

## **APA DSM-5 Cultural Formulation Interview**

According to Jarvis GE, et.al. (2020), “The Cultural Formulation Interview (CFI) is an interview protocol designed to be used by clinicians in any setting to gather essential data to produce a cultural formulation. The CFI aims to improve culturally sensitive diagnosis and treatment by focusing clinical attention on the patient’s perspective and social context.”<sup>1</sup> As you watch the videos provided in this module, reflect on how you might use the 16 CFI questions presented below.

### **Suggested introduction:**

*I would like to understand the problems that bring you here so that I can help you more effectively. I want to know about your experience and ideas. I will ask some questions about what is going on and how you are dealing with it. Please remember there are no right or wrong answers.*

### **CULTURAL DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM**

#### **Cultural Definition of the Problem (1-3)**

1 - What brings you here today?

*\*Probe: People often understand their problems in their own way, which may be similar to or different from how doctors describe the problem. How would you describe your problem?*

2 – Sometimes people have different ways of describing their problem to their family, friends or others in their community. How would you describe your problem to them?

3 – What troubles you most about your problem?

### **CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS OF CAUSE, CONTEXT, AND SUPPORT**

#### **Causes (4, 5)**

4 – Why do you think this is happening to you? What do you think are the causes of your [PROBLEM]?

*\*Probe: Some people explain their problem as the result of bad things that happen in their life, problems with others, a physical illness, a spiritual reason, or many other causes.*

5 – What do others in your family, your friends, or others in your community think is causing your [PROBLEM]?

#### **Stressors and Supports (6, 7)**

6 – Are there any kinds of support that make your [PROBLEM] better, such as support from family, friends, or others?

7 – Are there any kinds of stresses that make your [PROBLEM] worse, such as difficulties with money, or family problems?

#### **Role of Cultural Identity (8-10)**

Sometimes, aspects of people’s background or identity can make their [PROBLEM] better or worse. By background or identity, I mean, for example, the communities you belong to, the languages you speak, where you or your family are from, your race or ethnic background, your gender or sexual orientation, or your faith or religion.

8 – For you, what are the most important aspects of your background or identity?

9 – Are there any aspects of your background or identity that make a difference to your [PROBLEM]?

10 – Are there any aspects of your background or identity that are causing other concerns or difficulties for you?

### **CULTURAL FACTORS AFFECTING SELF-COPING AND PAST HELP SEEKING**

#### **Self-Coping (11)**

11 - Sometimes people have various ways of dealing with problems like [PROBLEM]. What have you done on your own to cope with your [PROBLEM]?

#### **Past Help Seeking (12)**

12 – Often, people look for help from many different sources, including different kinds of doctors, helpers, or healers. In the past, what kinds of treatment, help, advice, or healing have you sought for your [PROBLEM]?

*\*Prompt: (If does not describe usefulness of help received) What types of help or treatment were most useful? Not useful?*

#### **Barriers (13)**

13 – Has anything prevented you from getting the help you need?

*\*Probe: For example, money, work or family commitments, stigma or discrimination, or lack of services that understand your language or background?*

### **CULTURAL FACTORS AFFECTING CURRENT HELP SEEKING**

#### **Preferences (14, 15)**

Now let’s talk some more about the help you need.

14 – What kinds of help do you think would be most useful to you at this time for your [PROBLEM]?

15 – Are there other kinds of help that your family, friends, or other people have suggested would be helpful for you now?

#### **Clinician-Patient Relationship (16)**

Sometimes doctors and patients misunderstand each other because they come from different backgrounds or have different expectations.

16 – Have you been concerned about this and is there anything that we can do to provide you with the care you need?

<sup>1</sup> Jarvis G.E. MD, Kirmayer J MD, Gomez-Carrillo A. MD, Aggarwal N.K. MD MBA, Lewis-Ferandez MD MTS *Update on the Cultural Formulation Interview*, Focus The Journal of Lifelong Learning in Psychiatry, Published online: 24 Jan 2020 <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.focus.20190037>