

Enhancing Reflective Practice in Multicultural Counseling Through Cultural Auditing

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■ Counselors work in an increasingly complex cultural milieu where every encounter with a client must be considered multicultural in nature. Reflective practice is a central component of professional competence and necessarily involves attention to culture. The cultural auditing model provides an effective and flexible reflective process for enhancing multicultural counseling. The 13 steps in the model are detailed with probes and questions to guide counselor reflection. A case example illuminates the principles involved.

There is a plethora of writing in the area of multicultural counseling designed to convince the practitioner that attention to culture in counseling not only is important for effective practice but also is counselors' ethical obligation in terms of competent practice (Arredondo & Toporek, 2004; Pedersen, 2007; Pettifor, 2005). There also continues to be considerable writing aimed at articulating the specific attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, and skills that practitioners require to be competent multicultural counselors (American Psychological Association [APA], 2002; Arredondo et al., 1996; Collins & Arthur, 2010b, in press-a, in press-b; Hansen, Petitione-Arreola-Rockwell, & Greene, 2000; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). There appears to be strong agreement that self-awareness of values, personal assumptions, and biases is the foundation for enhancing multicultural counseling competence (APA, 2002; Collins & Arthur, 2007; Pitner & Sakamoto, 2005; Sue et al., 1992). Self-awareness is an ongoing process of reflection and learning from which counselors gain personal understanding as well as insight into how they view clients who are culturally diverse (Roysircar, 2004). Self-awareness supports the integration of both counselor and client identities into the counseling process and the therapeutic relationship (Collins & Arthur, 2007; Constantine, Melincoff, Barakett, Torino, & Warren, 2004).

The purpose of this article is to introduce the cultural auditing process as a systematic and practical reflective method designed to address critical elements of the multicultural competency development process. We begin with a discussion of the importance of reflective practice in the general counseling literature. We then argue that attention to culture is an essential component of counselors' work with all clients and must become a key focus in reflective practice. Reflective practice is presented as a central component of multicultural counseling. Finally, a 13-step process for cultural auditing is presented, including core domains and reflection questions. Cultural auditing is proposed as a practical process to infuse culture into counseling practices with all clients. A case study is provided to bring the cultural auditing process to life.

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■ Reflective Practice in Counseling

Counselor self-awareness has been commonly highlighted through research as an essential professional competency for counselor educators, students, supervisors, and practitioners (APA, 2002; Peterson, Peterson, Abrams, & Stricker, 2006; Pitner & Sakamoto, 2005). Reflective practice is an important means of facilitating self-awareness in students and novice counselors (Furr & Carroll, 2003; Peterson et al., 2006; Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1995). Likewise, Larsen (1999) found that an openness to and intentionality about self-discovery through reflection was consistent among male counselor educators with at least 25 years of experience. Reflective practice was shown to nurture positive changes and build professional stamina for longtime practitioners (McMullen, 2001). In addition, Kramer (2000) promoted counselor self-knowledge for enhancing reflective processes in clients, which contributes to positive outcomes and enhances the quality of interaction between counselor and client.

Although the significance of reflective practice is well established, its application in counselor education and professional practice is less clear. Schwebel and Coster (1998) found that even though student self-awareness was rated most important by 107 North American psychology department heads, this focus was not reflected in course curriculum. In the United Kingdom, however, most counselor education includes reflective journals as part of developing self-awareness. The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy requires accredited courses to include a personal development component (Wright, 2005). Nevertheless, clear constructs of personal development and assessment processes for reflective practice are missing (Bleakley, 2000; Wright, 2005).

A gap exists between acknowledgment of the importance of reflective practice in the professional counseling literature and research and theory about how to become a reflective counseling practitioner (Wong-Wylie, 2006). Although the significance of the person of the counselor has been espoused for decades, researchers and theorists have paradoxically

avoided specific reference, with rare exceptions, to personal development in textbooks, counselor development models, training programs, and evaluative processes (Jevne, 2002).

