

Competence 2.3 Engage in self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Awareness on Death and Dying

Introduction

Intentionally seeking to learn about others' beliefs and manage bias from my own personal beliefs is essential in effectively serving diverse populations. In order to increase my awareness on beliefs regarding death, I attended an enrichment program on death and dying. After processing this, I reflected on what I learned, how I view death, and how I will manage the influence of my personal biases.

On September 14, 2018, I listened to a presentation entitled "The Accidental Prophet" that was a part of the enrichment program aiming to encourage people to talk about death and dying. Since our society typically avoids these topics, Welcome Home Chattanooga hosted this event. I found listening to the speaker, Peter Anthony to be fascinating and thought provoking. I do not agree with his perspective of what happens when you die, but I do not claim to perfectly understand what dying is like and found it beneficial to listen to his perspective.

Summary

At first, I felt uncomfortable with listening to someone share stories that contradict my beliefs. I know I will work with people who do not hold the same beliefs on death. Hearing about a different view was good exposure for me since I aspire to work effectively with clients without allowing my personal bias to interfere. The speaker shared his experience about being pronounced clinically dead for 11 minutes and the impact it had on him when he was given a second chance at life. He described seeing his

ancestors, people in his life who had died, and his life in review. Then a being showed him a vision of him traveling around the world sharing his story and asked if he wanted to go back to life on earth, and he chose to come back.

Learning Opportunities

Although I believe that the dead do not have thoughts or experiences, opportunities to learn and benefit were still affluent. One lesson I learned is that I cannot argue with someone's personal experience even if I do not necessarily hold the same perspective. Another important lesson is to "Do the right thing because it's the right thing." After reviewing his life, Anthony realized the ramifications of his actions, including what may have seemed insignificant to him at the time. From his death experience, the speaker also shared that he came to a deeper understanding of what is important in life. Considering death can encourage humans to more deeply realize what makes life meaningful. Anthony found that living to do good for others is what is truly valuable in his life.

Self-Awareness

As a Seventh-day Adventist Christian, I have a unique perspective on death and believe that the Bible is the sole foundation for my views. I believe God ordered death to be the consequence for sin out of mercy in order to bring humans to a realization of what makes life meaningful. When someone dies, I do not believe that they immediately encounter any type of afterlife experience, like Heaven, Hell, Purgatory, or Nirvana. Instead, I believe those who are dead do not know or experiencing anything. It is a state that can be compared to a dreamless sleep. I believe that Jesus will return to the earth in

the future and raise those who have accepted His grace to life again and take them to Heaven.

Self-Regulation

In the future, I will seek to manage the influence of my personal beliefs in working with diverse clients. I will not force or freely self disclose my personal beliefs when working with clients. When clients refer to beliefs that contradict my own, I will not correct them. Instead, I will seek to learn what I can from those with differing perspectives. Whether someone has a different race or belief, I will put discomfort aside and seek to serve him or her. I will not argue with others' experiences but listen for what is meaningful and useful in providing clients with the best help possible.