Southeast ATTC

Presents

Counseling African Americans With Substance Use Disorders

Presenter

Mark Sanders, LCSW, CADC
Premises

- Across cultures addiction is characterized by increased tolerance, loss of control and continued use of the drug(s) in spite of adverse consequences.

- Addiction is best treated when the cultural context in which it develops is taken into consideration.
Premises Continued

The context for African American includes:

• Historical trauma
• Police brutality
• Culture taken away
• Unresolved grief
• Discrimination
• Poorly performing schools
• High unemployment - STEMM
• Community trauma
• High arrest and imprisonment rates
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Inmates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>400,000 inmates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Today</td>
<td>2.4 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Premises Continued

• Cross cultural tensions that exists outside of the counseling office can also exist within the office

• Intercultural tensions that exists outside of the counseling office can also exist within the office

  ❖ Age
  ❖ Gender
  ❖ Complexion
  ❖ Social economics etc.
Premises Continued

- There are many protective factors that reduce rates of substance use disorders among African Americans
Question to Ponder

Year after year SAMSHA’s annual drug use report by race and gender reveals that African Americans rank third or fourth in terms of the amounts of drugs used.

What are substance use protective factors for African Americans? How can treatment utilize these protective factors as a part of the recovery process?
Protective Factors for African Americans and Treatment Implications

1. Kinship like bonds – extended family orientation and taking in non-relatives

2. Spirituality

3. “A praying grandmother”

4. A sense of humor – the shortest distance between two people is a good laugh
Resilience Factors for African Americans
Continued

5. Collectivism – concern with survival of the group

6. Music

7. A sense of we’ness

8. Resilience produced by survival of oppression

9. Empathy as a result of oppression

10. Individuals who can instill hope and prove success is possible
Overcoming Mistrust
Reasons African Americans Often Mistrust Behavioral Healthcare Services

Misdiagnosis

– Drapetomania 1851
  (Dr. Samuel Cartwright)

– Dysuethesia Aethiopica
  “A mental health condition that makes the slave lazy.”
Reasons African Americans Often Mistrust Behavioral Healthcare Services Continued

- Experimentation
- Tuskegee Experiment
Reasons African Americans Often Mistrust Behavioral Healthcare Services Continued

- Withholding of pain medication
- More chronic diagnosis early
- Disproportionately diagnosed with conditions that are often viewed as incurable
- Greeted by security
- Low service energy
- A history of paying a price for talking
The price that African Americans pay for speaking their truth
Summary

If you speak your truth you can:

– Get assassinated
– Exiled
– Fired
– Labeled communist or un-American
Engaging African American Clients Within the First 10 Minutes of Contact

- Engage with your
Engaging African American Clients Within the First 10 Minutes of Contact Continued

Creating a welcoming environment

- Voice tone matters
- Lessons from doctors offices – increased first session attendance by 30%
- The greeting matters
- What do the pictures on the wall say?
Engaging African American Clients Continued

- An inviting waiting room
- What do the magazines say?
- The length of the wait matters
- Provide positive service energy
Above and Beyond
Creating a Welcoming Environment for African Americans

- The receptionist
- Walk-in Center Model
- A tour
- The decor
Counseling African Americans With Substance Use Disorders
Counseling African Americans Continued

The importance of joining.

“Small talk.”

“Only equals engage in small talk.”

Maya Angelou

Source: flickr

common
Counseling African Americans Continued

Joining

- Work
- School
- Interests
- Travel to the agency
- Hobbies
Joining With Mandated Adolescent African American Males With Substance Use Disorders

- Shoes
- Hats
- Jerseys
- Hand and arm tatoos
- Music
- Aspirations for the future
- Work

Source: flickr common
The importance of an effective opening statement.
Opening Statement

I know I cannot make you stop getting high. I will honor whatever decision you make concerning your use.
Focus on Strengths as Soon as Possible

- What do you do well?
- How have you been able to endure so much?
- What do you like to do in your leisure time?
- What is the best thing you ever made happen?
- What are the best 3 moments you can recall in your life?
- What is your previous life suffering preparing you to do with the rest of your life?
Focus on Strengths Continued

• What have you learned from what you have gone through?

• What sources of strength did you draw from?

• Which of your experiences has taught you the most about your own resilience?
Honor Multiple Pathways of Recovery for African Americans
Multiple Pathways of Recovery for African American Clients Continued

- Religious styles

  Pastor Hilliard

  Salem Baptist Church

  One Church One Addict – Fr. George Clements

  Glide Church
Multiple Pathways of Recovery for African American Clients Continued

• Treatment assisted
• 12 Step
• Shifting allegiance
• Mature out
• Medication assisted
• Use of recovery coaches
Malcolm X
Love of self (reading, what you wear, what you eat), love of culture
Pathways Continued

Samuel L. Jackson and Spike Lee
Quantum Change
Pathways Continued

– Combined pathways – treatment, 12 step, education, cultural exploration, nutrition, cultural revitalization
Effective Cross Cultural Counseling With African Americans With Substance Use Disorders
Cross Cultural Counseling: What’s Important to Know About African Americans

History and Historical Trauma

- Before 1619
- Slavery
- KKK terror
- Jim Crow
- Lynchings, bombings and burning
- Riots
Trauma Continued

- Medical trauma - Tuskegee
- Police brutality
- Gang violence
- Gun violence
Cross Cultural Counseling Continued

Impact of interacting with different systems

- Hospitals
- Education
- Behavioral Health Systems
- Criminal Justice System
- Child Welfare System
Cross Cultural Counseling Continued

- How racism, discrimination, socioeconomics and migration can impact drug use patterns
- Family structure – extended family orientation, taking in non-biological relatives
- How to address micro-aggressions in counseling
- How to address intersectionality in counseling
- The importance of examining biases, assumptions and stereotypes
Biases

• When you were growing up what biases did your family and community hold about African Americans?
• Which if any of these biases did you internalize?
• How do these biases effect your relationships with African American Clients?
• What actions will you take to help assure that these biases do not negatively impact the cross cultural counseling relationship?
Assumptions

• What assumptions if any do you make about African Americans?
• What are the origins of these assumptions?
• How will you challenge these assumptions so that they do not show up in your work with African American Clients with substance use disorders?
Stereotypes

List any stereotypes you have regarding African Americans.

• How did you develop these stereotypes?
• How do these stereotypes effect your work with African American Clients?
• What strategies will you use to decrease, or eliminate these stereotypes so that they won't negatively effect your work with African American Clients?
Cross Cultural Counseling Continued

• The importance of religion and spirituality
Cross Cultural Counseling Continued

The Diversity of African American Culture Sub-cultures Within African American Communities

- Culturally Elite
- Biracial
- Middle Class
- Emergent
- The Abandoned

(Source: The Splintering of Black America by Eugene Robinson)
Trainers’ Contact Information

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Online Museum of African American Addictions, Treatment and Recovery

**WELCOME** The purpose of this website is to serve as a single location where individuals who are interested in information about addictions, treatment, and recovery among African Americans can be found. The site contains historical data, scholarly articles, educational videos, music and DVDs.

www.museumofafricanamericanaddictionsrecovery.org