*This activity is embedded in a course titled* ***Introduction to Professional Issues****. The class meets weekly for 80 minutes of facilitated discussion and in class activities followed by discussion. Prior to class the students have a reading assignment from textbook (generally 2 chapters) to platform the discussions.*

*This class is the 5th meeting and is preceded by topics of Professionalism and Personal Growth, Ethics in Healthcare, Values and Principles, and Emotional Intelligence. The topic on this day is Cultural Competency. In addition to two chapters on Multicultural Health the students watch the APTA cultural competency video prior to class. Below is the outline for the second half of this class day; the first part of discussion is on situatedness/context and influence of language.*

Instructor Outline—Prompts:

CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Let’s break this down

Competence—what is it?

**Give me some synonyms** (writing answers on board)

Capability, capableness, capacity, aptitude, talent, effectiveness

**How about antonyms?** (writing answers on board)

Helplessness, weakness, inadequacy, ineffectiveness, inefficient, deficient

Can we agree on this definition?

**Competence: the ability to do something well: the quality or state of being competent**

Okay how about Culture?

What defines culture? (writing answers on board)

Beliefs, customs, arts, of a particular group, place or time

Synonyms—life, lifestyle, society

Key is “of a particular group”

**In the APTA video – what parameters of culture did the speakers offer?**

Race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and geographic region

Can you think of others?

Religion? Socioeconomic? Generation? Military? Disability?

*activity*

THINK for a minute on what “groups” you are a member of—write them down

List one belief/life habit that you share with members of one of the groups

Discuss with your neighbor—did they know you had this belief/life habit? Would it matter if they were your PT?

Is a diverse PT staff a means to competency?

How much diversity do you think we have in the PT program?

Let’s look at some admission profile numbers

So, for cultural competency is diversity necessary? Is it sufficient?

Did it bother you that none of the video speakers were white/anglo or European in lineage?

Is diversity the same thing as cultural competence?

What is a therapeutic alliance?

The scaffolding is communication—this is verbal and non verbal communications

At a recent conference that had a panel of activists with disabilities one said: “your ability to help or impact a patient in any way is directly related to how that person feels they are seen in your eyes”

Okay let’s watch this

**BLUE BIRDS- video** (this is Pixar short- available on DVD or on Youtube)

So why did I have you watch that in the midst of a discussion on cultural competency?

(free flowing discussion with prompts depending upon offered comments below are common couplets)

*Student: it is racism*

*Instructor: they are all blue birds*

*Student: the big bird didn’t think he was different*

*Instructor: did he not know he was different, or did he just want to belong?*

*Student: it shows mob behavior*

*Instructor: in what way?*

*Student: the big bird seemed happy the whole time he didn’t mind or know that they were picking on him*

*Instructor: what should we think about that? Is it okay to mock or belittle someone if they are unaware?*

We do not spend much more than ~5 minutes after the video but the summative comment from the instructor is:

Do not answer—just think about this: Cultural Competency starts at home, starts in how you treat others in your immediate space. Is there someone in your class cohort that is not being as welcomed as others? anyone being left behind or belittled when not present? As we started with at the beginning of the term—we can really only work on the “man in the mirror”. Think about whether you can do better in this.