Much of what is read about in the counseling literature appears to focus on what Kramer (2000) referred to as “the outer world of therapy”:

our everyday domain. Taught and practiced everywhere, it fills our professional journals, makes up the majority of training programs, and dominates our conferences. It is the world of many theories, many methods, many techniques for doing therapy. . . . For some therapists it is the only world. (p. xiii)

In contrast, the inner world of therapy involves the subjective realm of thoughts, feelings, attitudes, behavior, therapeutic experiences, life history, personal stories, family life, and philosophical beliefs. From a multicultural counseling perspective, this inner world often contains important information about the personal cultural identities of both client and counselor and forms the foundation for building an effective working alliance (Arthur & Collins, 2005a; Collins, 2010; Collins & Arthur, 2010a; Fischer, Jerome, & Atkinson, 1998).

Awareness of the inner world of counseling involves reflective practice. In his seminal writings, Schön (1983, 1987) described the reflective practitioner as one who “reflects on the phenomena before him and on the prior understandings which have been implicit in his behaviour” (Schön, 1983, p. 69). Reflective practitioners engage in a dialectic process of thought and action (praxis) that actively shapes their professional growth (Osterman, 1990). Schön (1991) outlined two modes of reflection within this process: *reflection-in-action* and *reflection-on-action*. Reflection-in-action can instantaneously change counselors’ practice in the moment (Taylor, 1998) through critically evaluating, shifting, reframing, and questioning tacit knowledge. Alternatively, reflection-on-action is carried out after and usually away from the practice situation (Schön, 1983). The first mode facilitates improvement in the moment, and the second mode focuses on only future practice.

Bridging reflective practice generally with personal and cultural self-awareness, Wong-Wylie (2007) introduced a third practice: *reflection-on-self-in/on-action*. This third practice emphasizes salient personal experiences that influence and shape the person of the professional and her or his actions and decisions. Dimensions of self, such as culture, worldview, ethnicity, religion, and life experiences that affect such things as one’s personal theory of counseling (Wong-Wylie, 2006) are uncovered through reflection-on-self-in/on-action. This concept is anchored in Clandinin and Connelly’s (1991) and Connelly and Clandinin’s (1988) narrative perspective: that a practitioner’s personal awareness, which they called *personal practical knowledge*, promotes personal and professional growth. Such transformational learning evokes change in one’s frame of reference (Mezirow, 1997, 2000), including associations that come from concepts, values, feelings, and conditioned responses. A frame of reference is composed of habits of mind, habitual ways of thinking and acting influenced

by basic social and cultural experiences and learning over a life span. These habits of mind are manifested through points of view toward specific individuals or groups and form the lens through which all meaning is construed and all learning takes places (Mezirow, 1997, 2000).

■ Reflective Practice in Multicultural Counseling

The importance of reflective practice is magnified by the challenge of working across cultures (Collins & Arthur, 2005b, 2007). Feminist and multicultural theorists have consistently pointed to the importance of self-awareness as foundational to competent practice (Arredondo et al., 1996; Collins, 2010; Pitner & Sakamoto, 2005; Sue et al., 1992). Building on the earlier Multicultural Counseling Competencies (Sue et al., 1992), the current APA (2002) guidelines emphasize that awareness of personal cultural identity, along with awareness of client culture, is foundational to effective applied practice, education and training, research, and organizational development.

One’s cultural sensitivity is affected by one’s personal frames of reference or cultural schemata (Arthur & Achenbach, 2002; Collins & Arthur, 2010c; Pitner & Sakamoto, 2005), which form a filter through which both counselor and client behavior is perceived and interpreted. In a multicultural context, one can make even fewer assumptions based on the outer world of counseling because of differences in values, beliefs, and assumptions that shape both counselor and client perspectives. Knowing oneself and coming to know another requires engagement in a deeper level of personal and professional reflection in which cultural identities become a key focus. What is missing in the multicultural counseling literature, as well as the reflective practice literature, is a direct focus on the counselor’s dynamic process of reflection in-and-on action and reflection-on-self-in/on-action that specifically includes both counselor and client worldviews. The cultural auditing process is designed to facilitate dialogical thinking between the counselor’s worldview, culture, and experiences and those of clients.

