Dear Reentry Advocate Applicant:

Thank you so much for your willingness to give of yourself, your time, and your talents to such a rewarding work. The impact that you will make in the lives of the reentrants that you will serve is in some ways measurable and in other ways immeasurable. Yes, you will help provide tangible advocacy and support to a life in most desperate need of it. However, you will also be providing hope where there is perhaps no hope; courage where there may be fear; love where there perhaps is hatred; peace where there is perhaps conflict; and joy where there perhaps is eternal sadness.

Your work begins with this initial training, after which you will have competed 8 of a total of 16 hours of training. This training is designed to provide you the tools that will help you become a competent NAIA Reentry Advocate. I thank you again and wish you the best in this training.

Most Sincerely

[Signature]

Lauri J Westfall
State Director, Nebraska Aftercare In Action
Welcome!

We welcome you into our organization and wish to share a bond of communication that will help our Reentrants integrate from the prison system back into their communities. This reentry process is best described as a journey rather than a pass or fail training. It is very important that we recognize that through our uniqueness we are able to contribute the best problem solving skills. It is very probable that you may know of a solution to an obstacle that everyone in the program is dealing with. Please ask questions and share your ideas.

Summary of Purpose

The purpose of our training is to prepare advocates to help Reentrants enter into their communities through a collaboration which encourages accountability in decision making and creates positive change in the fabric of lives. As an advocate, it is very important to recognize and examine your own personal biases. Through a good understanding of self, cultural competence is developed and the advocate can role model trust and good will.

Understanding the Reentrants Psyche

Sometimes the Reentrant may have anxiety about what is expected of them. As an advocate, we encourage you to be as clear with expectations as possible. Helping the client to develop plans and timetables is the beginning and then later becoming a soundboard for self accountability. The advocate must allow the client to create their own goals and be as open minded as possible about possibilities.

Another common anxiety for Reentrants is their parole/probation officer is trying to send them back to prison. Encourage the client to see their choices as conditions of their freedom and their officer as a resource for their personal improvement. Frustrations are a common reaction as reentrants deal with a myriad of difficulties that most of us don’t even think about. While our clients are rebuilding their lives, it is best to encourage an attitude that progress is made through many small adjustments through time. When frustrations appear, try to associate something positive with the change.

The transition from prison accountability toward self accountability creates a need for learning how to make meaningful choices. We suggest an accountability plan that has both internal and external focus. Internal focus may include 2 meetings/events per week. External focus may be similar but includes time commitments to others. The most important factors here are that these activities are consistent and with healthy and stable individuals.

Again, your work begins with this initial training…ASK questions and CONTACT us with questions!

Thank you.

Nebraska Aftercare In Action
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Introduction to NAIA

Overview of NAIA

In January of 2008 a need for support was recognized in assisting the large number of incarcerated individuals attempting to return to society. As a result, an Aftercare program was formulated in the State of Nebraska. With the help of a number of very dedicated people, hundreds of volunteers in various Nebraska Communities and organizing the support of existing community resources, the Aftercare program took off and has had a number of major success stories in helping returning citizen’s re-enter the community and begin the path of leading healthy lives and giving back to the communities in return for their support.

The road to transforming the re-entry program into a viable state wide organization has been difficult and at times bumpy, but in October of 2009, a group of 20 very dedicated people from around the state of Nebraska met in Lincoln and officially formed NEBRASKA AFTERCARE IN ACTION (NAIA). Inmate aftercare in Nebraska now had a name, an elected Board of Directors, and an appointed State Director and Deputy Stated Director to facilitate the program throughout Nebraska.

Mission: To prepare inmates for successful reentry into our communities

Fundamental Principles that Guide NAIA Work

• Safety First – Is this course of advocacy safe for me and the reentrant?
• The “Best Interest” Principle – Is this course of advocacy in the best interest of the reentrant?
• Do No Harm – Will this course of advocacy harm the reentrant?

It is best for the reentrant to decide what is best for him. They are their best advocate. NAIA serves best when the reentrant has determined that he needs help in advocating for himself. As the RA team advocates, they must let the above listed fundamental principles guide that advocacy.

