Embracing Diversity: Treatment and Care in Addictions Counseling addresses diversity aspects to consider within the addiction counseling setting. It explores the reader’s self-awareness, knowledge, and skills regarding various populations and provides information on substance use issues, screening and assessment, and treatment recommendations.

Contributed chapters speak to the unique issues faced by people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds in relation to substance use and treatment. Moreover, the reader learns how to best meet the needs of those who have co-occurring disorders, are involved with the criminal justice system, or are economically disadvantaged. There is also material devoted to the following: adolescents, older adults, women, members of the LGBTQ community, and those who are military/veterans.

For the second edition, each chapter has been fully updated with new research to provide readers with the most accurate, timely information. The text features a new chapter dedicated to the topics of cultural humility and broaching, as well as the addition of a conclusion chapter, which highlights main points across the textbook.

Embracing Diversity prepares counselors to assist individuals who come from differing walks of life and whose backgrounds and experiences must be taken into account to optimize successful outcomes. The book is suitable for courses in addiction studies, psychology, social work, and multicultural counseling.

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# Brief Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>xvii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1.</td>
<td>Diversity Concepts and a Discussion of Racism</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Tiffany Lee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2.</td>
<td>Privilege and White Identity</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Tiffany Lee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3.</td>
<td>Cultural Humility and Broaching</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Tiffany Lee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4.</td>
<td>Microaggressions and Antibias Strategies</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Tiffany Lee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5.</td>
<td>Black/African Americans</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Bianca T. L. Fetherson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6.</td>
<td>Arab Americans</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By W. Bryce Hagedorn, Sejal M. Barden, and Dania Fakhro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7.</td>
<td>Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Giao Tran and Tiffany Lee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 8.</td>
<td>Latino Americans</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Tiffany Lee, Dominique Giroux, and Tara Casady</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 9.</td>
<td>Native Americans</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Dee Sherwood and Karen VanDeusen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 10.</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Tiffany Lee and Heather Greko</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 11.</td>
<td>Persons Identifying as LGBTQ</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Cher N. Edwards, Jordan P. Shannon, and Christy Bauman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 12.</td>
<td>Adolescents and Young Adults</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Tiffany Lee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 13.</td>
<td>Older Adults</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Christine Chasek</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Persons With Co-Occurring Disorders</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Tiffany Lee and Lauren Borges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Persons Within the Criminal Justice System</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Tiffany Lee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Persons With Disabilities</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Tiffany Lee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Persons Who Are Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Ashley J. Blount and Olivia Uwamahoro Williams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Persons Within the Military</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Seth C. W. Hayden, Joan McDowell, and Jessica Rodriguez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: Asking the Right Questions</td>
<td></td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B: The Six Stages of Identity Development</td>
<td></td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td></td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 1. Diversity Concepts and a Discussion of Racism</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By Tiffany Lee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Goals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity Concepts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism and Prejudice</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Racism</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism-Related Stress</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prejudice</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism Is “Institutionalized”</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Questions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 2. Privilege and White Identity</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By Tiffany Lee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Goals</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Exercise</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Video</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Light Is Right”: The Meaning of Skin Color in Our Society</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Exercise</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color Blindness: “Blinded by the White”</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Exercise</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Racial Identity Model</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Exercises</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Video</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 3. Cultural Humility and Broaching</th>
<th>31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By Tiffany Lee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Goals</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facets of Cultural Competency</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural Identity Models</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multicultural Competencies ........................................... 33
Cultural Competency Is Multidimensional ....................... 35
Cultural Humility ........................................................... 37
Broaching .................................................................. 37
  Exercise ................................................................ 39
  Broaching Styles ...................................................... 39
  Four REC Dimensions .............................................. 41
Social Justice and Advocacy ......................................... 43
  On Behalf of .......................................................... 45
  In Collaboration With .............................................. 45
Addiction-Related Counseling Competencies .................. 46
Conclusion .................................................................. 48
Chapter Questions ...................................................... 48
References ................................................................ 49

Chapter 4. Microaggressions and Antibias Strategies .......... 53
  By Tiffany Lee
Learning Goals ............................................................. 53
Sexism .................................................................... 54
Heterosexism and Cisgenderism .................................... 55
  Reflection Questions ............................................... 57
Classism .................................................................... 58
  Reflection Questions ............................................... 58
Microaggressions ......................................................... 60
  Exercise ................................................................ 60
  Reflection Questions ............................................... 62
  Types of Microaggressions ....................................... 62
  Reflection Questions ............................................... 66
Antibias Strategies ....................................................... 66
  Reflection Exercise ................................................. 67
  Secondary Microaggressions .................................... 68
  Implications for Addiction Counseling ....................... 69
  Group Therapy ....................................................... 70
References ................................................................ 72

Chapter 5. Black/African Americans ................................. 75
  By Bianca T. L. Fetherson
Learning Goals ............................................................. 75
Overview .................................................................... 75
Statistics .................................................................... 76
  Etiology and Predictors of Substance Use–Related Problems ........................................... 78
Resiliency Factors ....................................................... 82
Barriers to Treatment .................................................. 83
Treatment Recommendations ...................................... 84
  Afrocentric Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (AACT) ....................................... 84
  AACT Interventions ................................................. 85
Chapter 6. Arab Americans ................................. 93
By W. Bryce Hagedorn, Sejal M. Barden, and Dania Fakhro
Learning Goals ........................................ 93
Overview ............................................. 93
Specific Concerns ....................................... 95
 Trauma ............................................ 95
 Loss and Grief ...................................... 97
 Substance Use ...................................... 97
 Risk Factors ........................................ 98
 Addictive Behaviors .............................. 98
Screening and Assessment ..................... 99
Barriers to Treatment ............................ 102
Resiliency Factors .................................. 103
 Family ............................................ 103
 Religion .......................................... 104
Recommendations for Treatment .............. 105
 Clinical Environment .............................. 105
 Cultural Sensitivity and Responsiveness .......... 106
 Preclinical Awareness .......................... 106
 Initial Connection and Establishing Trust ........ 106
 Approaches and General Techniques ............ 107
 Moving Into the Therapeutic Realm .......... 108
Two Approaches: Empowerment and Support .... 109
 Motivational Interviewing .................... 109
 Mutual Self-Help Support Groups ............ 112
Conclusion ........................................ 113
Chapter Questions ............................ 114
Case Study ........................................ 114
Questions ...................................... 118
References .................................... 118

