

Appendix

These questions are offered as guides for you to use in examining your cultural background and life experiences. Answering them will help you focus on what has shaped your views and how those views might affect your interactions with others.

It is important to approach each question honestly and with an open mind. There are no right or wrong answers. The questions are not intended to judge or categorize, nor to offend. They are merely individual tools of exploration designed to help you get to know yourself a little bit better.

Some of your answers may surprise you, other may inspire a range of emotions from anger to fear. Give yourself time to reflect. Talking with a trusted individual may help. Just remember that your discoveries are means to an end; providing the best education you can for the young people you serve.

Consider these questions both in the context of your present life as well as your experience growing up as a child and young adult. Reflect on the differences between your current home and the one in which you were raised.

Language

What language or dialect is spoken in your home? Is it different or similar to the language used in your household growing up? Do you understand or speak another language from your ancestral heritage? Do members of your family? Is there a generational split among your family members with regard to speaking English versus another language?

What body language do you typically use when speaking? How about members of your family? Are there certain non-verbal signals that are considered polite or rude, such as eye contact, physical closeness or tone of voice?

Are there different rights or status of speaking in your household or family? Are some members listened to more than others?

Do children or teens in your family have the same rights to speak? What rights to speak did you have growing up as a child and then as a teen? Were they similar to other members of your family who were of the same generation? Did those rights vary by gender?

What forms of communication are common in your family experience? How common are joke-telling, sarcasm, storytelling? How freely are emotions expressed? How common or appropriate was/is touching or physical forms of affection in your family?

Health

How is illness treated in your family? Do certain behaviors or beliefs play a role in illness? What behaviors or remedies were used to prevent or cure illness? To whom did you turn inside the family when you were sick? To whom outside the family?

Family Relationships

What is your family structure? Is your current family structure different from the one you grew up in?

Who is considered to be a member of your family? Are there individuals to whom you are not related, but who are considered family such as longtime friends, neighbors or godparents?

What was the division of labor and responsibilities in your family? Did that vary by gender or age or other forms of status? How about now?

How important is it to have children? How many children are in your household? Was there value placed on having children of one gender or the other?

What family members were typically involved in major family decisions? Were you included in these discussions? Who in your family is included now?

How involved is your family in marriage decisions? Are marriages arranged? By whom? Is there a balance of responsibility between both families involved in the marriage?

What are/were the expectations of what responsibilities you have to your parents or family? What responsibilities did/do your parents have to you? What are the expectations about living at home? Does that change in the context of marriage?

Are there any openly gay, lesbian or bisexual members of your family, including you? Are they acknowledged? Accepted? Are same-sex life partners or opposite sex partners considered to be family members as well?

What are your views on marriage outside your cultural group? What are your family's views? How do you view dating or sexual affairs? What about your family's views?

Sexuality

What do you consider to be the "ideal" body type for a man and for a woman? What do members of your family think? How are your ideals influenced by your upbringing and images in mainstream advertising?

Are you generally happy with your body? Do you think your view is atypical of those around you?

A Youth Leader's Guide to Building Cultural Competence

In what ways do you express different levels of intimacy? Do you think you have different needs for intimacy than most members of the opposite sex? Do you consider displays of public affection acceptable or in poor taste?

How do you express closeness to members of the same sex? To friends of the same or opposite sex?

When and how were you allowed to date? Was dating in the conventional American sense the norm for your household? Were you allowed to socialize in co-ed groups? Were there any specific restrictions or unspoken rules about these activities?

Which gender was encouraged or expected to take the initiative in heterosexual romantic relationships?

Who was supposed to ask first? What expectations were there for the opposite sex in response?

Are some sexual acts taboo? If so which ones and with whom? When? How do you view masturbation?

Have your responses changed from your childhood and adolescence? If so, how?

If you have had heterosexual intercourse, at what point was contraception a part of your sexual experience? Your sexual education? How was the subject treated in your family? Who was responsible for purchasing and using contraception, including condoms?

How do you view homosexuality? How does your view influence or not influence your treatment of others? Your own behavior?

Are gay, lesbian, and bisexual people accepted as members of your community? The community you were raised in?

Are you gay, lesbian or bisexual? When did you come out to yourself? Are you out to friends? Family?

Employers and co-workers? Why or why not? How many other members of the gay, lesbian or bisexual community do you know? How involved are you in organized gay, lesbian or bisexual community activities?

What behavior constitutes flirting? What are your expectations of people engaging in flirtatious behavior?

Are there certain behaviors that are unacceptable?

At what age did you first express yourself physically in a sexual relationship? Was that considered an acceptable age by your family for someone of your gender? Was it typical of your peers? What age was considered acceptable for males to have sexual intercourse? For females?