■ Cultural Auditing: A Process to Enhance Multicultural Counseling

In counselor education, attention has focused primarily on the actions of rather than the person of the counselor (Wong-Wylie, 2006). Counselors are challenged to develop strategies to monitor interactions with clients in the moment to ensure that both verbal and nonverbal communication is effective, they monitor practice to ensure that the goals and processes of counseling are consistent with clients’ perspectives and needs, they evaluate interventions and techniques for their efficacy with particular clients and client groups, and so on. The focus on reflective practice requires a different way of thinking about both teaching and practicing multicultural counseling. It is not enough to increase counselors’ knowledge and skills; they must engage in active and continuous

reflection on their application in the context of their work with each individual client.

Reflective practice, however, involves moving beyond both reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Schön, 1991) to reflection-on-self-in/on-action (Wong-Wylie, 2007). The multicultural counseling literature emphasizes both awareness of personal cultural identity(ies) and awareness of client cultural identity(ies) as a foundation for building an effective working alliance with clients (APA, 2002; Collins & Arthur, 2005b, in press-a, in press-b; Pitner & Sakamoto, 2005; Sue et al., 1992). Counselors must ask themselves, What does this mean about my personal culture, about the culture of my client, and about our working alliance? Focusing on the working alliance places the spotlight on the interaction between the person of the counselor and the person of the client in their collaborative negotiation of culturally relevant goals and processes (Collins & Arthur, 2010a, in press-a).

Cultural auditing is an extension of reflective practice that provides counselors with a strategy for reflecting on self, client(s), and the working alliance both in the moment in their work with clients and as a follow-up to counseling sessions. According to Collins and Arthur (2005a), the intent of cultural auditing is to “*provide counselors with focused reflection about the influences of culture on their work with individual clients, groups, and systems*” (p. 141). The 13-step framework presented in Table 1 is intended to provide counselors with a detailed tool for conducting a cultural audit of counseling practices.

The first 11 steps of the cultural auditing process guide the counselor from the point of initial encounter with the client through to termination and follow-up. They facilitate reflection on the application of both self-awareness and awareness of the client's culture through the working alliance. In the context of this alliance, the counselor must move beyond awareness of culture to infuse this awareness into his or her work with each particular client, with each particular presenting concern, and in each particular context (Collins, 2010; Daya, 2001). In this sense, as Wong-Wylie (2007) pointed out, reflective practice brings about change in both the counselor and the client(s), as well as in the quality of the interaction between the two, which is central to an effective working alliance. Both personal culture and client culture affect the establishment of trust and respect, comfort with physical space and other counseling conventions, interpretations of presenting concerns, establishment of counseling goals and interventions, and norms related to evaluating progress and negotiating termination. The questions or topics in Table 1 provide a guide for systematic reflection that encourages engagement with the person of the counselor.

Two additional steps focus on turning the learning that occurs in encounters with individual clients and groups into continued competency development. Toporek and Reza (2001) noted that praxis involves a “continuous process of awareness, reflection, and action” (pp. 17–18). Without action, new learning is not translated into enhanced competence. By learning from each encounter with clients, counselors are able to shape

their practices in ways that are maximally responsive to client needs, identifying themes that emerge and noting processes that lead to effective practice. Articulating and sharing those experiences with other practitioners can then enhance the multicultural competence of the profession as a whole.

Case Example

Sarah has been working in a nonprofit counseling agency for many years. Minkah has recently emigrated from West Africa and has come to discuss plans to enroll in a community college to study early child education. (This case study is fictional, drawing on our previous experiences with clients.) Sarah has worked predominantly with immigrants from the East Indies and Asia. She took some time before their first session to consult with one of her colleagues about the customs and norms that might affect establishing trust with Minkah. This background information provided her with some general insights, but she also wanted to remain open to appreciating Minkah's unique cultural identity. She had pulled out some guidelines on cultural auditing she had recently read and made a mental note of some of the issues that may require her specific focus.