Chapter 7. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders .......... 125
By Giao Tran and Tiffany Lee
Learning Goals .................................... 125
Overview ........................................ 125
 AAPI-Relevant Terminology .................... 126
 Substance Use .................................... 127
Specific Concerns ................................... 129
 Historical Examples ............................... 129
 History in the Making: COVID-19 Hate Crimes ............... 131
Barriers to Treatment ............................ 133
### Chapter 8. Latino Americans

By Tiffany Lee, Dominique Giroux, and Tara Casady

**Learning Goals**

**Overview**

**Reflection Questions**

**Diversity Among the Latino Population**

**Statistics**

**Risk Factors**

**Specific Concerns**

**Acculturation**

**Reflection Questions**

**Value-Driven Concepts**

**Familismo**

**Simpatía, Dignidad, Respeto, Personalismo, and Confianza**

**Gender Roles**

**Reflection Questions**

**Screening and Assessment**

**Barriers to Treatment**

---

**Lack of English Language Proficiency**

**Psychological Distress Expressed as Somatic Symptoms**

**Stigma**

**The Model Minority Stereotype**

**Resiliency Factors**

**High Sensitivity to Alcohol**

**Later Initiation of Use**

**Multigenerational Living Arrangement**

**Trust of and Respect for Authority Figures**

**Screening and Assessment**

**Phone Screening and Administrative Information Gathering**

**Intake Evaluation**

**Treatment Recommendations**

**Migration**

**Acculturation**

**Language and Use of Interpreters**

**Culture**

**Communication**

**Violence**

**Treatment Planning**

**Partnerships**

**Chapter Questions**

**Case Study**

**Questions**

**Acknowledgment**

**References**
Chapter 9. **Native Americans**  
By Dee Sherwood and Karen VanDeusen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Goals</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American/American Indian Identities</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Use in Native American Communities</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverse Childhood Experiences</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social-Ecological Factors</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American Cultures, Values, and Ways of Being</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The “Indian Problem” and Residential Schools</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Concerns</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening and Assessment</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Identity</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectedness</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma History and Symptoms</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers to Treatment</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resiliency Factors</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment Recommendations</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Questions</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 10. **Women**  
By Tiffany Lee and Heather Greko

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Goals</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Concerns</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Factors</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening and Assessment</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers to Treatment</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resiliency Factors</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 11. Persons Identifying as LGBTQ

By Cher N. Edwards, Jordan P. Shannon, and Christy Bauman

Learning Goals .......................................................... 217
Overview ................................................................. 217
Specific Concerns ......................................................... 219
Screening and Assessment ........................................... 220
Barriers to Treatment .................................................. 221
Resiliency Factors ......................................................... 223
Treatment Recommendations ...................................... 223
   Terminology for LGBTQ Individuals .......................... 223
   The Therapeutic Relationship ..................................... 225
   Sponsorship ........................................................... 225
   The Coming-Out Process ........................................... 225
   Family of Origin and Family of Choice ........................ 226
   Clinical Issues to Consider With LGBTQ Clients .......... 226
Conclusion ............................................................... 228
Chapter Questions ..................................................... 228
Case Study ................................................................. 229
Questions ................................................................. 229
References ................................................................. 229

Chapter 12. Adolescents and Young Adults

By Tiffany Lee

Learning Goals .......................................................... 235
Overview ................................................................. 235
   Middle and High School Students .............................. 236
   Adolescents ............................................................ 237
   Differences by Sex/Gender and Race/Ethnicity ............... 237
   Young Adults .......................................................... 238
   College Students ....................................................... 238
Specific Concerns ......................................................... 239
   Consequences of Use ................................................. 240
Barriers to Treatment .................................................. 241
Resiliency Factors ......................................................... 242
Screening and Assessment ........................................... 243
   Recommended Instruments ....................................... 244
Treatment Recommendations ...................................... 245
   Values Clarification .................................................. 245
   Abstinence Versus Harm Reduction ............................. 246
Other Goals in Treatment ........................................... 246
Family Approaches ................................................. 247
BASICS Approach .................................................... 248
Alternative Peer Group (APG) ...................................... 248
Collegiate Recovery Programs ...................................... 249
Use of Media and Technology ..................................... 250
A Few Considerations ............................................... 250
  Prescription Drug Use ............................................. 250
  Vaping Cannabis Concentrates .................................. 251
  Alcohol and Inhalants ............................................. 251
  Over-the-Counter Cough and Cold Medicines ............... 252
  Legal Involvement and School-Imposed Sanctions .......... 252
  Confidentiality and Duty to Warn ............................ 252
Conclusion .............................................................. 253
Chapter Questions ................................................... 253
Case Study ............................................................ 254
Questions ................................................................ 255
References ................................................................ 255

Chapter 13. Older Adults ............................................. 257
  By Christine Chasek
Learning Goals ......................................................... 257
Overview ................................................................. 257
  Substance Use ........................................................ 258
Specific Concerns ....................................................... 260
  Etiology ................................................................ 260
  Risk Factors .......................................................... 261
Resiliency Factors ...................................................... 263
Barriers to Treatment ............................................... 263
Screening and Assessment .......................................... 264
Treatment Recommendations ..................................... 267
Chapter Questions ................................................... 270
Case Study ............................................................ 270
Questions ................................................................ 271
References ................................................................ 271

Chapter 14. Persons With Co-Occurring Disorders ....... 275
  By Tiffany Lee and Lauren Borges
Learning Goals ......................................................... 275
Overview ................................................................. 275
Statistics ................................................................ 276
Mood Disorders ........................................................ 277
  Major Depressive Disorder ....................................... 277
  Dysthymia ............................................................. 277
  Bipolar Disorder .................................................... 278
Anxiety Disorders ....................................................... 279
Chapter 15. Persons Within the Criminal Justice System

By Tiffany Lee

Learning Goals

xiv Embracing Diversity: Treatment and Care in Addictions Counseling
Overview .................................................................................................................. 303
Substance Use and Crime .......................................................................................... 304
  Differences in Incarceration Rates ........................................................................ 306
Systemic Influences on Incarceration ........................................................................ 307
Specific Concerns ...................................................................................................... 310
Barriers to Treatment ............................................................................................... 311
Resiliency Factors ..................................................................................................... 312
Screening and Assessment ......................................................................................... 312
Treatment Recommendations .................................................................................... 314
  Focus Areas for Treatment .................................................................................... 315
Conclusion .................................................................................................................. 316
Chapter Questions ..................................................................................................... 317
Case Study .................................................................................................................... 317
Questions ..................................................................................................................... 318
References .................................................................................................................... 318

