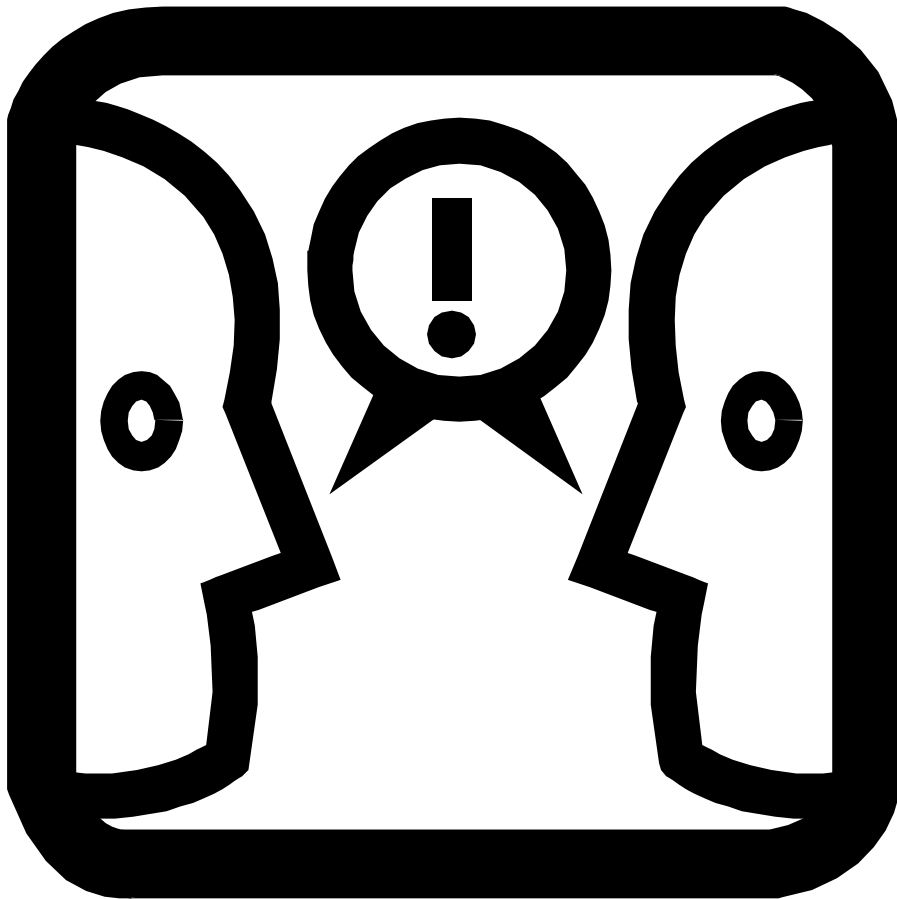


Participant Materials

Module 2: Self-Awareness



Ethnic Communities Council of NSW and
NSW Community Options
2006



This training package was developed out of a research project auspiced by the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW (ECC). The project was initiated as a partnership between the ECC and NSW Community Options, and was directed by a project reference group made up of a variety of representatives (see acknowledgments). The project was funded by the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program through the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC).

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- DISCLAIMER -

This training and the handouts are general in nature and give a broad overview of cultural competency within the context of providing community care case management services. This training package may not provide you with ALL the information you may need to know about this topic, or your role.

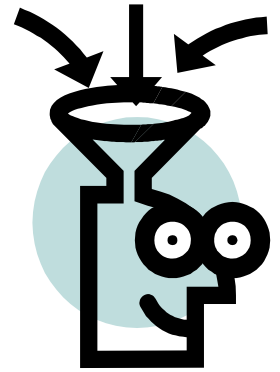
Independent professional advice should be sought about specific issues.

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Learning Objectives and Assessment Tasks



Learning outcome

1. List the 4 elements of self-awareness.
2. Identify your professional knowledge and skill sets.
3. Identify and name some of your emotions and motivations.
4. Demonstrate the process of active reflection.

Assessment task

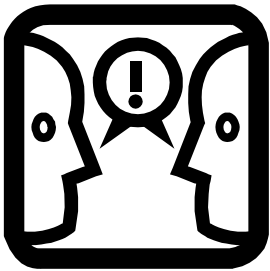
1. Recall and discuss the elements of self-awareness.
2. Discuss the experience of identifying knowledge and skill sets.
3. Watch a video and
 - discuss emotional responses; and
 - identify and discuss motivations.
4. Discuss a written scenario using the process of active reflection and discuss the experience of active reflection.

Introduction

The practice of being self-aware is a vital skill for case managers.

The ability to continuously work through the process of self-awareness is the key to improving personal and professional effectiveness.

Today’s lesson is about exploring the concept of self-awareness and how it relates to case management in general and working in a culturally diverse context.



Activity 1 (Introduce Yourself)

Introduce yourself, telling us:

- your name;
- the service you work for and the programs you case manage in; and
- what you’d like to get out of the day, or what you expect of the day?

Activity 2 (Orientation)

Have you heard of the term self-awareness before?

It’s a term that many of us may have heard, or even have used before. But let’s take a moment to think about what it means.

What do you think self-awareness is?

