

*Race, Immigrant Status, Socioeconomics and Culture
Handout 1*

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The Person-in-Culture Interview

1. What are the most enjoyable activities in your life? What types of activities, interactions, and thoughts are most rewarding? [For clients in a mental health setting] What would be the best [most pleasurable] part about getting rid of your problem?
2. What are the most enjoyable activities for the other members of your family? Are there different activities, interactions, and thoughts that are most rewarding? [For clients] Why would your family be happy to have you get rid of this problem? [What would be pleasurable for them?]
3. In general, what types of experiences are particularly painful for you? [For clients] In what way do your current problems create pain for you?
4. What types of experiences have been most painful for the other members of your family? [For clients] In what way do your current problems create pain in your family?
5. Describe your most embarrassing experience in the past year and in your life, or describe what might be an embarrassing situation.
6. What kinds of things make you angry? Or how would someone be able to tell that you are angry?
7. How do the different members of your family express anger?
8. Do you have enough money to eat well?
9. Does your family have enough money to eat well?
10. Do you feel safe where you live?
11. Does your family feel safe where they live?
12. Name situations in which you feel safe.
13. What about the rest of the family? What types of things make them feel safe?
14. What type of things make you feel important?
15. How do the people in your family get that feeling of importance and self-esteem?
16. What types of things make you feel that you are living life to the fullest?
17. If you "fit in" at home and in your community, tell what a normal day would be like. What type of normal day are you striving for?
18. Each little community has certain images of a successful person. In what ways would your community judge you to be successful or unsuccessful?
19. Draw me a "psychological map" of where you are in the center of the universe. Who are the people closest to you [psychologically]? Who are the people most distant from you? Draw a straight line between you and each person with whom you have good communication. Draw a dotted line between you and the people in your map with whom you have dysfunctional, aversive, or strained communications. Draw zigzag line between you and those people with whom communication is infrequent.
20. Draw me totem pole of the important people in your life. Put the weakest person on the bottom. Put the most powerful person on the top. Pretend the totem is 100 feet high and people can be placed on any of the 100 steps—each one foot higher than the next. People can share "steps" on the totem pole. Be sure to include yourself and anyone in the community or elsewhere who is very important in your life.
21. What are your religious beliefs?
22. On day-to-day basis, how do you learn new things? Who gives you new information? How do you go about learning new information?
23. What about your feelings about death?
24. How can your life be more meaningful?
25. What types of things do you feel you are responsible for on a day-to-day basis as human being? What types of things do you feel your family is responsible for? What types of things do you think your society/community is responsible for?

Berg-Cross, L. & Zopetti, L. (1991). Person-In-Culture Interview. *Journal of College Student Psychotherapy*, 5(4), 5-21. Reprinted with Licence from Haworth Press.