The LEARN Model for Cultural Competency

L   Listen with empathy and understanding to the person's perception of the situation

E   Elicit culturally relevant information and

        Explain your perception of the situation

A   Acknowledge the other person's strengths rather than pointing out their deficits

R   Recommend options/alternatives and

        Respect the person and their choices

N   Negotiate agreement

(Adapted from Berlin & Fowkes, 1983)

Cultural Competence Continuum

1. Cultural Destructiveness: Attitudes, policies, and practices that are destructive to a particular culture (eg, English only policies). The outcome of cultural destruction is the demise of the client's access to cultural folklore or folkways as an integral part of the treatment or education process. The intention is to undermine or replace the customs of another culture.

2. Cultural Incapacity: Resistance to construction of culturally competent services, may be parternalistic or favor clients of color/different cultures who act like mainstream clients (eg, Asians who are expressive of feelings). No intention to be destructive, simply unable to be responsive (eg, treatment/education that reflects only one cultural paradigm).

3. Cultural Blindness: Perceiving or treating all clients as the same/equal, while ignoring cultural strengths (eg, Children and Families Services: "We don't get Asian, Hispanic, African-American clients"). Providers tend to blame clients for their deficiencies. Again, the "good" client approximates a middle-class non-minority life style. Express policy unbiased: "We treat everyone alike."

4. Pre-Competence: Desire to be culturally competent, but may lack information on how to do that. Aware of cultural differences. May perceive cultural differences as barriers. Attempts to improve services, initiates training opportunity.

5. Cultural Proficiency: Culturally compatible services, policies, programs. Service goals, definitions are adapted. Does continual self-assessment on this dimension. Values diversity; recognizes dynamics of differences, including relations of power to class/ethnicity/culture. Works in partnership with , members of minority communities. Cultural knowledge is mandated into service delivery systems.