

This is a therapist guide intended to be used by the treating therapist at the first or early sessions. In each section you will find additional information and a script (in red) you can use to help in your conversations with clients. On the back you will find more guidance on how to have these conversations.

CELEBRATIONS

Learning About You:

LANGUAGE

Who we are and where we come

SCRIPT: I want to take some time to begin getting to know you and your family better.

from matters.

PARENTING BELIEFS

COMMUNITY

IMMIGRATION STORY

GENDER

RELIGION OR SPIRITUALITY

★ Race, Culture, Identity.

- The better I understand you, the better I can be at helping you.
 - **SCRIPT: The better I understand you, the better I can be at helping you. Here at the top of the sheet are some different parts of culture or identify that might be important for me to know about in working with you. Things like race, ethnicity, or values that matter to you.**
- You may want to talk about your race, culture, and identity a lot. You may want to share a little. You may not want to share at all. I will respect your comfort level.
 - **READ bullet point above**
- Please share anything you believe is important for me to know about your family, your identity, and your beliefs.
 - **SCRIPT: READ bullet point above. If no answer, you might ask: Is there anything you'd like me to know about how you or your family came to be living where you live? Do the people at your school (or work) look like you? Do others in your community celebrate the same holidays?**



Respect

★ Discrimination

- Being treated unfairly because of how you look or because you are part of a different group, especially race, is common.
 - **I want to talk for a moment about discrimination. Unfortunately being treated unfairly because of how you look or because you are part of a different group, especially race, is common.**
- Discrimination harms people's health and well-being.
 - **And we know this harms people's health and well being.**
- I want to know how discrimination may be affecting you. Talking about discrimination can be an important part of your care, especially when it relates to why you are seeking treatment.
 - **READ bullet point above. If needed, add: Has your family faced or seen discrimination you want me to know about? It's ok if you don't want to share.**



★ Thank You

- Your feelings and experiences matter.
 - **SCRIPT: I am sorry you went through that (or name experience). Thank you for sharing.**
- There are ways our experiences (of race, gender, or community) will be different. In working with your family, I might make mistakes and I encourage you to bring attention to those mistakes so I am aware and can learn to do better.
 - **READ bullet point above. SCRIPT: I understand it may be hard for you to speak with me about my mistakes. You can also speak with my supervisor about my mistakes, especially repeated mistakes, and they will work with me to better learn how to make changes.**
- What you choose to share with me (about you and your family, or feedback about our work together) is deeply appreciated..
 - **READ bullet point above**



<--for parents and caregivers who are interested, this QR code leads to online resources for helping youth cope with racism.

GUIDE FOR THERAPISTS

- Talking with our clients about race, culture, and identity is important. Discrimination based on identity can impact mental health and may be related to their presenting concerns.
- ASK! It shows that you care and can handle the conversation.
- Not asking about race, culture, and identity in therapy is one of the most commonly noted microaggressions against BIPOC clients. It can communicate that we do not value a person's full identity, we are not comfortable with discussing identity, or that we do not understand that experiences related to one's identity can be related to mental health. Asking can be tricky though. Do not ask where people are from and what they are. Instead, try asking how they identify and what they would be willing to share about their or their family's background.
- Keep in mind these subjects:
 - may be hard to discuss
 - can be loaded
 - could be connected to traumatic experiences
 - have a history of being dismissed and discounted, especially by white people who are not aware of the way race and unconscious bias frequently leads to discriminatory behavior
- It is ESSENTIAL not to question or challenge a client's perspective of discrimination; do not be dismissive. Focus on validating feelings and find out how these experiences might relate to the presenting concerns or treatment plan.
- ALL people can experience bigotry. Discrimination towards white clients can exist as a form of racial bigotry and it is okay to validate feelings related to these experiences. There may be times during the course of treatment when challenging a white client's perspective about racism may be important.
- Negative experiences related to identity can create a lot of emotions and beliefs. LISTEN for current coping, positive self and community identity, and healthy thoughts. Highlight resilience by using opportunities early in treatment to reflect back, validate, and encourage the ongoing use of current coping, positive self and community identity, and healthy thoughts as you continue to work together to learn more skills.
- Critical feedback from our clients is a gift for us AND is given at a risk for them. Saying or doing something racist or biased, or that offends (intended or not) is to be expected. Try not to be defensive. Embrace the opportunity for growth and becoming a more effective provider with diverse families.
- Commit to your own learning and change
 - we all have biases, learn and reflect on your own.
 - attend to your biases by understanding how they impact your own identity formation, relationships with others, power dynamics, and your privilege.
 - increase contact with people who are different than how you identify.
 - counteract your biases by remembering and focusing on individuals who do not fit group stereotypes.

RESOURCES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT:

- Microaggressions
 - Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life (article): [how_to_be_an_effective_ally-lessons_learnhttps://academic.oup.com/jid/article/220/Supplement_2/S62/5552356](https://academic.oup.com/jid/article/220/Supplement_2/S62/5552356)ned_microaggressions.pdf
 - If Microaggressions Happened to White People (video): <https://youtu.be/KPRA4g-3yEk>
- Implicit Bias
 - Harvard Implicit Bias Test: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
 - How to Reduce Implicit Bias (article): <http://www.ihl.org/communities/blogs/how-to-reduce-implicit-bias>
- Impact of Provider Bias on Health Outcomes
 - Implicit Bias in Healthcare Professionals (article): A Systematic Review: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5333436>
 - The Impact of Unconscious Bias in Healthcare: How to Recognize and Mitigate It (article): https://academic.oup.com/jid/article/220/Supplement_2/S62/5552356