Activity 3 (Ground Rules)

If we are going to get the maximum benefit out of the day, we need to feel free to engage and explore our personal ethics. This will involve exploring some of our emotions and motivations, as well as discussing issues that relate to our values and beliefs. To be able to do this, we will need to feel safe and supported.

What ground rules do you think the group should have?



TOPIC 1: The 4 Elements of Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is having an understanding that one exists as an individual, who is separate from others and has unique thoughts. It also includes the understanding that others are self-aware and have their own unique thoughts. The concept of self-awareness is related to one's understanding of identity. It is a "personal understanding of the very core of one's own identity" and it describes a state of being where we are the closest we can come to knowing ourselves objectively (Wikipedia, 2006). Self-awareness is the key to understanding our own behaviour and reactions.

As with all things, self-awareness is viewed and valued differently across different cultures. Within cultures heavily influenced by European Enlightenment traditions (such as philosophers Descartes and Rousseau), self-awareness is highly valued and various 'sciences' have been devoted to enabling constant self-monitoring (or scrutinizing). Other cultures place these identity and "self" issues firmly in the realm of spirituality.

Today's lesson fits into the former category. We will be looking at self-awareness as a process where we try to 'step outside of our selves' in order to gain as objective a view of our 'selves' as possible. This training course focuses on self-awareness as THE core underlying process that enables cultural competency to occur.

In *Module 1: What is Cultural Competency*, cultural competency was defined as "the ability to see beyond the bounds of our own cultural interpretations" (Walker, 1991). For this to occur, we need to define where the bounds of our cultural interpretations begin and end. This definition, in effect, describes the process of self-awareness.

TOPIC 2: Knowledge and Skill Awareness

This involves how you perceive your own skills, knowledge, responsibilities and values, both professionally and personally.

It also involves being able to acknowledge your talents and feel confident about yourself and what you can do, including the ability to improve and gain new talents and skills.

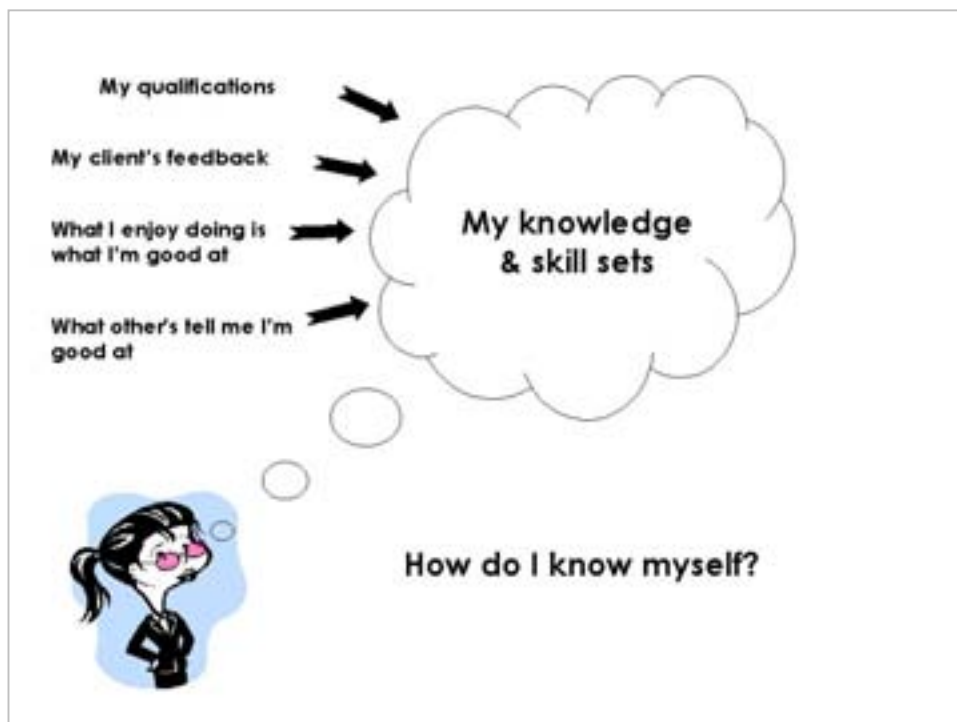
To be self-aware, you need to periodically ask yourself: "What are my knowledge and skills sets?"

How do you 'know' yourself?

We take in information from our observations and feelings, as well as from external feedback. We may also try to see ourselves through the eyes of others.

For example, just before you go out for an event, you look into the mirror and ask yourself, "How do I look?" You are actually asking yourself, "How do I appear to others?"

We look to the external world for evidence of our achievements. Supervision sessions with a trusted supervisor can be valuable in developing our knowledge and skill sets.



Activity 4 (Knowledge and Skill Set)

Complete the following questionnaires. Your answers will remain anonymous. You will not be asked to share your answers with the group. However, you will be asked to talk about the experience of completing the questionnaires.