What did you learn about child sexual abuse growing up? About forced sex between partners? About sexual harassment? How is that knowledge different or similar to what you know now?

Gender Roles

Were tasks in your home assigned by gender? Are they now? Which things were traditionally done by men in your family? By women?

Were both yourself and members of the opposite sex encouraged to stay in school? Go to college? To work outside the home? Were there certain hobbies or extracurricular activities that were encouraged in one gender and not the other?

Were you allowed or encouraged to express emotions freely? Was this similar for members of the opposite sex in your family? Did this differ by age? Were some emotions more appropriate in one gender or another?

Who takes care of the children? What respective roles do members of your sex and members of the opposite sex have in raising a child?

Are either males or females expected to be more knowledgeable, interested or experienced in sex? Is one gender supposed to be more interested in monogamy or abstinence before marriage?

Religion

What religion or religious beliefs do you adhere to? Is this different or similar to that of your family? If you do not follow any religion, why? How observant are you with regard to specific traditions, beliefs, holy days or daily practices?

What are the basic beliefs of your religion? What are its teachings about gender roles, pre-marital and extra-marital intercourse, homosexuality, contraception, childbirth and abortion?

What role does fate or predestination play in your life? In the context of your religion? How do you regard death? Do you believe in life after death? Does your religion? What about members of your family?

Do you belong to the same religion as the one you were raised in, or the one your family follows? Are you as religious as your family members? Is this different from when you were a child or adolescent? Do young people express their religious beliefs differently? How observant are young people in your family now compared to adults?

How is religion incorporated into your daily life? Do you follow some teachings more than others?

How important are religious leaders in your life? In your family's? How often and in what situations are/were they consulted by you or your family?

Are there behaviors or foods that are taboo? Which ones and when?

How is your religion perceived in your ancestral country? Is it the dominant or minority religion? Is it respected and/or tolerated?

Acculturation

How would you consider yourself under the categories of acculturation? Bicultural? Traditional?

Marginal? How about members of your family? Does that vary by age?

If you are not Native American, how long has your family been in the United States? How long have you been in the U.S.?

If you are Native American, what is your family's tribal history?

What values, beliefs, attitudes, customs, traditions, or behaviors have you retained or adopted from your ancestral heritage? Has that changed over the years? How about for your family?

Immigrant Status

What is your citizenship status? What is the status of members of your family? What are the reasons behind having or not having U.S. citizenship in your family? Do you or any of your family have dual citizenship?

What was your ancestors' migration experience? Did they arrive alone or with family members? Are there family members still living in your ancestral country? Are you in contact with them? Do they receive financial support from you or other family members?

If you immigrated, what was your migration experience?

Do you live in a community with others from your ancestral country or heritage? If you live in a community that is multi-racial and multi-ethnic, how do all the various groups get along?

Do you or your family members plan to stay in the U.S. or do you or they hope to return to your ancestral country?

Have you ever visited your ancestral country? With or without family? How did that experience affect you?

Have you ever moved within the United States?

Political Power

How well-represented do you feel members of your cultural group are in local, state or national politics?

How many women representing your cultural group hold a political office?

Is it common for most members of your cultural group to be U.S. citizens? To be registered to vote? To vote? To be courted by candidates? If so, how and by whom?

What advocacy organizations work on behalf of your group? How well do they represent diversity in your group?

How active are members of religious organizations in social movements?

What is the political situation in your ancestral country? If you or your family are recent immigrants, what kind of political participation if any was encouraged? Are elections held? Are they believed to be fair?

Racism

What has been the impact of racism on you? On your culture group as a whole? What is it today?

How do you feel affected by racist attitudes and practices? What about your community? Does it vary for men and women? How about children and teenagers?

How do formal and informal leaders talk about racism now? How did they in the past?

Do you see yourself as a victim or perpetrator of racism? How and why? What has it been like to try and do something positive about racism in your life?

Poverty and Economic Concerns

What was the standard of living in your family when you were growing up? Was it similar to other people in your community or in your extended family?

Are you currently employed? What kinds of jobs have you held in the past? Are most adults in your community employed? In what kinds of jobs? Do most women work outside the home? How high is the average standard of living?

What is the level of involvement in illegal industries? What is the degree of violence in your community?

How has that had an impact upon you?

Have you or family members ever received public assistance? How has that influenced your perspectives?

How safe are the public schools? Are they well-staffed? Adequately funded? How many children are in private or parochial school?

How are health needs serviced in your community? When and how do you seek medical treatment? Do you have medical insurance? Do most people in your community?

Oppression

What is the history of your ancestors and your cultural group in the United States? What laws and policies have affected your group? What laws and policies today?

What is the history of your cultural group in your ancestral country? Has it experienced oppression in some form? Does it today?