

*CBT Outside the Box:  
Tips & Tools for Multicultural Practice*

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*Agenda*

- The ADDRESSING Framework
- Strengths & Limits of CBT across Cultures
- Tools for Culturally Responsive Practice

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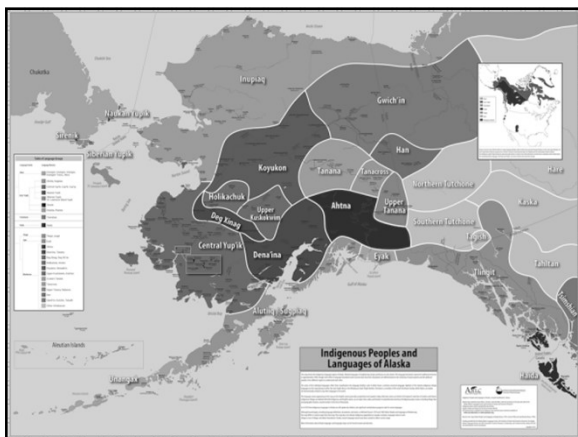
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## Evidence-Based Practice in Psychology:

Integration of the best available research with *clinical expertise* in the context of patient characteristics, culture, and preferences.

– APA Presidential Task Force on EBPP, 2006

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### The ADDRESSING Framework

#### Cultural Influences

Age/generational

Developmental & other  
Disability

Religion & Spirituality

Ethnic & racial identity

Socioeconomic status

Sexual orientation

Indigenous heritage

National origin

Gender

#### Minority Groups

Children, adolescents, elders

People with developmental, physical, sensory, psychiatric, or cognitive disability

Religious minority cultures

Ethnic & racial minority cultures

People of lower status by education, income, occupation, rural/urban habitat

Gay, lesbian, & bisexual people

Indigenous/Aboriginal/Native people

Refugees, immigrants, international students

Women & transgender people

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## Two Categories of Work

- Personal
- Interpersonal

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Mrs. Sok...

An older woman named Mrs. Sok came with her Cambodian interpreter Han to see a Euroamerican psychologist named Elaine. Mrs. Sok spoke in a soft voice and made little eye contact. She could not provide her age, and did not know the date or the name of the building in which they were meeting. Through the interpreter, Mrs. Sok acknowledged that she had been crying, sleeping poorly, and losing weight since learning 3 weeks earlier that her apartment building was scheduled to be demolished. Elaine made an empathic comment, but then focused on questions about Mrs. Sok's experiences during the war. Through Han's interpretation, Elaine learned that Mrs. Sok had been widowed since her husband was killed in the war in Cambodia during the late 1970s, and that 4 of her 6 children (at the time) also died or were killed. In the late 1980s, Mrs. Sok and her two surviving children plus one born in the refugee camp emigrated to the U.S. where they had been living on public assistance in an apartment next door to two other Cambodian families...

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Mrs. Sok...

... As they talked, Elaine noticed that Mrs. Sok's responses in Khmer were shorter than Han's interpretations in English. When Elaine asked Han in a firm tone to interpret exactly what was said, Han agreed but appeared uncomfortable. After running over their allotted time, Elaine told Mrs. Sok that she believed she could be of help and asked Han to schedule another appointment the following week. Elaine also recommended that Mrs. Sok see a psychiatrist for a medication evaluation. Mrs. Sok nodded her head in agreement. The next week, Mrs. Sok and Han did not appear for their appointment, and when Elaine telephoned Han to find out why, Han told her that Mrs. Sok did not want to return.

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## Essential Knowledge

1. *Bias* is best thought of as a tendency to think, act, or feel in a particular way.

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## Understanding Bias

Categorizations → Biases  
& → Biases → Worldview  
Generalizations → Biases

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## Essential Knowledge...

2. We're all biased but we don't all belong to dominant cultural groups.
3. Bias + Power = Systems of privilege ('isms).

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## Essential Knowledge...

4. Nonprivileged members are socialized to be aware of the lines separating those who have privilege from those who do not.
5. Privileged members are socialized to ignore these lines and differences.

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## Essential Knowledge...