THE RA’s RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REENTRANT

Establishing a relationship with the reentrant is one of the most important things you do as a RA team member. The ideal relationship is one that maximizes your ability to advocate successfully for the reentrant. The following guidelines describe the parameters for your relationship and contacts with the reentrant.

As an RA you have direct and sufficient contact with the reentrant to carry out an independent and valid investigation of the reentrant’s circumstances, including the reentrant’s needs and wishes, so as to be able to make sound, thorough, and objective recommendations in the reentrant’s best interest.

This contact should occur in person to provide firsthand knowledge of the reentrant and his/her unique personality, abilities, and needs. While social contact is permitted with the reentrant to develop trust and a meaningful relationship, you function as an objective advocate for the reentrant. You do not provide direct services to the reentrant. Under no circumstances shall you take the reentrant into your home, provide shelter for the reentrant, or develop romantic relationships with reentrants.
Attitudes and Skills That Enhance Reentry Work

PROFESSIONALISM
Ethics, accountability, confidentiality, resourcefulness, critical thinking, and good judgment can enhance your credibility and earn the respect of the reentrant, fellow team members, and community partners. Professionalism can help you be a powerful advocate for the reentrant.

INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCE
Open-mindedness, respect, collaboration, self-awareness, and assertiveness will help you be more successful in working with team members, communicating with the reentrant, and making accurate interpretations of situations. As a Reentry Advocate, you are expected to demonstrate respect and open-mindedness in your interactions. Advocating for reentrants requires unique skills and attitudes, different from those required in typical day-to-day interaction. Reentrants may have unique mental and emotional needs. Listening and observation skills will help you gather a full picture of the reentrants situation.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE
What you do not understand may lead to inaccurate interpretations. Understanding your own culture and the differences between cultures will allow you to best serve reentrants. Your life experience (culture, era, geography, race, education, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, family dynamics, etc.) has led you to develop a particular perspective. Your unique perspective always influences how you interpret what you observe. The more aware you become of your personal perspective, the better able you will be to understand that others have different perspectives. In observing reentrants, it is important to understand that your cultural perspective is likely to be different from those with whom you are working.

The Role of the Reentry Advocate

INVESTIGATION
Carry out an objective examination of the situation, including relevant history, environment, relationships, and needs of the reentrant.

FACILITATION
Help connect the reentrant with appropriate resources and services and facilitate a collaborative relationship between all parties involved in the case, helping to create a situation in which the reentrant’s needs can be met.

ADVOCACY
Speak up for the reentrant by making recommendations regarding the reentrant’s best interests.

MONITORING
Keep track of whether the orders of the court and the plans of engaged agencies are carried out.
1. The fundamental principles that guide NAIA work are safety, best interest of the reentrant and to do no harm. Please comment about each of these principles and how you feel they are important.

   Safety-

   Best interest of the Reentrant-

   Do no harm-

2. Cultural competence is the understanding that we each hold unique perspectives that have developed from our personal and cultural experiences. Why do you think cultural competence is important?

3. Describe each role of the Reentry Advocate by giving examples of how each is done:

   Investigation-

   Facilitation-

   Advocacy-

   Monitoring-

   Mental Health-
Gate I – Understanding Reentry

Defining Reentry
According to the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs website, “Reentry involves the use of programs targeted at promoting the effective reintegration of offenders back to communities upon release from prison and jail. Reentry programming, which often involves a comprehensive case management approach, is intended to assist offenders in acquiring the life skills needed to succeed in the community and become law-abiding citizens. A variety of programs are used to assist offenders in the reentry process, including prerelease programs, drug rehabilitation and vocational training, and work programs.”

Primary Barriers to Reentry
While there are many barriers to successful reentry, there are a few that research has shown to be primary and fundamental barriers to reentry. Successfully acknowledging and addressing these barriers will greatly increase the chance of successful reentry.

