

## **Culturally Infused Research Practice: What is that and how do I do it?**

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*Culturally-Infused Research* requires that the researcher begin with understanding one's self before considering any research project that involves people (Offet-Gartner, 2010). Richards (2005) suggested that the more one invests in understanding their own cultural influences, biases, and values, the greater the opportunity to fully embrace learning about and increasing our understanding of the experiences of another. However to understand our own cultural influences we must understand that culture—broadly defined—is inherent in all beings and comes with a set of intersecting and intermingling identities that make up each persons' unique cultural makeup (Arthur & Collins, 2010). Hence all activities that involve people, involves culture. Consequently, culture must be considered in all activities within the helping professions—including research—in order for it to be considered competent and ethical.

Therefore, competent, ethical research *begins* with a thorough understanding of *self* as a cultural being; then transitions to gaining a solid understanding of the cultural influences of the person, group, place, etc. that is the subject of the project; and requires that *all* of these cultural influences are considered and acknowledged throughout *every* stage of a research project, including dissemination.

Sound ominous? Overwhelming? This presentation is designed to assist participants to understand the basic tenets and processes involved in engaging in ethical and competent cultural research. A practical example will be used to demonstrate the process and possibilities of engaging in culturally-infused research. A 'cheat sheet' of things to consider when engaging in culturally-infused research will be given to all who attend, making this ideal for students, those new to the research field, and those who are interested in ensuring that research is culturally inclusive.