

Cultural Safety A Self Assessment Tool for Healthcare Providers and Organizations

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This interactive workshop instructs participants on how to use a Cultural Safety Self-Assessment Tool to develop cultural safe practices and organizations. The session explores the concept of cultural safety and its practical implications for program and policy designed to improve the health and the wellness of First Nations, Inuit and Métis. The workshop will demonstrate that cultural safety can shift from a being a concept to a tool to deliver culturally safe health care services.

The interactive workshop will show participants how to ‘decolonize’ health care services by developing transformative relationships based on trust. The workshop uses case studies to show how cultural safety and Indigenous Knowledge has helped communities engage in healing that led to lasting change. The workshop would result in a series of next steps or recommendation for the future of health and wellness in five areas; training, recognition, strategies, research and education.

What is safety?

Safety for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation’s (AHF) projects can be defined as both personal safety and cultural safety, alluding to the identity of every person as an individual and as a member of a cultural community. The first step in the healing process is to establish safety and trust with clients. Safety can restore power and control to survivors and foster responsibility for self and a feeling of belonging.

Safety for Aboriginal Healing Foundation Projects (Simon Brascoupé, 2008)

A. Personal Safety: *What do we mean by personal safety for survivors, workers and in centres?*

Building trust:

- Build foundation with clients to start intensive treatment.
- Dependability, consistency.
- _____
- _____

Ensure confidentiality:

- Confidentiality and privacy policies clear at all levels of contact (personal and professional).
- _____
- _____

Client rights:

- Rights clearly stated; code of ethics, guiding principles, etc.
- Communicate centre’s principles, e.g., posters in healing centres.
- Advocate for client’s rights.
- Group/team rules or self-directed guidelines created by clients.
- _____
- _____

Safe therapeutic process:

- Intake, triage area or buffer zone for evaluation of needs.
- Explain and introduce the process clearly to clients.
- Orientation process and package for clients.

- Explain and define worker/client boundaries.
- Explain plan or road map for healing journey.
- Clients develop and maintain self-care plan and/or a wellness plan.
- Let clients know they have freedom of choice with options.
- Empower clients.
- _____
- _____

Appropriate:

- Sincere, non-judgemental, trustworthy.
- Walk the talk; be visible and involved in the community.
- Love oneself and have humility.
- Have good intentions about what you do as a service provider.
- Respect choices, cultural diversity in community and other people's ways.
- Don't impose beliefs onto others.
- Have a mentor to turn to for support.
- Practice self-care techniques.
- Ensure workers are healthy mentors.
- Safe hiring; reference, security checks, etc.
- _____
- _____

Create safe atmosphere:

- Warm, respectful, welcoming environments.
- Be available, consistent, open and unbiased.
- Create an environment where clients don't feel shame, e.g., especially if they don't have knowledge or experience.
- Respect is key (signage that encourages respect).
- Listen and learn.
- Be accepting, empathic and don't criticize.
- Be non-judgemental, patient and respectful.
- Use humour.
- _____
- _____

Create comfortable place:

- Building should be warm and welcoming.
- Orientation of building and grounds.
- Create space for healing.
- Naming, i.e., name of facility should be meaningful culturally.
- _____
- _____

Reinforce safety:

- Through proper closure, follow-up and aftercare.
- Survivors need to know that assistance is available throughout their healing journey.
- _____
- _____

B. Cultural Safety: *What does cultural safety mean for survivors, workers and centres?*

Elders:

- Elders' participation is key.
- Know who providers are, i.e., elders who have walked the talk.
- _____
- _____

Cultural activities:

- Explain and introduce process, i.e., reconnect to culture.
- Follow cultural protocols.
- Utilize local cultural resources.
- Traditional ceremonial practices.
- Augment with western, alternative and other practices.
- Encourage participation in the cultural program and activities.
- Feasts, i.e., appropriate behaviour/protocols for Elders' feasts.
- Freedom to choose to participate.
- Respect all cultures – be appropriate for audience and not exclusionary, e.g., smudge, sweet grass, eagle feather.
- Understand family unit and structure and respect relationships, i.e., what does it mean to be father/mother/grandfather/son/aunt etc.
- Encourage parents to educate their children.
- Understand who we are as First Nations people, e.g., do not let diversity become a barrier, such as religious denominations.
- _____
- _____

Cultural competency training:

- Ensure staff understands the diversity of the Become familiar with cultural and other ways, e.g., not only one way.
- Being a First Nations person is a way of life.
- Provide cross-cultural workshops.
- Provide education and awareness about cultural teachings and traditional ceremonies.
- Provide appropriate teaching and encouragement.
- Understand ceremonies and protocols, e.g., similarities/difference between churches and First Nations.
- Retain, speak and learn traditional languages.
- _____
- _____

Physical environment reinforces cultural identity:

- Gardens, healing ponds, sweat lodges, etc.
- Healing room for ceremonies and resource.
- Utilize cultural symbols, e.g., buffalo hides, elk horns, eagle feathers, dream catchers.
- _____
- _____