Employment
• Stable employment is a strong predictor of successful reentry
• Helps to alleviate the potential for poverty
• Women who are single parents may be at a greater risk of recidivating when unemployed
• Increases “social capital” of the reentrant
• Keeps the reentrant busy

Housing
• Important in stabilizing other aspects of reentrant’s life
• Housing situation should be conducive to law-abiding behavior
• Increases “social capital” of the reentrant
• Stability in housing is a crucial factor in reducing stress

Family/Community Contact
• Important in encouraging social conformity and law-abiding behavior
• Source of support both inside and outside the family structure
• Key to success in other areas of the reentrants life

Substance Abuse
• 30-45 percent of rural arrestees in NE were alcohol intoxicated at time of arrest
• 25-38 percent of rural arrestees in NE tested positive for at least one drug at time of arrest
• Greatly reduces the likelihood of obtaining and/or maintaining steady employment, family relations or complying with parole requirements.
• Tends towards violent recidivism
Mental Health

• 16% of the adult prison population has a diagnosed mental illness
• Difficult to distinguish between substance abuse
• Treatment is often prolonged
• Behavior is often seen as criminal rather than a result of mental illness.

Parole vs. Probation

Parole and probation perhaps, are often confused as interchangeable words. However, though they are similar in function, there represent two very different processes in the corrections system. Probation is a sentence issued by a judge either in the place of jail time or in addition to jail time. A reentrant on probation is a very restricted citizen and may even be subject to a probation officer.

Unlike probation, parole is a conditional release from prison granted to some inmates after they have served part of their sentence. It is not issued by a judge. Rather it is granted as a privilege by a parole board. Reentrants on parole are generally far more restricted than those on probation. A violation of the conditions of their parole will result in revocation of parole and a return to prison.
Gate I Review Questions

1. Reentry is the use of programs to help people transition from prison life into their communities. Describe what kind of programs you feel would help in the reentry process.

2. Describe how these barriers become obstacles to the reentry process:
   - Employment-
   - Housing-
   - Family/Community-
   - Substance abuse-
   - Mental Health-
Gate II – The Reentrant: A Human Being

Activity: Seeing the Reentrant as a Whole Person

In order to effectively advocate for Reentrants, it’s important to look at all aspects of their life and identify what makes for a happy, well-adjusted person. Below is a four-layered onion. Each layer represents four aspects of a person’s life from the most external to the most internal: the social, the physical, the mental/emotional and the spiritual.
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow believed there are five categories of needs that all people have, and that these needs have to be met in sequence from the first level on up. If the needs at one level are not met, the needs at the next level cannot be met.

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is often depicted as a pyramid consisting of five levels. The two lower levels can be grouped together as needs associated with survival. The next two can be grouped together as needs associated with thriving. The top level is need associated with growing.

The basic concept is that the higher needs in this hierarchy only come into focus once all the needs that are lower down in the pyramid are mainly or entirely satisfied.

Once an individual has moved past a level, those needs will no longer be prioritized. However, if a lower set of needs is continually unmet for an extended period of time, the individual will temporarily re-prioritize those needs—dropping down to that level until those lower needs are reasonably satisfied again. Innate growth forces constantly create upward movement in the hierarchy unless basic needs remain unmet indefinitely.

THE NEED TO SURVIVE

1. Physiological—food, clothing and shelter
   • The need to breathe
   • The need to drink water
   • The need for sleep
   • The need to eat
   • The need to dispose of bodily wastes
Of all needs, a human’s physiological needs take the highest priority. Physiological needs can control thoughts and behaviors, and can cause people to feel sickness, pain, and discomfort.

2. **Safety—protection and security**

When physiological needs are met, the need for safety will emerge. Outside of physiological needs, safety and security rank above all other desires. These include:

- Physical security—safety from violence, delinquency, aggressions
- Security of employment
- Security of revenues and resources
- Family security
- Security of health.

**THE NEED TO THRIVE**

3. **Primary Relationships – Love & Belonging**

After the survival needs are fulfilled, the third layer of human needs is love and belonging. This involves emotionally-based relationships in general, such as:

- Friendship
- Sexual intimacy
- Having a supportive and communicative family

Humans need to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance, whether it comes from a large social group (such as clubs, work, religious groups, professional organizations, sports teams, gangs) or small social connections (family members, intimate partners, mentors, close colleagues, confidants). They need to love and be loved (sexually and non-sexually) by others.

