

# Once Upon A Time: Narrative Therapy With Children And Their Families

## Chapter 8 Application of Social Justice and Cultural Responsiveness Strategies: Using Cultural Assessments in Counseling and Psychotherapy

### Introduction

The importance of broaching cultural issues with clients has been addressed in the counseling and psychotherapy literature (Arnold, 2010; Cardemil & Battle, 2003; Chang & Yoon, 2011; Day-Vines et al., 2007; Ibrahim & Heuer, 2013; Ibrahim, Ohnishi, & Wilson, 1994; Zegley, 2007; Zhang & Burkard, 2008). However, concrete approaches to understanding a clients experience, culture, values, etc., are unclear, beyond a recommendation to address these issues. Broaching the cultural dimension by seeking to conduct cultural assessments is a process that helps in bringing cultural issues into the counseling process (Ibrahim, 2010; Ibrahim & Heuer, 2013). The rapidly changing demographic profile of the United States requires that clinicians acquire knowledge and skills to identify cultural dimensions of the counseling encounter, i.e., the helpers and client cultural identity, and cultural context, before proceeding with setting goals and process for counseling (Ibrahim, 1999, 2003). This chapter will have an introductory section identifying the process for conducting assessments on cultural variables, and incorporating them in interventions and in the second section case studies highlighting how cultural assessments were used to help design interventions, and the evaluation of the interventions will be presented.

### Process for Conducting Cultural Assessments

We recommend two approaches for incorporating the cultural assessments into the counseling process: (1) integrated into the initial interview; and (2) giving the paper-pencil tests and inventories to the client and having the client complete the information and bring it in to the second session. Reviewing the results on the tests and inventories can corroborate the information provided by the client in the initial

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