Cultural Safety Self-Evaluation Tool

This self-evaluation questionnaire is a list of positive attitudinal and cognitive skills that contribute to building a culturally safe workplace and delivering culturally safe services. It is designed for you to evaluate your own culturally safe attitudes, awareness and knowledge. [1]

	This does not describe me at all				This describes me perfectly
Personal Cultural Self-Awareness					
I have a clear sense of my own ethnic, cultural and racial identity.	1	2	3	4	5
I am aware that, in order to learn more about others, I need to understand and be prepared to share my own culture.	1	2	3	4	5
I am aware of my discomfort when I encounter differences in race, colour, religion, sexual orientation language, and ethnicity.	1	2	3	4	5
I am aware of the assumptions that I hold about people of cultures different from my own.	1	2	3	4	5
I know my family's story of immigration and assimilation into Australia.	1	2	3	4	5
I am aware of how my cultural perspective influences my judgement about what are 'appropriate', 'normal', or 'superior' behaviours, values, and communication styles.	1	2	3	4	5
If I am a White person working with an Aboriginal person, I understand that I will likely be perceived as a person with power and racial privilege, and that I may not be seen as 'unbiased' or as an ally.	1	2	3	4	5
Cultural Sensitivity and Humility					
I know that differences in colour, culture, ethnicity, etc., are important parts of an individual's identity which they value.	1	2	3	4	5
I am knowledgeable about historical incidents in Australia's past that demonstrate racism and exclusion towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. (E.g., the Protection Act, the White Australia policy, Stolen Generation, Self-Management, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
I accept that in cross-cultural situations there can be uncertainty and that uncertainty can make me anxious. It can also mean that I do not respond quickly and take the time needed to get more information.	1	2	3	4	5
I recognise that cultures change over time and can vary from person to person; as does attachment to culture.	1	2	3	4	5
I recognise that achieving cultural competence involves a commitment to learning over a life-time.	1	2	3	4	5
I am conscious about areas where there are gaps my cultural knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
I recognise that unconscious bias and stereotypes build up over a lifetime and impact on my judgments of people who belong to groups which are different from mine.	1	2	3	4	5

	This does not describe me at all				This describes me perfectly
Developing Personal Ability					
I am developing ways to interact respectfully and effectively with individuals and groups.	1	2	3	4	5
I am aware of my stereotypes as they arise and have developed personal strategies for reducing the harm they cause.	1	2	3	4	5
I can effectively intervene when I observe others behaving in racist and/or discriminatory manner.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to adapt my communication style to interact effectively with people who communicate in ways that are different from my own.	1	2	3	4	5
I seek out people who challenge me to maintain and increase the cross-cultural skills I have.	1	2	3	4	5
I am actively involved in initiatives, small or big, that promote understanding among members of diverse groups.	1	2	3	4	5
I take any opportunity to put myself in places where I can learn about difference and create relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
I am learning about and put into practice the specific cultural protocols and practices which are necessary for my work.	1	2	3	4	5
My colleagues who are Aboriginal, immigrants or minorities consider me an ally and know that I will support them with culturally appropriate ways.	1	2	3	4	5
I work hard to understand the perspectives of others and consult with my diverse colleagues about culturally respectful and appropriate courses of action.	1	2	3	4	5
I know and use a variety of relationship building skills to create connections with people who are different from me.	1	2	3	4	5
Personal Motivation					
I recognise that my knowledge of certain cultural groups is limited and I am committed to creating opportunities to learn more.	1	2	3	4	5
I commit to really listening to people's answers before asking another question.	1	2	3	4	5
I will make mistakes and faux pas, and will learn from them.	1	2	3	4	5
I will not hide behind the claim of "colour blindness" or say to groups different to mine: "I thought you wanted equality".	1	2	3	4	5
I want to learn how to more effectively value diversity.	1	2	3	4	5
I view human difference as positive and a cause for celebration.	1	2	3	4	5

Calculate the average score for each section. Where do you need to do better?

A guide to each section

Personal Cultural Self-Awareness

This scale measures the degree to which you're aware that you bring your own cultural background into every interaction with others. As we grow up, we see our own culture as being the "norm", when in actual fact – the "norm" is different depending on what culture you belong to. Being aware of this is the first step to creating a culturally safe environment.

Cultural Sensitivity and Humility

This scale measures the degree to which you're aware of the impact cultural differences might make on your own level of comfort, as well as the level of comfort and confidence of the people you are interacting with. Cultural humility is a process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience. It's important to remember that you don't need to be an expert in someone else's culture to be sensitive to the difficulties that they may be experiencing as a result of living and operating in our new culture. It's really just taking empathy to the next level.

Developing Personal Cultural Competence

This scale measures the degree to which you currently engage in actions that help you to develop your own levels of cultural safety and competence. The extent to which you try to consciously practice and develop your competence by putting yourself in situations that will challenge you, educate you, and expand your experience. It also gives an indication of how willing you are to support and champion the diverse groups you come in contact with.

Personal Motivation

This scale measures the degree to which you are personally motivated to develop your cultural competence and safety. It gives an indication of the extent to which you are willing to go the extra mile and create learning opportunities for yourself, so that you can continue to grow your own ability to provide a culturally safe space for others.

What were your thoughts as you completed the questions? What surprised you?

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About Cultural Safety

Cultural Safety first came to prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and was spearheaded by the work of Moari nurses like Irihapeti Ramsden. What she wrote about cultural safety in nursing education then still strikes a chord all through our modern enlightened society.