4. **Esteem**

According to Maslow, all humans have a need to be respected, to have self-respect, and to respect others. People need to engage themselves to gain recognition and have an activity or activities that give the person a sense of contribution, to feel accepted and self-valued, be it in a profession or hobby.

There are two levels to Esteem needs. The lower of the levels relates to elements like fame, respect, and glory. The higher level is contingent to concepts like confidence, competence, and achievement. The lower level is generally considered less advanced and more external; it is dependent upon other people. However confidence, competence, and achievement only need one person and everyone else is inconsequential to one’s own success.
THE NEED TO GROW
Needs associated with survival and thriving can be satisfied and when they are, they cease to be a priority in ones behavior and decision making process. However, it is important to recognize that growth needs are an enduring driver of behavior.

5. Self-actualization—community and wholeness
Self-actualization is the inborn need of humans to make the most of their abilities and to strive to be the best they can be.

• They embrace the facts and realities of the world rather than denying or avoiding them.
• They are spontaneous and creative in their ideas and actions.
• They are interested in solving problems.
• They feel closeness to other people, and generally appreciate life.
• They have a system of morality that is fully internalized and independent of external authority.
• They have discernment and are able to view all things in an objective manner.

IMPORTANT POINTS ABOUT REENTRANT’S NEEDS
• Successful reentry depends on adequately meeting basic needs (e.g., the development of job acquisition skills depends on more basic needs being met first).
• Because every Reentrant has a different history and a different future. Their needs will depend on where they’ve been and where they’re going.
• The essence of your role as a Reentry Advocate is to identify the Reentrant’s unmet needs and to advocate for those needs to be met.
Gate II Review

Activity: Understanding the Needs of Reentrant's

PART I

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs includes Self-actualization, Esteem, Primary Relationships, Safety and Physiological needs. Pick two or three of these needs and tell how you could help them achieve those needs.
Working with the Reentrant’s Mindset

It is important that you as a Reentry Advocate understand some of the common descriptions of the Reentrant’s mindset and be familiar with principles that will help you work with this mindset. Andre Norman, an expert in reentry advocacy has identified several things that RA’s need to know to better advocate for Reentrants. The following list of principles is an adaptation from his writings.

**Mindset #1 – “Pie in the Sky”** The prison experience often creates a kind of panic in the mind of the Reentrant upon their release. This often results in the desire to accomplish a number of lofty aspirations “right now!” Generally, this counterproductive mindset results in frustration and disappointment.

**Work With It** – Believe with your Reentrant that anything is possible, but develop common sense plans with common sense time-tables. Work with the Reentrant to help identify goals and then using the Rule of Time and Effect, develop short-, medium-, and long-range objectives that go towards realizing those identified goals.

**Mindset #2 – “My parole/probation officer is trying to send me back to prison.”** Reentrants often believe that their parole and/or probation officer is out to get them and has the sole purpose of sending them back to prison.

**Work With It** – Help the Reentrant understand that the path back to prison is paved only by the choices and decisions they themselves make. The probation/parole office only becomes the enemy when they make poor choices. Help them see that the “conditions” of their probation/parole must be obeyed with meticulous detail. When possible and appropriate help the Reentrant to view their probation/parole officer as a resource to be used in the reentry process. Allow the officer to become an active part of the “team”.

**Mindset #3 – “Everything’s all different now.”** Upon release, Reentrants get a reality check on how much things may have changed since they were last in free society. For some it may even be a culture shock. Everything may have changed – the neighborhood, local businesses, technology, family and friends, boyfriends and girlfriends, the bus system, everything. This can be a source of frustration for the Reentrant.

**Work With It** – Realize yourself that time is needed to get used to being free. For some, this may take only days, but for others it may take weeks or even months. This adjustment has to be made before any real work can be accomplished in terms of serious goals and objectives like buying a new car or house. Help the Reentrant get comfortable with the idea that the reentry process requires a number of adjustments over time. When frustrations arise, help the Reentrant identify the positives associated with the change or adjustment.
Mindset #4 – “I’m so used to being told what to do.” One of the primary challenges for Reentrants is transitioning from being accountable to the corrections system in every detail of their lives to being accountable to themselves. Prison, by design, has stripped the Reentrant of their ability to make meaningful choices. They have been told when to wake-up, when to eat, when to work, when to play, when to use the restroom, and when to go to bed. Many Reentrants have mastered the art of manipulation in order to survive and navigate the prison culture.