Chapter 16. **Persons With Disabilities** .................................................................. 321

*By Tiffany Lee*

Learning Goals .............................................................................................................. 321

Overview ....................................................................................................................... 321
  Types of Disabilities .................................................................................................. 322
  Statistics ..................................................................................................................... 323
  Substance Use ........................................................................................................... 325
Specific Concerns ......................................................................................................... 325
  Functional Capacities ............................................................................................... 326
  Risk Factors ............................................................................................................. 327
Barriers to Treatment .................................................................................................... 328
  Attitudinal ............................................................................................................... 328
  Discriminatory Policies, Practices, and Procedures .................................................. 328
  Communication ........................................................................................................ 328
  Architectural ............................................................................................................ 329
  Ableism ..................................................................................................................... 329
Resiliency Factors ......................................................................................................... 331
Screening and Assessment ............................................................................................ 332
Treatment Recommendations ....................................................................................... 333
  For Clients Who Have a Physical Disability .......................................................... 334
  For Clients With Visual Impairments ...................................................................... 334
  For Clients With Hearing Impairments .................................................................... 335
  For Clients With Cognitive Disabilities ................................................................. 335
  Treatment Planning .................................................................................................. 335
  Partnerships ............................................................................................................. 336
  Language Considerations ....................................................................................... 337
Conclusion ..................................................................................................................... 338
Chapter Questions ....................................................................................................... 338
Case Study ....................................................................................................................... 339
Questions ................................................................. 340
References ............................................................ 340

Chapter 17. Persons Who Are Economically Disadvantaged ....................... 343
By Ashley J. Blount and Olivia Uwamahoro Williams
Learning Goals ......................................................... 343
Overview ............................................................... 343
Specific Concerns ....................................................... 344
  Etiology and Theories of Addiction ................................ 344
  Stressors .................................................................. 345
  Stigmas .................................................................... 346
  Risk Factors ............................................................ 347
Screening and Assessment .................................................. 347
Barriers to Treatment ...................................................... 348
Resiliency Factors .......................................................... 349
Treatment Recommendations .......................................... 349
Chapter Questions ......................................................... 352
Case Studies ................................................................ 352
Discussion Questions ...................................................... 354
References .................................................................... 354

Chapter 18. Persons Within the Military ..................................................... 357
By Seth C. W. Hayden, Joan McDowell, and Jessica Rodriguez
Learning Goals ............................................................. 357
Overview ................................................................... 357
  Context of the Military ............................................... 358
  Definitions and Prevalence of Substance Use .................. 358
  Substance Abuse Etiology .......................................... 359
Barriers to Treatment ...................................................... 362
Resiliency Factors .......................................................... 362
Screening and Assessment ................................................ 363
Treatment Recommendations .......................................... 364
Special Topics ............................................................... 366
Summary ................................................................. 368
Chapter Questions ......................................................... 368
Case Study ................................................................ 368
Questions ................................................................. 369
References .................................................................... 369

Conclusion ..................................................................... 373
Appendix A: Asking the Right Questions ........................................ 377
Appendix B: The Six Stages of Identity Development ......................... 381
Index .......................................................................... 383
Addiction is an equal opportunity disease, impacting people of any age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, geographic location, education level, and socioeconomic status. Not all people, however, experience substance use, misuse, and addiction in the same way. The etiology differs among and between groups of people, and not everyone enters treatment for the same reasons. Treatment efficacy can be affected by cultural variables, and these variables must be taken into account by researchers and clinicians as well as clients and their family members. In other words, aspects of culture and diversity have vast implications for the delivery and success of substance abuse treatment services provided to special populations.

The term “special populations” has been used in the substance abuse field since the 1970s (Hegamin et al., 2002). By definition, a special population is a subgroup that historically has been underrepresented in prevention and treatment clinical research and are considered vulnerable (Winter et al., 2018). The term originated in an effort to address the unique needs of underserved populations and provide appropriate and efficient services to these groups. These vulnerable groups tend to have limited access to resources and disproportionately experience premature mortality and morbidity (Hailemariam et al., 2020). Therefore, population-based approaches have been widely advocated in an effort to reduce these concerns. According to Grimsrud et al. (2013):

Special populations should not be forced to remain “special” out of ignorance of their conditions, treatments, adverse events, and outcomes. Research must be conducted to enhance our knowledge and provide better care for each individual within those populations, for the same ethical reason that they are considered special. (p. 13)

Special populations include, but are not limited to, the following subgroups:

**RACIAL AND ETHNIC POPULATIONS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alaska Natives</th>
<th>Arab Americans</th>
<th>Asian Americans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Black/African Americans</td>
<td>Latino/a Americans</td>
<td>Native Americans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders
CULTURALLY DIVERSE POPULATIONS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adolescents</th>
<th>People in the criminal justice system</th>
<th>People living with HIV/AIDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College students</td>
<td>People with disabilities</td>
<td>People identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older adults</td>
<td>People who are economically disadvantaged</td>
<td>People within the military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>People living in various geographic locations</td>
<td>People without permanent housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young adults</td>
<td>People with co-occurring disorders</td>
<td>People identifying as spiritual and/or religious</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most clients have multiple, intersecting identities and can fit into more than one category of special populations. For instance, a client can present for substance abuse treatment who is:

- A 20-year-old, gay, partnered, Chinese American man who was arrested for driving under the influence and is coming in for an assessment. He recently revealed his sexual orientation to his family, and he reports his family members had a negative reaction to this disclosure. He indicates an increase in alcohol consumption to cope with his feelings.
- A 35-year-old, heterosexual, married, White man who was released from the military a year ago. He was diagnosed 2 months ago with posttraumatic stress disorder and a traumatic brain injury. He now goes to the Veterans’ Affairs Medical Center to address his concerns, which is almost an hour away from his home in rural Alabama. He reports daily use of cannabis and alcohol.
- A 43-year-old, divorced, African American woman who is required to attend counseling due to involvement with Child Protective Services. Her partner was arrested for domestic violence, and during the incident, police officers found cocaine at the residence.
- A 78-year-old, widowed, White woman who has been prescribed Norco, an opioid pain medication, for the past 3 years. The client’s daughter has noticed her mother feeling “sick” and taking more pills than prescribed. Recently, the client’s daughter accompanied her mother to a doctor’s appointment and told the physician that she found her own Vicodin pill bottle empty, and the client admitted taking the medication.
- A 55-year-old, divorced, Mexican American woman who was released from prison last month. She was convicted of manufacturing methamphetamine. She is unemployed, lives at the local shelter, has lost custody of her two children, and has a past diagnosis of bipolar disorder and borderline personality disorder.
Consideration must be given to each identity and how they intersect in an effort to effectively conceptualize clients. The term “intersectionality” was first coined by law professor Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989 and added to the Oxford Dictionary in 2015. Intersectionality is defined as the interconnected nature of social categorizations (e.g., race, class, gender, etc.) as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. Substance abuse counselors should be able to understand how the various multicultural aspects of a person’s identity impact not only the use of substances but also how these aspects correspond with particular barriers, counseling strategies, risk factors, preventive factors, and treatment outcomes.

