

My Culture and what it means to me

Instructions for support workers

This activity is to help service users think and talk about their culture and what it means to them. Service users complete a worksheet in discussion with their support worker to detail aspects of their culture. They then rate each aspect to indicate its importance to them. A poster provides examples to help stimulate discussion. The activity is designed as a talking tool, therefore, support workers should explore aspects of culture including access to activities, previous preferences and current desires. The activity may improve mutual understanding and aid individual and service planning by identifying the cultural needs of service users and areas for development. The activity may also help inform staff selection, be used for quality assurance purposes, or to identify service deficiencies.

This activity is designed to be completed by individual service users supported by a support worker. There is a poster to provide examples and help the service user to start thinking about their own culture. Thermometer stickers are used to indicate the importance of each cultural aspect identified by the service user. The poster, worksheet and stickers should be printed.

Resources to be printed:

1. My culture poster, printed at least size A3
2. My culture and what it means to me worksheet, printed as A3
3. Discussion prompt cards
4. Thermometer stickers (printed on sticker sheets (36 labels per sheet, each label sized 49 x 30 mm) or printed on paper, cut and glued to the worksheet).

Instructions:

1. Explain that the activity is to help service users think and talk about their culture and what it means to them.

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2. Direct the service user to the 'my culture' poster and talk through the sections and pictures. The poster provides examples.
3. Explain that culture can mean lots of things. Often, when we talk about culture, we talk about where you and your family might have lived, the languages you speak, clothes you wear, things you do and things that are important to you et cetera.
4. Show the 'My culture and what it means to me' video.
5. Discuss the video: ask whether the service user has any questions, ask whether what was said felt relevant to the service user, ask what it meant to them, and what they felt was important.
6. Explain the activity:
 - a. Explain that the activity involves completing a worksheet.
 - b. The service user adds details about their culture under each of the headings.
 - c. The service user might like to write or might like some support to write.
 - d. The poster provides examples of potential aspects of culture.
 - e. Once the service user has filled in details about their culture, they rate each aspect on how important it is to them using the thermometer stickers. Three thermometers are available, one showing a 'hot' temperature which indicates high importance, one showing a 'moderate' temperature which indicates moderate importance and one with a 'cool' temperature which indicates low importance.
7. Ask whether the service user has any questions.
8. Look at the pictures on the poster and talk about what they might represent.
9. Start working through the worksheet, help the service user to fill in the details under each heading. For each element entered into the worksheet, choose a thermometer and place it on the worksheet next to that element.
10. Ask the service user to provide further details on each aspect such as when, where and who with they might express or explore their cultural identity. The discussion prompts cards outline areas that you may want to explore in more detail.
11. There may be overlap between categories, for example, activities and rituals may be largely related to religion, however, make sure you explore non-religious cultural identity as well.
12. Explore the culture of the service user's family including any similarities and differences. Be aware that there may be tensions around differences between the service user's cultural beliefs and those of their family. You or the person may not be comfortable about some cultural aspects that are discussed.
13. Ask the service user to explain their choice of thermometer stickers.

14. Encourage discussion around the service user's current cultural activities and aspects of their culture that they would like to explore further. Discuss access to activities, such as who the service user would like to do the activity with, and transport. You may like to choose a number of activities and use the planning worksheet with the service user to plan how these activities could be developed.

This activity was developed by Gemma Unwin, Michael Larkin, Biza Stenfert Kroese and John Rose from the University of Birmingham in 2014 to reflect themes from the 'Access to Social Care – Learning Disabilities Project (ASC-LD)'.

Please visit our website: www.ToolsForTalking.co.uk

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