Work With It – Covenant with the Reentrant on an accountability plan. A good accountability plan has both an internal focus and an external focus. A good internal accountability plan centers on selecting two meeting/events that the Reentrant attends weekly. This could be personal Bible study, reading a book at the library, etc. The important thing about internal accountability is that it is regular and consistent time alone for the Reentrant, time for introspection and re-centering. A good external accountability plan involves a commitment of time to others. This could be a group Bible study or prayer meeting, meeting with someone for coffee, a movie, or some other positive encounter. The important thing with external accountability is that the Reentrant meets regularly and participates in an uplifting and beneficial lifestyle activity with stable, healthy people. Missing their weekly appointments can be a clear signal that re-focusing is needed.
Gate III - Developing Cultural Competence

Understanding Cultural Diversity
As a general term “diversity” refers to difference or variety. In the context of Reentry Advocacy “diversity” refers to differences or variety in people’s identities or experiences: ethnicity, race, national origin, language, gender, religion, ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, and so on. The term “cultural competence” refers to the ability to work effectively with people from a broad range of backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints.

The United States is becoming increasingly multicultural. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 35% of the population currently belongs to a racial or ethnic minority group. The Census Bureau projects that by the year 2050, non-Hispanic Anglo will make up only 50% of the U.S. population. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, at the end of 2008, 66% of all persons incarcerated belonged to a racial or ethnic minority.

As you work through this section, keep in mind the particular cultural groups with whom you will work as a Reentry Advocate (RA).

Understanding issues related to diversity and culturally competent Reentry Advocacy is critical to your work as an RA. It can enhance your ability to see things from new and different perspectives and to respond to each Reentrant’s unique needs. Developing cultural competence is a lifelong process. This section offers a starting point for understanding key issues.

Guiding Principles for Developing a Diverse NAIA Network

The NAIA Statewide Vision
Nebraska Aftercare In Action advocates for persons leaving prison and reentering mainstream society.

In developing our legacy of quality advocacy, we acknowledge the need to understand, respect, and celebrate diversity including race, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and the presence of a sensory, mental, or physical disability. We also value diversity of viewpoints, life experiences, talents, and ideas.

A diverse NAIA network helps us to better understand and promote the well-being of the people we serve. Embracing diversity makes us better advocates by providing fresh ideas and perspectives for problem solving in our multicultural world, enabling us to respond to each person’s unique needs.
**Guiding Principles for Achieving a Diverse NAIA Network**

1. Ethnic and cultural background influences an individual’s attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors.

2. Each Reentrant’s individuality reflects adaptations to their primary culture and the majority culture, the person’s unique environmental influences, and the sum total of their internal needs.

3. A Reentrant can be best served by an NAIA Reentry Advocate who is culturally competent and who has personal experience and work experience in the Reentrant’s own culture(s).

4. To understand a Reentrant, people should understand cultural differences and the impact they have on the behavior of groups that result from the interactions of individual group members.

5. No cultural group is uniform in structure or composition throughout; within every group there is great diversity.

6. Reentrants have similarities, yet are all unique.

7. In order to be culturally sensitive to another person or group, it is necessary to evaluate how each person’s culture impacts his/her behavior.

8. As a person learns about the characteristic traits of another cultural group, he/she should remember to view each person as an individual.

9. Most people like to feel that they have compassion for others and that there are new things they can learn.

10. Value judgments should NOT be made about another person’s culture.

11. It is in the best interest of Reentrants to have RA’s who reflect their characteristics (i.e., ethnicity, national origin, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, physical ability, and socioeconomic status).
Reflection Questions

1. Review the list of Guiding Principles for Developing a Diverse NAIA Network. Which of the principles do you think is most important and why?

2. In your own words, describe why you think it’s important to understand, respect, and celebrate cultural diversity.
Activity: Assessing Your Cultural Competence

Place an “X” on each line in the place that best represents you.