What I know	Beginner: no idea at all!	Know a little, can talk about it.	Moderate know the basics quite well.	High know this area well.
Health systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HACC Program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DVA systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ethno-specific services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guardianship Tribunal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability services (intellectual)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability services (brain injury)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability services (mental illness)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability services (physical)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability services (children)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Provide a list of some areas you know really well (may not necessarily be in case management):

Provide a list of some of the areas you feel you really should learn more about:

What I can do	Beginner: no idea at all!	Know a little, can talk about it.	Moderate know the basics quite well.	High know this area well.
Type	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get information from a client while developing rapport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use a computer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write evidence-based care plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use an accredited interpreter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Find cultural brokers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interpret census data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negotiate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Provide a list of some professional skills that you can do really well (may not necessarily be in case management):

Provide a list of skills that you feel you really should have, or could improve on:

Activity 5 (Recall the 4 Elements of Self-Awareness)

TOPIC 3: Identifying Emotions and Motivation

The second element of self-awareness is being aware of and responsible for our own emotions and motivations.

In recent years, this area has often been referred to as “Emotional Intelligence”. This term came to prominence in 1995 with Daniel Goleman's book titled: *Emotional Intelligence*.

Goleman argued that emotional intelligence requires the effective awareness of one's own emotions and the emotions of other people. It also requires the ability to control our emotional responses.

Self-awareness also involves understanding ourselves, our goals, our motivations and recognising our behaviour patterns.

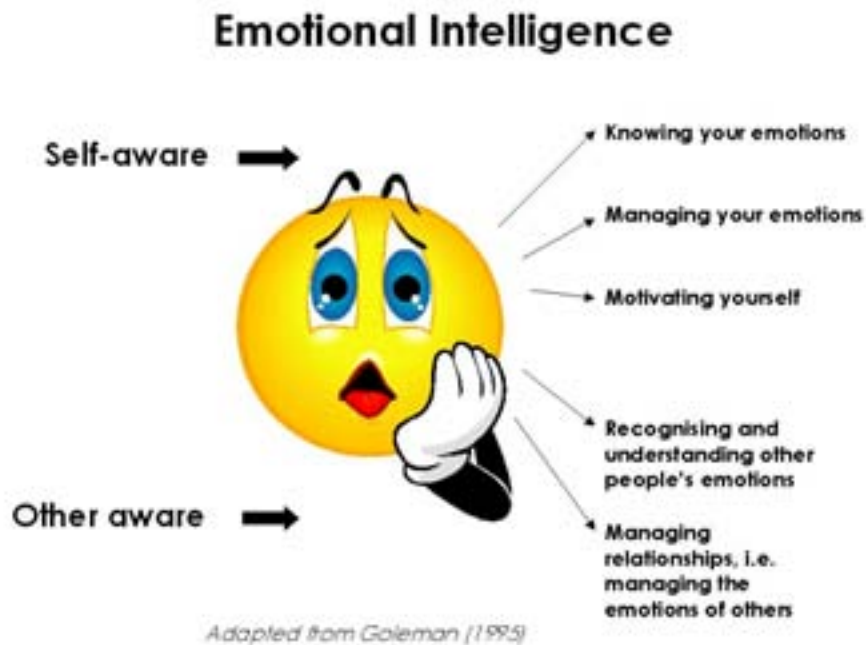
5 Domains of Emotional Intelligence

Goleman identified two areas of awareness:

- self-awareness; and
- other awareness.

That is, awareness of ourselves and awareness of others. Within these two areas Goleman identified five domains of emotional intelligence:

- knowing your emotions;
- managing your emotions;
- motivating yourself;
- recognising and understanding other people's emotions; and
- managing relationships, ie managing the emotions of others.

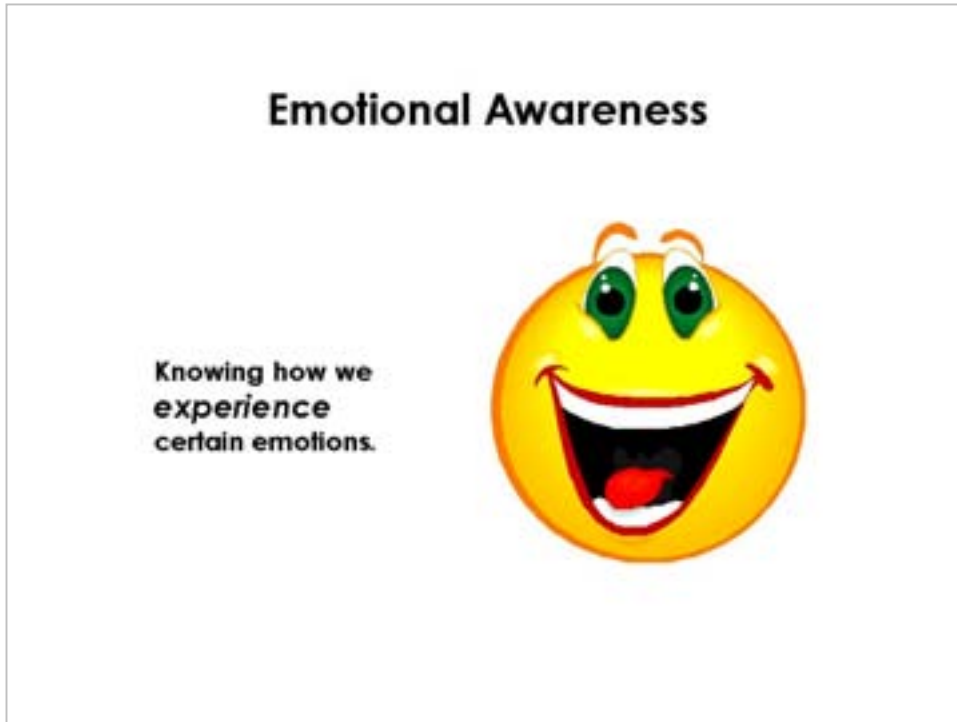


Emotions

Emotional awareness requires us to have EXPERIENCED emotions and then to be able to RECOGNISE them when they come along again.

