

# From Cultural Destructiveness to Cultural Proficiency: Increasing Cultural Competence in Working with African Americans



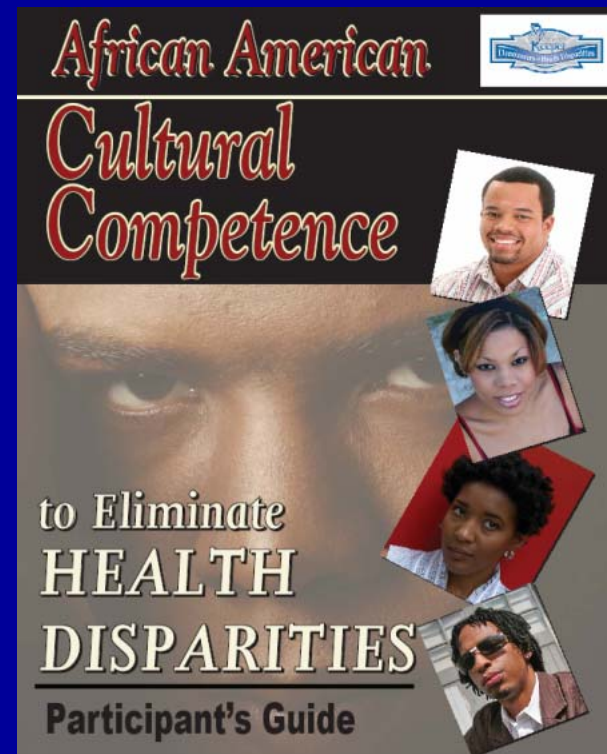
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# African American Cultural Competence to Eliminate Health Disparities

- One-day interactive, skills building course
- Based on cultural competence continuum that ranges from cultural destructiveness to cultural proficiency



# Objectives

- To provide healthcare workers with the necessary skills needed to recognize health-related beliefs and practices of African Americans
- To improve the quality of services delivered
- To understand the vital role cultural competence plays in reducing health care disparities among African Americans

# Program Evaluation Data

- Delivered to 7 community health care organizations
- 75 % of the participants strongly agreed they learned new skills
- 75% of the participants strongly agreed their awareness about cultural competence had increased due to the course
- 87.5% of the participants strongly agreed they could apply the cultural competence skills within the next three months

# African Americans and Health Disparities

- African American women, ages 35-44, have a breast cancer death rate more than twice the rate of White women in the same age group.
- African American men have about a 60% higher incidence rate of prostate cancer than white men.
- African Americans are far more likely to rely on hospitals or clinics instead of personal physicians for their usual source of care (16%), than are white Americans (8%).

# Barriers to Healthcare

- Economic
- Structural
- Informational
- Individual/Cultural

# What is Culture?

Patterns of human behavior that includes:

- Institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups
- Thoughts
- Communications
- Actions
- Customs
- Beliefs
- Values

# What is Cultural Competence?

A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together to enable health care providers to work *effectively* in cross-cultural situations.



# Justification for Cultural Competence in Health Care

- The perception of illness and disease and their causes varies by culture
- Culture influences “health seeking behaviors” and attitude toward health care providers
- Health care providers from culturally and linguistically diverse groups are under-represented in the current service delivery system