6. Privilege separates and cuts Privileged members off from valuable knowledge regarding Nonprivileged groups.

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## Cultural Self-Assessment

### Cultural Influences

Age/generational

Developmental & other  
Disability

Religion & Spirituality

Ethnic & racial identity

Socioeconomic status

Sexual orientation

Indigenous heritage

National origin

Gender

### Minority Groups

Children, adolescents, elders

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## Strengths of CBT across Cultures

- Emphasizes the uniqueness of each individual.
- Empowers clients via educational approach.
- Focuses on conscious processes & specific behaviors.
- Integrates assessment throughout therapy.
- Emphasizes strengths & supports.
- Works across the lifespan (children, adults, elders).
- Considers cognitive, emotional, physical, behavioral & environmental components of a problem.

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### Limitations of CBT across Cultures

- Often assumed to be value-neutral.
- Emphasis on cognition, "rational" thinking, & confrontation.
- Focus on the present may result in neglect of generational & historical influences.
- Emphasis on personal change may contribute to neglect of oppressive environmental conditions.
- Heavy reliance on verbal abilities.
- Research is still predominantly ethnocentric.
- CBT jargon.
- Neglects the spiritual component.

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### TIPS for Assessment:

A. Use ADDRESSING to develop hypotheses & questions.

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Rick is a 32-year-old biracial (Euro/African American) man who transitioned from female identity assigned at birth several years before he was hired for his current position. One month ago, Rick was promoted to a managerial position in which he is responsible for 30 employees. Since then he has begun feeling increasingly anxious, has had several panic attacks, lost weight, and been sleeping poorly due to worry about having another attack. He says he knows his exhaustion is being noticed by his coworkers and may be affecting his performance. He wants help with managing his anxiety and eliminating the panic attacks.

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Case example:Mark

25yo "Mark" came to his college counseling center asking for help in figuring out what jobs to apply for after graduation. In response to the young Euroamerican counselor's questions about Mark's background, Mark said his mother was Athabaskan & father Russian/Euroamerican. After his parents divorced, he and his brother took turns between his father in Anchorage & mother in a rural area. When he was 18, his father died and he decided to stay with his mother for a while before going to college in Anchorage. Two years later, his maternal grandparents both died. Mark became tearful when he said this and changed the subject back to his career search. The counselor was familiar with the many losses experienced by Alaska Native people and told Mark that he could see Mark had experienced many losses in his life and might need an opportunity to grieve more fully. He added that counseling could help with this. At his encouragement, Mark made another appointment, but the next week, Mark did not appear and the counselor did not hear from him again.

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TIPS for Assessment:

B. Actively look for cultural strengths and supports.

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Culturally Related Personal Strengths

- pride in one's culture
- religious faith or spirituality
- artistic and musical abilities
- bilingual and multilingual skills
- group-specific social skills
- sense of humor
- culturally-related knowledge & practical skills (fishing, hunting, farming, medicinal plants)
- culture-specific beliefs that help one cope with others' prejudice & discrimination
- respectful attitude towards the natural environment
- commitment to helping one's own group
- wisdom from experience

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### Interpersonal Cultural Supports

- extended families including non-blood-related
- cultural or group-specific networks
- religious communities
- traditional celebrations and rituals
- recreational, playful activities
- story-telling activities that make meaning and pass on history of the group
- involvement in political/social action group
- a child who excels in school

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### Environmental Cultural Supports

- altar in home to honor deceased family members
- space for prayer and meditation
- culture-specific art and music
- culturally preferred foods for cooking & eating
- animals to care for
- gardening area
- access to outdoors for subsistence or recreational fishing, hunting, farming, observing night sky
- communities that facilitate social interaction by location or design

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### Strengths & Supports

Juan is an 18-year-old high school student whose father is White and mother Puerto Rican. He was born and grew up in the city. He began drinking and using drugs at 12. His father was physically abusive, and Juan dropped out of school and left home at 16 to live with a variety of extended family members and friends. He reports his relationships are primarily with people who drink and use drugs, although he stays connected to his mother and one sister via phone calls and visits. He had two months clean and sober once following a domestic violence incident with his girlfriend, but he admits he is now drinking and smoking marijuana. He continues to have contact with the girlfriend. He has had a variety of jobs, is currently working part-time at a gas station, and sporadically attends the alternative high school. He is angry at the police, his father, and his girlfriend but also says he knows that part of his problem is himself.