I know my own cultural background.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Aware</th>
<th>Somewhat Aware</th>
<th>Need Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I am aware of many of the cultural influences that have shaped my worldview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Aware</th>
<th>Somewhat Aware</th>
<th>Need Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I can describe the influences of culture and cultural identity on Reentrant’s self-image.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Aware</th>
<th>Somewhat Aware</th>
<th>Need Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I understand how prejudice and discrimination impact the Reentrant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Aware</th>
<th>Somewhat Aware</th>
<th>Need Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I understand how prejudice and discrimination can impact the Reentry process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Aware</th>
<th>Somewhat Aware</th>
<th>Need Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I am clear about my own attitudes regarding culture and race and the impact these will have on the Reentrants I may serve.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Aware</th>
<th>Somewhat Aware</th>
<th>Need Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I know how to provide culturally competent advocacy and support to the Reentrants I serve.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Aware</th>
<th>Somewhat Aware</th>
<th>Need Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Cultural Heritage

Most people are knowledgeable and open about some aspects of their culture. About other aspects, they may have either less information or a heightened sense of privacy. In some matters they might fear judgment or discrimination. People from the dominant culture may not recognize their own values, behaviors, or traditions as cultural at all—they may think of them simply as “normal.”

As a foundation for expanding your understanding of other cultures, it is important to be thoroughly acquainted with your own. Cultural competence begins with understanding and appreciating your own identity. You are a “culturally rich” individual with your own blend of culture, ethnicity, race, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, religion or spirituality, geographic location, and physical and mental abilities.
Activity: Exploring Your Culture and Perceptions

As an RA, you will have influence in the lives of the Reentrants you serve.

• How might your position as an RA affect your ability to establish rapport, communicate effectively, gather accurate information, and connect with resources?

• How do your personal values impact your ability to be unbiased?
Culturally Competent Reentry Advocacy

In the context of the NAIA Reentry Advocate role, cultural competence is the ability to work effectively with people from a variety of backgrounds. It entails being aware and respectful of the cultural norms, values, and traditions of those with whom you work. Striving to be culturally competent means cultivating an open mind and new skills and meeting people where they are, rather than making them conform to your standards.

Each Reentrant is made up of a combination of cultural, familial, and personal traits. In working with Reentrants, you need to learn about the individual’s culture. When in doubt, ask the people you are working with. It might feel awkward at first, but learning how to ask questions respectfully is a vital skill to develop as you grow in cultural competence. Once people understand that you sincerely want to learn and be respectful, they are usually very generous with their help.

Developing cultural competence is a lifelong process through which you’ll make some mistakes, get to know some wonderful people in deeper ways, and become a more effective NAIA Reentry Advocate.

STEREOTYPING vs. CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Stereotypes are rigid and inflexible. Stereotypes hold even when a person is presented with evidence contrary to the stereotype. Stereotypes are harmful because they limit people’s potential, perpetuate myths, and are gross generalizations about a particular group. For instance, a person might believe that people who wear large, baggy clothes shoplift. Teenagers wear large, baggy jackets; therefore, teenagers shoplift. Such stereotypes can adversely affect your interactions with children and others in your community. Even stereotypes that include “positive” elements (e.g., “they” are quite industrious) can be harmful because the stereotypes are rigid, limiting, and generalized.

Unlike stereotyping, cultural competence (Cultural competence refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures) can be compared to making an educated hypothesis. An educated hypothesis contains what you understand about cultural norms and the social, political, and historical experiences of the Reentrant with whom you work. You might hypothesize, for example, that a Jewish Reentrant is not available for a meeting on Yom Kippur, or that they would not want to eat pork. However, you recognize and allow for individual differences in the expression and experience of a culture; for instance, some Jewish people eat pork and still are closely tied to their Jewish faith or heritage.

Another example might be that some African American Reentrants celebrate Kwanzaa, while others do not.

As an advocate, it is important to examine your biases and recognize they are based on your own life and do not usually reflect what is true for the stereotyped groups. Everyone has certain biases. Everyone stereotypes from time to time. Developing cultural competence is an ongoing process of recognizing and overcoming these biases by thinking flexibly and finding sources of information about those who are different from you.
10 Benefits of Practicing Culturally Competent Reentry Advocacy

1. Ensures that advocacy issues are viewed from the cultural perspective of the Reentrant:
   a. Takes into account cultural norms, practices, traditions, familial relationships, roles, kinship ties, and other culturally appropriate values.
   b. Advocates for demonstrated sensitivity to this cultural perspective on the part of service providers or others involved with the Reentrant.

