Creating Space for Cultural Responsivity

The ability to learn from and relate respectfully to people of your own culture and other cultures is known as "cultural responsivity." Being culturally responsive requires openness to the viewpoints, thoughts, and experiences of others. This is not about changing others to be more like you. Instead, it is about exploring and honoring the differences of others. Developing a culturally-responsive attitude is a life-long journey.

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| **Recommendation** | **Explanation** |
| **Developing cultural self- awareness** | What values and beliefs do you hold? Why? Understanding your own cultural makeup is the first step to understanding that others hold different values and beliefs and believe in them as much as you believe in yours. What influenced your own cultural identity? |
| **Learn to appreciate and value diverse views** | When your values conflict with those of your colleagues, employees, or fellow peers, accept that they are different and even try to understand other points of view. |
| **Avoid Imposing Your Own Values and Seek Understanding** | Once you are aware of cultural differences, you may find that the cultural norms of some groups make you uncomfortable. Again, it is important to resist the urge to judge. Instead, make a conscious effort to first understand the other perspective. |
| **Resist Stereotyping** | Avoid all stereotypes whether "negative" or "positive." Statements such as "blondes are dumb" or "Asians are good at math" will never be true of all individuals within that population. There will always be individuals outside of that population who will also fit that statement. Stereotypes are therefore unreliable and untrue. |
| **Learn What You Can** | Reading about or talking to members of another culture or visiting a cultural celebration is a great way to increase your knowledge and overall acceptance. |
| **Achieve community without imposing uniformity** | Remain open and respect the values of others by not responding defensively or expecting others to assimilate to other norms. |

References

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