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ORIENTING VOLUNTEERS ON CULTURAL AWARENESS AND EMPATHY WHILE
WORKING WITH REFUGEES

by

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©

SYNTHESIS*

MASTER OF ARTS

CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

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Advisor: Robert Ricketts

* The Synthesis can take a variety of forms, from a position paper to curriculum or professional development workshop to an original contribution in the creative arts or writing. The expectation is that students use their Synthesis to show how they have integrated knowledge, tools, experience, and support gained in the program so as to prepare themselves to be constructive, reflective agents of change in work, education, social movements, science, creative arts, or other endeavors.

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ABSTRACT

It is imperative to recognize that effective volunteer engagement in refugee resettlement hinges upon a deep understanding of cultural dynamics and sensitivities. This paper explores the challenges and complexities of volunteer engagement with refugees, offering insights from the author's experiences, scholarly literature, and theoretical frameworks. The writing highlights the importance of cultural awareness, empathy, and reflective practice in supporting refugees during resettlement while acknowledging the need for ongoing learning and evaluation of volunteer approaches. Relevant concepts and theories from the Critical and Creative Thinking courses are included, integrating perspectives into the author's analysis of volunteer experiences. Additionally, the paper incorporates metacognitive questions and reflective practices for volunteers, encouraging continuous learning and personal growth. The framework seeks to empower volunteers to navigate complicated interpersonal dynamics and build meaningful connections with refugee families by fostering self-awareness, curiosity, and empathy.

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I. Prologue

In refugee resettlement, there needs to be more training for volunteers concerning a need for mandated cultural awareness orientation to address the complexities associated with working with people from various cultures, speaking multiple languages, and often holding vastly different values and beliefs. The Collins Online English dictionary defines cultural awareness as *“someone’s cultural awareness is their understanding of the differences between themselves and people from other countries or other backgrounds, especially differences in attitudes and values.”* I am advocating for training to foster cultural awareness in volunteers to bridge the gap. The research process and the critical thinking understanding have been integral to my synthesis journey. The research allowed me to analyze the existing situation and underscore the lack of mandated cultural awareness orientation for volunteers despite the complexities of working with refugees. I also recognized the importance of ethical considerations in research, especially when working with vulnerable populations like refugees. Likewise, my synthesis journey helped me critically reflect on my volunteering experiences, identify areas for improvement, and adopt mindfulness and non-judgmental strategies.

Similarly, thinking creatively about my synthesis, I can propose a possible solution to address the identified gap in volunteer training, a novel approach to volunteer orientation focused on fostering cultural awareness. Osborn's "creative problem-solving model (Davis,1999, p.124) " has been a precious tool for me in addressing the challenge of fostering cultural awareness in volunteers. By adhering to the model's prescribed steps, I could accurately identify the problem, devise viable solutions, and establish a plan of action to execute those solutions. Through this process, I focused on preparing volunteers to work effectively with refugees while considering the current situation and lack of sufficient cultural awareness training. By integrating critical

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thinking lenses and diverse concepts such as cultural humility, competence, communication, self-reflection, and empathy, I was able to address the complex challenges faced by volunteers working with refugees. Overall, the creative problem-solving model has been instrumental in guiding me toward effective and impactful solutions.

Likewise, Kaufman and Beghetto provide a framework for the various models of creativity (such as “Big-C” and “small-c”). "Big-C" creativity is centered around grandeur works, arts, and creative genius (such as Darwin's theory of evolution and Vinci's Monalisa painting). Meanwhile, “little-c” creativity can be found in the everyday production of new solutions that help enhance people’s lives. I am simply advocating for a "small c" creative idea that might generate an “a-ha” moment that may enhance cultural awareness in volunteers while working with refugees. I believe that this small “c” creativity is inspired by my surroundings, where I interact with volunteers like myself who talk about ways to serve refugee families better and improve the current situation. This led me to ponder the current problem and ask myself the “Five Whys” while exploring possible solutions. Toyoda’s “Five Whys” technique is another problem-solving technique. It is an iterative questioning method in which one can ask “why” five times to determine the root cause of a problem. I asked myself the following:

“Why” are service providers not providing cultural awareness orientation to volunteers?

“Why” refugee organizations do not have standardized cultural awareness orientation programs?

“Why” is there a lack of awareness of the need for cultural awareness orientation in organizations serving refugees?

“Why” is there a lack of expertise in designing and implementing cultural awareness initiatives?

“Why” is there a lack of needs assessment in recognizing specific areas for volunteer training?

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The root cause suggests a systemic issue within the organizational structures, emphasizing the need and prioritizing cultural awareness orientation.

During this problem-solving, decision-making, planning, and analysis journey, I put on various “thinking hats” to set a specific structure for my project. Edward de Bono’s “Six Thinking Hats” (Davis, 1999, p. 209) is a thinking approach to examining problems from multiple perspectives. Each hat corresponds to different colors representing various ideas, such as a white hat representing facts/logic, a red hat focusing on emotions, a black hat helping to foresee adverse outcomes, etc. For example, I wore a blue hat while thinking about various approaches and processes, a white one while reviewing multiple facts related to my topic, and a green one while working on my project. These hats helped me generate various ideas and alerted me to the pitfalls of judgment. Above all, I was mindful of using empathic lenses while working on my project. Thinking critically and creatively is highly valued in any human interaction. Nevertheless, it is essential to acknowledge that empathy is equally crucial in completing the picture. With empathy, the interaction may come across as complete, lacking depth and understanding. Therefore, it is vital to cultivate empathy alongside critical and creative thinking to ensure that our interactions and relationships are respectful, meaningful, and productive while working with refugees.

II. Introduction

Som Neupane will turn 100 years old in July. He was pushed out of Bhutan because the Bhutanese government did not give him, his family, and thousands of others a space to practice their culture. He was forced out of Bhutan and languished in the camps for two decades before getting resettled in the U.S.A. in 2007 with his five sons and two daughters and his extended

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family members. He became a U.S. citizen in 2020. *“It has been 16 years since we resettled in the U.S.A. However, no one has asked about our ways of doing things. We were given a class on how things would be when resettled in a refugee camp in Nepal. When we came to the U.S., we were offered an orientation on how systems work here. We had to learn everything new and how things get done in the U.S. However, no one ever tried to understand us, our values, our culture, and how we live our lives.”*

The need to be understood, which Mr. Neupane has highlighted, underscores how refugees are taken in the U.S.A. There is a lack of cultural awareness orientation in understanding refugees. Volunteers working directly with refugees during resettlement are also unaware of the cultural differences and how that impacts their whole work in resettlement. Because of that, there is a massive gap in understanding between those who are receiving services and those who are delivering services. Since the cultural, linguistic, and regional chasm that persists is impacting everything, including communication and understanding, the services and cultural awareness orientation are necessary for effective communication and support. It is crucial to emphasize the significance of cultural awareness and empathy when working with refugees, which is currently lacking in service delivery. Service providers must realize that not every culture and society uses words to convey the same meaning. Some words may even carry a certain stigma. In the United States, people tend to speak openly about mental health services, but in some cultures, mental health is a taboo subject and carries a significant social stigma. This results in people being hesitant to discuss their mental health issues openly. As a result, general questionnaires on health assessment intended for mental health screening in the doctor's office may not be culturally appropriate. This is evident from the increased suicide rate among

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Bhutanese refugees in the US, which was 24 per 100,000 after their resettlement in 2007 (Meyerhoff et al., 2018).

