



NO MEMBER LEFT BEHIND

Broaching as the Path to Equitable Group Work

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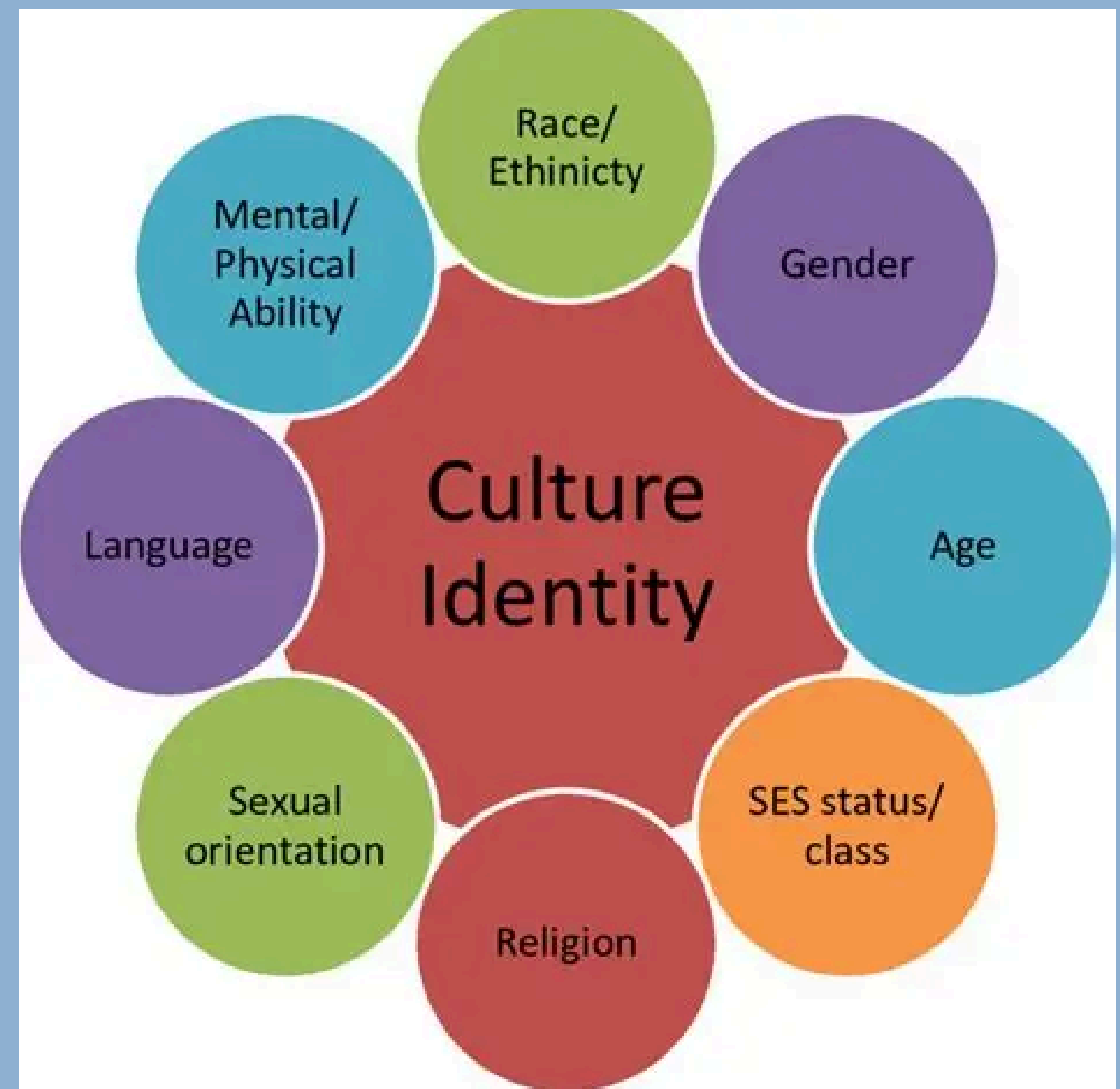
ABOUT ME

- ▶ • PhD Student in Counselor Education & Supervision at VCU
- ▶ • LPC (VA) since 2011, LPC-S, counseling experience in multiple settings, specialities in TVIC and IPV
- ▶ • Relational Cultural Lens:
 - Counseling
 - Supervision
 - Teaching
 - Leadership
- ▶ • African-American, Cisgender Woman, Wife, Mother, Christian
 - Urban NJ, low SES roots



WHO'S IN THE ROOM?