> *You people talk about legal safety, ethical safety, and safety in clinical practices and a safe knowledge base, but what of cultural safety*?[2]
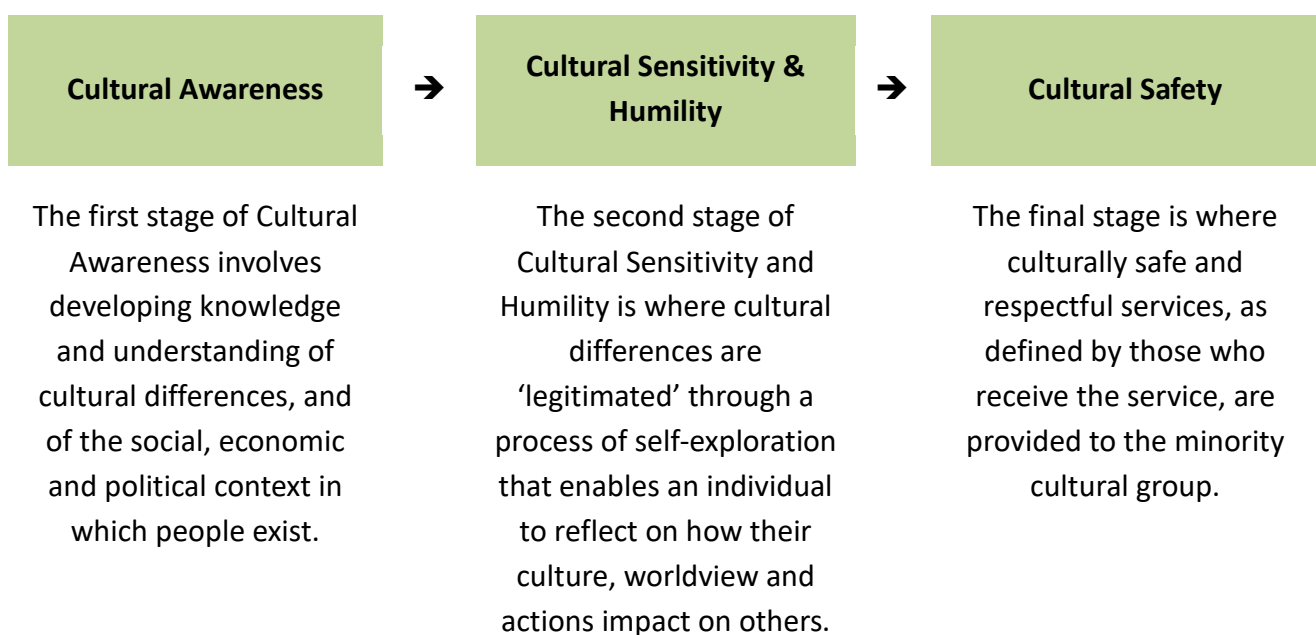
Her Indigenous nursing students were experiencing ongoing institutional racism, and lack of appropriate opportunities. Sound familiar?

One definition of cultural safety that has emerged from years of reflection, argument and discussion between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff and students, is the following:

> *Cultural Safety is more or less - an environment which is safe for people; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning together with dignity, and truly listening.*

Developing Cultural Safety

The process toward becoming culturally safe includes three key elements: Cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity and cultural safety. Although these are related concepts, it is important to understand that they are not the same as each other. All need to be achieved to be in a position to negotiate culturally safe interactions with others. A person who can understand his/her own culture and the concept of transfer of power between dominant and less dominant groups can be culturally safe in a number of contexts.

Cultural Awareness →	**Cultural Sensitivity & Humility** →	**Cultural Safety**
The first stage of Cultural Awareness involves developing knowledge and understanding of cultural differences, and of the social, economic and political context in which people exist.	The second stage of Cultural Sensitivity and Humility is where cultural differences are 'legitimated' through a process of self-exploration that enables an individual to reflect on how their culture, worldview and actions impact on others.	The final stage is where culturally safe and respectful services, as defined by those who receive the service, are provided to the minority cultural group.

How culturally safe are you?

An important principle of cultural safety is that it doesn't ask people to focus on the cultural dimensions of any culture other than their own. Instead, cultural safety is primarily:

- about examining our own cultural identities and attitudes, and

- being open-minded and flexible in our attitudes towards people from cultures other than our own.

Identifying what makes someone else different is simple - their English isn't very good or they don't do things in the same way as others (Morris, 2010). Understanding our own culture and its influence on how we think, feel and behave is much harder. However, in the increasingly multicultural environments in which we all live and work, the importance of being culturally safe in what we do cannot be underestimated.

Strategies that enhance the ability to be culturally safe include:

- reflecting on one's own culture, attitudes and beliefs about 'others'
- clear, value free, open and respectful communication
- developing trust
- recognising and avoiding stereotypical barriers
- being prepared to engage with others in a two-way dialogue where knowledge is shared
- understanding the influence of culture shock

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1. [1] This self-evaluation tool was developed by the *Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society* for the purposes of improving culturally safe awareness in health care workers. The questionnaire was adapted by Dr Helen Siddel from Fox J, & Schultz (2014). Cultural Safety initiative: Awareness, sensitivity and safety SPH ER, Submission to the Aboriginal Health Team of Island Health May 2014 retrieved in October 2016 from https://docplayer.net/40259275-Cultural-safety-initiative-awareness-sensitivity-and-safety-sph-er.html .

2. [2] https://www.mja.com.au/journal/2010/193/3/cultural-safety-health-aboriginal-people-will-it-work-australia