In order to be emotionally self-aware, we need to:

- stop and think about how we feel;
- know how we uniquely experience our emotions; and
- recognise and name how we're feeling.



Motivational Awareness

Motivational awareness is knowing about “what makes you tick”. It is knowing what makes you do the things you do.

There are two kinds of motivators - extrinsic motivators and intrinsic motivators.

Extrinsic motivators are generated externally, for example:

- getting paid for your work;
- getting verbal praise – although this can be linked to an internal motivator, if we are the type that “wants the approval of others”; or
- acknowledgement.

Intrinsic motivators are generated internally, for example a desire to:

- be seen as an “angel”, a “rescuer” or an expert;
- feel in control; or
- follow religious teachings or ethical guidelines.

By far the most powerful motivators are intrinsic motivators.

Activity 6 (Motivational Awareness)

We are going to watch a scenario from a video called 'Behind Closed Doors: The Hidden Problem of Abuse of Older People.' The NSW Advisory Committee on Abuse of Older People in their Homes developed this video for the NSW Government in 1995 to promote discussion and learning about the issue. Today, we are going to use it to explore motivations.

In small groups, discuss each of the characters that you observed using the following questions.

Topics and Questions

Identify your emotional response to this situation

What do you think are the motivations of the bank clerk?

What factors do you think might underlie his motivations?

What do you think are the motivations of the son?

What factors can you think might underlie the son's motivations?

What do you think are the motivations of the mother?

What factors might underlie her motivations?

TOPIC 4: Awareness of the Existence of the Unconscious

The third element of self-awareness is knowing about the unconscious and how it can affect our emotions and motivations and therefore our behaviour.

What is the Unconscious?

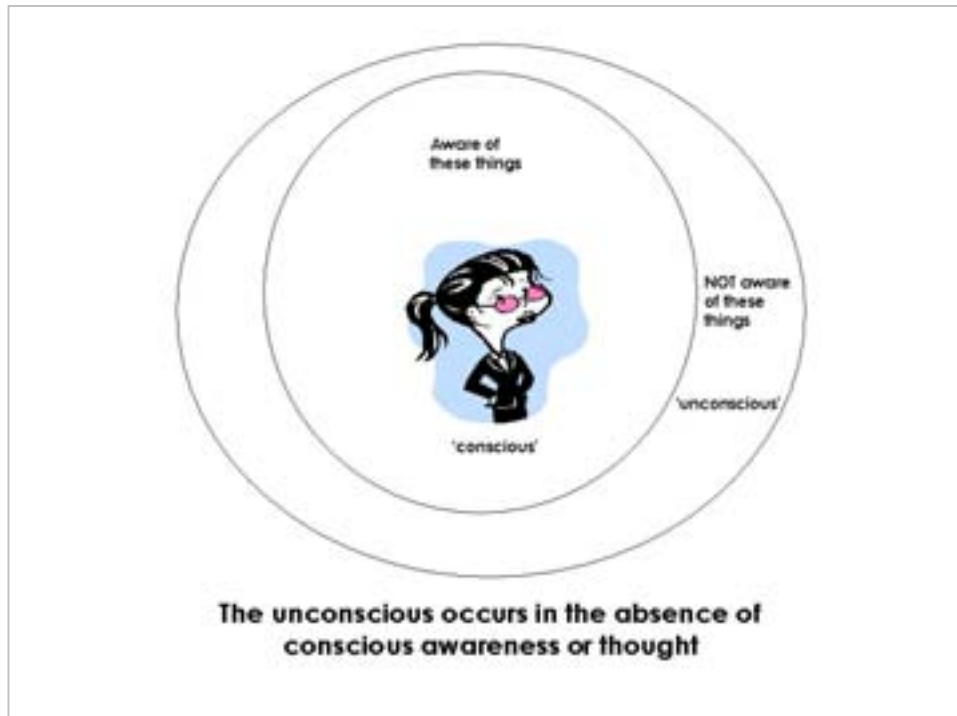
The unconscious is defined as what it is NOT. The unconscious is all the thoughts that we are not aware of.

For example, as learner drivers, all our skills are new and need to be thought about. We need to think about pressing on the accelerator with our right foot, the clutch with the left, changing gears, the car in front of us and so on. When we are new drivers this all has to be consciously thought about.

This is why new drivers are prone to accidents, especially when there are distractions in the car.

For experienced drivers, much of the driving of the car is done unconsciously. So we drive the car without thinking about it. We think about it, but we don't CONSCIOUSLY think about it. Instead we can think about what we are going to do that evening or have for dinner.

This is an example of our brain processing information and making decisions but not doing so consciously.