Minkah was quiet, shy, and withdrawn during their first encounter. Sarah encouraged Minkah to describe her background and to explain her transition to North America. Minkah seemed reluctant to talk about these issues, and Sarah noticed that she had glanced several times at Sarah's degree parchment hanging on the wall. Sarah graduated from a university affiliated with the college that Minkah would like to attend. Sarah wondered if this was connected to Minkah's reserved communication style. She asked Minkah how access to higher education occurred in her country and discovered that connections and bribes to persons in authority were commonly required for most services, including education. Sarah explained that the system was quite different in North America. Sarah assured Minkah that she had no connection to the college and that nothing they discussed would influence Minkah's admission. Minkah relaxed a little and slowly shared some information about her family. Both parents were killed during a civil war when she was very young, and her grandmother had struggled to provide for her for many years. Minkah had come to North America on a student visa, sponsored through a local church group with direct ties to her home country.

At the end of the first session, Sarah made a couple of quick notes about issues that might be important to explore as she continued to build a relationship with Minkah. These issues were clarification of Sarah's role as a counselor and Minkah's role as a client, Minkah's cultural beliefs about education, and the importance of family and community in decision making. Sarah also took a moment to reflect on her own feelings about the session. She was feeling uneasy about being associated with the kinds of authority figures Minkah described. She had taken Minkah's lack of trust a bit personally and decided to spend some time before the next session to reflect on how her own beliefs and experiences with authority might be affecting their interaction.

TABLE 1

Cultural Auditing in Multicultural Counseling

Auditing Step	Question or Topic for Reflection
1. Reflect on the potential influences of culture on establishing initial rapport in the counseling relationship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are my initial reactions to this client, and what do these tell me about my own beliefs, values, and assumptions? • How might gender dynamics and differences in age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or range of ability between my client and me affect the counseling relationship? • What conflicts in values and beliefs might arise, including religious beliefs? • How might my prior history of working with clients from a similar cultural group affect my working with this client? • What are the client's cultural norms about privacy and preferences for informal versus formal relationships, degree of directiveness, and communication styles? • What have the client's previous experiences with people in authority been like? • What potential language barriers exist, and how are those most effectively addressed?
2. Reflect on the potential influences of culture on the development of a relationship of trust and respect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information about the counseling process might the client require in order to understand the roles and processes involved? • Given my understanding of the client's cultural identity, how can I best highlight the ways that we share values, beliefs, and perspectives? • What do I bring to this encounter as a person who will support or hinder the development of trust and respect? • What style of counseling might best suit the client's particular cultural expectations and norms? • What types of cultural inquiry might fit best for the client and ensure that all relevant factors are considered throughout the counseling process? • What can I do to enhance my credibility as someone who can help the client reach her or his goals? • How do I best communicate to the client that I understand and empathize with the experiences, thoughts, and feelings she or he has shared with me? • What aspects of the client's expressed needs can I address early on in our interaction that will increase her or his expectation for success in counseling? • How can I best establish a collaborative interaction that equalizes power wherever possible?
3. Reflect on the potential influences of culture on counseling conventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can I do to structure the environment and the counseling session to enhance the client's trust and willingness to return to counseling? • What norms related to setting, time scheduling, frequency and length of appointments, or who participates in the session might I want to consider adapting? • How might I step outside my own comfort zone to provide a context that is optimally conducive to the client's success in the counseling process?
4. Reflect on the potential influences of your personal culture on how you view clients from this particular cultural group or groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What assumptions am I making about this particular client and her or his culture? • In what ways do I assume we are similar and different because of our cultural backgrounds? • What aspects of my own beliefs, values, or worldview do I anticipate might be challenged or in conflict in my work with the client? • What are my initial hypotheses about the impact of culture on the client's presenting concerns? How sure am I of the accuracy of those hypotheses? How open am I to considering new information and modifying those assumptions?
5. Reflect on the potential influences of your personal culture on how you view the client's presenting issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do I believe about human nature and healthy development? • What assumptions do I make about how problems arise and how change occurs? • What do I know about common presenting concerns among clients who identify with their cultural group(s)? • What assumptions do I make about the nature of the client's problems that may be a reflection of my own cultural encapsulation? • What personal stereotypes or biases might I need to watch out for in my assessment?
6. Reflect on the potential influences of the client's culture on how she or he views the presenting issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the client's rationale for the problem, and how does this fit with the ways that problems are conceptualized within her or his culture? • What is the client's view of causality, sense of where the problem is located (internal or external), and assessment of her or his ability to effect positive change? • How might the client's perspective on human nature, healthy development and functioning, and change processes differ from mine because of her or his cultural identity? • How might this alternative perspective fit or not fit with my theoretical orientation?
7. Reflect on the potential influences of broader social, economic, and political systems on the client's presenting concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might the client's presenting problems be affected by family, subcultural group, community, and larger social systems? • To what degree might sociopolitical oppression play a role in the client's presenting concerns? • How do the specific experiences of racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, ableism, and other forms of oppression affect the client's view of self and of social, familial, work, and community environments? • What expanded roles might be required for me to respond effectively to the multiple influences on the client's experiences?
8. Reflect on the potential influences of culture on the definition and negotiation of client goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the counseling goals appear to match the client's presenting issues? • What is the impact of the client's level of acculturation and cultural identity development on her or his goals for counseling? • How might my own level of identity development facilitate or hinder the client in attaining those goals?