Mental health professionals failed to understand the mental health of these refugees, leading to a lack of culturally appropriate services. This highlights the need for cultural awareness orientation for volunteers involved in refugee resettlement. Despite the gap in understanding refugees' cultural backgrounds, refugee resettlement organizations have not yet realized the importance of cultural awareness orientation for volunteers. This has resulted in anyone being able to pose as a volunteer without receiving any training on cultural awareness. You would think that the expertise required to work with people who could have languished in refugee camps for a decade or more and gone through much trauma would have necessitated some 'must-take orientation' before working with the refugee population. The above example shows how crucial it is for people working with refugees to undergo cultural awareness orientation. However, expectations are far from reality. Finding organizations that mandated orientation for volunteers working with refugees was very hard. At the same time, most people I talked to underscored the need for cultural awareness orientation training for volunteers to work with refugee families and advocate on their behalf effectively. After all, the need for a more fundamental understanding of the refugee background (such as socio-cultural, economic, political, and geographical contexts) is another obstruction that volunteers deal with, hindering effective communication and timely support to help refugees successfully integrate into their new host communities.

Likewise, it is foundational for volunteers to understand the people they serve, and cultural awareness orientation training is critical to efficient service delivery to refugees. Therefore, it is essential to analyze what type of training is required to enhance a deeper

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understanding of refugees. The expected outcomes of my research have the potential to strengthen volunteer training for refugees. Informing and educating volunteers to prepare them to enhance their understanding of the population, assure humility for effective cross-cultural interaction, underscore commitment to open communication, advocate for culturally sensitive policies when required, and provide need-based services for refugees should be the priority of the cultural training. These priorities are essential and central in orientating volunteers and ensuring the proper service model is developed for volunteers working with refugees.

As we already discussed, the significance of cultural awareness orientation for volunteers and its impact on refugee resettlement is fundamental. It helps shape the volunteer experience and better equip them to serve the refugee population during resettlement. This support underscores the effective engagement of volunteers and understanding of the cultural implications of resettlement in a diverse refugee community. It will also emphasize that volunteers need cultural awareness orientation to contribute to the ethnocentric tendency in which volunteers will look into refugee cultures from their narrow viewpoint rather than through the cultural humility lenses. Comprehending and respecting cultural nuances can facilitate trust, bridge gaps, and develop mutual relationships. Preparing a volunteer base that acknowledges refugee customs, traditions, and belief systems, orienting them to be culturally sensitive, and fostering an inclusive environment where refugees can feel heard and respected are the goals of this project.

My audiences for this project are organizations that work with refugees and local and state representatives or policymakers engaged in impacting the lives of refugees through new and existing policies. My work will influence refugee organizations and local/state policymakers. By introducing cultural awareness orientation, I can underscore the need for practical and culturally

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sensitive training for volunteers, ultimately supporting refugee families in the U.S. In addition to organizations, local and state representatives/policymakers are my audiences who can help introduce effective and culturally sensitive policies to support resettlement.

III. Methodology

After establishing the critical need for cultural awareness and empathy in volunteer work with refugees, I now focus on the methodology. I conducted a thorough research process for my project by gathering information from both primary and secondary sources. This included direct information obtained by conversing with experts from the field and reaching out to refugee resettlement agencies that utilize volunteers to support their resettlement efforts. My primary focus was on ASCENTRIA Care Alliance and Advocacy for Immigrants and Refugees for Empowerment (ARISE), two organizations that have implemented programs with volunteer support. To ensure a diverse range of information, I conducted both formal interviews and informal conversations with representatives from resettlement organizations, refugee families, and volunteers. Additionally, literature reviews were undertaken to provide a solid theoretical foundation and demonstrate my engagement with relevant literature. Key stakeholders were also interviewed to gain in-depth insights into their experiences and perspectives pertinent to my research objectives. Overall, this mixed approach of comprehensive literature review and exploration of individual experiences and perspectives has enhanced the validity and reliability of my argument.

However, I did encounter several constraints and limitations during the research process. Time constraints were a significant factor, as the information was gathered under a limited timeframe, which may have impacted the meticulousness and depth of the project. Resource

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constraints were also present, particularly in accessing a desirable number of experts, refugees, and volunteers for interviews. Despite these limitations, I have strived to ensure the integrity and accuracy of my research findings. Throughout my research, I have strictly adhered to ethical principles safeguarding the rights of all individuals, including those belonging to vulnerable populations such as refugees. I have ensured that all participants in my synthesis project are fully informed of its purpose and how their information will be incorporated into the paper. I have obtained informed consent from all research participants, and their experiences and opinions were included in the paper while maintaining confidentiality and anonymity. I have taken special care to honor the requests of those interviewees who wished to remain anonymous or use only their first names, and this is reflected in multiple examples throughout the paper.

IV. Motivation for Volunteering

Having discussed the research approach, I will now focus on exploring the motivations behind volunteerism. Numerous factors can impact an individual's motivation to volunteer. Wilson (2012) discusses the experience of volunteering, how it can transform individuals' perception and awareness of themselves, its positive effects on mental health, and the relationship between volunteers and the people they serve. Choi et al. (2018) highlight that "Generation Z" (teenagers born from the mid-1990s through 2002) identify factors such as "value, career, learning, self-esteem, social" as motivators for volunteering. Meijeren et al.'s (2023) study provided significant insights into volunteers' motives for refugees, where humanitarian concerns and social justice were the most important factors, followed by the desire to improve or acquire knowledge and skills. As someone passionate about giving back to the community, I currently volunteer with a refugee organization based in central Massachusetts.

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Through my experience, I have observed that refugees are incredibly motivated to learn a new language and understand their host society to become self-sustaining and provide for their families. I am touched by their perseverance and their work to achieve successful integration despite all the linguistic and cultural barriers they face. After my involvement in volunteering, I realized what difference a volunteer can make in understanding the needs of refugees and helping them navigate the complex new society they are a part of. Resettlement is not an event but a process. Every day, refugees learn new information about the system they are a part of. However, if we can understand how they are processing information, it helps us tailor the information to their needs.

Let us take a real-world example of a refugee who has no vocabulary in her mother tongue to report the anxiety and depression that she is facing. Instead, she described it as her "man" being restless. "Man" is an abstract idea that can be closely described as a "figurative heart connected to the mind" common in some South Asian cultures and is believed to be somewhere near the heart. This is a pervasive language used to convey emotions in Bhutanese and Nepali communities, which generally hailed from the villages of Bhutan and Nepal, as they share the same cultural and linguistic roots. The words being used by this refugee were not effectively understood, and she was referred to a cardiologist because Western health care failed to dissect the perspective of an unstable "Man" and its cultural implications.

Just imagine how this would have been different if the providers were culturally aware of the community's language. Western health care was built on a distinct cultural and linguistic understanding that was unable to catch her mental health crisis. This underscores what a foreign

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idea can do to an understanding between people of different cultures and briefly highlights the need for cultural awareness orientation for people who work directly with refugees.

In Fall 2023, while researching my 692 Research & Engagement Process class, I discovered a need for state and federal volunteer training guidelines for working with refugees. There must be a comprehensive training package or standard protocol for volunteers across refugee resettlement and advocacy organizations. This led me to probe into finding the existing training in the field and understand what is lacking so that I can come up with something substantive that may contribute to training volunteers. The most crucial information I realized (while interviewing experts from the field) was that there is a need to make volunteers aware of the background of refugees since refugees come from different parts of the world with unique socio-cultural, linguistic, political, economic exposure that the people in the U.S.A are not exposed to.

I have observed scenarios like the above where volunteers who are unaware of the cultural practices of the refugee population make wrong assessments about the family they work with, putting them in a problematic scenario.