Culture Can Be Unconscious

It is important to remember that much of what we regard as culture - our practices, beliefs and morals - are created and practiced unconsciously.

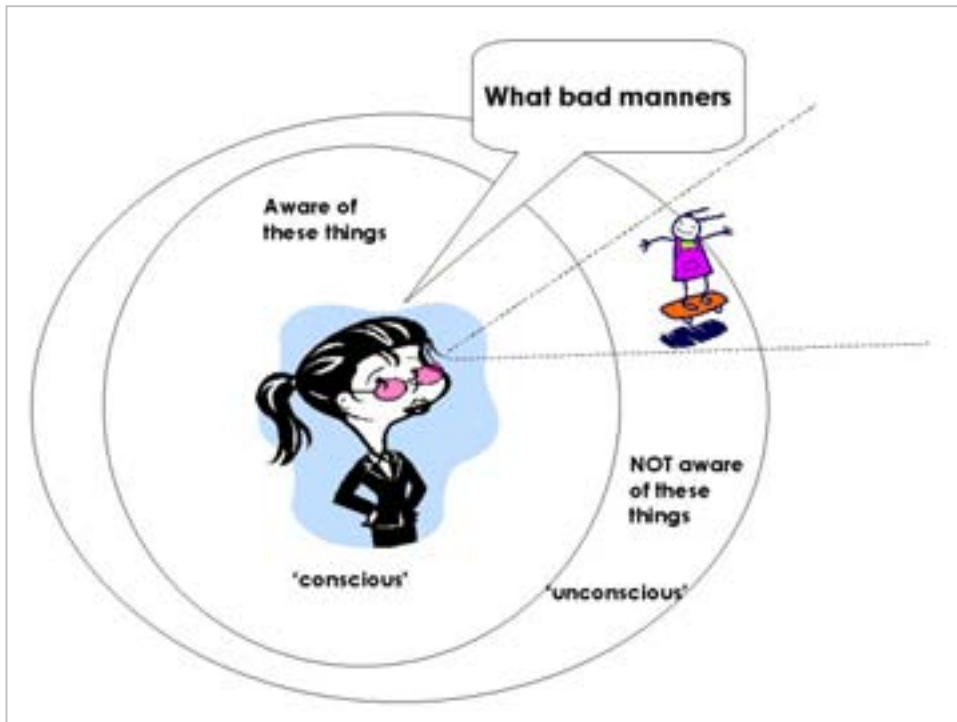
For example, it may not be until you visit another country that you realise that you walk on the left side of the footpath or escalator and that you are compelled to turn off dripping taps or turn the tap off while cleaning your teeth.



When Others Break Our Unconscious Rules

Sometimes it is not until someone breaks one of our unconscious beliefs or rules that we become aware that those rules or beliefs exist.

For example, our belief in what is 'good' or 'poor' behaviour is often deeply ingrained in unconsciously held beliefs.



Shadow

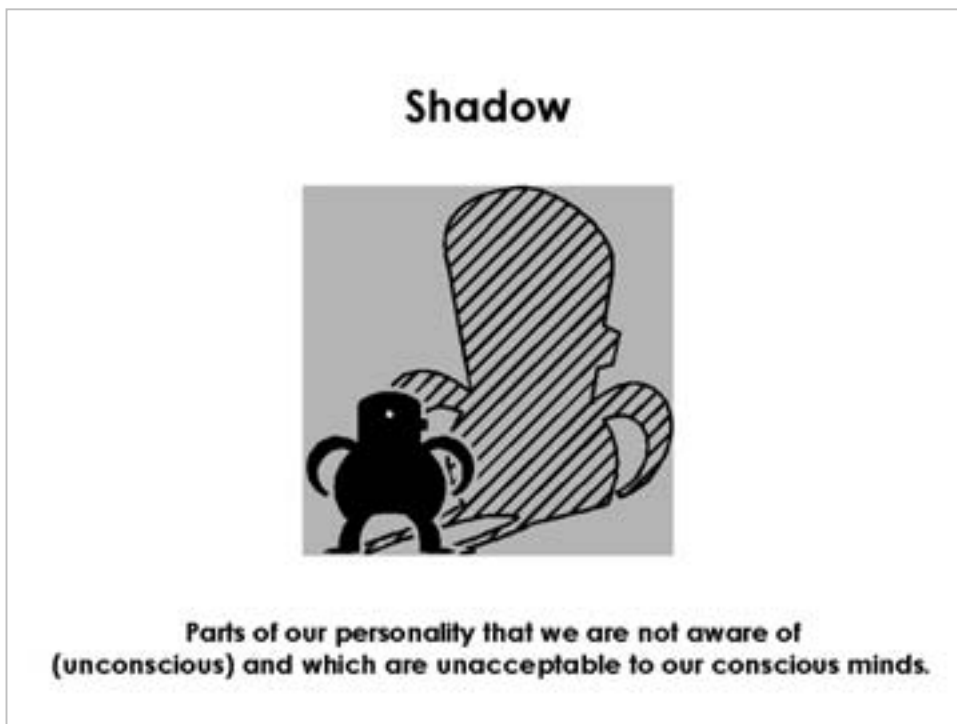
Psychologist Carl Jung developed a very useful concept called SHADOW (Jung, 1978: 171-185).