2. Ensures that the Reentrant’s long-term needs are viewed from a culturally appropriate perspective:
   a. Takes into account the Reentrant’s need to develop and maintain a positive self-image and cultural heritage.
   b. Takes into account the Reentrant’s need to positively identify and interact with others from his/her cultural background.

3. Prevents cultural practices from being mistaken for deviance or dysfunction.

4. Assists with differentiating between non-compliance with a service and when a service may be culturally inappropriate or non-inclusive.

5. Contributes to more accurate assessment of the Reentrant’s welfare, family system, available support systems, societal needs, services needed.

6. Decreases cross-cultural communication clashes and opportunities for misunderstandings.

7. Allows advocates to utilize culturally appropriate solutions in problem solving.

8. Encourages participation of Reentrants personal support system in seeking assistance or support.

9. Recognizes, appreciates, and incorporates cultural differences in ways that promote cooperation.

10. Allows all participants to be heard objectively.
Gate III Review Questions

1. Cultural competence involves an understanding that we each base our decisions upon diverse personal and cultural circumstances. The aim of cultural competence is to develop interpersonal trust so that reentry goes as smoothly as possible.

   • Explain how cultural competence (Cultural competence refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures) leads to respect and trust.

2. Stereotypes are generalizations that people associate with groups of people, often culturally specific. Stereotypes can become problems for individuals because of false beliefs they generate.

   • Write about how a stereotype might cause a misunderstanding that leads to a person being hurt by a false idea.

   • List some stereotypes you are aware of.

   • Explain why problem solving is related to being a culturally competent reentry advocate.
## Cultural Diversity Vocabulary