For example, in Bhutanese culture (and Nepali culture, to which I belong), feeding kids with hands is normal. When kids resist eating, parents/caregivers do not immediately stop feeding them. Instead, they will take time to feed them anyway. My fellow volunteer was working with one of the Bhutanese families, where she encountered a similar situation and told her manager that she felt like parents were force-feeding kids with their hands. It felt to her that their parenting style was causing distress to the children. Since the volunteer was from a different culture, where children are given freedom to play with food and take their time, a mother feeding her child with her hands looked unhygienic and forceful.

Therefore, my synthesis project asserts the necessity of cultural awareness orientation for volunteers aiding refugee families, highlighting the importance of cultural awareness and empathy in volunteer work.

Likewise, this and cultural practices are worthy of study because the U.S.A. welcomes thousands of refugees and immigrants yearly. The lack of understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity, considering its role in refugees' daily lives, hinders effective cross-cultural communication and the transition of refugees to their new host communities. This problem is also feasible for study in collaboration with some refugee organizations, interviewing and interacting with experts, volunteers, and refugee families.

V. Literature Review

Building on the foundation of volunteer motivations, I next engage with existing scholarly discussions and perspectives. The literature review serves as a critical backdrop, enriching our understanding of the subject and highlighting the gaps my project seeks to address. Comprehending cultural niceties and sensitivities is paramount for effective volunteer refugee interaction. While serving refugees, volunteers should know whether the refugees are coming from "high or low context" cultures. Hall (1977) talks about "high and low context cultures." Suppose refugees come from a high-context culture (for example, Japan). In that case, volunteers should be aware that there is an emphasis on shared knowledge/values, relationships, non-verbal and implicit communication, and the importance of long-term relationships. Likewise, if refugees come from low-context cultures (like that of the U.S.), then volunteers should be

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aware that people from such cultures communicate explicitly; messages are expressed directly through language and are more effective in accomplishing individual goals.

“Culture is communication” (Hall & Reed 1990). They emphasize the significance of knowing whether the culture of any specific nation belongs to one of the categories (high or low). Hall’s “silent language” concept offers a deeper understanding of the underlying principles that shape one's life. There is an emphasis on silent signs, which often communicate about cultural context and convey meaning without spoken words.

For example, Rabi worked with an Afghani refugee family. He shared that when he used to visit family, as soon as he entered the family's home, all female members left the room. He felt weird, but when he learned about their culture, he understood why women were not in the room. He added that the female figure of the house used to serve him tea and would leave the room right after.

So, it is essential to pay attention to prevent volunteers from reading incorrectly about the dynamics of cross-cultural communication and unknowingly imposing their rules on another communication system. In their work, Hall and Reed (1990) discuss the concept of personal space, also known as “proxemics,” which refers to the invisible boundaries individuals from different cultures establish for themselves regarding physical distance during interactions. It is important to note that these norms may vary considerably across cultures. Likewise, their idea of “chronemics,” which explores the cultural perception of time, is also crucial in understanding how people from different cultures approach time. Monochronic individuals tend to be low-context and prioritize promptness, short-term relationships, and job commitment, among other

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things. On the other hand, polychronic individuals are high-context and emphasize building long-term relationships and valuing human connections over promptness.

MONOCHRONIC PEOPLE	POLYCHRONIC PEOPLE
do one thing at a time	do many things at once
concentrate on the job	are highly distractible and subject to interruptions
take time commitments (deadlines, schedules) seriously	consider time commitments an objective to be achieved, if possible
are low-context and need information	are high-context and already have information
are committed to the job	are committed to people and human relationships
adhere religiously to plans	change plans often and easily
are concerned about not disturbing others; follow rules of privacy and consideration	are more concerned with those who are closely related (family, friends, close business associates) than with privacy
show great respect for private property; seldom borrow or lend	borrow and lend things often and easily
emphasize promptness	base promptness on the relationship
are accustomed to short-term relationships	have strong tendency to build lifetime relationships

If volunteers know that the refugee families they are working with come from monochronic or polychronic cultures, this will help them understand refugees' cultural context and better prepare them to work with them.

According to Lau et al. (2021), acknowledging cultural competence as a fundamental element is crucial to adequate and equitable service delivery. Their study analyzed 26 relevant peer-reviewed studies and highlighted the need for refugee participation and accommodation of their views in cultural competence practices. The authors also emphasized the importance of clarifying the concept and identifying structural barriers to achieving cultural competence. The benefits of culturally competent approaches include reducing health disparities and improving access to healthcare, social services, employment, and education. However, the study shows that

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more attention needs to be given to the unique challenges refugees face in implementing culturally competent approaches.

According to Bacote (2002), “cultural competence is a process rather than an event” that involves five key components--“cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural skill, cultural encounters, and cultural desire.” The first component, “cultural awareness,” requires service providers to reflect on their cultural and professional background, recognize their biases and assumptions, and avoid imposing their cultural beliefs on others. This is essential for adequate cultural competence, as service providers may unknowingly impose their cultural behavior patterns on another culture.

The second component, “cultural knowledge,” involves service providers acquiring a solid educational foundation on diverse cultural and ethnic groups. This understanding enables them to comprehend their clients' worldviews and the unique life experiences that shape them. “Cultural skill,” the third component, refers to learning and gathering relevant cultural data regarding a client’s presented problem and accurately performing a culturally based physical assessment. Bacote also encourages service providers to directly engage in cross-cultural communications with clients from culturally diverse backgrounds (cultural encounters), including assessing the client’s linguistic needs. This also includes using trained interpreters to collect accurate data.

Finally, Bacote introduces the concept of “Cultural Desire,” which motivates service providers to become culturally aware, knowledgeable, skilled, and familiar with cultural encounters. It is all about caring and genuine passion, in which service providers exhibit

openness, flexibility, and willingness to accept differences and build on similarities.

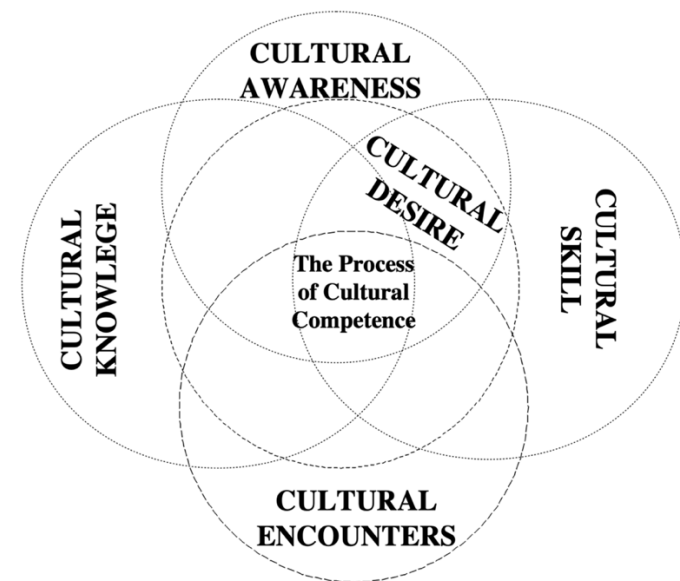


FIGURE 1. The Process of Cultural Competence in the Delivery of Health Care Services.
SOURCE: Transcultural C.A.R.E. Associates. Reprinted with permission.