“We tend to talk about race inequality as separate from inequality based on gender, class, sexuality or immigrant status. What’s often missing is how some people are subject to all of these, and the experience is not just the sum of its parts.”

—Kimberle Crenshaw

On the other hand, counselors must be careful with generalizations, as each group is highly heterogeneous. Intragroup differences exist among racial and ethnic groups. For instance, Latino/a Americans can include Cuban Americans, Mexican Americans, Central and South Americans, and Puerto Rican Americans. Although individuals from these places of origin may identify as Latino/a American, their country of origin, upbringing, level of acculturation, age, education, religion, and current place of residence are very important to consider. All of these have the potential to influence worldview, spirituality, community orientation, definition of family, communication styles, boundaries, authority issues, learning styles, views of respect, and attitudes related to helping professionals.

Moreover, a client’s identity is fluid and can change over time. For example, a middle-aged woman born in the United States was raised by a Latino, Catholic father born in Mexico and a White, Protestant mother born in the United States. As a youth, the woman did not self-identify as a Latina, but over the years she has identified with that ethnicity and culture. An individual’s categorization of self may deviate from what the therapist believes to be the “membership” of various identities. The reactions, behaviors, attitudes, and characteristics of a person may be erroneously attributed to a particular identity and, in fact, perpetuate stereotypes and misperceptions of a specific population.

An Asian saying posits, “All individuals, in many respects, are (a) like no other individuals; (b) like some individuals; and (c) like all other individuals” (Sue et al., 2019, p. 33). One’s identity has three levels: (1) individual; (2) group; and (3) universal. Individuals have universal commonalities because we are human (e.g., biological and physical similarities); as part of a group identity (e.g., gender, race, sexual orientation), individuals have similarities and differences; and at an individual level, we are all unique (refer to Figure 0.1 below). In summary, practitioners and researchers must recognize these three aspects of a client’s personal identity, as each influences the lived experience of a person.
Research on Special Populations

For over 40 years, the National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services (N-SSATS) has collected data on the location and characteristics of addiction treatment facilities and services throughout the United States. In 2020, 94% of clients in treatment programs were at outpatient settings; 5% of clients were in residential facilities; and 1% of clients were in hospital inpatient facilities (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2021a). N-SSATS results indicated that the use of medications in treatment have increased from 2011 to 2020. For instance, the proportion of all clients receiving methadone increased from 25% in 2011 to 29% in 2020, and those receiving buprenorphine increased from 3% to 16%. Another noteworthy finding of the survey is that 55% of clients in treatment were diagnosed with a co-occurring mental disorder.

To explore this treatment data further, the author would like to include an overview of admission data that is collected from the Treatment Episodes Data Set (TEDS) and analyzed by SAMHSA each year. The TEDS report provides information on the demographic
and substance abuse characteristics of admissions to treatment by agencies that report to individual state administrative data systems. (Note: The data includes adults, aged 12 and older.) The most frequently reported primary substances of use in 2019 were opiates (30%), alcohol (17%), stimulants (12%), marijuana/hashish (11%), and cocaine (6%) (SAMHSA 2021B). Of those admissions, the two racial groups admitted into treatment at the highest rate were non-Hispanic Whites (66%) and non-Hispanic Blacks (20%). Refer to Table 0.1 for a full listing.

Substance abuse patterns also differ between racial/ethnic subgroups, as indicated by the TEDS data. Also shown in Table 0.1 is the data related to the primary substance of use by race and ethnicity. Opiates were the drugs reported most often as the primary substance by far, with heroin being the reason for most admissions. In Table 0.1, each column shows which group reported that drug as their primary substance of use at admission. Looking down each column, the data indicates White individuals consistently held the highest percentage for almost each drug category. In other words, White persons more frequently reported their primary substance was alcohol, opiates, marijuana, methamphetamine, and so forth, as compared to people from other racial or ethnic groups. The only two drugs that White persons did not most often report as their primary substance was smoked cocaine and PCP. Of those who reported that their primary substance of use was smoked cocaine, 52% were Black, 40% were White, and 9% were Hispanic. When PCP was the primary substance of use reported, 67% of those indicating so were Black, 21% were Hispanic, and 19% were White.

When looking at racial/ethnic groups individually (in Table 0.2), the reader is asked to scan the data across, by row. To highlight some of the findings, the following are the top three most reported substances for each population:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Indian/Al. Native</td>
<td>alcohol</td>
<td>(27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>other</td>
<td>(22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>methamp/amp</td>
<td>(14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>alcohol</td>
<td>(24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>methamp/amp</td>
<td>(18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>heroin</td>
<td>(18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>heroin</td>
<td>(21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>marijuana</td>
<td>(20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alcohol</td>
<td>(14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>heroin</td>
<td>(25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alcohol</td>
<td>(17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>marijuana</td>
<td>(15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Isl.</td>
<td>methamp/amp</td>
<td>(27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>heroin</td>
<td>(20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alcohol</td>
<td>(13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>heroin</td>
<td>(25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alcohol</td>
<td>(18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>methamp/amp</td>
<td>(14%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another finding worth highlighting is the data among those who identified as different Hispanic origins. For instance, 28% of individuals of Mexican origin reported methamphetamines and amphetamines as the primary substances of use, while only 2% of individuals of Puerto Rican origin indicated so. Additionally, 46% of individuals of Puerto Rican origin reported heroin as their primary substance of use, but only 17% of individuals of Mexican origin indicated such.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race and ethnicity</th>
<th>Primary substance use at admission</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alcohol only</td>
<td>Opiates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All admissions</td>
<td>321,789</td>
<td>438,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>2,952</td>
<td>4,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opiates</td>
<td>1,234</td>
<td>1,782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>1,234</td>
<td>1,782</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Race**

