



Innovations in Counseling (Part 10 Session 2)

Counselors in Solidarity With the Asian Population in the United States: Support and Advocacy for #StopAsianHate

Webinar Follow-up Question and Answer Session With
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Question from S. Bogert:

Does the research show that the younger generation is more apt to seek counseling services?

Answer from Presenters:

To our knowledge, there isn't research showing that the Asian younger generation is more inclined to seek counseling services. However, we can guess that the younger generation in general feels more comfortable receiving mental health services. According to the American Psychiatric Association (2019), Gen Z, who are between the ages of 15 and 21, are more open to utilizing or have experienced mental health services (37%) than any other generations, such as millennials (35%), Gen Xers (26%), and Boomers (22%).

American Psychiatric Association (2019). *Stress in America: Gen Z*.

<https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2018/stress-gen-z.pdf>

Question from A. Vosburg:

What have you found to be a key to get counselors to be progressive in change to positive growth?

Answer from Presenters:

In order for counselors to be active agents of social justice, we would like to emphasize the importance of ongoing reflection and learning about our own attitudes, knowledge, and skills and action (AKSA). AKSA is embedded into the MSJCC framework, within the domains of counselor self-awareness, client worldview, and counseling relationship (Ratts et al., 2016). Ratts et al. (2016) claimed that competent counselors in multicultural and social justice counseling are constantly developing their AKSA in the above three domains. We also believe that the foundation for initiating changes comes from accurate knowledge and understanding of how clients perceive and experience the world and how counselors help challenge discrimination and oppression against the clients. Therefore, opportunities such as seeking out professional development, building networks with marginalized communities, and participating in immersion experiences can be utilized to develop

counselors' advocacy roles. For example, service learning and the immersion experience are utilized in counselor education as ways to unlearn stereotypes and biases against marginalized communities and acquire a deeper understanding of them (De Ricco & Sciarra, 2005; Lee et al., 2014).

De Ricco, J. N., & Sciarra, D. T. (2005). The immersion experience in multicultural counselor training: Confronting covert racism. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 33*(1), 2-16.

Lee, D. L., Rosen, A. D., & McWhirter, J. J. (2014). Assessing changes in counselor trainees' multicultural competence related to service learning. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 42*(1), 31-41.

Ratts, M. J., Singh, A. A., Nassar-McMillan, S., Butler, S. K., & McCullough, J. R. (2016). Multicultural and social justice counseling competencies: Guidelines for the counseling profession. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 44*(1), 28-48.

Question from M. Balent:

What culturally informed interventions would you recommend in addressing trauma caused by those impacted by Asian hate crimes?

Answer from Presenters:

Our presentation as a whole tried to address racial trauma caused by anti-Asian racism during COVID-19. Among various interventions and techniques we suggested, there are three most important strategies we want to recommend here.

First, counselors are encouraged to raise clients' awareness of their marginalized experiences and help develop useful tactics to take actions against racial discrimination (Litam, 2020). Counselors can utilize validation techniques for recognizing what clients have gone through (Liu & Modir, 2020) and broaching techniques for deepening clients' self-disclosure. Counselors also can utilize psycho-education and behavioral rehearsal to encourage clients to practice coping strategies (Litam, 2020).

Secondly, counselors are recommended to help clients connect with social support systems. Encouraging clients to build stronger relationships with family, friends, and colleagues in their community can be a way to enhance clients' sense of belonging (Litam, 2020). Promoting ways to build communities with other Asian individuals or other people of color also can help them have a stronger sense of safety and reduce the stress derived from racial trauma (Lee & Waters, 2021).

Finally, counselors can take initiative on advocating for Asian clients outside of their counseling offices. That is, counselors can play a role to challenge stereotypes and prejudice and promote a welcoming and safe environment within their communities, institutions, or at the higher organizational level. This includes providing workshops and educational opportunities, assessing institutional statements, and organizing community events for human rights allies.

- Lee, S., & Waters, S. F. (2021). Asians and Asian Americans' experiences of racial discrimination during the COVID-19 pandemic: Impacts on health outcomes and the buffering role of social support. *Stigma and Health, 6*(1), 70-78.
- Litam, S. D. A. (2020). "Take Your Kung-Flu Back to Wuhan": Counseling Asians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders with Race-Based Trauma Related to COVID-19. *Professional Counselor, 10*(2), 144-156.
- Liu, S. R., & Modir, S. (2020). The outbreak that was always here: Racial trauma in the context of COVID-19 and implications for mental health providers. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy, 12*(5), 439-442.