH: A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE"
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SAMPLE POLICIES, TEMPLATES, AND TOOLS: HELLO SEVEN GUIDE TO INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE
SYSTEMIC RACISM:
WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE
INTERNALIZED RACISM
ONLINE TOOLS FOR UNDERSTANDING BIAS:

HARVARD IMPLICIT ASSOCIATION TEST – INFORMATION PAGE
[HTTPS://IMPLICIT.HARVARD.EDU/IMPLICIT/IATDETAILS.HTML](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/iatdetails.html)
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