- **American Indian or Alaska Native:**
  - Alcohol: 2.9%
  - Opiates: 4.5%
  - Cocaine: 3.3%
  - Other: 1.8%

- **Asian:**
  - Alcohol: 0.6%
  - Opiates: 0.9%
  - Cocaine: 0.5%
  - Other: 0.7%

- **Black or African American:**
  - Alcohol: 20.0%
  - Opiates: 15.5%
  - Cocaine: 26.8%
  - Other: 12.1%

- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander:**
  - Alcohol: 0.4%
  - Opiates: 0.3%
  - Cocaine: 0.3%
  - Other: 0.5%

- **White:**
  - Alcohol: 66.3%
  - Opiates: 69.7%
  - Cocaine: 59.5%
  - Other: 80.3%

- **Other:**
  - Alcohol: 9.7%
  - Opiates: 9.2%
  - Cocaine: 9.6%
  - Other: 12.7%

**Ethnicity**

- **Specific Hispanic or Latino origin:**
  - Alcohol: 14.5%
  - Opiates: 14.3%
  - Cocaine: 15.2%
  - Other: 17.6%

- **Mexican:**
  - Alcohol: 4.2%
  - Opiates: 4.3%
  - Cocaine: 4.0%
  - Other: 6.5%

- **Puerto Rican:**
  - Alcohol: 3.7%
  - Opiates: 2.4%
  - Cocaine: 3.7%
  - Other: 6.4%

- **Cuban:**
  - Alcohol: 0.3%
  - Opiates: 0.3%
  - Cocaine: 0.2%
  - Other: 6.4%

- **Not of Hispanic or Latino origin:**
  - Alcohol: 85.5%
  - Opiates: 85.7%
  - Cocaine: 84.8%
  - Other: 87.1%

**Total**

- Alcohol: 100.0%
- Opiates: 100.0%
- Cocaine: 100.0%
- Other: 100.0%

---

- **Notes:**
  - For some states, “Asian” includes “Pacific Islanders.”
  - Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Admissions for which values were not collected, unknown, or missing are excluded from the percentage base (denominator).
  - Source: SAMHSA, “Primary Substance of Use Indicated at Admission,”. Copyright © 2021 by SAMHSA.
### TABLE 0.2  Primary Substance of Use Indicated at Admission, by Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race and ethnicity</th>
<th>Primary substance use at admission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,783,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>52,388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>11,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>357,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>6,684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1,183,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>173,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,785,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Hispanic or Latino origin</td>
<td>258,311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>74,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rican</td>
<td>65,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban</td>
<td>5,043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>113,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not of Hispanic or Latino origin</td>
<td>1,524,804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,783,115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---
<sup>1</sup> For some states, “Asian” includes “Pacific Islanders.”

NOTES: Based on administrative data reported to TEDS by all reporting states and jurisdictions. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Admissions for which values were not collected, unknown, or missing are excluded from the percentage base (denominator).

Source: SAMHSA, “Primary Substance of Use Indicated at Admission, by Race/Ethnicity.” Copyright © by SAMHSA.
The percentages discussed above have meaning, but the readers are encouraged to critically analyze the data presented. These numbers are based on self-report and from a database of information that is put into the system by clinicians at intake. The clients do not represent all people admitted into treatment facilities (e.g., private entities). In addition, these are admission reports by clients seeking treatment. What about those who are not admitted? Moreover, usually those seeking addiction services have more severe substance use concerns than those who have not accessed treatment. These are important factors to consider when interpreting this research.

Specialized Programming and Services

In an effort to meet the needs of all persons entering substance abuse treatment, specialized programming has been suggested by researchers and clinicians for decades. Over 20 years ago, the 2000 N-SSATS results indicated that approximately 90% of facilities offered at least one program designed specifically for certain populations (Olmstead & Sindelar, 2004). In 2020, the N-SSATS data indicated a reduction: 84% of facilities reported doing so (SAMHSA, 2021a). However, it appears that more services are being offered when compared to the 2011 data (SAMHSA, 2012).

The following is a list of treatment programming found to be available for diverse populations and the percentage of facilities that offer them (SAMHSA, 2021a):

- clients with co-occurring mental and substance abuse disorders (55%)
- adult women (51%)
- adult men (49%)
- persons involved in criminal justice system (38%)
- young adults (32%)
- interpersonal violence or domestic violence (30%)
- pregnant or postpartum women (26%)
- seniors or older adults (25%)
- persons identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (24%)
- adolescents (24%)
- veterans (23%)
- persons arrested for a driving offense (23%)
- persons living with chronic pain (22%)
- persons living with HIV or AIDS (21%)

Not only is the specialization of treatment programming suggested but offering key services to the various populations is also recommended. Addiction is considered a primary, progressive problem that causes secondary problems within all life areas, such as physical or mental health, unemployment, and housing. In an effort to provide a holistic, recovery-oriented system of care, addiction must be culturally responsive and viewed as a chronic issue (Conner & Anderson, 2020). Therefore, treatment services must be grounded in the community and available for those who need comprehensive, wraparound assistance.
For example, the attractiveness and accessibility of treatment for women are affected by child care and transportation issues. Thus, programs providing assistance with obtaining these ancillary services increase the likelihood of attracting women who are seeking addiction treatment. Moreover, retention outcomes for women in treatment will improve as well as their overall functioning, wellness, and quality of life. (Refer to Chapter 10 for the full list of recommended services for women.)

Persons who abuse substances are at higher risk for medical issues (e.g., hepatitis, cirrhosis, high blood pressure, cancer, infection with HIV, etc.). Moreover, those who use drugs intravenously are even more at risk for various infections. Due to the increased likelihood of clients practicing unsanitary injections as well as unsafe sexual behaviors, treatment programs are encouraged to integrate prevention, intervention, and treatment protocols into their practices. Health services that have been recommended include:

- provider education
- patient screening and risk assessment
- patient education
- biologic testing
- medical examinations
- counseling
- treatment
- treatment monitoring

Other services that treatment personnel are encouraged to provide to specific populations include sign language for persons who are hard of hearing as well as providing treatment in languages other than English. In 2020, N-SSATS data indicated that sign language was offered in 36% of all agencies in the study and that treatment in languages other than English were offered at 55% of all facilities (SAMHSA, 2021a). To be more specific, Spanish was the most frequently spoken language (94%).

