

Purpose/Objectives

- Enhance awareness of our culture and its influence on resource use
- Enhance understanding of communication and develop skills
- Enhance awareness and understanding of other cultures and influence on resource use
- Incorporate learning into teaching and practice to build capacity for working in the community

Basis of Program

- Principles for program
 - We value culture
 - We value culture diversity
 - We respect and celebrate culture diversity
 - Resources are valuable
 - Families approach resources within a cultural perspective
 - Empowerment of helpers in the community is important

Culture helps to establish a shared understanding among a group of people of the external world and each individual's relationship to this world. Siobahn Austen

Culture

- Language—meanings have agreed relationships, e.g. wink, words
- Norms—standard pattern regarded typical
- Customs—learned from generation to generation
- Morals—learned right and wrong conduct
- Beliefs and conventions—shapes consciousness within society

Culture at the Group Level

- Cultural self awareness
- Cultural exclusiveness
- Cultural consciousness raising

Cultural Self Awareness

- Becoming aware of your culture first
- Discovering your unique cultural ways
- Identifying importance and role of your culture in your life
- Considering culture in family of birth or growing up (family of origin)
- Considering culture in current family (family of choice)

Cultural Exclusiveness

- Explore your own culture first (insider's view)
- Consider important aspects– positive and negative

Cultural Consciousness

Raising

- Look beyond your own culture
- Ask “If this is true for my culture, is it true for others?”
- Recognize the world consists of many cultures--each different from the other

Culture at the Instructor Level

- Cultural self awareness
- Cultural exclusiveness
- Cultural consciousness raising

Culture and Resources

- Everyone has culture
 - Extension educator's culture
 - Service providers culture
 - Client's culture
- Everyone has resources. They are:
 - Interconnected
 - Form the core daily life
 - Often are not recognized, especially when families have daily life stressors

Awareness

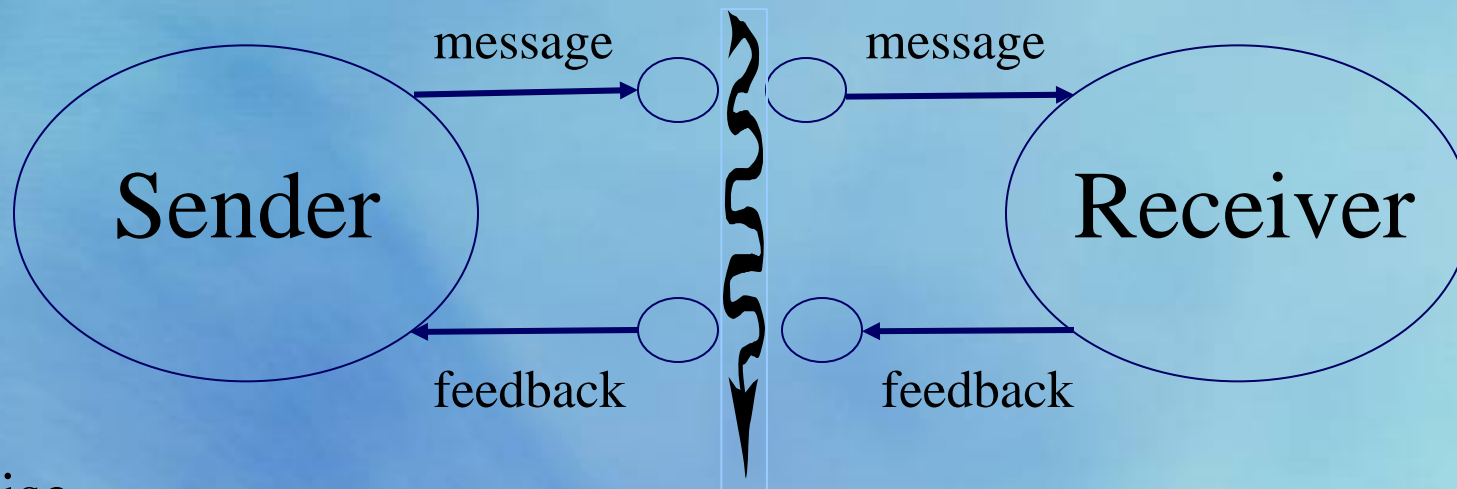
- Building awareness means communicating about culture and resources.
- Communication is the first step.
- What is communication?