He argued that there are parts of our personality which we are not aware of and which we cannot accept about ourselves.

This is called our SHADOW. An area of SHADOW you may already know of is projection.

Projection is attributing behaviour, attitudes and traits onto other people that are really part of us (Berne, 1981:208).

There is a saying that "you cannot love or hate something that is not part of yourself." This saying is based on the concept of shadow projection.



Shadow Factors

Besides projection, other factors we need to know about as identified by Eric Berne (1981) includes:

Identification

This includes times when you “really identify” with someone. On the unconscious level, you are taking in the situation symbolically. What is happening becomes strangely important to you. More important than it should be.

For example: the grief you may have felt over the death of Princess Diana.

Displacement

You transfer or displace your feelings about one object / event onto another.

For example: we take the anger we feel towards our boss, out on our partner or the kids.

Rationalisation

This relates to situations in which we hide our true feelings or motives by making self-serving explanations.

For example: we negate our sadness about an important happening by saying that it doesn't really matter.

Denial

This happens when we are unable to see or acknowledge what is obvious to others.

For example: we are so in love with someone that we can't see or admit their faults.

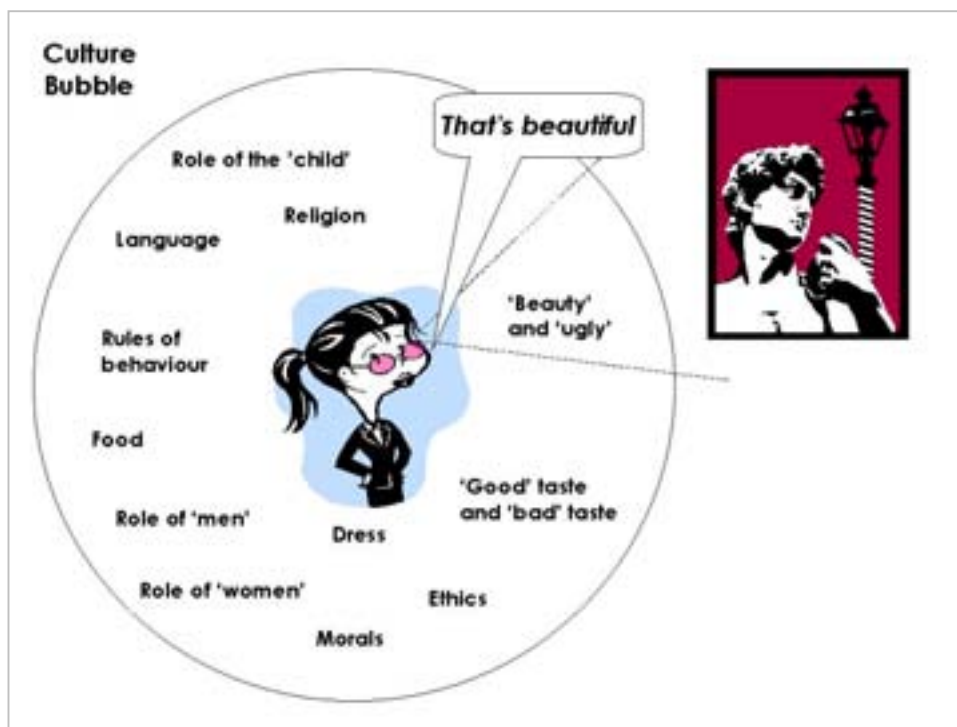
A self-aware person is open to the possibility that any of these factors may affect their behaviour.

Topic 5: Relative Truth

Finally, we come to our fourth element of self-awareness. The awareness of relative truth.

This is simply an acknowledgment that each of us is shaped by our culture, which gives us a unique perspective of the world.

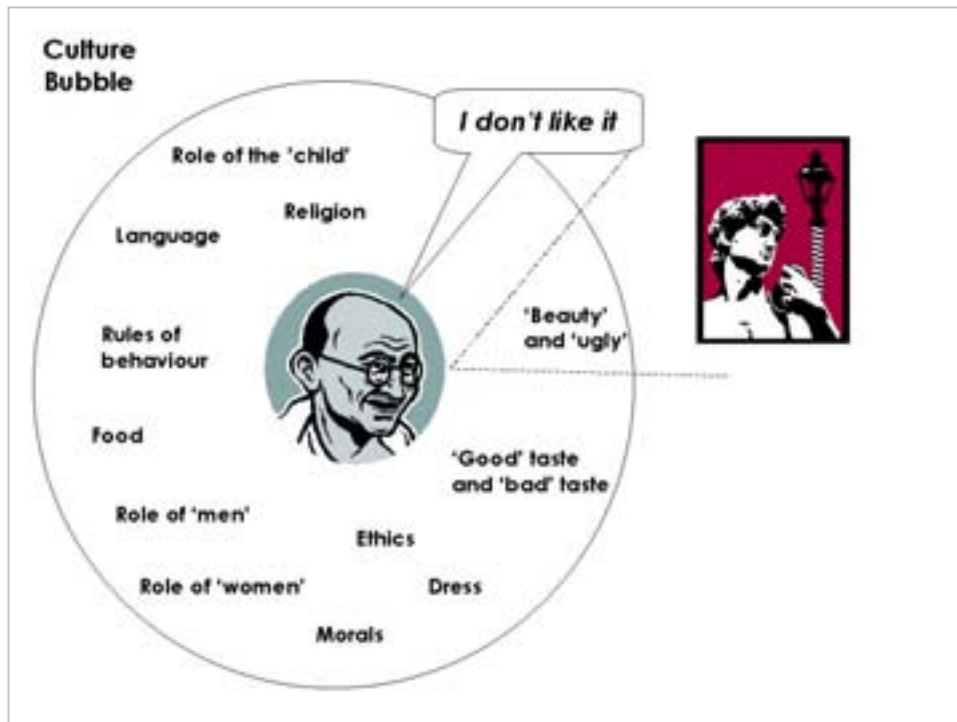
The way we see and make sense of the world is determined by our cultural beliefs, morals, values and ethics; in other words, what we may, for example, believe to be good, bad, right, wrong, beautiful or ugly.