# Health Care Assumptions

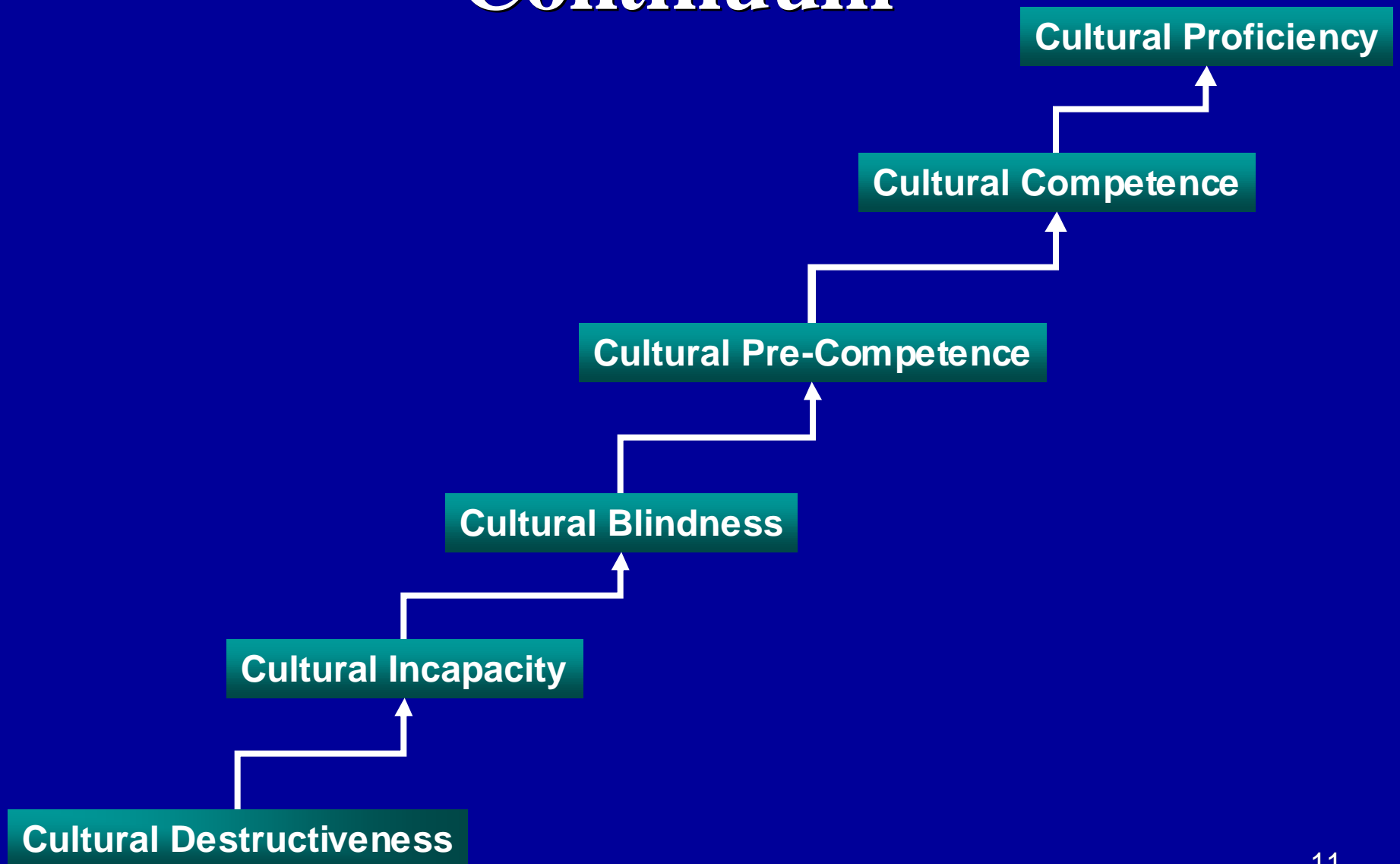
## Provider Assumptions

- Uneducated
- Don't care about health
- Lazy

## Client Assumptions

- Used as a guinea pig
- Don't care about my health
- They don't understand the challenges in my life

# The Cultural Competence Continuum



# Cultural Destructiveness

- The blatant attempt to destroy the culture of a given group
- The assumption that one group is superior to another
- Acknowledges only one way of being and purposefully denies any other cultural approach

# Cultural Incapacity

- An individual or organization lacks the capacity to be responsible to different groups, but this is not intentional.
- Ignorance and unfounded fear are often the underpinnings of this problem.
- Failure to recognize when mistreatment is due to cultural differences and thereby perpetuating its occurrence

# Cultural Blindness

- A blindness or ignorance of cultural differences
- Individuals perceive themselves as “unbiased” because they feel that “culture makes no difference” in the way a person or group acts or reacts
- Foster the assumption that we are all basically alike so what works with members of one group will work with all groups.

# Cultural Pre-competence

- Implies movement toward cultural sensitivity
- The active pursuit of knowledge about cultural differences and the attempt to integrate this information into the delivery of health care services
- Learning and understanding of new ideas is encouraged along with solution to improve performances or services

# Cultural Competence

- The capacity to function in an effective manner within the context of the targeted group
- Acceptance and respect of differences
- Continual self-assessment
- Actively seeks advice and consultation



# Cultural Proficiency

- Culture is held in very high esteem
- Cultural differences are regarded proactively
- Improved cultural relations among diverse groups are promoted
- Healthcare providers are regarded as specialists in developing culturally sensitive practices

# Achieving the Goal

The achievement of cultural competence assures that clients/patients are treated with dignity and that cultural traditions and values that can impact healthcare are identified and treated with *respect*.

# Recommendation

Utilizing a developmental process to building cultural competence is recommended as the most effective means to increase cultural competence skills among healthcare providers.