

Praise Hong

MFT 603: Individual & Family Development

Week 2 Reading Points

Culturally competent, congruent care is crucial in healthcare. I know from firsthand experience that having a provider that I can trust to be understanding and respectful of my culture makes a significant difference. I have also heard many secondhand accounts from friends and acquaintances about the preference for therapists from similar or relatable cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Patient's care should be person centered first and foremost, and it is my responsibility as a therapist to learn how to apply the client's cultural standards to each situation, and avoid projecting my own beliefs.

I was interested to read about the dual-process model of coping with bereavement. The cycling between loss orientation (LO) and restoration orientation (RO) can help the client process the loss as well as work on rebuilding their life. I tend to focus more on the RO when dealing with difficult emotional situations, so I am learning to recognize the importance of LO in grief counseling. It's just as valuable to face the loss head on as it is to find ways to distract oneself or move on. Grief work is not magically removing the sadness of loss but rather companioning with the mourner in meaning-making through my relational skills.

The grief experience is unique and personal to each individual. Especially when it comes to complicated grief and disenfranchised grief, the counseling process can become even more nuanced. At the same time, I believe people can also heal by sharing common experiences with one another, even if the grief looks different for every person. I hope to be able to balance between treating grief work as a deeply personal experience and normalizing talking about losses.