So the fourth element of self-awareness is an awareness that our point of view is unique and that it is constructed symbolically through our culture and our experiences (Jung, 1978).

A culturally competent person will resist the temptation to consider their beliefs as the absolute or only truth.

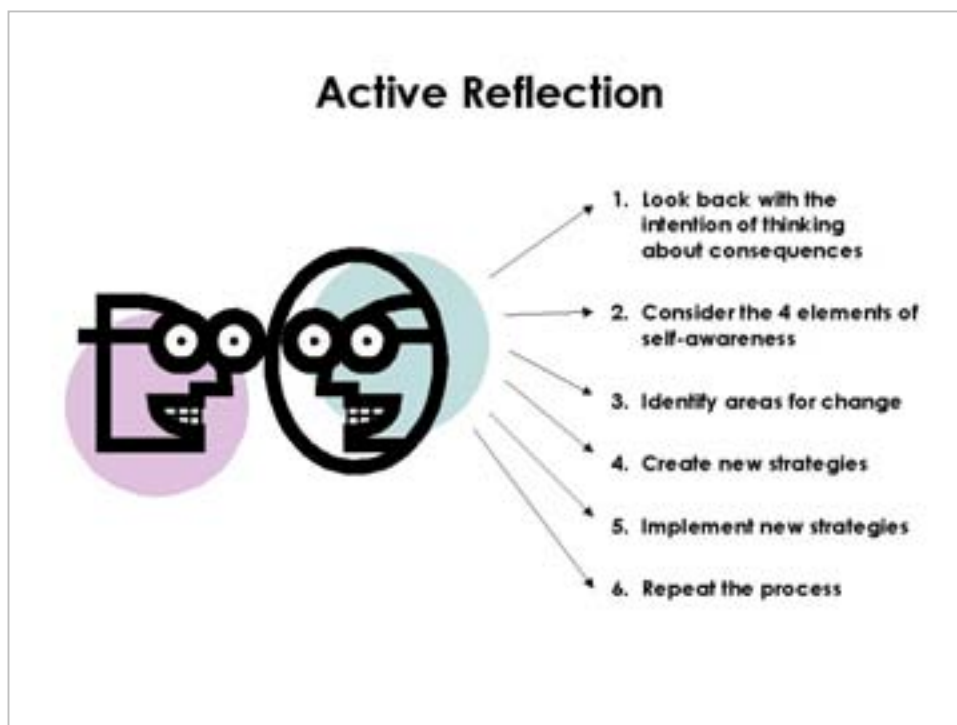
Awareness in this fourth element requires the understanding that everyone does not share our perceptions. Using this premise, we will be better able to think about how others may perceive our actions.



TOPIC 6: Active Reflection

Active reflection is the process by which we practice self-awareness. It can be practised alone but is very useful in supervision. It involves:

- looking back with the intention of thinking about consequences;
- considering the 4 elements of self-awareness;
- identifying areas for change;
- creating new strategies;
- implementing new strategies; and
- repeating the process.



Case Study: Hoa

Hoa is a Case Manager who is allocated to Mr. Trinh, an 85- year old Vietnamese man. Although Hoa has only visited Mr. Trinh a few times, she feels she has developed a rapport with him.

Hoa visits Mr. Trinh to monitor his progress. She wears modest, smart clothing, gold earrings and her favourite bracelet, which her sister gave her. Being of Vietnamese descent, she feels quite prepared for the visit and Mr. Trinh already seems to like her.

When Hoa arrives, Mr. Trinh opens the door and is smiling broadly. He invites her in for tea. She sits on the sofa, placing her materials on the table. When she looks up, she sees that Trinh's face has changed from a smile to a blank look. This is definitely not engaging and quite a change.

Mr. Trinh sits quietly during the entire visit. He answers few of her questions. Hoa asks if Mr. Trinh is all right? He nods silently. She feels quite uncomfortable. It reminds her of how her grandfather used to act when he was angry. Perhaps Mr. Trinh is angry with her? She rushes through her monitoring checklist. She really wants this uncomfortable situation to be over quickly.

She finishes her enquiries and feels relieved that the visit is at an end. As she leaves, she waves a polite goodbye. She thinks she notices Mr. Trinh's eyes settle for a moment on her bracelet but his face remains impassive.

