

DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE



Gízhewaadiziwin Health Access Centre

February 24, 2010

What is Diversity?

- **Diversity**: noun – 1. the condition of being diverse; 2. The inclusion of diverse people in a group or organization.
- **Diverse**: adjective – 1. differing from one another; 2. composed of distinct or unlike elements or qualities.

People are like snowflakes...No two are alike!!



Snowflakes
©2004 Lauri A. Kangas

Staff Diversity

- Each staff member within the **team** environment brings unique differences with them in many areas
 - Personality
 - Communication
 - Culture/Beliefs
 - Education
 - Skills and Experiences
 - Personal issues/Experiences



DIVERSITY

THE PRIVILEGE OF A LIFETIME IS BEING WHO YOU ARE.
JOSEPH CAMPBELL

© 2008 Pearson Education, Inc. All rights reserved.

Diversity Within An Organization

- Diversity bring both opportunity and challenges within an organization

The key is to embrace the opportunities and build on these while acknowledging the challenges and finding ways to learn from them.

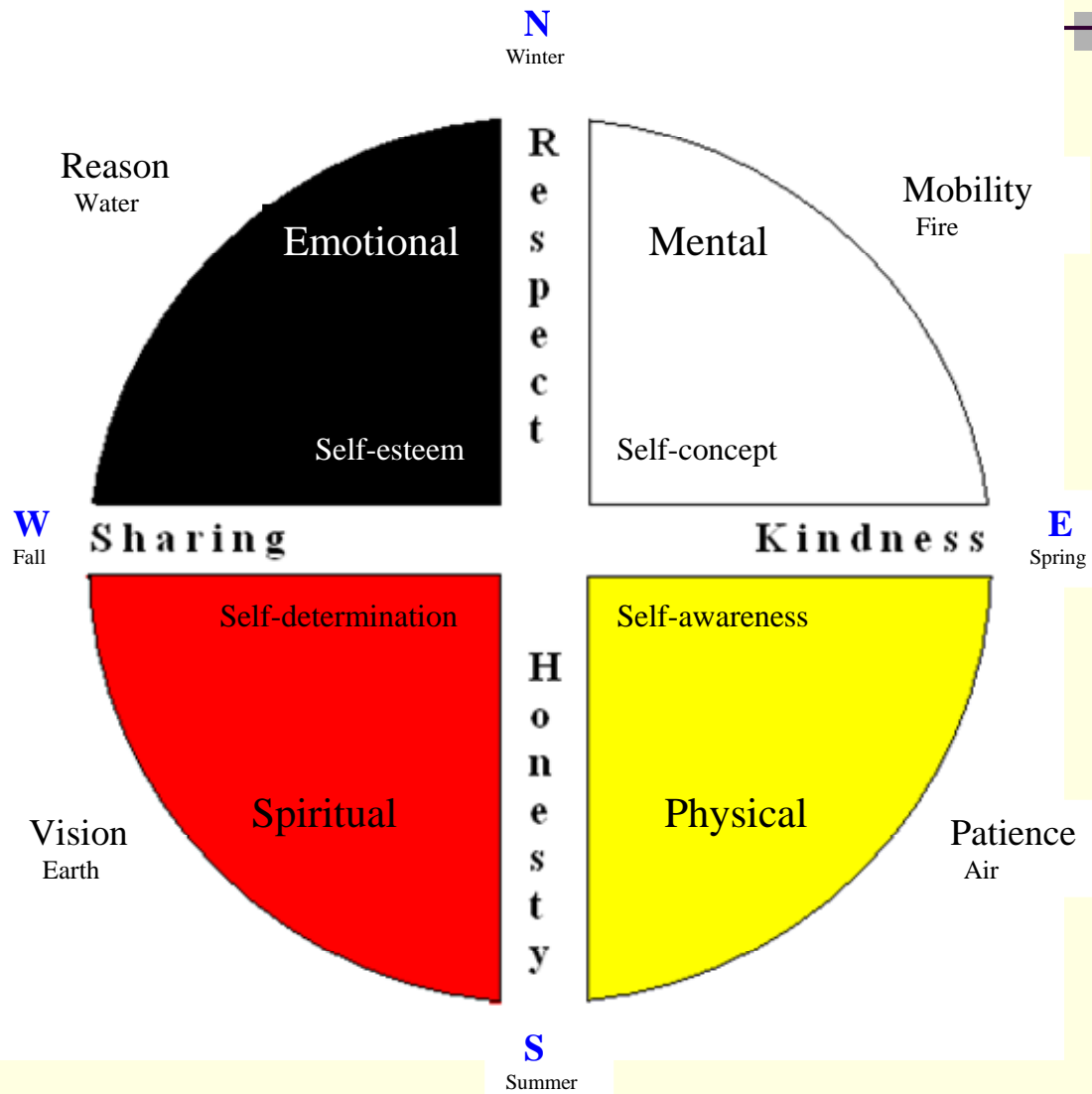
Opportunities of Diversity

- Different perspectives
- Can learn from each others strengths
- Develops respect among the team
- Assists in program development and design
- Fosters understanding

EXAMPLES FROM GHAC

- Diversity among our staff fosters collaboration among the programs
 - share resources, work together based on strengths/skills to meet client needs
- All programs and services are client driven
 - Community based or office based
 - Interdisciplinary team approach to client care
 - Wholistic approach used

Medicine Wheel



Challenges of Diversity

- Individual differences can cause conflict
 - Feelings of inadequacy/inequality can lead to protectiveness/defensiveness
 - Can create competitiveness
- Differences can impair/hinder communication
 - Leading to misunderstandings
 - Impact care/services for clients

Ways to Embrace Diversity

- Staff training/professional development
- Promotion of honesty and openness within the organization
- Open door policy with management
- Respect
- Encouragement of regular communication
- Recognition of good work and uniqueness

Cultural Diversity

- There is diversity not only via different cultures within our workplace but also within the aboriginal communities that we provide services to.
- Each community has different expertise, knowledge and cultural norms and expectations.
- The GHAC ensures respect to each community regarding their own practices and norms through our Traditional Healing Program.

The Traditional Healing Program

- Traditional Healing is a way of life and it is at the very heart of the Anishinaabe culture
- The Traditional Healing program and services promote the awareness and respect of culture, traditional and religious beliefs of the individual. It also establishes PRIDE in who we are.

Purpose of Traditional Healing Program

- **The purpose of this program is to assist in the referral of clients to seek Traditional Healers while providing the clientele with a full access to Traditional Healing practices along with Western medicine.**

Duties of the Traditional Healing Program Coordinator

- **Duties and responsibilities include;**
 - **arranging and coordinating referrals for clients to Traditional Healers, Elders and Cultural resources**
 - **create a file of local Elders, Healers and Resource people as to make references to**
 - **be aware and respect individual cultural and/or religious beliefs**

Other Activities of the Traditional Healing Program

- **Some activities;**
 - **coordinate the spring and fall ceremonies for the organization. These are held to feast our sacred items**
 - **involved in translation services**
 - **do nature /medicine walks, circle and craft group, teach birch bark basket making and teachings, medicine picking and teachings**
 - **palliative care for First Nations**
 - **providing traditional healing clinics**
 - **involved in health fairs, other Aboriginal organizations, Rainycrest Home of the Aged – Aboriginal Elders visits, ceremonies spring and fall, Christmas, Fish fry**
 - **assist in parenting program**

Questions??
Thank you.

