

Critical Self-Reflection Tool

Cultivating Critical Self-Reflection to Increase Self-Awareness

For providers working with minoritized children, families, and communities, increasing self-awareness on their identities, sociocultural context, and social location, and how these impact their perceptions and interactions of the families they serve, is key to increasing the insight and skills needed to implement anti-oppressive interventions that are developmentally, relationally, and culturally responsive (Thomas et al., 2019; Noroña et al., 2021). Self-awareness is enhanced and deepened by cultivating critical self-reflection and the related capacities of awareness, analysis, accountability, reparation, and taking action toward change.

As an example, Table 1 lists a variety of reflective prompts that can be used in Reflective Consultation/Supervision and Mentoring relationships and individually by practitioners for promoting critical self-reflection (Noroña et al., 2023)

Table 1. Questions That Promote Critical Self-Reflection

Areas of exploration for consultant/supervisor, consultee/supervisee, mentor/mentee, practitioner for personal development	Prompts for reflection
1. Explore the provider's identities and positionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do my identities impact how I perceive myself, perceive my client/patient families, my supervisees/consultees/mentees, and how they might perceive me?• How have my identity markers (e.g., race, education, socioeconomic status) and positionality informed my values, beliefs, preconceptions, and the expectations I have for my clients/patients, supervisees/consultees/mentees, and myself?• How do similarities or differences in my identities and social location to those of client families or of supervisees/consultees I work with make me feel?
2. Explore the sociohistorical, political, professional, and theoretical contexts and influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do these values, beliefs, and assumptions reflect dominant paradigms about health, attachment, parenting, raising children, and addressing and recovering from grief, pain, distress?

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the messages I received about these issues growing up?• What are the messages I received from my professional training?• What do I know about the history of my ethnic, racial, and cultural group?• How has having or not having access to that knowledge impacted my assumptions, perceptions, and biases about other communities?
3. Explore the provider's increased awareness and commitment to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In what ways have my ancestor's successes benefited others or been at another's expense?• In what ways have my ancestors used race, economics, gender, and politics to continue past and current inequities? (Garcia et al., 2009)• In what ways were my ancestors targeted by oppression because of their race, ethnicity, immigration status, or any other aspect of their identities?• In what ways have I reproduced, maintained, or supported systems of oppression in my work?• In what ways do I carry out my moral obligation to correct current social inequities? (Garcia et al., 2009)• Are these actions meaningful to those who have been injured/targeted or just meaningful to me? (Garcia et al., 2009)• In what ways do my supervisors, colleagues, and organization challenge me to increase my critical reflection and take actions toward change? (Garcia et al., 2009)
4. Explore willingness and commitment to take action toward change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Am I ready to move toward relational action (Hernandez-Wolfe & McDowell, 2012) by:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• repairing relationships where I was oblivious to the impact of my privilege, power, and/or my actions/words?• accepting feedback about this impact?

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• seeking reflective supervision/consultation/mentorship to support me in this process?• dealing with the fear of potential losses (e.g., relationships, mentors, a job, privileged positionality in a group) as I engage in this process of questioning structural racism, White supremacy culture, and taking action?• Am I going to start taking action steps toward being accountable for social and racial justice/equity by: (Hernandez-Wolfe & McDowell, 2012)• staying at my growing edge and understanding that to stay “awake” I need to look for opportunities for growth and for staying accountable?• using my positionality, privilege, or power from wherever I am to create awareness about systems of oppression?• speaking out/taking risks?• becoming a co-conspirator by forming alliances, organizing, working in solidarity with others to unveil, address, dismantle inequities affecting the families I serve, my colleagues, my or others’ communities?• teaching, mentoring, presenting at speaking engagements, writing, publishing articles ?
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Adapted from “*Raising Critical Consciousness in Family Therapy*” by M. Garcia, I. Kosutic, T. McDowell, & S. A. Anderson, 2009, *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*, 21(1), 18–38; “*Table 1 Reflections Toward Cultural Formulation*” by Noroña, C. R., Lakatos, P. P., Wise-Kriplani, M., & Williams, M. E. (2021). Critical self-reflection and diversity-informed supervision/consultation: Deepening the DC:0–5 cultural formulation. *ZERO TO THREE Journal*, 42(2), 62–71. and “*From the Margins to the Center: Moving Towards a Resilience-Based Model of Supervision for Queer People of Color Supervisors*” by A. Singh and K. Y. S. Chun, 2020, *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 4(1), 36–46.

Source: Noroña, C. R., Raskin, E., Flores, E., Fernández-Pastrana, I., Anderson, S., & Saulnier, M. (2023). Diversity-informed reflective consultation and radical healing: A new paradigm for infant and early childhood mental health providers serving immigrant families. *ZERO TO THREE Journal*, 43(3), 33–54.