Hoa returns to the office and actively reflects on the situation.

Activity 7 (Active Reflection Practice)

Discuss the case study on the previous page using the five-step process of active reflection.

STEP 1: "Look back with the intention of thinking about consequences"

What were the consequences?

Before the visit, Hoa felt she had developed some rapport. When she arrived at the house, Mr. Trinh was smiling. By the time she sat down, he was stone-faced. What happened?

STEP 2: "Consider the 4 elements of self-awareness"

Knowledge and Skills

Hoa feels confident about her communication skills, she has after all, very successfully completed the assessment and care planning stages with Mr Trinh.

Hoa also feels she has a basic knowledge of Vietnamese customs. However, she does think it is quite possible there is something she's missing here. And it must have been something about what she said, how she behaved, or how she looked. Hoa decides she may need a cultural broker.

Emotional and Motivational

Hoa knows she was motivated to get that monitoring visit done quickly and without fuss. She actually thought it was going to be an easy one. Yes, she did want to finish quickly as possible because she had the kids to pick up from school. She did feel a little rushed during the visit. But no, she decides, she was rushing because she felt uncomfortable and wanted to get away to think.

Emotionally she felt very happy when she left for the visit and first arrived. But after she sat down, she felt uncomfortable. It was the way he was looking at her. It made her feel very tense and she felt like she had done something wrong. She felt like she had disappointed Mr Trinh, somehow.

Activity 7 (Active Reflection Practice - continued)

The Unconscious

Why should she feel like she had disappointed him? Well, he did remind her of her grandfather, didn't he? Perhaps she was identifying with him? And when she really thought about it, she couldn't be 100% certain that he was angry. The only thing she was certain of was that he had stopped smiling.

Relative truth

'Well SOMETHING must be going on for him,' Hoa thinks to herself. She decides that whatever it is, it must be of no consequence to her, but is VERY important to Mr. Trinh.

STEP 3: "Identifying areas for change"

Weighing it all up, Hoa decides the best place to start is to call her friend Ang at the local Migrant Resource Centre. Ang is older than her, born in Vietnam and knows a lot about Vietnamese customs - especially to do with elderly people.

Hoa describes the scenario to Ang. "What were you wearing?" Ang asks.

"Well nothing revealing. I wore modest clothing, gold earrings and that bracelet my sister gave me," Hoa replies.

"The Jade bracelet?" Ang says. "That could be a problem. Many Buddhists wear bracelets like that one."

"Oh, I see", says Hoa. "Mr. Trinh is a devout Catholic."

STEPS 4 & 5: Create and implement new strategies

From here Hoa would create and implement different strategies in order to regain the trust and confidence of Mr Trinh.

Not wearing Jade would be a start.

Activity 8 (Active Reflection)

This is an activity where you have to demonstrate the practice of self-awareness.

Think of a situation in your case management experiences where you were required to reflect on your practice. Try to think of a situation where you encountered cultural difference. If you can't think of one, just choose any scenario that you can.

Analyse your scenario using the 6 steps of active reflection.

STEP 1: "Look back with the intention of thinking about consequences"

STEP 2: "Consider the 4 elements of self-awareness"

Knowledge and Skills

Emotional and Motivational

The Unconscious

Relative truth

STEP 3: "Identifying areas for change"

STEP 4: "Create new strategies"

STEP5: "Implement new strategies"

Summary

Today we've learned about the 4 elements of self-awareness. They are awareness of:

- knowledge and skills;
- emotions and motivations;
- unconscious; and
- relative truth.

When considering knowledge and skills, we discussed how we take information from others and look into ourselves in order to formulate what we believe to be our knowledge and skill set.

We then looked at our emotions and motivations, specifically considering the concept of "Emotional Intelligence" developed by Goleman (1995).

We found that emotional intelligence requires the effective awareness of one's own emotions and the emotions of other people. It also requires the ability to control our emotional responses. Adding to this, we discussed how self-awareness also involves understanding ourselves, our goals, our motivations and recognising our behaviour patterns.

We then considered the third element of self-awareness, which is knowing about the unconscious and how it can affect our emotions and motivations and therefore our behaviour. We learnt about the unconscious and how it consists of all the thoughts that we are not aware of. We learnt that many of our cultural values and beliefs are held in our unconscious and that we may only become aware of these when someone "breaks" our unconsciously held rules. We also considered Carl Jung's concept of "shadow" and the various 'tricks' shadow can play, which include:

- Projection;
- Identification;
- Displacement;
- Rationalisation; and
- Denial.

And finally, we looked at the fourth element of self-awareness, the awareness of relative truth. This is simply an acknowledgment that each of us is shaped by our culture, which gives us a unique perspective of the world. This final aspect is very important to cultural competency.

Putting all these aspects of self-awareness together, we considered the process of active reflection. This technique can assist you to analyse your responses to a particular situation and assist you to find a more objective space from which to consider your encounters with difference.

Active reflection involves:

- looking back with the intention of thinking about consequences;
- considering the 4 elements of self-awareness;
- identifying areas for change;
- creating new strategies;
- implementing new strategies; and
- repeating the process.

This concludes our training for today.

PLEASE COMPLETE YOUR EVALUATION FORM