**Using the Term “Special Populations”**

The term “special populations” can be widely seen throughout scholarly literature and on countless websites, especially when it relates to groups such as students (education) and patients (health care). Over the years, there have been discussions surrounding the appropriate terminology to address specific populations in addictions. Differences even exist with regard to the meaning of the term “diversity” and how addiction research and programming should attend to diversity issues (Loue, 2003). The author would like to take a brief moment to delineate the opposing perspectives. Some scholars suggest several advantages for continued use of the term “special populations.” The concept of special populations increases the likelihood that therapists will be trained to competently serve all of their clientele. This designation:

- fosters research agendas to focus on specific groups
- directs new resources toward treatment services
advocates for the consideration of group-based external factors that impact effectiveness of treatment (e.g., cultural beliefs and practices)

- aids in dispelling myths and stereotypes

Government agencies have also used this designation; however, some have changed the title of their programs to no longer include the term. For instance, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is one of the leading organizations in the field of addiction research and, in 1993, created an office called the Special Populations Office (SPO) that was designed to address diversity. The SPO had work groups specific to African American, Latino/a American, Asian American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian and Alaska Native communities. NIDA has since changed the title from SPO to the Office of Diversity and Health Disparities. While eliminating the wording, the office still identifies similar aims, which are the following:

- Recruit and retain underrepresented scholars and researchers actively participating in research.
- Enhance the pool of independently funded, underrepresented scholars and researchers conducting substance use and addiction research.
- Develop strategies to reduce health disparities and improve the health of vulnerable populations. (NIDA, 2021)

As stated above, there are advantages to the term’s utility, and it is still considered appropriate. However, there is the potential to marginalize groups outside of the norm. The “norm” is usually considered White, heterosexual, Christian, economically advantaged, adult men without a disability, and it is not expected to become more inclusive. As Lawson and Lawson (2011) ask in their textbook Alcoholism and Substance Abuse in Diverse Populations, “Who is to say who is ‘special?’” (p. xxi). If the addiction field continues to label certain groups as “special,” the result may be the tendency to segregate these populations. Labels can influence and perpetuate stereotypes, biases, incorrect perceptions, and negative attitudes regarding people who present for substance abuse concerns. Moreover, using the term “special populations” attaches homogeneity. As discussed earlier, people have multiple identities, and these identities may come with unique needs, which may not be attended to if classified under only one of those identities.

After much consideration, the terms “specific” and “culturally diverse” are used throughout the text in an effort to more accurately represent various populations. The author is selective on the populations chosen to comprise this text and acknowledges an exclusion of some subgroups (e.g., persons without permanent housing, persons living with HIV/AIDS, and persons with spiritual/religious beliefs). As such, the author attempts to address some of these subgroups within other chapters. Moreover, this text was written primarily with counselor trainees in mind. Much of the cited research is from the counselor education literature; however, the information is transferable to the disciplines of social work, criminal justice, sociology, and psychology as well as the medical and educational fields. As students, teachers, and practitioners, we must continue our journey toward cultural humility, sensitivity, responsiveness, and competency. Thus, in an effort to assist in this
process, self-awareness exercises, discussion questions, and case studies are included in the chapters. These activities will explore your knowledge, skills, attitudes, awareness, and motivation related to specific populations.

Before moving on to the first chapter, take about 5–10 minutes to complete the Personal Identity Questionnaire and reflect on your answers.

---

**Personal Identity Questionnaire**

1. Who are you (i.e., identify your various intersecting identities)?

2. Describe your primary racial, ethnic, and cultural background(s).

3. How would you describe yourself as a member of these cultural identities? (Hint: Think about the group level in Figure 0.1.)

4. Where were you raised? Describe how this/these location(s) may have impacted your worldview.

5. What were the spiritual/religious beliefs with which you were raised?

6. Describe the gender roles that are primarily promoted in your culture.

7. Describe at least two important core values that you were raised to follow.

8. What were your beliefs regarding alcohol and other substance use when you were growing up? What are they now? How did you develop these beliefs?

9. To whom do people in your culture usually turn to for help?

10. Who has the responsibility of caring for those who become ill (e.g., the individual, family, community, and/or doctor)?

11. Are there any reasons why you would have barriers to accessing, retaining, and/or successfully completing counseling/treatment?

12. Explain why clients from two specific populations may be reluctant to seek out counseling.

13. What two populations do you feel most comfortable interacting with, and why?

14. What two populations do you feel most uncomfortable interacting with, and why?

---

**References**


**Credit**

Fig. 0.1: Adapted from: Derald Wing Sue, “Tripartite Development of Personal Identity,” *Counseling the Culturally Diverse: Theory and Practice*, p. 42, John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
All substance abuse counseling is multicultural in nature. Many cultural differences can exist between clients and their therapists, thus potentially impacting the efficacy of treatment. These differences include one’s identities, including race, gender, sexual orientation, class, age, and so on. The majority of this text includes various chapters that address a specific population. Several identities may be discussed within one chapter (e.g., women who also identify as lesbian) to highlight the complex nature of intersecting identities (Crenshaw, 1989) and how they can correlate with substance use.

Within the chapters focusing on specific populations, the following information is delivered:

- overview (e.g., statistics, prevalence of use, definitions of a specific population)
- specific concerns (e.g., etiology, risk factors, stigmas)
barriers to treatment
resiliency factors
screening and assessment (e.g., outlining the valid/reliable tools frequently used with or focused on a specific group and any identified diversity concerns associated with these instruments)
treatment recommendations

Before attending to specific populations, the first few chapters present definitions and key concepts associated with race and ethnicity. At first, racism, White privilege, and White racial identity are explored, then a discussion of sexism, heterosexism, and classism follows. Next, the reader has the opportunity to understand topics related to cultural humility, broaching behaviors, and how to use antibias strategies to identify and attend to microaggressions.

Diversity Concepts

Exercise

1. Take a moment and write a definition for each of the following concepts:
   (a) culture, (b) worldview, (c) ethnicity, and (d) race.
2. Reflect on this process. Which were the hardest to define, and why? Where did you learn these definitions?