According to Rowe et al. (2010), an individual's openness to learning and ability to minimize ethnocentric behavior are crucial to communicating with refugees effectively. These traits catalyze culturally competent communication and should be a part of an ongoing quest for professionalism. The authors suggest that “care, cultural sensitivity, cultural knowledge, and cultural skills” are channels for culturally competent communication. They provide a few suggestions to improve culturally competent communication, which include understanding which cultural differences may exist, developing a basic understanding and knowledge of the refugee's cultural background, demonstrating genuine interest in the refugee patient's circumstances and seeking to establish trust, and avoiding making generalizations about refugee groups. Within each cultural group, differences are influenced by geographical and historical factors that should be considered.

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According to Reis et al. (2017), feeling understood by another person creates a sense of psychological connection and facilitates better coordination of activities. Conversely, feeling misunderstood leads to alienation and resistance to interdependence or influence attempts by those who misunderstand us. This underlines the significance of comprehending and empathizing with others in constructing positive relationships.

For example, One of the Bhutanese refugees expressed that he could not sleep, and even though he fell asleep, he had nightmares of how his families were tortured and killed in Bhutan. His caseworker suggested counseling, but he resisted and retorted, "I am a strong man who had endured such a horrific incident but not crazy. "This statement alone shows a massive gap in understanding of the mental health services we briefly touched on above in Bhutanese culture.

If volunteers have preconceived notions or biases about the population they work with, how will they ensure reflective listening in scenarios like the above? To grasp that impact, we must understand Scharmer (2009), who talks about the Four Fields of Conversation, widely known as Generative Dialogue Theory. The four fields of the conversation are talking nice (downloading), talking tough (debating), reflective dialogue, and generative dialogue. According to Scharmer, these four fields of conversation facilitate omitting 'blind spots' in communication. To foster cultural awareness, I will focus on Scharmer's third field of dialogue—reflective dialogue as an action tool to help bring awareness and engage volunteers to embrace things from somebody else's perspective, be empathetic, and listen self-reflectively. Salem (2003) describes empathic listening as active/reflective listening that helps facilitate mutual understanding with others. When volunteers work with refugee families, they should be active listeners. The art of

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listening is the key in which the listener is not just hearing the spoken words but trying to comprehend the underlying meaning so that refugees feel they are being listened to. This feeling of being heard helps in facilitating the building of trust and connection between volunteers and refugees.

For example, Pabitra is a workforce coordinator at the refugee resettlement agency-- ASCENTRIA Care Alliance. She has been working with refugee clients for 13 years. She came as a refugee in the U.S. in 2007. Pabitra said she takes time to understand the refugees' concerns before suggesting anything to them. As a workforce coordinator, she states that listening to their interests and comfort regarding work is essential to finding the right job for them. She gave an example of an Afghani woman who was in a class but always behind the whiteboard, covering her face with a hijab. She encouraged the person to come from behind and sit down with other women but also understood that it would be a process for her to change her habit because, culturally, she has a very different worldview. She has never sat amidst men and discussed anything. Since Pabitra took time to observe this, she said that she would consider finding a job for her client that is among women, mainly that she can identify with, till her comfort level of working with men improves. Those unspoken words that Pabitra heard during her mindful engagement with her client.

Dialogue is different from other forms of communication. Romney's "The Art of Dialogue " mentions that "dialogue is a focused conversation, intentionally to understand problems and question thoughts or actions increasingly. It engages the heart as well as the mind. It differs from an everyday conversation in that dialogue has a focus and purpose." The focus should be on listening and engaging in a dialogue, and the purpose should be to build trust

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between service providers and their clients. Empathy and compassion are essential when we are working with the refugee population. When we are empathic, genuine concerns for well-being are fostered for other individuals. With empathetic understanding, volunteers can put themselves in the shoes of refugee families, their challenges, feelings, and emotions, which are crucial to rapport building.

VI. Ethical Consideration

As we navigate the complexities of volunteer engagement and cultural awareness, we must consider the ethical dimensions. This section explores the ethical responsibilities and considerations that underpin my research and practice in this sensitive area. Volunteers must be fully aware of the ethical considerations when working with a vulnerable population like refugees. This is a serious matter that requires utmost attention and responsibility. The fundamental tenets of "ethical research" and "practical ethics" are critical components that ensure informed consent, confidentiality, and researcher competence. These aspects determine whether a research study involving refugees will "do no harm" and fulfill the "dual imperative" (Deps et al., 2022, pp. 3-5). The UNHCR guidelines for "dos & don'ts for volunteers" highlight the importance of professionalism, empathy, and respect volunteers exhibit while working with refugees. The guidelines emphasize the necessity of self-care and ethical conduct.

Furthermore, Singer et al. (2021) direct our attention to the American Psychological Association APA's ethical codes and principles for research and practice. The principles guide us in practicing ethical codes and acting responsibly while interacting with refugees. Principle A aims to provide a service that serves the client's best interest without causing them harm. Principle B emphasizes establishing trust with clients. Principle C highlights presenting oneself

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honestly, accurately, and truthfully. Principle D aims to refrain from unjust practices and recognize one's biases. Principle E emphasizes respect for the dignity of all individuals. The Advocacy for Refugee & Immigrant Services for Empowerment (ARISE), the refugee organization where I volunteer, emphasizes maintaining respectful communication and confidentiality, establishing empathetic and non-judgmental rapport, encouraging active listening and open communication, and respecting religious beliefs and cultural practices while working with refugee families. As per the article "Elements of an Effective Volunteer Orientation," some critical ethical elements such as confidentiality issues, ethics and moral expectations, safety considerations, and risks associated with various positions must be considered.

Based on my literature review, I have been oriented towards adopting the concept of "systems thinking." This approach encourages us to consider situations individually or from a holistic perspective. The context of a refugee serving system has helped me comprehend the interconnected nature of the various components, including volunteer training organizations, refugee resettlement organizations, community forums, and other entities directly or indirectly impacted by the resettlement process. I propose facilitating cultural awareness and developing empathic skills in volunteers working with refugees. I recognize the importance of being mindful of the potential consequences of my interventions, including both intended and unintended outcomes, feasibility, new perspectives, ways of measuring success, and effects on stakeholders. By integrating reflective dialogue and empathy with systems thinking, I can help volunteers understand how their actions contribute to the more extensive system of cultural understanding. Furthermore, this approach has helped me appreciate the complexities of the situation, which require a nuanced and comprehensive knowledge. I am confident that fostering a cultural

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awareness approach will effectively achieve our goals while promoting a deeper comprehension of the unique challenges refugees and other stakeholders face in this complex system.

VII. Why Conduct Orientation?

With a solid grasp of the ethical framework guiding our actions, I now examine the core question: Why is orientation necessary? This segment delves into the rationale behind cultural awareness orientation, underlining its significance in enhancing volunteer efficacy and empathy. Cultural awareness intensely relies on a profound hold of cultural sensitivities and nuances. Providing cultural awareness orientation to volunteers on how to work effectively with refugees is a delicate subject that requires careful attention. Several areas must be considered, such as incorporating information on refugees' socio-cultural backgrounds, understanding potential trauma experiences, cultural norms, effective cross-cultural communication strategies, and self-care.

Additionally, volunteers should demonstrate empathy, compassion, and an open mindset to learn about refugees. I contacted refugee resettlement and advocacy organizations to understand better the training topics they covered in the greater Worcester area. These organizations cover several issues, such as introducing refugees, resettlement, mental health, trauma, immigration, and employment. Based on my research, I concluded that these organizations need to cover fostering cultural awareness among volunteers explicitly. Therefore, we should focus on this area to enhance our volunteers' ability to work effectively with refugees.