Communication Model

- Must have a sender of message
- Must have a receiver of message
- Works best when there is little noise in the system

Communication Model

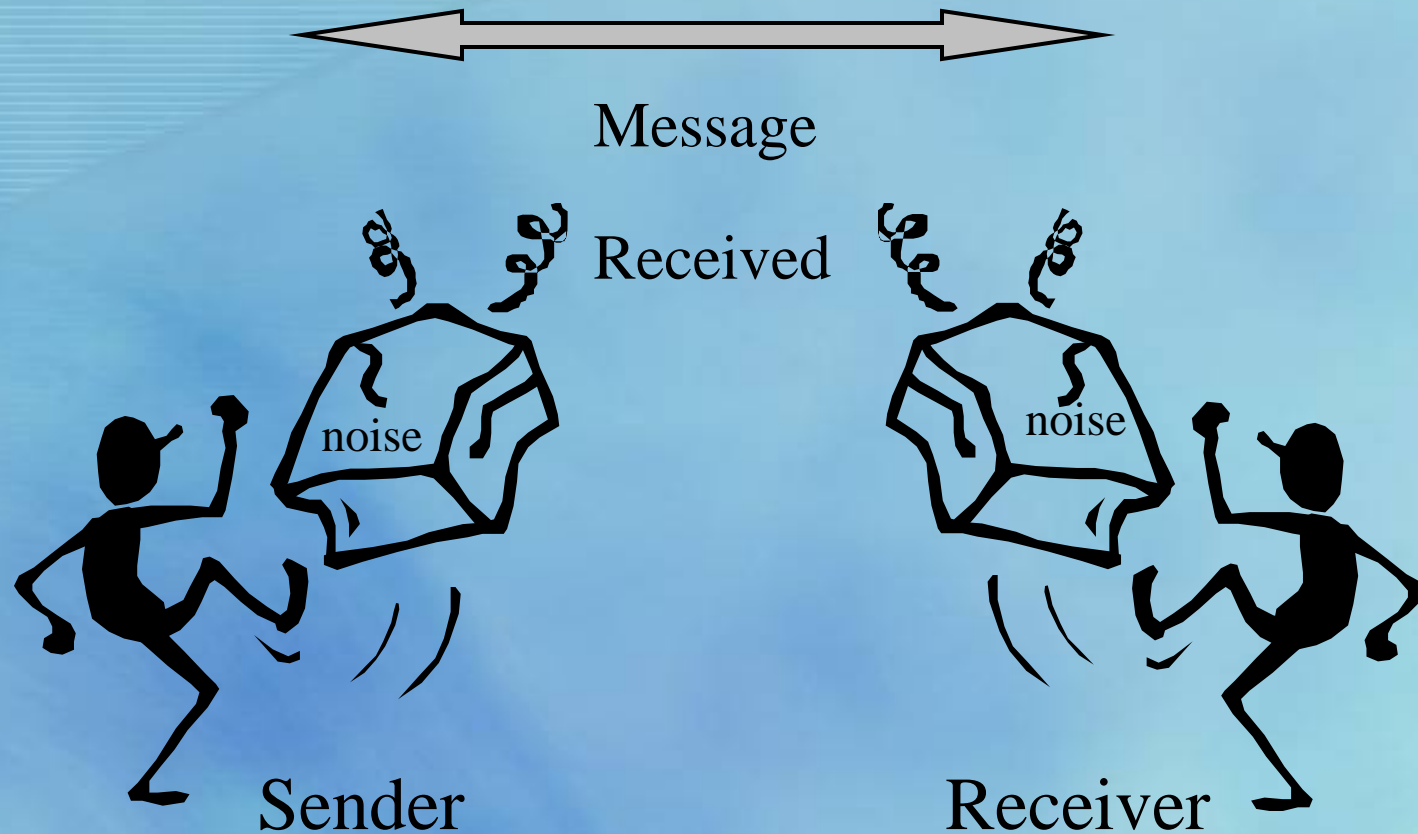
Noise



Noise

- impedes communication
- interrupts sender's message
- disturbs receiver's feedback

