



# Cultural Humility Self-Reflection Guide for Home Visiting Public Health Nurses and Their Managers/Supervisors

Informed by contemporary literature<sup>1,2</sup> and the tacit knowledge of public health nurses, this practice guidance outlines a series of questions to reflect on the embedding of cultural humility in practice. This guide can be used as part of individual reflective practice or a prompt for discussion in reflective supervision. The questions in this guide are open-ended, intended to spark reflection and conversation, and are not a direct measure of a nurse's cultural humility.

## Cultural Humility

A **life-long commitment** to **self-evaluation** to redress **power imbalances** and develop and maintain **respectful relationships** based on **mutual trust**.<sup>2</sup>

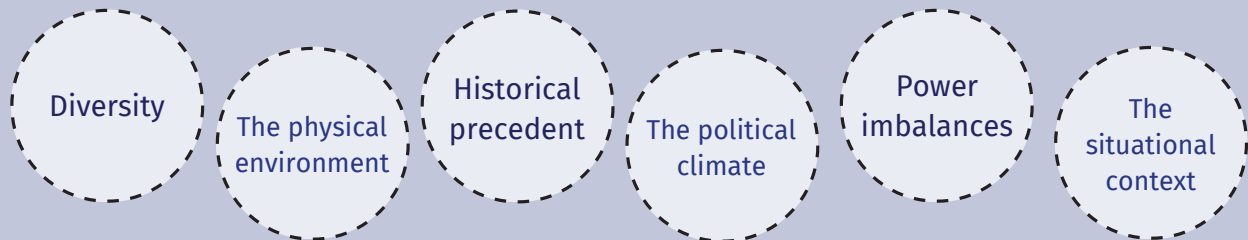


### Life-long commitment

- ✓ Am I interested?
- ✓ Am I fully engaged?
- ✓ Am I enthusiastically saying, “Yes, I want to practice with cultural humility?”
- ✓ Am I willing to embrace and hold discomfort as I see and hold space for a person and their cultural lifestyle and values?
- ✓ Have I done my homework?
- ✓ Am I committed to constantly updating my cultural knowledge and perceptions, and addressing any assumptions?

## Self-evaluation

- ✓ Do I have positive, safe relationships with colleagues and/or my supervisor/manager with whom to self-evaluate and self-reflect?
- ✓ Do I self-evaluate alongside the client? Do I show them I have the transparency to hear them out and do I show them I am working to understand their cultural values and practices?
- ✓ Have I accepted that, at times, I will fail, offend others, or neglect their needs? Am I committed to repair if/when that happens?
- ✓ Do I regularly develop an awareness of my own biases? Do I consider the various factors<sup>1</sup> that contribute to a difference in perspectives, including:



- ✓ Have I already made changes to my practice/interactions in ways that reflect cultural humility?

## Power imbalances

- ✓ How do I hold my power?
- ✓ How do I acknowledge my client's power?
- ✓ How do I give back power that perhaps the processes or systems I'm in may have taken from the client?
- ✓ What are the intersections of my own power and privilege with the work that I do?
- ✓ How am I accountable for unearned privileges?
- ✓ How might my own disadvantages/lack of privilege in society help me to practice with sensitivity and humility?
- ✓ Have I invited clients to name misuses of power, in safe and trustworthy enough ways? What structures and practices are in place to make this naming possible and useful, consistently, and predictably, for every client?
- ✓ Once I've recognized/named misuses of power, have I explored ways to mitigate/address any negative impacts, and give back the power in appropriate ways?
- ✓ Have I addressed any of my biases that have established my own lifestyle and culture as the 'default', 'normal', or 'right' way?



## Respect

- ✓ Do I show my client respect, in a way that works for them?
- ✓ Am I balancing respect for my own values/beliefs/expertise with respect for the client's values/beliefs/expertise?



**Practice note:** Respect and curiosity go hand in hand. You cannot fully respect someone (respect being a verb!) until you use your curiosity to get to know them and their needs. One starts off with the FEELING of respect towards another, then moves forward into the ACTION of respect for them, in the way they'd like to be respected.

Treat others the way THEY would like to be treated.

Let's also remember to define RESPECT the way THEY define it and balancing that with the way you define respect in your own culture. You can share your practices with them too; it goes two ways.

## Relationship

- ✓ Do I approach this relationship with curiosity? Do I assume positive intent?<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ When rifts occur, do I model that repair is possible in relationships? Do I scaffold onto that with my parenting teaching?
- ✓ When rifts occur, do I hold myself accountable? Do I commit to learning what went wrong in my approach or understanding? Do I communicate that maintaining the relationship is a high priority?

## Mutual Respect

- ✓ Do I really show that I trust the client?
- ✓ Do I invest time and energy into earning their trust?



Some cultural humility researchers<sup>4</sup> have found that the process of achieving cultural humility involves attributes such as:



Openness



Self-awareness



Being egoless



Supportive interactions



Self-reflection / self-critique

**A note on self-awareness:** Adapting and adjusting does not mean you have to let go of who you are. In fact, cultural humility involves acknowledging who you are and what you bring to the interaction. No person can ever be completely neutral.

## Advice for managers and supervisors:

When public health nurses experience discomfort or threats to their own psychological safety, feel disregulated and seek reflective supervision, remember to help them “focus on regulating rather than doing, taking the time they need to breathe and not simply jumping into action”<sup>5</sup>.

Use this reflection guide to reflect on your own cultural humility and encourage your team to do the same. Do you show cultural humility in the workplace, with your team? Within your role in the workplace, you can help shift the social dynamic towards cultural humility by modelling cultural humility and encouraging reflection. You can assess your organization’s cultural humility by completing an organizational cultural humility assessment.<sup>2</sup>

Consider the formal (e.g., training) and informal (e.g., bookclub) ways in which you can engage in learning together to build your cultural humility practice.



## References

- <sup>1</sup> Foronda, C., Porter, A., & Phitwong, A. (2021). Psychometric testing of an instrument to measure cultural humility. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, 32(4), 399–404. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1043659620950420>
- <sup>2</sup> Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement (now operating as Healthcare Excellence Canada). (2020). *A Journey We Walk Together: Strengthening Indigenous Cultural Competency in Health Organizations*. Healthcare Excellence Canada. <https://www.healthcareexcellence.ca/en/resources/a-journey-we-walk-together/>
- <sup>3</sup> Carmouche, M. (2023, November 15). *Health Equity: Awareness, Advocacy & Action*. [Webinar]. Public Health Ontario. <https://phnprep.ca/event/health-equity-awareness-advocacy-and-action/>
- <sup>4</sup> Foronda, C., Baptiste, D.-L., Reinholdt, M. M., & Ousman, K. (2015). Cultural humility. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, 27(3), 210–217. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1043659615592677>
- <sup>5</sup> Slade, A. (2023). *Enhancing Attachment and Reflective Parenting in Clinical Practice: A Minding the Baby Approach*. The Guilford Press.

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