According to the president of ARISE (one of the refugee advocacy organizations in central Massachusetts), Purna Neupane (who himself came to the states as a refugee), stated that acquiring cultural awareness orientation helps create a positive experience among volunteers,

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boosts their confidence level, and adequately prepare them to work with refugee families.

Orientation facilitates volunteers to prepare themselves to have an empathic and open-minded conversation that is different from their cultural and linguistic background, opines Neupane.

Initially, we established “Why” Cultural Awareness Orientation is essential to working with refugees. However, how to onboard or engage volunteers effectively to attain that goal has yet to be explored. Hirsch's article "Do not Underestimate the Importance of Good Onboarding" suggests that structured onboarding can increase the likelihood of a three-year commitment by 69%.

The article "Seven Ways to Make an Engaging Volunteer Orientation" provides a comprehensive guide for creating an effective volunteer orientation program. It recommends several tips for making the orientation more engaging, informative, and memorable. To begin with, critical information such as rules, regulations, and policies should be shared with volunteers before the orientation day. This information should be reviewed engagingly during the orientation, such as using quizzes or scavenger hunts. Knowing the audience and their comprehension level is essential to deliver the information effectively.

Volunteers should be able to handle the information. Focusing on 3-4 learning objectives per hour of training time and concentrating on specific behaviors to change is recommended. This approach ensures that the orientation is not just a single-time event but a transformative experience that endows volunteers with the necessary skills and knowledge. Emotions should be used whenever possible to make the orientation memorable. By making participants feel a particular emotion, they are more likely to remember the information and feel excited about their new role. It is also recommended that current volunteers be involved in the orientation process.

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Creating a volunteer panel where they can share their experiences and tips is an excellent way to engage new volunteers.

Additionally, inviting someone who has witnessed the positive influence that volunteers have had to share their personal experiences can also be beneficial. Lastly, team-building activities and socialization should be recognized not just as activities but as crucial in developing relationships with volunteers. These activities foster a sense of belonging and companionship among volunteers, making them feel more connected to the organization and each other. Conversations with volunteers about their motivation for volunteering and joining the organization can help gain valuable insights into new team members. Implementing these tips can help create an engaging, informative, and memorable volunteer orientation program.

VIII. Personal Reflection and Challenges

Volunteers must have cultural awareness orientation training when working with refugees. With it, effective communication can be improved, making resettlement much more challenging. Practical support to refugee families is essential, and building trust and rapport is critical to successful interactions. Volunteers must practice mindfulness and judgment suspension to enhance their understanding and empathy to achieve this. When volunteers receive proper orientation training, they are more committed and engaged. Incorporating cultural awareness in volunteer training can mitigate potential harm and promote positive outcomes. Lastly, cultural orientation material can bridge the gap in understanding between volunteers and the refugee population, leading to better outcomes for everyone involved.

As someone doing this volunteer work, I know firsthand that many obstacles can be overcome. One of the biggest challenges I faced was the cultural and individual differences

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between myself and the refugee families I was trying to help. It was easier to establish a connection and provide the support they needed by adequately understanding their backgrounds and the unique issues they faced. This is why a cultural awareness orientation is crucial for any volunteer working with refugees. Through a deeper understanding of their experiences and challenges, we can better support and empower them to build a better life.

For example, When Bob visited one of the Congoli families with eight kids during his monthly visit consecutively, he noticed that the family only had some green bananas, maize flour, some meat, and canned tomatoes as their groceries. He talked to his supervisor and said the family might need other food, such as veggies and fruits. His supervisor told us we could also ask the family to include fruits and veggies. However, he added that non-perishable items like meat and flour that can remain long-term are considered more valuable than perishable fruits and vegetables. When the family made a decision based on the available budget, they decided that meat that could be stored in a freezer and flour that could remain long-term were better bets. He added that flour is the staple food of most African families. Then I realized I should also be mindful of simple things like “food habits in different cultures” while working with various refugee families.

Dispositions that helped overcome challenges

At the same time, I was also aware that I could overcome these challenges. In my experience, being inquisitive and having an open mindset towards new information, actively listening, fostering empathy, creating a safe space, and building trust are vital components in establishing a solid rapport with families. However, these dispositions do not transpire naturally.

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These attributes require practice and self-awareness to develop effectively. To that end, I have practiced mindfulness and suspending judgment to enhance my perceptiveness and awareness while conversing with refugees. By focusing on the present moment, I can think thoughtfully without reacting, and consequently, I have built meaningful relationships with the people I work with. These techniques will benefit other volunteers seeking to support refugees compassionately and empathetically.

The article “Exploring Generative Dialogue as a Transformative Learning Practice within Adult & Higher Education Settings” by Gunnlaugson highlights the new vision of dialogue proposed by David Bohm. According to Gunnlaugson, Bohm not only "invites individuals and groups to inquire into their presuppositions, ideas, beliefs, feelings that we ordinarily identify with and defend, but also to suspend them." Bohm remarked that "the point of suspension is to help make proprioception (i.e., awareness of thought process) possible." Listening to oneself internally and being willing to accept differences also helped in the suspension process. Focusing on "inward" and "outward" processes, as I was exposed in our "Dialogue Processes" class, has helped me to focus on learning and achieving suspension of judgment.

Through the inward process, I have started to be observant of my experiences with my thoughts, emotions, and reactions and have begun to learn to be with these experiences in new ways. Through the outward process, I have started to be wise about suspending my beliefs and reminding myself to use the “I statement” to make others realize that I am expressing my subjective beliefs rather than imposing my views on them. The main mantra is to be mindful of “being caught in our thoughts to notice our thoughts.” Paying attention to our emotions and thoughts and fostering an ability to have control over our reactive emotions will help us put more consciousness into being mindful as well as self-reflective. I have understood that fostering in-

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depth observation and listening has helped me redirect my awareness. Likewise, journaling my thoughts and spending time in solitude, especially in nature, also helped me practice mindfulness.

I have learned the importance of reflective and empathic skills to build trust and connection, specifically while working with refugees. Elements of “open mind,” “open heart,” and “open will” (Scharmer, 2009, pp. 45-50) showed me to see things from various perspectives. Learning to be "open-minded" influenced me to cultivate the disposition of curiosity, seeing things from a new perspective and letting go of my biases. Likewise, learning to have an "open heart" has taught me to cultivate empathy, foster compassion, and the importance of building trust and a sense of connection with others. Lastly, comprehending the importance of "open will" has taught me the importance of letting go of my past “downloaded” habits and being open to future possibilities. I feel like these are the skill sets that are important to all volunteers.

IX. Metacognitive Questions Proposed for Volunteers

Fostering a solid thinking culture among volunteers is essential when working with refugees. Tishman et al. (1995) underscore the need to institute a culture of thinking in a classroom. With the same idea, the proposed questions (listed below) support volunteers in building a culture of thinking that contributes to their understanding of the world in which they interact and invigorate them to become lifetime curious and independent learners. Various questions are proposed so that volunteers can be better mental managers through metacognition. Through metacognition, volunteers will be aware of their thinking process and can manage their thinking creatively and efficiently. Awareness of one’s thinking process prepares volunteers

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mentally against impulsive thinking. They will be self-coached to consciously and thoughtfully reflect on their habits to improve their thinking. This technique promotes independent thinking and makes volunteers more creative. When volunteers face thinking challenges, they prepare themselves to deal with them independently, fostering strategic thinking. Volunteers will learn how to keep some plans and strategies in mind.

