

RCCS Tidbit of the Month

Exploring Identity: One of the Five RCCS Conversations

In the RCCS, we say we are all on a journey heading somewhere. Some of us have a very well thought out path and destination. Some of us do not. Regardless, all journeys require a vehicle to transport us. In the RCCS, our identity (who we are) is the vehicle we use to take us on our life's journey.

Who we are is an issue that we are constantly being reminded of in our country these days. Identity politics, immigration status, tribalism, racial bias and privilege are just some of these reminders. If we're not careful, our relationships and recovery culture can also get defined by labels of people (job titles, roles within the team, staff vs. managers, programs vs. corporate).



At Telecare, we strive to remind ourselves to remain curious and approach our relationships seeking to understand each other, not from what we think we know but rather from what we don't know. We call this cultural humility. The RCCS works from the perspective that each of us is uniquely different. This uniqueness encompasses an individual's lived experiences and how s/he interprets the outside world. If we see and know other based on each other's history, experiences, values, beliefs, and world view rather than our assumptions - then our relationships become deeper and stronger. Judgement is reduced. And we can provide services that are respectful and culturally curious. The RCCS thus counters the stigma that permeates the dominant culture.

We also know that who we are today may be, in some ways, different than who we were five years ago today. Who we will be five years *from* today may be different than who we are today. The RCCS Conversations titled *My Story*, *My Values*, *My Identity - Now* and *My Identity - the Future* begin this exploration. These Conversations can facilitate team members getting to know each other and remain curious. They can help us to see and know each other, not as labels or as a member of a group, but as individuals with unique stories, gifts and talents.

PRACTICE:

1. Complete the attached My Identity - Now Conversation tool (remember, even if you have done this before, our Identity can change over time. What we may want to change can be different as well)
2. Partner with someone and share your completed Identity Now circle
3. Be curious. Ask your partner questions about who they are.
4. Is there any part of your identity you would like to change in any way?
5. How might your Identity be different five years from today?

FOR PROGRAM STAFF:

Use this activity with clients or members. Assist them to explore who they are today. Encourage them to be curious and ask each other similar questions. Share a little about who you are. Remember - we are just people serving people!