Reduce Noise in Communication



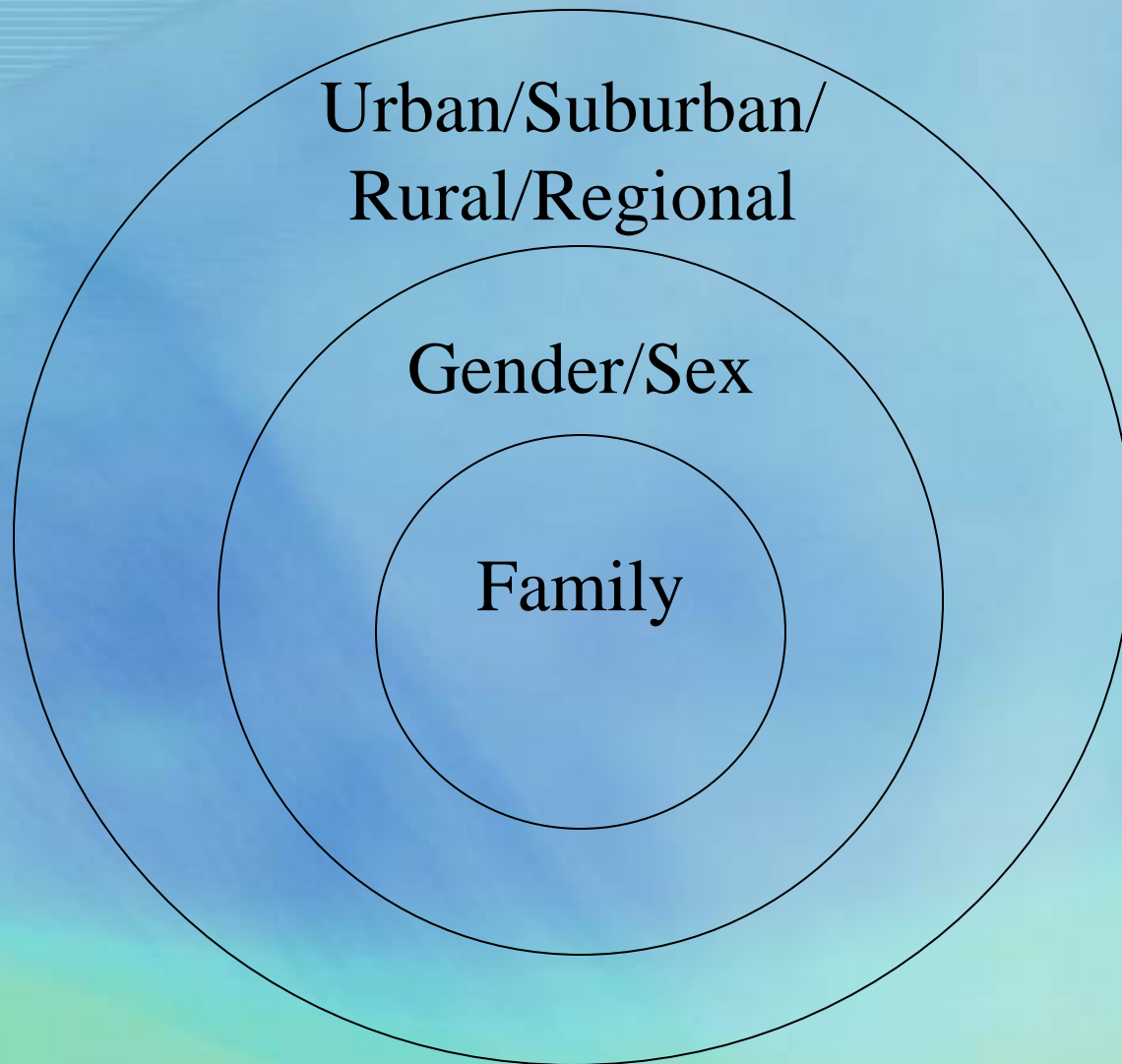
Helpers Are Part of the Noise When...

- Engrossed in own culture
- Do not allow other cultures to emerge
- Do not listen
- Give advice based on their own cultural norms
- Allow assumptions to drive work