Lastly, mental management is a skill that we all can learn. So, with the proposed questions, I hope volunteers can put an effort into learning and practicing metacognitive skills by continuously monitoring and reflecting on their thinking. With the questions listed below, volunteers can practice self-reflection. Asking these questions will help volunteers pay more attention to how they communicate with refugees and their underlying feelings, motives, and emotions. Some of the questions that volunteers can contemplate while conversing with refugees are listed below. These questions are designed around the dialogue framework, influenced by ideas based on Scharmer's "Four Fields of Dialogue" (2009). The Four Fields of the conversation are talking nice (downloading), talking tough (debate), reflective or empathic, and generative dialogue/presencing. Downloading and debating can help solve minor problems, whereas reflective and generative dialogue is crucial in producing more significant change. According to Scharmer, these four fields of conversation illuminate the blind spot of conversation. Volunteers may construct their reality based on how they perceive the world. In this process, the self-awareness and consciousness they put into their thoughts, emotions, and actions are notable. Are they non-judgmental, empathic, and able to connect with their authentic self while having a dialogue? Pondering on these questions can help them explore and clarify their values and beliefs. It will also help them examine their past patterns and guide them to make improved decisions and more informed choices through self-reflection.

Practicing self-reflection by asking metacognitive questions:

Which four fields of conversations (“downloading, debating, reflective, generative) am I engaging in?

How often do I hold onto my established beliefs?

How open am I to new ideas?

Are conversations meaningful when I am open to diverse perspectives?

Am I open to considering different opinions?

Do I actively listen during conversation?

Do I exhibit empathy during conversation?

How can I improve active listening and empathy during a conversation?

How open-minded am I?

What makes it easier or harder to be fully present during the conversations?

Can I open my heart and mind and be open to new possibilities?

Why do I need help understanding the situation/content?

What could I have done differently?

Can I apply what I have learned to a different context?

Questions that can help to reevaluate one’s conversational style:

Am I going through the process of moving towards improved communication styles and moving from less productive fields to reflective and generative conversation?

Can I suspend my judgments, listen actively, and be open to novel ideas?

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Am I "acting like a mirror" and reflective enough of other's views and feelings?

Am I also paying attention to my nonverbal behaviors?

Do I refrain from interrupting, interrogating, giving advice, and reflecting back to others on what I understood and how they feel?

Likewise, reevaluating one's conversational style will help volunteers realize how fundamental their listening skills are. Being a good listener, bringing attention, and shifting to listen to comprehend a setting in which refugees are conversing is critical to effective communication. This shift can facilitate improved communication and more profound understanding and solidify connections with refugee families. When volunteers become active listeners, they can suspend their judgments, be open to new perspectives, and be empathic. Lastly, volunteers can also ask questions to self-assess their awareness, sensitivity, and strategies while working with refugees in diverse settings.

Question for volunteers to self-assess their awareness, sensitivity, and strategies:

What motivates me to work with refugees?

What is my understanding of refugees' challenges in their home country and their new host society during resettlement?

What are my thoughts on the socio-cultural and emotional adjustments refugees must undergo during resettlement?

What does being culturally competent while working with a diverse group of refugees mean?

How will I acknowledge and respect the cultural differences between the refugee population?

How did I demonstrate in culturally sensitive conversations in the past?

How will I overcome the language barrier during my communication with refugees?

How do I address cultural differences in communication styles to ensure effective communication?

How will I maintain respect and privacy for the refugees?

How will I incorporate compassionate and empathic lenses while working with refugees?

How did I demonstrate empathic practices in the past?

How do I plan to stay up-to-date or foster continuous learning about the cultural nuances, policies, and practices regarding refugees?

X. Conclusion

As I near the end, I want to summarize the key takeaways from my research, personal experience, and reflective practice. Volunteering to work with refugees is a noble and crucial task requiring more than good intentions. Understanding the cultural differences and unique challenges that refugees face when settling into a new country is essential. Therefore, volunteers must receive proper training that equips them with the knowledge and skills to work effectively with refugees. The training should focus on cultural awareness, empathy, and the ability to communicate effectively. Volunteers must approach their work with an open mind and be willing to learn and respect the customs and traditions of the refugees they are working with. They should also be mindful of the cultural differences in communication styles, body language, and social norms to avoid misunderstandings.

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Empathy is the backbone of volunteer training when working with refugees. Volunteers must be trained to understand and empathize with the trauma and challenges that refugees may have experienced in their home countries and during the resettlement process. Volunteers can help refugees feel safe, secure, and welcomed in their new homes through compassionate interactions.

I am committed to active listening and continuous learning to apply the principles of cultural awareness and empathy in my interactions with diverse communities. Similarly, I am dedicated to enhancing my cultural competency by participating in relevant training programs, seeking educational resources promoting diversity and inclusivity, and engaging with diverse communities to understand different perspectives better. Additionally, reflecting on my actions and decisions while being mindful of my biases and assumptions will help ensure respect and inclusivity.

To encourage critical thinking and problem-solving skills in volunteer work with refugee populations, I will focus on creating learning opportunities for volunteers and engaging in learning through scenarios. For instance, volunteers can participate in the "Cultural Iceberg Activity." In this activity, volunteers will be introduced to the concept that the tip of the cultural iceberg represents the surface level of culture, for instance, language, customs, practices, and food. On the other hand, the submerged portion represents the deeper underlying cultural elements such as beliefs, values, norms, and assumptions. Volunteers will first be introduced to the concept of cultural awareness. Following this, they will be presented with several scenarios involving refugee families. Their task will be to put themselves in the shoes of these families and identify the overt and covert aspects of their own culture and that of the refugee families. Such exercise can encourage them to empathize with these families' experiences, challenges, and

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perspectives. By envisioning themselves in refugee situations, they will take a significant step towards understanding the cultural norms, beliefs, and social contexts that shape the viewpoints of refugees.

Likewise, cultivating a culture that encourages feedback and reflection is crucial, where volunteers share and discuss what worked well and what needs improvement. Additionally, it is vital to lead by example to support a culture of continuous learning and self-reflection in a volunteer organization. Setting aside regular time for personal and collective group reflection helps create a culture of growth, learning, improved self-awareness, and continuous improvement. In a nutshell, the success of the refugee resettlement process hinges on our volunteers' cultural awareness, empathy, and communication skills. It is crucial to equip them with the necessary training to ensure a positive and empowering experience for all parties involved. By investing in our volunteers and providing them with the tools they need, we can make a significant difference in the lives of refugees and help them resettle into their new communities with confidence and hope.

XI. GOING FORWARD

This synthesis represents five months of dedicated research and reflection. However, this journey has opened up several avenues for further exploration. While cultural awareness orientation is critical to effective volunteer engagement with refugees, other pieces of the puzzle exist. In the future, we must examine several factors to ensure positive outcomes. We must ask ourselves whether cultural awareness orientation alone addresses all the challenges volunteers face in working with refugees. Does it guarantee enhanced empathy and communication? How necessary is the role of practical experience and ongoing learning? Are cultural dynamics the

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sole determinant of effective volunteer engagement with refugees? Can the effectiveness of cultural awareness orientation vary depending on contextual factors? These are just a few questions we must consider and examine further.