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TABLE 1 (Continued)
Cultural Auditing in Multicultural Counseling

Auditing Step	Question or Topic for Reflection
8. Reflect on the potential influences of culture on the definition and negotiation of client goals. (<i>Continued</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What methods have I used to ensure that the identified goals are consistent with the changes that the client wishes to make? • Are the client's conceptualization of the problem and expectations about appropriate solutions compatible with my repertoire of intervention strategies? • What ethical considerations or personal and professional values might influence the boundaries I place on negotiating counseling goals?
9. Reflect on the potential influences of culture on associated tasks or subgoals and the negotiation of counseling interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well does my repertoire of intervention strategies and techniques prepare me to address the client's presenting concerns in a culturally respectful manner? • How are my choices of intervention influenced by my preferences for working with clients in particular ways? In what ways might those interventions need to be modified to work effectively with this client? • What levels of intervention could address the client's presenting concerns? • What interventions best match the client's preferred ways of help seeking and the goals we have established? • How open am I to incorporating indigenous healing practices or resources? • Who might be an appropriate cultural support or healer to involve in the client's counseling process?
10. Reflect on the best ways to evaluate client's progress in counseling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the potential cultural influences on how I view desirable change made by clients? • What are the important indicators in the client's cultural context that demonstrate how counseling has made a difference in her or his life? • What indicators of success have been negotiated with the client to determine that our work together is finished?
11. Reflect on the influence of culture on termination and follow-up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the cultural meanings of endings for me and for the client? • What is the impact of the client's cultural context and my cultural context on the termination process? • What are the potential hazards and benefits of continuing contact with the client in a non-counseling role? • What strategies should we put in place to ensure comfort and safety if we encounter each other in social settings?
12. Reflect on the links between client's experience and the experience of other clients you encounter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the common concerns raised by clients from specific groups that are culturally diverse? • What are the common concerns raised by clients between groups that are culturally diverse? • What level of intervention would best address individual client issues? • What level of intervention would affect social change to ameliorate the conditions that lead to counseling concerns?
13. Reflect on the links between client's experience in counseling and your continued competency development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where did my current level of multicultural competence serve me well in the counseling process? • What feedback has the client provided me about the working alliance, the counseling process, and the outcomes of counseling? • What attitudes, knowledge, and skills might I need to develop to work more effectively with a similar client in the future? • What are the implications for my personal development and the links between who I am as a person and as a professional?