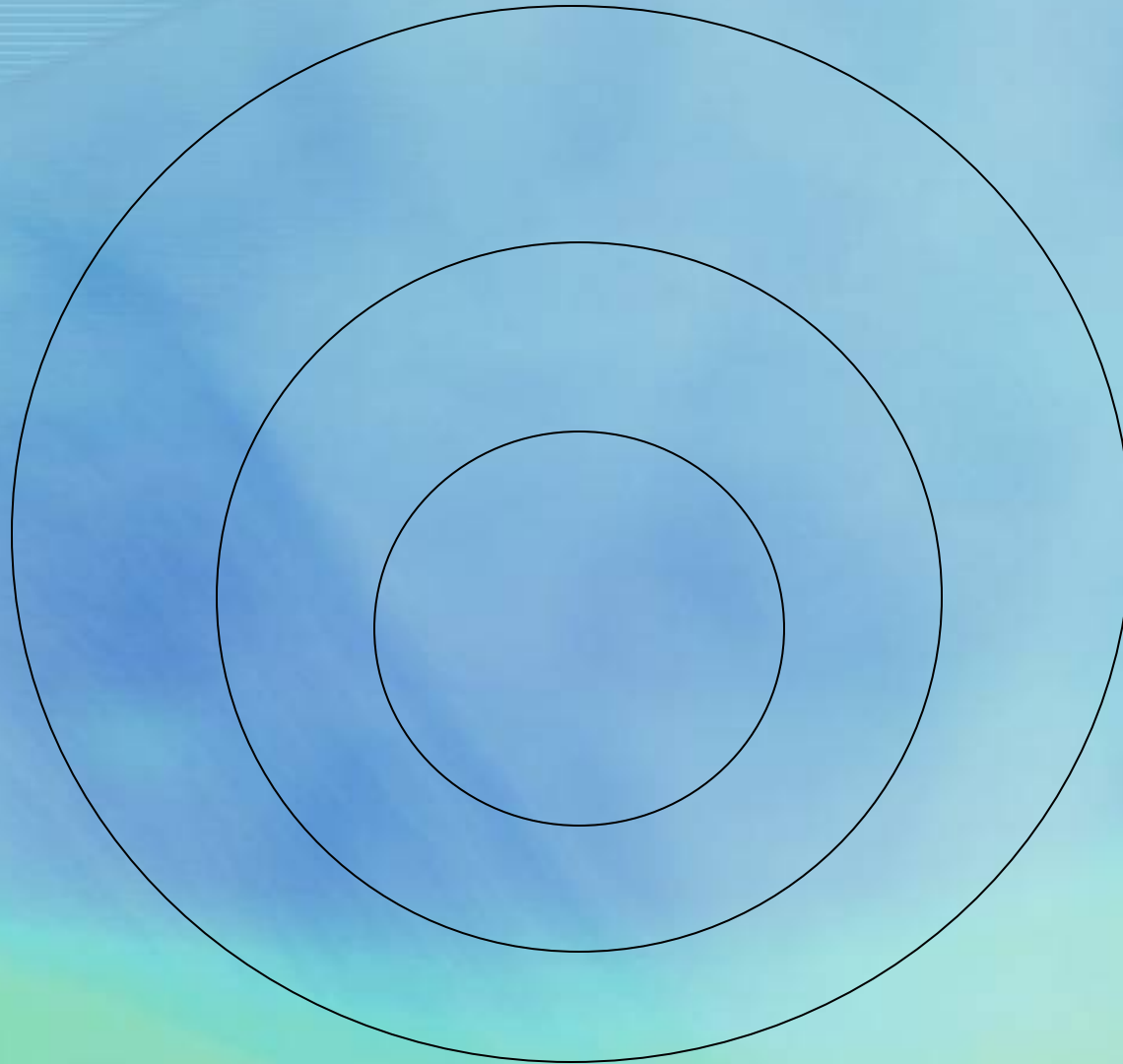
Awareness and Understanding

- Being aware is not enough.
- One must understand their own situation around culture.
- Understanding one's own can help you to understand how culture can be structured around groups.

Micro Cultures



Micro Cultures



Basis for Cultural Structures

Ingroup

- Group whose norms, goals, and values shape behavior of members
- Members who “feel similar” because of common fate

Cultural Structures and Resource Use

- Collectivism
- Individualism

Collectivism Structure

- Ingroup fate and goals given priority over personal goals
- Works to maintain harmony, cooperation, keeping the group first (interdependence)
- Involves a sense of obligation to group
- Shares most resources

Individualism Structure

- Dominate structure in many groups
- Promotes personal independence
- Stand on own—promotes self-care first
 - Financially take care of self
 - Advocate for self
 - Not willing to risk personal resources to help others
- Most financial systems and rental markets assume the individualism cultural structure

Similarities Among Cultural Structures

Ingroups provide basis for

- Social and political action
- Preferential treatment
- Exclusion

(Robinson & Stiles- social capital)

Differences in Ingroups

- Collectivism
 - Ingroups formed on blood relationships and social hierarchy
 - Persons belong to few groups and remain members of group for life
- Individualism
 - Associations and memberships are basis for Ingroups
 - Persons belong to several groups
 - Persons change groups over lifespan

Another View – Social Capital

- Builds on connections from the individualism perspective to the group perspective.
- Builds ties or relationships among groups.
- Expands resources of everyone.