The most obvious cultural differences between the therapist and client are likely to be gender, race, ethnicity, and age. However, other aspects of diversity are less discernible when you meet a client for the first time. For example, during an intake session, you may sit down with someone who has a disability, is economically disadvantaged, is a member of the LGBTQ+ community, or has different spiritual/religious beliefs and practices from yours. In essence, all of these identities are considered part of a person’s culture. However, it is likely that you may not be privy to all of a client’s identities unless the client shares this information with you.

Culture is defined as the thoughts, beliefs, norms, symbols, practices, and behaviors of a group in the areas of history, religion, social organization, economic organization, political organization, and collective production. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) states culture is the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, and it encompasses language, food, dress, art, literature, music, lifestyles, value systems, traditions, and beliefs (UNESCO, 2009). In addition, culture is considered to be the sum total of life patterns within a given community over generations, and it also determines who will be oppressed and who will benefit in a particular society.

Culture provides a system in which people:

- set and achieve goals
- make decisions
- solve problems
define social roles
emphasize cooperation or competition
perceive human nature, truth, time orientation, and property
define identity and individuality

Each person is born into a cultural context, and the process of socialization is generally the function of the family and occurs through participation in cultural subgroups. These subgroups influence our worldview, which is defined as the perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions that individuals and groups hold about the world, including the use of alcohol and other drugs. Sue and colleagues (2019) outline two psychological orientations that represent differing worldviews: (a) locus of control (internal/external); and (b) locus of responsibility (internal/external). Most White, middle-class people fall into the internal loci of control and responsibility (e.g., “I am a master of my own fate and am responsible for my success or lack of success”). People of color who have external loci of control and responsibility (due to oppression in our society) think there is little they can do about the injustices and give up (e.g., learned helplessness), which can also result in mental health concerns (e.g., depression). A person of color can also have an external locus of control and internal locus of responsibility. They may believe the plight of their own people is due to laziness and stupidity and accept the dominant group’s cultural standards (e.g., “It is up to me and society is okay the way it is”). Lastly, people of color can have an internal locus of control and an external locus of responsibility and believe that they can shape events in their life if given a chance (e.g., “I have pride in my identity, and I have control over my life. Society is not okay, and I seek to change it”).

While culture is a global concept, ethnicity is a more focused notion. Ethnicity refers to a person’s identity based on a group’s social and cultural heritage passed on to group members from one generation to the next. The term comes from ethnos, which is a Greek word for “people” or “nation.” While not synonymous, this term is commonly used interchangeably with the term “race.” How did you define race? How is it similar to or different than ethnicity?

Before discussing what race is, let’s look at what race is not. Race is NOT:

- scientific, biological, or based on genetics
- neutral or harmless
- the same as culture or ethnicity
- defined by color or other physical attributes
- the same as religious identity (Barndt, 2007; Lee et al., 2021)

More than 400 years ago, in the days of the European colonial expansion, racial identity was imposed and there was a forced process of “lumping” people together based on a social construct. This is known as racialization. Racialization has historically been identified as a process where one group defines another as morally and/or genetically inferior to dominate and oppress others. There are scholars who argue that this term should be used as a replacement when referring to race (Gonzalez-Sobrino & Goss, 2018). Therefore, race is a myth, yet it is also a reality. It is a societal construct that was designed and used for control and exploitation. In essence, race is a racist concept created to support racism.
When defining race, did you think about how a person looks or include skin color in your definition? Phenotypical features such as skin color, hair texture, or facial structure are interpreted as evidence that two groups are indeed separate “types” of people and are used to strategically demark the boundaries between groups. To define race based on phenotype is not accurate. A Latino man, for example, can also be of African American, European American, or Native American racialized background and cultures. Thus, racialized categorization can negate the other various identities of a person. Through DNA analysis, physical appearance has been found by researchers to determine nothing about a person’s ancestry. If you are interested in learning more about this topic, the author recommends a video called *Race: The Power of an Illusion*, which is available along with other informative videos online (https://racepowerofanillusion.org).

In this text, the concepts of culture, worldview, ethnicity, and race are addressed as they relate to each population. The issues associated with substance use, misuse, and abuse must be viewed within the context of a people’s past, present, and future. Counselors must consider the history of the United States. Historical events that have occurred (and incidents that continue to occur) influence (a) the current environment in which the client lives; (b) the client’s mental health status; (c) the client’s self-perception, self-esteem, and self-worth; (d) perceptions of others (including you); (e) coping skills; and (f) the consumption of alcohol and other drugs. Exploring addiction as it relates to diversity and specific populations cannot be assessed and interpreted only in terms of prevalence of use and treatment protocols. In order to treat substance use problems effectively, we must not ignore the societal constructs that have enormous negative impacts on the health and well-being on all of us—but even more so on marginalized individuals.

**Racism and Prejudice**

In an effort to accurately conceptualize the factors impacting alcohol and other drug use by specific populations, counselors should understand the diversity issues that exist within the United States. Attempts should be made to empathize with the lived experiences of people who do not identify as White, heterosexual, Christian, economically advantaged, cisgender, adult males without a disability. First, let’s take a closer look at racism and prejudice.

**Exercise**

Take a moment and answer the following questions:

1. How do you define racism?
2. What are five examples of racism?
3. What is prejudice? How is it different from racism?

When defining racism, there are various words or phrases commonly used, and they can be grouped by category (e.g., individual racism or institutional/societal racism). Take
a look at Table 1.1. Did you include any of the words or phrases outlined below? You were also asked to come up with five examples. These examples can be racist at an individual or systemic level. One example you may have thought of is an overt act of individual racism, such as the use of a racial epithet or slur. Refer to your examples and identify the category for each.