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TIPS & TOOLS for THERAPY:

A. Explain what you do without jargon.

1. Childhood vulnerability, stressors, supports
2. Solution categories—Action & Mental strategies
3. Homework—Smallest Possible Step

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TIPS & TOOLS for THERAPY:

B. Avoid the biggest CBT mistake--premature cognitive restructuring--by clarifying externally generated stress vs. internally generated stress.

1. Validate oppressive environmental influences.
2. Problem conceptualization→intervention

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Clarify External vs. Internal

Sources of Stress

José is a 32-year-old bilingual (Filipino/Native Hawaiian) former soldier who was near the explosion of an IED one year prior which resulted in a brain injury. He has recovered his cognitive abilities with the exception of some mild concentration difficulties but is blind in one eye and has mildly slurred speech and right-sided weakness especially when tired. He tearfully reports feeling useless to his wife and two children and is worried about their inadequate finances. He says he wants to work again but adds "I am so sick and tired of people's stares. When I'm not in uniform, people assume I'm drunk or crazy. I know no one would give me a job like this. I hate the way I am."

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TOOLS

C. CLASS *Action* Strategies:

- **C**reate a healthy environment
- **L**earn something new
- **A**ssertiveness & other communication skills
- **S**ocial engagement
- **S**elf-care--physical, emotional, spiritual

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TOOLS

D. Personal Strengths Inventory (PSI)

- What do you consider your strengths & supports? What would your mom/kids/best friend say?
- A connection to any religion or spiritual practice?
- Is your cultural heritage a source of strength or support?

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TOOLS

**FOCUS exercise** (E. Gendlin)

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TOOLS

Compassion Voice

- Most Generous Interpretation
- Looking for Suffering

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Attitude of Gratitude

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TOOLS

Wise Elder (Y. Dolan)

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TOOLS

Culturally Adapted Visual Imagery

(LaRoche, D'Angelo, Gualdron, & Leavell, 2006)

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TOOLS

Sayings & Metaphors

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TOOLS

Coyote Thoughts

(B. Washington, 2012)

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TOOLS

Taoist Cognitive Therapy *wu wei*

(Chang et al., 2016)

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TOOLS

Maori *whare*

(Bennett, Flett, & Babbage, 2014)

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TOOLS

Transaffirmative Hope Box

(Craig, McInroy, Alaggia, & McCreedy, 2014)

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TOOLS

**Magic 3-Step Technique**

(Sommers-Flanagan, 2007)

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TOOLS

**Anxiety Remote Control**

(Anderson, Smith, & Christopherson, 2011)

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TOOLS

**Art Therapy**

(Malchiodi & Rozum, 2012)

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### Books & Training Videos

- Hays, P. A. (2016). *Addressing cultural complexities in practice: Assessment, diagnosis, & therapy (3rd edition)*. Washington DC: APA Books.
- Hays, P. A. (2014). *Creating well-being: Four steps to a happier healthier life*. Washington DC: APA LifeTools.
- Hays, P. A. (2013). *Connecting across cultures: The helper's toolkit*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Iwamasa, G. Y., & Hays, P. A. (Eds.) (2019). *Culturally responsive cognitive behavior therapy: Practice and supervision (2nd edition)*. Washington, DC: APA.
- Wenzel, A., Dobson, K., & Hays, P. A. (2018). *Cognitive-Behavioral Techniques & Strategies*. Washington DC: APA Books.

**Training Videos** (produced by the APA)

- Hays, P. A. (2015). *Culturally Responsive Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy in Practice Over Time*. Series VIII—*Psychotherapy in Six Sessions*.  
<http://www.apa.org/pubs/videos/4310945.aspx>
- Wenzel, A., Dobson, K., & Hays, P. A. (2015). *Cognitive-Behavioral Techniques & Strategies (DVD Series w/ matching book)*.

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