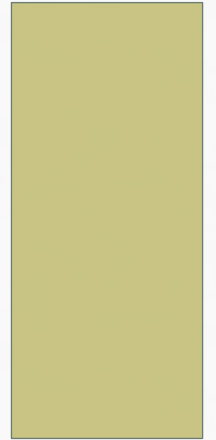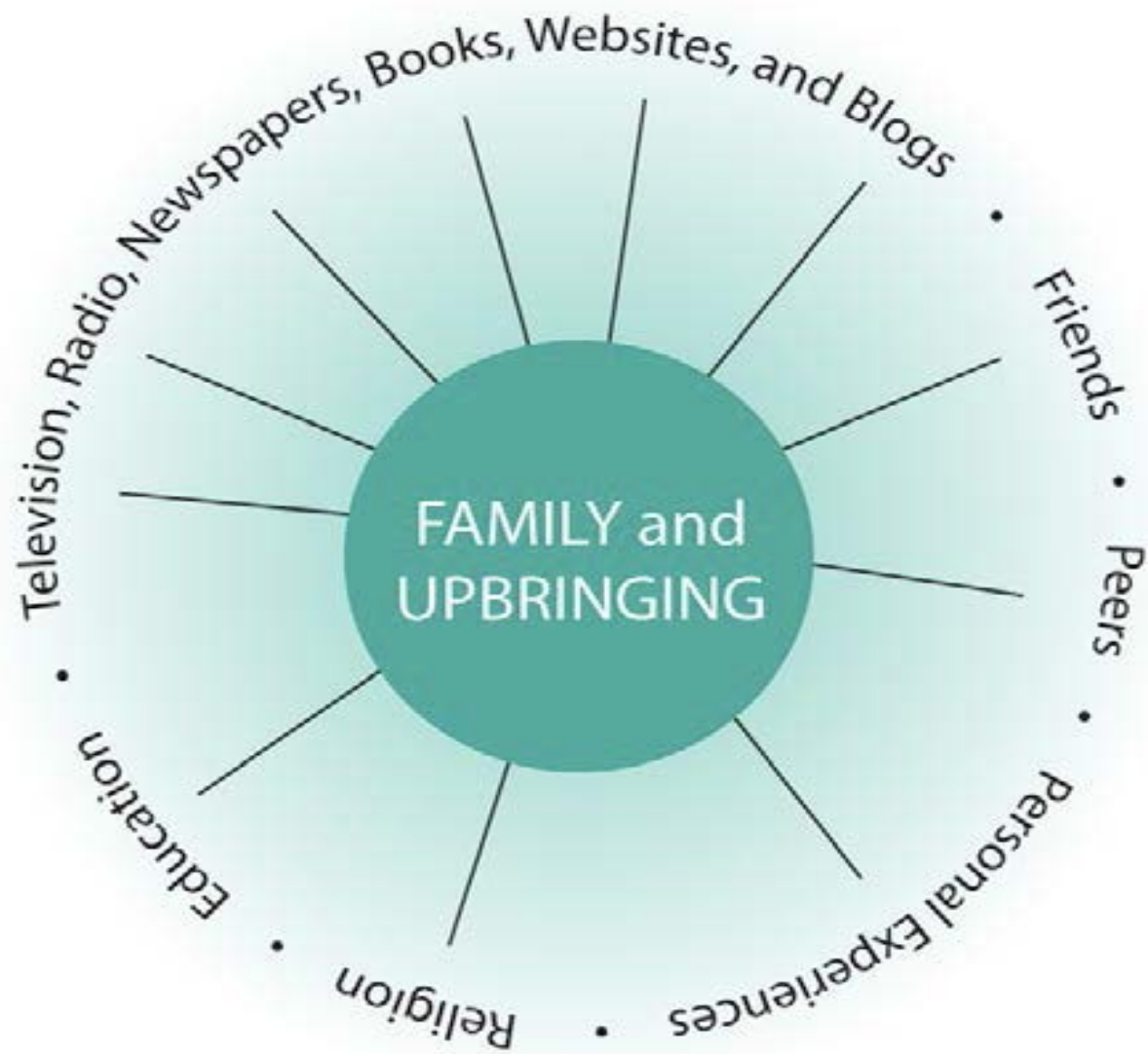# CULTURAL COMPETENCY

CARRI GIBSON, LMFT

WHAT IS CULTURE?

- Culture refers to the integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communication, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CULTURE

- Racial Groups
- Generations
- Sexuality
- Occupations
- Food Practices
- Religions

FAMILY and UPBRINGING

Television, Radio, Newspapers, Books, Websites, and Blogs

Friends

Peers

Personal Experiences

Religion

Education

CONSCIOUS EFFORT IS NEEDED.
WE CAN GET OFF "AUTOMATIC" BY

Becoming aware of our mental filters; getting to know the labels and whom we relegate to them.

- *Deciding not to act on our stereotypes.*

- *Trying to imagine what the world might look like through the eyes of other people who are different from us in some way.*

- *Seeking out information, reading, talking and observing as objectively as possible. Work with a mentor!*

- *Process with colleagues to receive and give constructive feedback when we don't catch that we are on automatic.*

- *Honestly and continuously access our privilege and responses to that privilege.*

ASK YOURSELF THREE QUESTIONS

- What is culture?

- What influence does it have on the client's trauma?

- What relevance does it have for the client?

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

- Are you in for a long few years?

- We need to ask the right questions. Never be afraid to ask!

- What does this mean in advocacy?

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

- Culture affects how the victim perceives the trauma
  - Ask "If this happened to me, how would you expect me to deal with it?"
- Communicate respect and good will
  - Acknowledge the differences
- Be aware of cultural biases
- Culture affects how the victim will heal from the trauma
  - Ask if they have any culture specific treatments or healing processes
- Do not be afraid to apologize
- Acknowledge your limitations and differences

KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

- Make sure to have knowledge of the different cultures within the community you serve

- Attend local events and festivals

- Interact and ask honest, respectful questions.

- Try to obtain referrals that are culture specific if agreed upon by client

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?