**HANDOUT**

**Title:** Becoming a Culturally Responsive Teacher

**Handout #:** 20a

**Content:**

**Specific Activities for Becoming a Culturally Responsive Teacher**
**(Gay, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002)**

**1. Engage in Reflective Thinking and Writing**
Teachers must reflect on their actions and interactions as they try to discern the personal motivations that govern their behaviors. Understanding the factors that contribute to certain behaviors (e.g., racism, ethnocentrism) is the first step toward changing these behaviors. This process is facilitated by autobiographical and reflective writing, usually in a journal.

**2. Explore Personal and Family Histories**
Teachers need to explore their early experiences and familial events that have contributed to their understanding of themselves as racial or nonracial beings. As part of this process, teachers can conduct informal interviews of family members (e.g., parents, grandparents) about their beliefs and experiences regarding different groups in society. The information shared can enlighten teachers about the roots of their own views. When teachers come to terms with the historical shaping of their values, teachers can better relate to other individuals.

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**3. Acknowledge Membership in Different Groups**
Teachers must recognize and acknowledge their affiliation with various groups in society, and the advantages and disadvantages of belonging to each group. For example, for white female teachers, membership in the white middle-class group affords certain privileges in society; at the same time being a female presents many challenges in a male-dominated world. Moreover, teachers need to assess how belonging to one group influences how one relates to and views other groups.

**4. Learn About the History and Experiences of Diverse Groups**
It is important that teachers learn about the lives and experiences of other groups in order to understand how different historical experiences have shaped attitudes and perspectives of various groups. Further, by learning about other groups, teachers begin to see differences between their own values and those of other groups. To learn about the histories of diverse groups, particularly from their perspectives, teachers can read literature written by those particular groups as well as personally interact with members of those groups.

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