- ▶ Graduate Students
- ▶ Residents in Counseling
- ▶ LPCs (Other licenses/disciplines)
- ▶ Private Practice Owners
- ▶ Supervisors
- ▶ Faculty
- ▶ Administrators



LEARNING OBJECTIVES



Define broaching and explain why it is vital for establishing group safety.

Formulate at least one group rule related to broaching during the group contracting phase.

Analyze a brief group scenario and determine an appropriate response using broaching.

BROACHING (DAY-VINES ET AL., 2007)

Broaching refers to the counselor's effort to discuss racial, ethnic, and cultural (REC) issues

Builds rapport, invites open communication about REC and other identities and differences, and lets clients know it's valued and welcomed

Helps clients feel seen, and builds trust and safety, which facilitates engagement and reduces attrition



GROUP CONTRACTS

The contract is an agreement that sets the tone, structure, and expectations for how a counseling group will function.

Includes: confidentiality and limits, group norms and boundaries, roles and responsibilities, unacceptable behaviors and how they will be addressed along with crises.

Verbal agreement or signature required.
Reviewed regularly.



Group therapy is effective when people feel safe, respected, and clear about expectations.



In what section(s) of the group counseling contract can we add specific considerations for REC, and other identities and difference

CONFIDENTIALITY/LIMITS

PARTICIPATION

ATTENDANCE

RESPECT

AUTONOMY

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS

EMERGENCIES AND CRISES

ENSURING REC/IDENTITY CONSIDERATIONS ARE EXPLICIT IN GROUP CONTRACTS



Members agree to honor and respect differences in race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, age, and lived experience.

Members acknowledge that **trauma** is shaped by identity and social context, and commit to approaching others with openness and curiosity rather than assumptions.

Members may participate in ways that align with their cultural background and comfort level, as long as group safety is maintained.

The group maintains a zero-tolerance stance toward identity-based harm, including microaggressions, invalidation, or discriminatory comments.

Members may name if something feels harmful or invalidating, and the facilitator will support repair and safety.

GROUP COUNSELING VIGNETTE

During a weekly interpersonal process group, members are discussing challenges in dating and relationships. As the conversation moves around the circle, one member turns to Aisha, an African-American adult woman in the group, and says, "I'm really curious what you think about all this. Would you be willing to share your perspective?"

Aisha shifts in her seat and looks down for a moment before responding quietly, "I think I'm going to pass. I'd rather stay silent... I don't want to say something and have people see me as a stereotype."

Aisha, I hear you saying that speaking up might put you at risk of being seen through a stereotype. I want to acknowledge that race and identity can shape how safe it feels to share in a group like this. If you're open to it, we can slow down and talk about what that experience is like for you.

Thank you for naming that, Aisha. It sounds like there's a concern that your voice might be interpreted through stereotypes connected to being a Black woman. Am I correct?

Aisha, I appreciate your honesty. The fear of being stereotyped, especially as a Black woman, can make sharing feel risky. I want you to know this is a space where we can talk about those concerns directly.

How would you use broaching in your response?

BROACHING & EQUITABLE GROUP WORK



Broaching becomes equitable in group work when it actively reduces power imbalances, increases psychological safety for marginalized members, and ensures that everyone can participate without extra emotional risk. Broaching makes the invisible dynamics of race, culture, and identity visible so they can be addressed rather than silently shaping the group.

REFERENCES



- ▶ Day-Vines, N. L., Cluxton-Keller, F., Agorsor, C., & Gubara, S. (2021). Strategies for broaching the subjects of race, ethnicity, and culture. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 99*(3), 241–359.
- ▶ Day-Vines, N. L., Cluxton-Keller, F., Agorsor, C., Gubara, S., & Otabil, N. A. A. (2020). The multidimensional model of broaching behavior. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 98*(1), 107–118
- ▶ Day-Vines, N.L., Wood, S. M., Grothaus, T., Craigen, L., Holman, A., Dotson-Blake, K., & Douglass, M. J. (2007). Broaching the subjects of race, ethnicity, and culture during the counseling process. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 85*, 401-409.



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