Sarah discussed her reactions with colleagues during a consultation session. She realized that she and Minkah may have more in common than she thought when she found herself reflecting on a promotion she believed she had earned in her last position that went, instead, to a long-term friend of the executive director. She also suspected at the time that gender played a role. She felt a shift in her energy and found herself experiencing a stronger empathetic connection with Minkah in the next session.

Over the next few weeks, Sarah began to suspect that the goal of entering college may not be as heartfelt as Minkah suggested. Minkah presented multiple potential barriers to her success and seemed reticent to engage in solution-focused approaches. Sarah returned to their initial goal-setting process but was unable to resolve the apparent discrepancy between Minkah's stated commitment to the goal and her hesitation to move forward. Sarah wondered if there were external factors that resulted in internal conflicts for Minkah. Sarah had asked

about family influences and cultural expectations related to education and gender but forgot to ask about the church sponsorship of Minkah's student visa mentioned on the intake form.

As Sarah began to explore the issue of church sponsorship with Minkah, it became apparent that the church members were from her ethnic subgroup and that the expectation of the sponsorship was that she would return to her country and teach in a poor rural area. Minkah felt a strong sense of responsibility to carry through with these plans. She acknowledged that the church represented her cultural community and that it was a customary practice for the community to guide decision making. She felt very lucky that the high needs in her country meant the community was more willing to invest in the education of women than ever before. Minkah confided in Sarah that, since coming to North America, she saw so many options that she wished there was a way off of this predetermined path. Sarah spent time after this session reflecting on how her personal and cultural experiences

have affected her own decision-making processes. She realized that there was much more complexity to Minkah's career process than she had originally accounted for.

Together, Minkah and Sarah refocused the counseling process to target development of a personal strategy for decision making. They identified a number of culturally appropriate means of facilitating decision making that took into account the importance of community well-being. Sarah realized that she was lacking experience in this area and suggested that Minkah invite a female elder she respected from the church community to attend a session and explain how she had reconciled traditional models with her integration into North American society. As Sarah listened to this elder, she was able to explore further some of her own cultural biases in terms of decision making. Sarah decided that it would be helpful to her, personally and professionally, to seek out other cultural mentors from the East Indies and Asia so she could work more effectively with her other clients.

Minkah found a path that she was comfortable pursuing and then enthusiastically engaged in the tasks that Sarah suggested to move her forward toward her new goal. She was invited by her church community to talk with other young women who had recently emigrated about her transition process. Sarah realized as they discussed Minkah's progress in one of their final sessions that she originally expected Minkah would have to break ties with the church to really find her own way. Sarah was reminded again to not foreclose on possible outcomes based on her own assumptions and values. She offered Minkah an opportunity to provide her with feedback about the counseling process. Minkah confided that it was likely she would never have raised her concerns about the church without direct prompts from Sarah because she was afraid to dishonor her community. Sarah made a point of discussing the ending of this counseling relationship because she sensed that she had been an important confidant in Minkah's life. They agreed that Minkah would contact her within the next 2 months to let Sarah know how her plans were unfolding. Sarah complimented Minkah for her efforts to build a local support system.

Later that week, Sarah visited the intake worker for the agency, and they reviewed the initial assessment forms to add a couple of questions about the importance of family, community, and other systems in decision making, providing some specific examples for her colleagues. She also posted the cultural auditing checklist on the staff bulletin board with a note inviting others to chat with her about it.

■ Analysis of the Case Example

One of the main issues preventing counselors from engaging in ongoing professional development is time and energy. Often, they are too busy barely keeping up with day-to-day demands to think more long term or to spend time in personal reflection. The model presented here is designed to provide counselors with a simple tool that is neither time nor labor intensive. As evidenced by Sarah's work, it can be used in case planning to ensure that attention to

culture is effectively infused in the work with a particular client or group. It may be used as a prompt for dialogue with clients within the counseling session, allowing counselor and client to collaborate in exploring the impact of culture on various aspects of the counseling process. It may also be used for counselor personal reflection, as a guide to note taking, for client evaluation of counseling sessions, or in the context of supervision and consultation. Like Sarah, the counselor may then take the areas identified as foci for continued professional development.