Moreover, we must evaluate the potential limitations or challenges of implementing cultural awareness orientation while considering resource constraints or resistance to change in systems working with refugees. We must also consider what other continuous support and education are necessary to effectively address issues and help volunteers navigate the challenges of working with refugee families. Does cultural awareness orientation alone suffice, or is ongoing training of volunteers pertinent? What other support is needed for effective volunteer engagement? While mindfulness and suspension of judgment are valuable practices, we must acknowledge that they do not eliminate biases and cultural blind spots. Self-examination of biases and assumptions is only enough with concrete actions and strategies. We must also examine how overemphasis on self-reflection through metacognitive questioning can overlook systemic issues affecting volunteer-refugee dynamics. Building trust is critical but requires ongoing effort and may vary depending on individual experiences and backgrounds. To have fully committed volunteers, providing them with the necessary resources and support structures is essential. While it is critical to foster cultural awareness, it is equally significant to address power dynamics and structural impediments that may influence the interactions between volunteers and refugees. Ongoing learning, practical experience, and collaboration with diverse stakeholders are equally critical to ensure positive outcomes.

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APPENDIX A: SAMPLE OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO EXPERTS, REFUGEES, VOLUNTEERS

Interview questions to experts:

- 1) How do you envision the role of cultural awareness orientation for volunteers while working with refugee families?
- 2) Based on your experience, could you share some of the instances in which volunteers with cultural awareness and understanding have positively contributed to the communication and support of refugee families?
- 3) From your perspective, how can cultural awareness orientation help build trust and relationships between volunteers and refugees?
- 4) What should volunteers be mindful of when working with refugees from various backgrounds?
- 5) How does receiving cultural awareness orientation enhance volunteers' ability to work effectively with refugees?
- 6) What are your thoughts on potential challenges or undesirable outcomes that may result in inadequate cultural orientation?
- 8) How often do volunteers face resistance to the services of refugees due to a lack of cultural awareness?

Interview questions to refugees:

- 1) How would you describe your overall experience with your service provider?
- 2) Are you saying... (rephrasing what they said to ensure I understand their experience)?
- 3) How supportive have you felt from the service provider?

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- 4) Are there any wishes you feel your service provider should consider to support you better?
- 5) How do you feel about your concerns being heard by your service provider?
- 6) How do you rate the service providers regarding respecting and acknowledging your cultural beliefs and practices?

Interview questions to volunteers:

- 1) Can you share your overall experience working with the refugee population?
- 2) How do you see the challenges you have experienced while volunteering with refugees?
Could you provide some examples?
- 3) What should volunteers be mindful of when working with refugees from various backgrounds? Do you have any advice for volunteers on cultural sensitivity when working with refugees from various backgrounds?
- 4) How would you describe some techniques or ways volunteers can enhance their ability to work effectively with refugees?

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APPENDIX B: AREAS TO CONSIDER WHILE CONDUCTING CULTURAL AWARENESS ORIENTATION

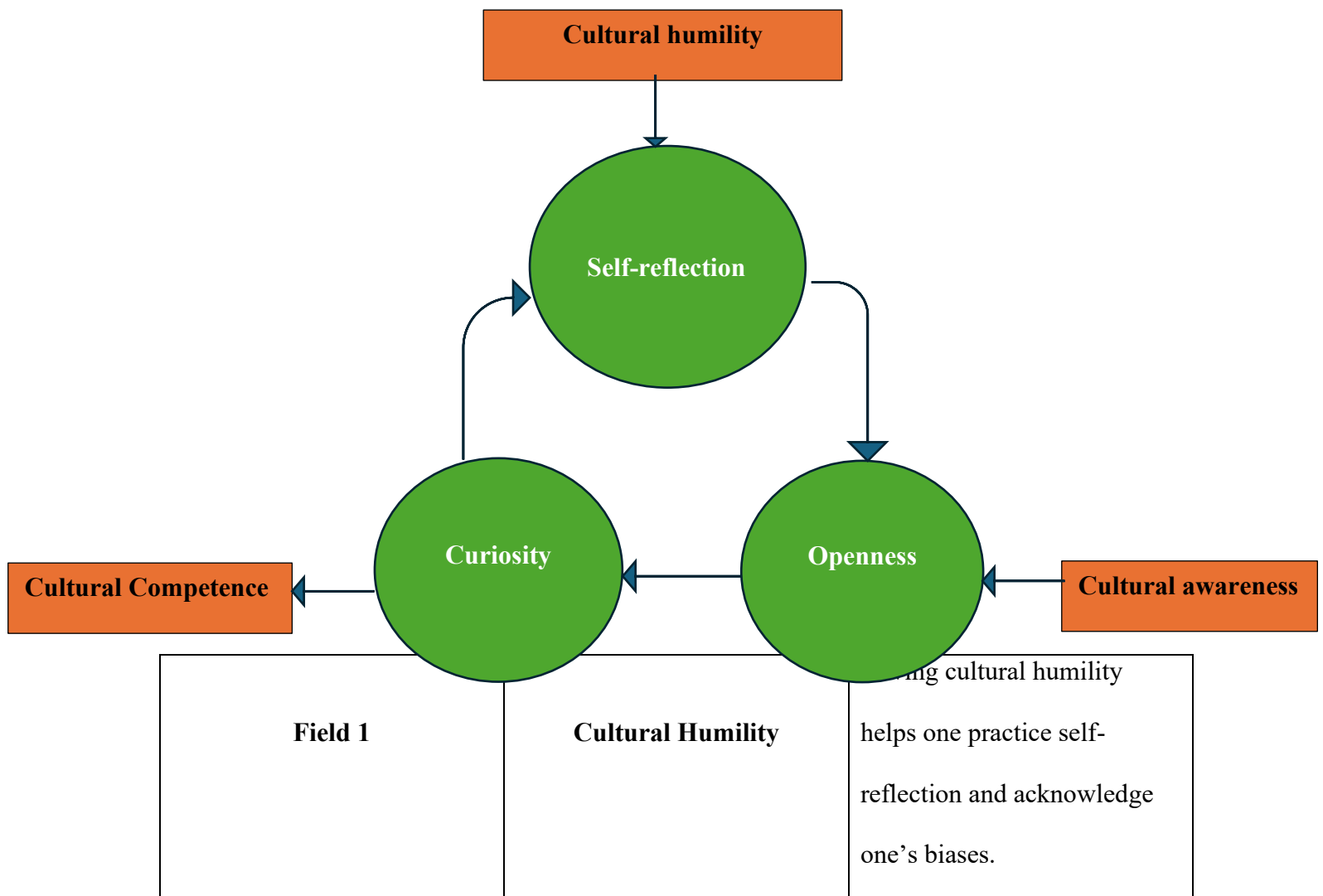
Developing cultural awareness is a continuous process, not a one-time event. While working with individuals from various cultural backgrounds, it is essential to learn and develop ways to help individuals orient toward understanding refugee backgrounds and cultures. Knowing how to facilitate a relationship of understanding and trust is crucial, especially when working with the refugee population. Asking “what if” questions helps organizations find novel solutions and opens new opportunities to do things differently.

<p>What if we:</p> <p>Build cultural awareness around refugees' cultures and their backgrounds.</p>	<p>Then:</p> <p>Volunteers' perspectives and cross-cultural communication skills will improve.</p>
<p>What if we:</p> <p>Learn about specific refugee cultures and use that understanding to build trust.</p>	<p>Then:</p> <p>Volunteers' confidence level and engagement will increase.</p>
<p>What if we:</p> <p>Nurture a culture of thinking by practicing self-reflection.</p>	<p>Then:</p> <p>Volunteers will feel motivated to use their skills in significant and transformative ways.</p>

APPENDIX C: AWARENESS ORIENTATION

Learning and developing ways to help individuals understand others' backgrounds and cultures is essential when working with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Understanding how to facilitate a relationship of understanding and trust is crucial, especially when working with the refugee population.