Social Capital “Perks”

- Rides train or bus for reduced rate
- Flies airlines for free or reduced rate
- Receives auto and/or house repairs by friend or family member
- Childcare by friend or family member
- Sharing valuable information about jobs, housing, furniture, clothes, and other resources

Viewing Culture Within Self

- People make choices, even when culturally based
- Culture varies over a lifetime for each person
- Time span changes the context and culture many times

Cultural Variations

Family as a Child

Cultural Overlap of Two

Family as an Adult

Cultural Variations

Dinner at the table
with mother

Dinner twice a week
with teenagers and parents

Breakfast at the table
with parents

Cultural Variations

No talk with children
about money

Some talking with children
about money

Talk with children
about money

Cultural Variations Housing Example

- Individualism
 - Nuclear families have private housing arrangements
 - Separate bedrooms for children
 - Only very needy adults live with their parents
- Collectivism
 - Multigenerational housing is common
 - Adults share responsibilities to maintain home

Cultural Variations

Family as a Child

Cultural Overlap of Two

Family as an Adult

Resource Management

- Process of using what one has to get what one wants. Resources are both human and non-human such as money, housing, food, education, health, ability to work.
- As an outsider, how do you learn how people manage their resources? Even if you are a member of the community ingroup, you are an outsider to the family of origin group.
- What ways are resources managed in your cultural ingroup?

Financial Management Systems

How are resources managed in:

- U.S. Financial Culture/System?
- Somali Culture?
- Hispanic Latino(a) Culture?
- Asian Culture?
- Native American Culture? Native American Reservation Culture?
- African American Culture?
- European American Culture?
- Other _____?

Culture and Resources in Action

- Find out how the family manages its money and other resources.
- Ask appropriate questions.
- Put people at ease, encourage them to use their system.
- Work within the financial larger system(s).

Financial Resources in Action

Helpful questions...

- How does your family handle money?
- How do the adults in the family talk about money?
- How does your family talk about money?
- Who pays the bills? Do you ?
- Who decides which bills you pay when?
- Other questions?

Financial Resources in Action

Helpful strategies...

Ways to find out how the family handles money and other resources...

- Listen carefully
- Frequently offer encouragement
- Use examples and let client share with you
- Assist with alternatives and ways to think about a situation
- Allow the person to make the decision

Housing Resources in Action

- Housing resources are generally thought of as housing, the housing unit, and the related support services such as utilities.
- People need shelter (housing) and so they must deal with the housing system which has rules and regulations.
- It is important to understand the role you can have as an intermediary with the housing systems.

Housing Norms and Preferences

- In the US, we have very clear norms. These are established at the community level and involves regulations.
 - Single family
 - Home ownership
 - Green space
 - Bedrooms
- Family norms and preferences are at the family or individual level.
- These have major influence on the way a family lives and feels about the community.

Housing Systems

As an observer, how do you learn a specific family's housing norms and preferences?

Let them tell you, listen carefully.

Observation relies on too many assumptions.

How do you learn about housing standards in the community?

Connect with the housing resources in your community.

Invite community housing resource persons to your programs.

Housing, the structure, and related services are important to the understanding of the housing system in the community.

Remember...

- Assumptions add NOISE to the system of helping.
- Let client tell you, do not assume you know.
- Use a situation or example to begin the discussion.
- Many examples are available.
- Use manuals from Dollar Works or RentWise for content and or examples.

Integrate Culture into Your Service

- Find services that complement – add value.
- Identify specific needs for your client.
- Look for culturally appropriate resources.
- Share resource list to empower client.
- Let them make the contacts.
- Learning occurs by doing
- Make the learning inclusive of the cultural structure and resource system

Integrate Culture into Your Work

- Helps you to understand and teach more effectively.
- Decreases role of assumptions about knowledge, skills, or available resources.
- Increases the learning for individuals.
- Creates an environment for empowerment of you and your clients.

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