Developing a working vocabulary related to issues of diversity can help you communicate more effectively with other people and examine where you have more to learn. How well-versed is your diversity vocabulary? Read the list below to find out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ableism</td>
<td>Discrimination or prejudice based on a limitation, difference, or impairment in physical, mental, or sensory capacity or ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ageism</td>
<td>Discrimination or prejudice based on age, particularly aimed at the elderly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bias</td>
<td>A personal judgment, especially one that is unreasoned or unfair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biracial</td>
<td>Of two races; usually describing a person having parents of different races.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classism</td>
<td>Discrimination or prejudice based on socioeconomic status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Dominance</td>
<td>The pervasiveness of one set of traditions, norms, customs, literature, art, and institutions, to the exclusion of all others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Competence</td>
<td>The ability to work effectively with people from a variety of cultures, ethnicities, races, religions, classes, sexual orientations, and genders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Group</td>
<td>A group of people who consciously or unconsciously share identifiable values, norms, symbols, and some ways of living that are repeated and transmitted from one generation to another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Sensitivity</td>
<td>An awareness of the nuances of one’s own and other cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culturally Appropriate</td>
<td>Demonstrating both sensitivity to cultural differences and similarities and effectiveness in communicating a message within and across cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>The shared values, traditions, norms, customs, arts, history, folklore, and institutions of a group of people who are unified by race, ethnicity, language, nationality, sexual orientation, and/or religion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>A limitation, difference, or impairment in a person’s physical, mental, or sensory capacity or ability. Many communities prefer the term “differently abled” over “disabled.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>An act of prejudice or a manner of treating individuals differently due to their appearance, status, or membership in a particular group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disproportionally Dominant Group/Culture</td>
<td>Overrepresentation or under representation of various groups in different social, political, or economic institutions; the “mainstream” culture in a society, consisting of the people who hold the power and influence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>The classification of a group of people who share common characteristics, such as language, race, tribe, or national origin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnocentrism</td>
<td>The attitude that one’s own cultural group is superior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>A social or cultural category generally assigned based on a person’s biological sex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Identity</td>
<td>A person’s sense of being; masculine, feminine, or some combination thereof.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexism</td>
<td>An ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual form of behavior, identity, or relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homophobia</td>
<td>Fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality, homosexuals, or same-sex relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Racism</td>
<td>Biased policies and practices within an organization or system that disadvantage people of a certain race or ethnicity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>The form or pattern of communication—spoken, written, or signed—used by residents or descendants of a particular nation or geographic area or by anybody of people. Language can be formal or informal and includes dialect, idiomatic speech, and slang.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minority</strong></td>
<td>The smaller in number of at least two groups. Can imply a lesser status or influence and can be seen as an antonym for the words “majority” and “dominant.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multicultural</strong></td>
<td>Designed for or pertaining to two or more distinct cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiracial</strong></td>
<td>Describing a person, community, organization, etc., composed of many races.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Origin</strong></td>
<td>The country or region where a person was born.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Person of Color</strong></td>
<td>Usually used to define a person who is not a descendant of people from European countries. Individuals can choose whether or not to self-identify as a person of color.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prejudice</strong></td>
<td>Over-generalized, oversimplified, or exaggerated beliefs associated with a category or group of people, which are not changed even in the face of contrary evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td>A socially defined population characterized by distinguishable physical characteristics, usually skin color.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Racism</strong></td>
<td>The belief that some racial groups are inherently superior or inferior to others; discrimination, prejudice, or a system of advantage and/or oppression based on race.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexism</strong></td>
<td>Discrimination or prejudice based on gender or gender identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Describes the gender(s) of people to whom a person feels romantically and/or sexually attracted: Heterosexual: Attracted to the other gender; Homosexual: Attracted to the same gender (i.e., gay or lesbian); Bisexual: Attracted to either gender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socioeconomic Status</strong></td>
<td>Individuals’ economic class (e.g., poor, working-class, middle-class, wealthy) or position in society based on their financial situation or background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stereotype</strong></td>
<td>A highly simplified conception or belief about a person, place, or thing, based on limited information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transgender</strong></td>
<td>Describes a person whose gender identity differs from his/her assigned gender and/or biological sex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transsexual</strong></td>
<td>A person whose gender identity differs from his/her assigned gender and/or biological sex. Many transsexuals alter their biological sex through hormones and/or surgery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Values</strong></td>
<td>What a person believes to be important and accepts as an integral part of who he/she is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Xenophobia</strong></td>
<td>A fear of all that is foreign, or a fear of people believed to be “foreigners.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cultural Competency Resources

Class Matters

www.classmatters.org

This website is a great resource for understanding class values and how class influences how people view the world.

Culture Matters: The Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Workbook

www.peacecorps.gov/wws/publications/culture/index.cfm

This cross-cultural workbook is fully accessible from the Internet and was designed for Peace Corps volunteers, but provides an excellent resource for cross-cultural awareness in America as well as for learning how to interact with people of other cultures in a respectful and successful manner. The workbook contains such chapters as “Understanding Culture,” “American Culture and American Diversity,” and “Styles of Communication.” Each chapter contains many resources.

Flipping the Script: White Privilege & Community Building


The authors of this monograph intend it to “help those involved in improving communities to work in more equitable and thoughtful partnerships with community residents and other stakeholders, with special attention to issues of privilege, oppression, racism and power as they play out in this work.”

The Black Database

www.theblackdatabase.com

This website provides links to other sites relevant to African Americans on topics ranging from news, arts, and society to health, education, and technology.

NativeWeb

www.nativeweb.org/resources

This site contains over 3,000 links to various aspects of Native American culture and history.

Asian-Nation

www.asian-nation.org

This site contains multiple resources concerning Asian history, culture, immigration, and contemporary issues in America.
**Deaf Linx**

www.deaflinx.com

This site provides an extensive list of links to sites about deaf culture, deaf history, deaf businesses, and other general resources for those with hearing loss or those who would like to learn about deaf culture.

**Center for Immigration Studies**

www.cis.org

An excellent resource for many current immigrant issues, this site contains informative articles explaining important topics that arise in US immigration and a forum for asking questions about immigration.
Works Cited

National Court Appointed Special Advocates Training Manual

Arizona Court Appointed Special Advocates Training Manual

Recidivism Reduction Treatment Center Study (2006)