Life Long Process of Practicing:



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Field 2	Cultural Awareness	Having cultural awareness helps one to be open and reflect on how one culture/background is or is not similar to others.
Field 3	Cultural Competence	Practicing cultural competency helps one actively seek and learn about the cultural background, norms, and values of others.

Guidelines for Being a Culturally Sensitive Volunteer



The Culture of Bhutanese Nepali-What Should You Know?

The following information is a simple template that provides essential guidance on various considerations volunteers can take while engaging in cross-cultural communication with Bhutanese Nepali refugees.

Key Facts:

1. More than 250,000 Nepali-speaking Bhutanese live mainly in the southern lowlands of Bhutan.
2. Bhutanese Nepalis are called "Lhotshampas" (people of the south). The country has numerous caste, ethnic, and religious groups (Brahmin (Bahun), Chettri, Gurung, Limbu, Newar, Rai, Tamang, and Hindu and Buddhist religions).
3. Family and community engagement are a vital aspect of Bhutanese-Nepali culture.

1. Greetings and Names:

This section outlines the general principles of how Bhutanese-Nepali greet and refer to each other.

1. Bhutanese Nepalis, influenced by Hindu and Buddhist tradition, greet each other by saying "Namaste" with a slight bow, bringing palms together in front of one's chest, and pointing their fingers upwards. Some may greet by shaking hands.
2. Close family members, especially sons and daughters-in-law, greet their elders by bowing their heads to their feet and seeking blessings.
3. However, to show sensitivity to cultural aspects of gender, namaste and smiles are considered suitable gestures rather than shaking hands.

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4. Many have given names and terms indicating seniority, relations such as "thulo dai" (big brother) and "Sano bhai" (younger brother). Assigning new names or nicknames may not be considered appropriate by many

2. Communication:

This section outlines the general principle of how Bhutanese-Nepali communicate.

1. Talking about family and asking about family members is considered polite when conversing.
2. They may hold back their opinion if they feel offended or hurt by another person.
3. Folding arms when listening and maintaining periodic eye contact during conversation shows respect and attentiveness.
4. It is common for Bhutanese-Nepali to ask others, "Where are you going?" and "When and what did you eat?".
5. The older adults are treated with the utmost respect during conversations. People may change their language and posture when speaking to them to show respect.
6. To resolve conflict, they prefer using an intermediary rather than confrontation.

3. Physical Contact:

This section outlines the general principle of how Bhutanese-Nepali approach physical contact and interaction between people in public.

1. Touching people is considered culturally inappropriate.
2. Putting feet on a pillow or table or touching someone with feet is considered inappropriate.
3. Stepping on paper (books, newspapers, etc.) disrespects knowledge.

4. Showing affection by holding hands with close friends of the same gender is appropriate, but not for the opposite gender.
5. Taking off shoes before entering the house is considered a respectful gesture.

4. Eating and Socializing

This section outlines how Bhutanese-Nepali approach communal gatherings and eating.

1. Eating by sitting on the floor and by hand is preferable.
2. During meals, the elderly and babies are served first.
3. Sharing and offering food to others is a sign of hospitality.
4. Alcohol consumption is considered wrong by most people.

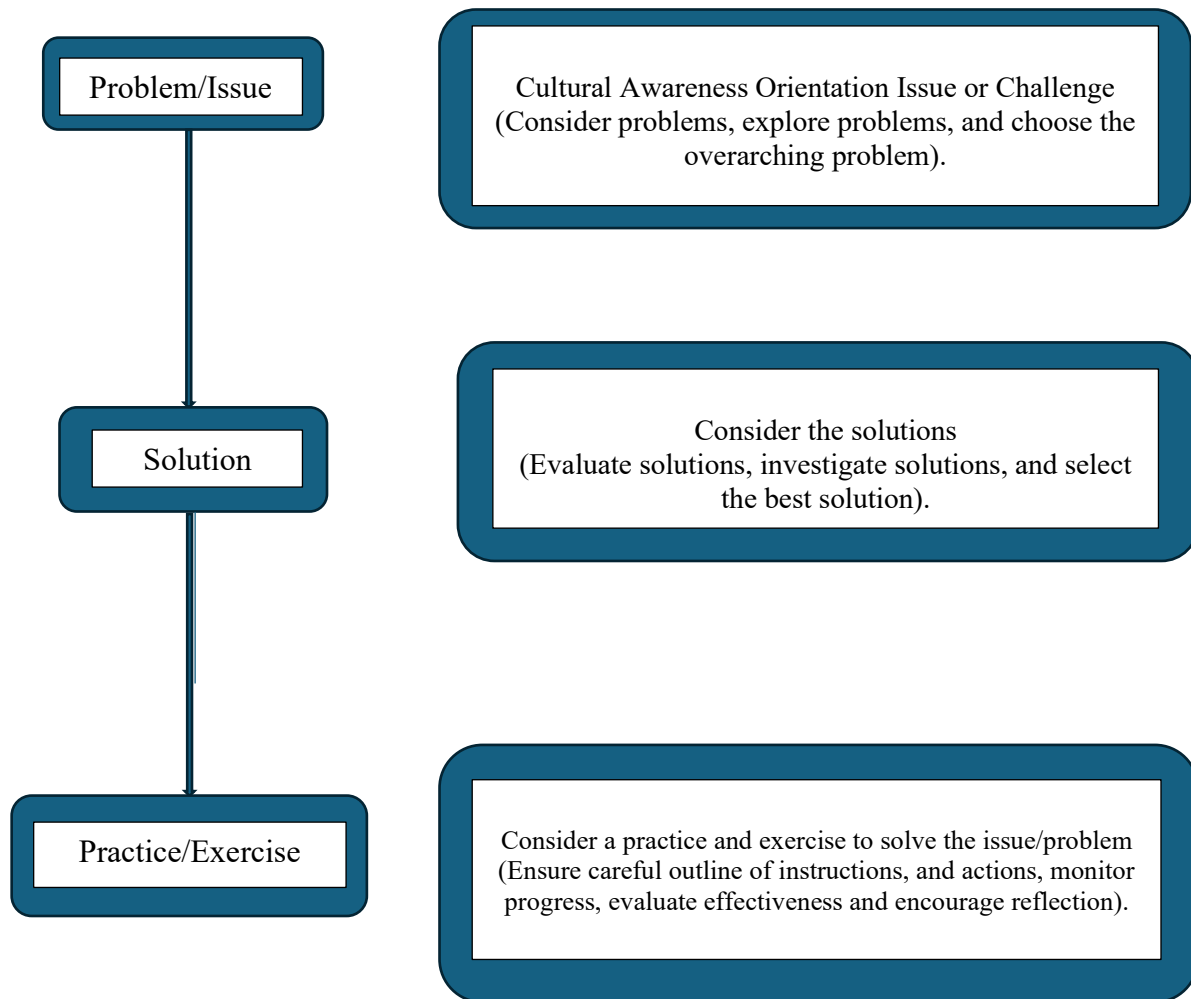
Conclusion:

Awareness of these general tendencies can positively impact cross-cultural interactions and help one learn about the cultural norms of people from different backgrounds.

Use of creative problem-solving model in refugee organization:

As a specific recommendation or strategy, I suggest the following model to my audience (organizations or institutions looking to incorporate cultural awareness orientation into their volunteer programs), which may help address each cultural awareness orientation issue or challenge.

ORIENTING REFUGEE VOLUNTEERS ON CULTURAL AWARENESS AND EMPATHY



Note: This creative problem-solving model is inspired by Drapeaus's--The Creative Problem Solving Process (2014).
