

## CULTURE COMPARISONS AMONG DIFFERENT ETHNICITIES

### American:

- Individualism prized; self-determination
- Task/achievement oriented
- Future oriented
- Biomedical & empirical belief in health care
- Self-care, self-responsibility
- Christian-Judeo religious beliefs (10 commandments)
- Usually only like physical contact with close family/friends
- Decision-making done jointly by men & women

### Hispanics:

- Family oriented, interdependence with kin, respect for family hierarchy
- Group control over individuals
- Present & past time – don't plan for the future
- Many different cultures (Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc.)
- Caring by others, group responsibility
- Use many home remedies
- Mostly Catholic
- Like close body contact – indicates sign of trust
- Male = decision-maker
- Barriers: language, illegal immigration status, lack of financial resources, like to keep problems private to prevent shame on family (especially mental illness)

### Asians:

- Family/group oriented; respect for elderly & authority
- Caring by family, especially by eldest son
- Well-defined roles for men & women; men = decision-makers; patriarchal society
- Philosophy/religion – many believe in fate and reincarnation; believe if something bad happens now, it is because something bad was done in a previous life; do not fear death due to reincarnation
- Use holistic approach to health care
- No direct body contact except by family/close friends; address formally
- Believe in harmony; are non-confrontational; will accept an injustice to preserve harmony rather than assert individual rights
- Barriers: language, reluctant to ask questions, very private; mental illness is viewed as shameful

### African Americans:

- Family oriented; seniors highly respected
- Caring is family responsibility
- Illness is often ignored; perceived as sign of weakness; home remedies popular
- Lack of trust in authority figures due to past history of discrimination & prejudice
- Some things kept in the family to prevent being disgraced (mental illness)

- Oldest child = decision-maker
- Don't like to accept outside assistance – viewed as “welfare”
- Barriers: distrust of authority, lack of financial resources

#### Asian Indians:

- Family-oriented; take care of own people; do not go to government for help
- Strong community commitment; must be of service to family/community; social harmony is important
- Caring usually done by oldest son
- Men = decision-makers
- Hinduism = major religion; people create their own destiny by thoughts, words & deeds; therefore, if have problems, they have contributed to that state; death not feared due to reincarnation; acceptance of incidents as the will of fate is widespread
- Women are very modest and physical contact not done in public or with non-family members
- Barriers: language, only trust others from their culture

#### Muslim Countries:

- Family is the center of their social life and support system
- Live according to the philosophy that the will of God is evident in all things; men pray 5 times/day
- Men = decision-makers
- Polygamy is permitted under Islamic law but is not widely practiced by most Muslims
- No physical contact between the sexes unless they are related; women very modest
- Barriers: language, do not trust American authority figures due to discrimination & prejudice

#### Russians:

- Strong family ties, both nuclear & extended
- Most immigrants are Jewish; religion plays a big part of their lives
- Men = decision-makers
- Stoic & do not admit pain; try to hide illness, especially mental illness; perceive pain & illness as part of life
- Home remedies & herbal treatments very common
- Enjoy physical contact
- Suspicious of authority figures due to history of persecution
- Barriers: language, many smoke & drink, resistance to outsiders