Reflective practice encourages counselors to review in the moment any changes to the quality of their interaction with the client that may indicate a disruption in the working alliance. Such disruptions have often been framed as "resistance" on the part of the client. The type of reflective practice described earlier and the emphasis on the collaborative nature of the working alliance allows the counselor to reframe the disruption in terms of a mismatch between counselor and client in the goals or tasks of counseling, a breakdown in collaboration, or a breakdown in respect or trust (Collins & Arthur, 2010a; Safran & Muran, 2006). Counselor flexibility is essential because "rigid adherence to prescribed techniques or the therapeutic rationale may fail to repair such ruptures and may even exacerbate them" (Castonguay, Constantino, & Holtforth, 2006, p. 272). In Minkah's case, Sarah noticed the discrepancy between her initial goals and her behavior as they began to work toward those goals. By exploring this discrepancy in terms of cultural expectations, she was able to revise the goals to reflect Minkah's underlying needs. Responsibility lies with the counselor to work with the client to reestablish trust and reassess the goals and tasks of counseling to ensure that they remain a cultural fit for the client. This cultural fit is essential to assess on an ongoing basis in all client-counselor relationships, even when no apparent cultural differences are obvious.

In the case example, Minkah's progress in counseling was paralleled by Sarah's personal and professional development. Throughout the process, Sarah was able to monitor her own responses to their interaction and reflect in the moment and following the session on the meaning of her reactions. Maintaining her working alliance with Minkah required her to attend to negative emotions or counterproductive attitudes as they emerged (Castonguay et al., 2006). She identified new areas of connection with Minkah and also cultural differences that challenged her to broaden her own thinking and ways of engaging with her client. The culturally auditing process, which facilitates reflection-on-self-in/on-action, centrally positions the person of the counselor along with his or her personal worldview, values, beliefs, and assumptions into the multicultural counseling process.

■ Reflections on Reflective Practice

Codes of ethics in both Canada and the United States now recognize the importance of attending to culture (Pettifor, 2005). Many argue for attention to culture in practice with all clients (Esses & Gardner, 1996; Hall, 1997; Pedersen, 2007). The definition of culture has also been expanded to include gender;

sexual orientation; ability; age; socioeconomic status; and other factors, such as language or religious affiliation (Arredondo & Perez, 2006; Arthur & Collins, 2005b; Collins, 2010; Collins & Arthur, in press-a; Harkins, Hansen, & Gama, 2007; Pope, 2007; Silverstein, 2006). This inclusivity highlights the complexity of the encounter between counselor and client. Both the counselor and the client come to the counseling relationship with their own worldview, values, and biases based on their cultural identities and contexts. Cultural auditing is a reflective practice process specifically designed to highlight the influence of the person of the counselor and the person of the client on the counseling process and to provide a means for counselors to optimize their effectiveness in working with all clients.

The literature on reflective practice fits well with the emphasis in the multicultural counseling literature on self-awareness as one of the foundations of professional competency. However, the extant counseling literature predominantly focuses on reflective interventions that target either clients' self-awareness related to their presenting problems (e.g., journaling, letter writing) or counselor application of psychological concepts and theories in a personal way. The cultural auditing process is unique in this regard and provides an effective tool for enhancing self-awareness through directed reflection on the impact of culture in all aspects of counseling practice. Without systematic reflection on the working alliance between the counselor and client, counselors are at risk of applying the principles and strategies associated with multicultural counseling in ways that fail to attend to a client's specific needs. Hanna and Ottens (1995) have gone so far as to identify the practice of reflection as an essential quality distinguishing mediocre counselors from exemplary ones.

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