### TABLE 1.1 List of Common Words or Phrases Used to Define Racism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual racism</th>
<th>Institutional or societal racism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal prejudice</td>
<td>Systemic power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bigotry</td>
<td>Institutional discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hate</td>
<td>Oppression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bias</td>
<td>Segregation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal dislike</td>
<td>Economic inequality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotyping</td>
<td>Political control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal belief in superiority</td>
<td>White supremacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Types of Racism

While there is variation in thought as to how many types of racism exist, for purposes of this text, definitions for three categories are presented: (a) individual; (b) cultural; and (c) institutional (Helms, 2020). **Individual racism** can be viewed as the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and behaviors of an individual that can be verbal or nonverbal, overt or covert, and intentional or unintentional. While using a racial slur would be considered a verbal, overt, intentional act of racism, saying to a person of color, “When I see you, I don’t see color” is a verbal, covert, unintentional act. **Cultural racism** occurs when there is cultural heritage superiority by the dominant group and the imposition of practices and beliefs as the norm. For instance, specific appearances or characteristics that are deemed most desirable by beauty standards results in the disintegration of the culture of people of color. **Institutional racism** is when the policies, practices, or structures of the educational, governmental, criminal justice, political, medical, economic, corporate, communications and media, and religious systems oppress people of color; thus, White individuals benefit. Table 1.2 displays a few examples of the general characteristics and societal expressions for the different types of racism.
### TABLE 1.2 General Characteristics and Societal Expressions of Racism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>General characteristics</th>
<th>Societal expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Belief that White people are superior</td>
<td>Violence against non-White individuals; making fun of physical characteristics or customs of non-White group; racial harassment; laughing at racist jokes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Denial of the existence of racism</td>
<td>Nonsupport of race-related civil rights legislation; uncritical acceptance of all-White work environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Belief that the lack of success of “non-White persons” is due to genetic inferiority or racial-group malaise</td>
<td>Using derogatory racial epithets; unthinking adherence to “bootstrap” philosophy; unwillingness to support race-related affirmative action; promulgation of racial stereotypes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Language superiority</td>
<td>Limiting access to work and education to “standard” English speakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In education, science, philosophy, and so on, the contributions of Whites are considered the best</td>
<td>Products (e.g., music, literature, ideas) of other racial groups are “better” when presented by a White person, and contributions from people of color are invisible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>Law enforcement policies are more stringent for people of color</td>
<td>Police brutality; severe sentences for the same crimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inadequate housing</td>
<td>Discriminatory pricing; mortgage loan discrimination; segregation of housing by race</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Racism-Related Stress

All people experience stress. However, individual, cultural, and institutional racism cause additional stress to people of color and can be considered chronic in nature. Racism-related stress has negative consequences on emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual health as well as social connectedness, job performance, academic achievement, and parental functioning. These consequences (due to racism) frequently result in higher levels of anxiety, guilt/shame, avoidance/numbing, and hypervigilance often seen with posttraumatic stress disorder (Kirkinis et al., 2021). Six types of racism-related stress exist: (1) race-related life events; (2) vicarious racism experiences; (3) daily racism microstressors; (4) chronic-contextual.
stress; (5) collective experiences of racism; and (6) transgenerational transmission of
group traumas.

Addiction counselors are encouraged to explore these stressors with regard to clients
who do not identify as White. The author provides a more in-depth discussion on how to do
this through a presentation of the multidimensional model of broaching behavior a bit later
in Chapter 3. In the meantime, take a moment to review Table 1.3 and consider how these
stressors can influence substance use and the treatment of addictions.

TABLE 1.3 Six Types of Racism-Related Stress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race-related life events</td>
<td>Time limited, have a beginning and an end, may lead to other events, and may occur infrequently</td>
<td>Police harassment Being rejected for a loan Housing discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vicarious racism experiences</td>
<td>Through observation and report of family members, friends, and strangers</td>
<td>Learning about incidents like those of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Trayvon Martin, and Rodney King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily racism experiences or microstresses</td>
<td>Frequent, subtle, unintentional offenses; most often not confronted; also called microaggressions</td>
<td>Being ignored Being followed while shopping Locking car doors or clutching purse tighter when a person of color walks by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic-contextual stress</td>
<td>Due to social structure, political dynamics, and institutional racism</td>
<td>Prevalence of liquor stores in a neighborhood Out-of-date textbooks in urban public schools Disparities in resources, access to health care, living conditions, and quality of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective experiences</td>
<td>Cultural-symbolic and sociopolitical manifestations of racism</td>
<td>Economic conditions of one’s racial/ethnic group Lack of political representation Media portrayals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgenerational transmission</td>
<td>Historical contexts (and traumas) of diverse groups transmitted through discussions, storytelling, and lessons taught to children</td>
<td>Slavery of African people Tuskegee experiment Removal of Indigenous peoples from their lands Internment of Japanese Americans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now, we can all think of incidents that occur in daily life that may cause stress for all people, regardless of race or ethnicity. However, the frequency, intensity, meaning, and consequences of these incidents can vary drastically based on one’s racial identity. For example, a person can feel anxious as they are sitting in slow-moving traffic due to a car accident up ahead and thinking about being late for work. Most White people would become stressed out. However, a person of color may encounter additional stress due to this incident. The person could be concerned about the tardiness as a confirmation of a stereotype given to their racial or ethnic group (e.g., unprofessional, lazy, or having a poor work ethic). Can you think of another example?

The six types of racism-related stress can also be compounded for a person of color if they are also a member of another oppressed group. If a person of color identifies as LGBTQ+, is a woman, is economically disadvantaged, has a disability, or is an older adult, they are in double or multiple jeopardy (Beal, 1970). Researchers have investigated the phenomenon of double/multiple jeopardy and argue the lived experiences of this intersection of two or more identities differ qualitatively to the experiences of having only one identity of an oppressed group. Women are oppressed; however, a woman of color in the workplace experiences different stressors than a White woman. The LGBTQ+ community also experiences stress from discrimination and oppression, but a Black person who is lesbian or gay has different stressors on well-being, as compared to a White person who identifies as lesbian or gay (Hancock & Daigle, 2021). While interactive effects of multiple cultural identities are experienced (i.e., double jeopardy), when asked to describe the effects specifically, people may have difficulty explaining the interplay, or they may end up focusing on describing the effects of one particular identity (Croteau et al., 2002).

The effect of possessing multiple identities (both privileged and oppressed) has been described as placing a transparency sheet of one color over a transparency sheet of another color. The color of one “is sometimes so strong or pervasive that it completely covers or obscures the other; at other times, overlaying one transparency on top of another merely changes the tint of the original transparency” (Croteau et al., 2002, p. 246). Refer to Figure 1.1 for the following illustration. Imagine if there is a transparency sheet with a blue circle representing a man’s racial identification as Latino. This particular man considers his Latino identity to hold much value. At the same time, it is viewed as an oppressed status in the United States. The other transparency sheet has an orange circle representing his sexual orientation as heterosexual. While relevant, his sexual orientation neither has much weight on his identification nor is recognized often in his daily life. However, identifying as heterosexual is a privileged status in our country. If the circles were to be placed over one another, the blue circle would cover the orange circle. In essence, the weight, recognition, and value of one (privileged or oppressed) status have the potential to affect the weight, recognition, and value of the other (privileged or oppressed) status.