

Multicultural Issues in Service Provision:

Toward an Interactive Approach

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Philosophic Framework

- Not a “cookbook” approach
- Not a simple study of the “cultural other”
- Relationship of people who are culturally different
 - Also consider assumptions of similarity and understanding

Real World Relevance

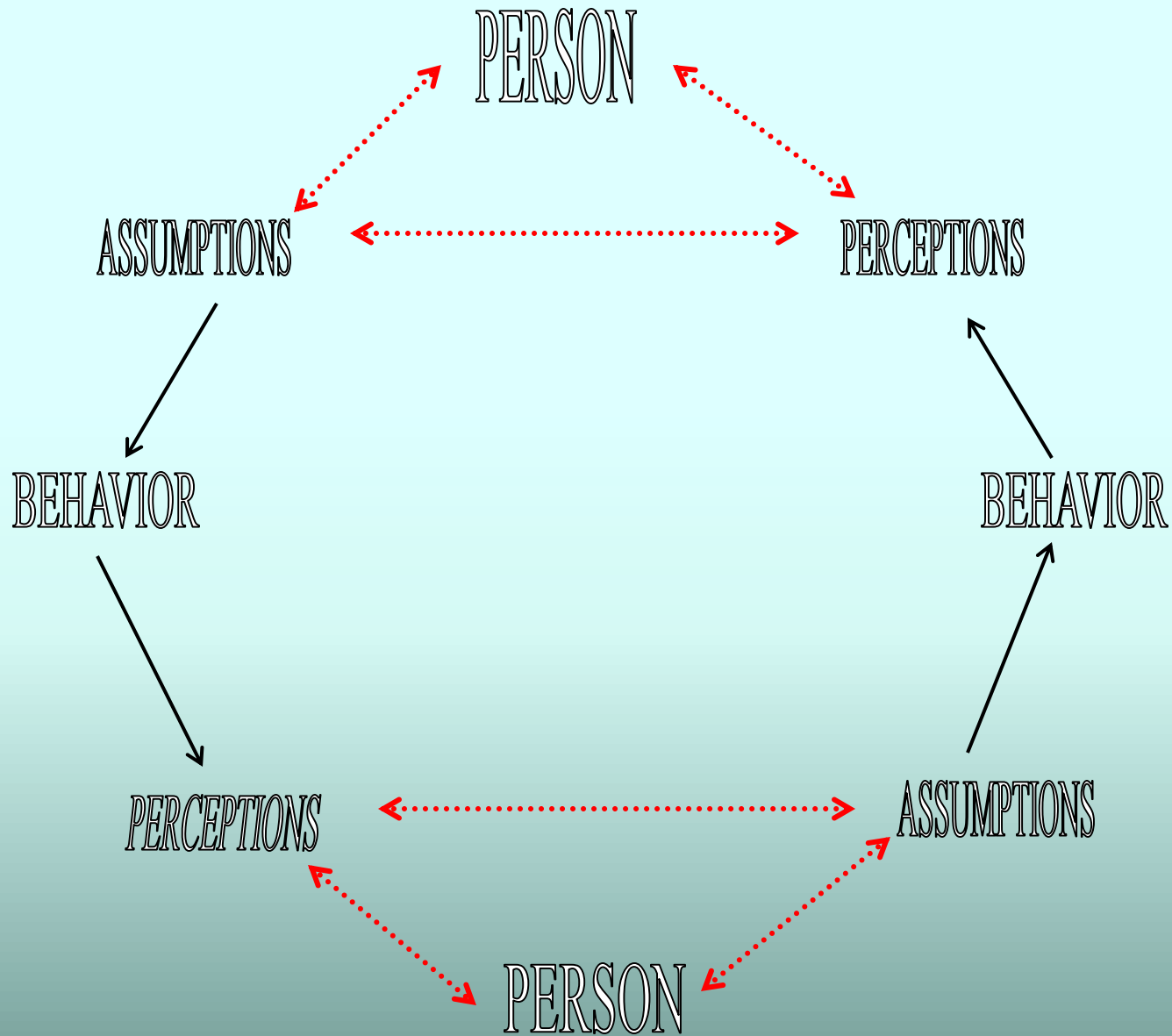
- Categorizing and pre-judging are part of the human experience
- Being cognizant of these processes is a crucial beginning step
- Getting beyond resistance
- What role do we play?

Complex Cultural Beings



Multiple Reference Group Identities:

Race; nationality; ethnicity; social class; religion (or lack thereof); gender; age; SES; “developed” v. “developing” world; level of education; sexual orientation; urban v. rural; physical (dis)ability; linguistic group; professional identity; trauma history?



External Salience

- The impact one's identities have on their history and experience of the world
 - Examples:
 - Rwanda
 - N. Ireland
 - Mauritania
 - Myanmar?

Personal Salience



It is more important to know what sense someone makes of their reference group identities than to simply know what those identities are.



Assumptions of Similarity

- Not always best to assign refugees to clinicians from their home country or culture;
 - Potential for a “Collusion of Silence”
 - Stigma; or negative beliefs about the quality of services
 - Differing views by people from similar backgrounds
 - Safety issues

Mediating Factors



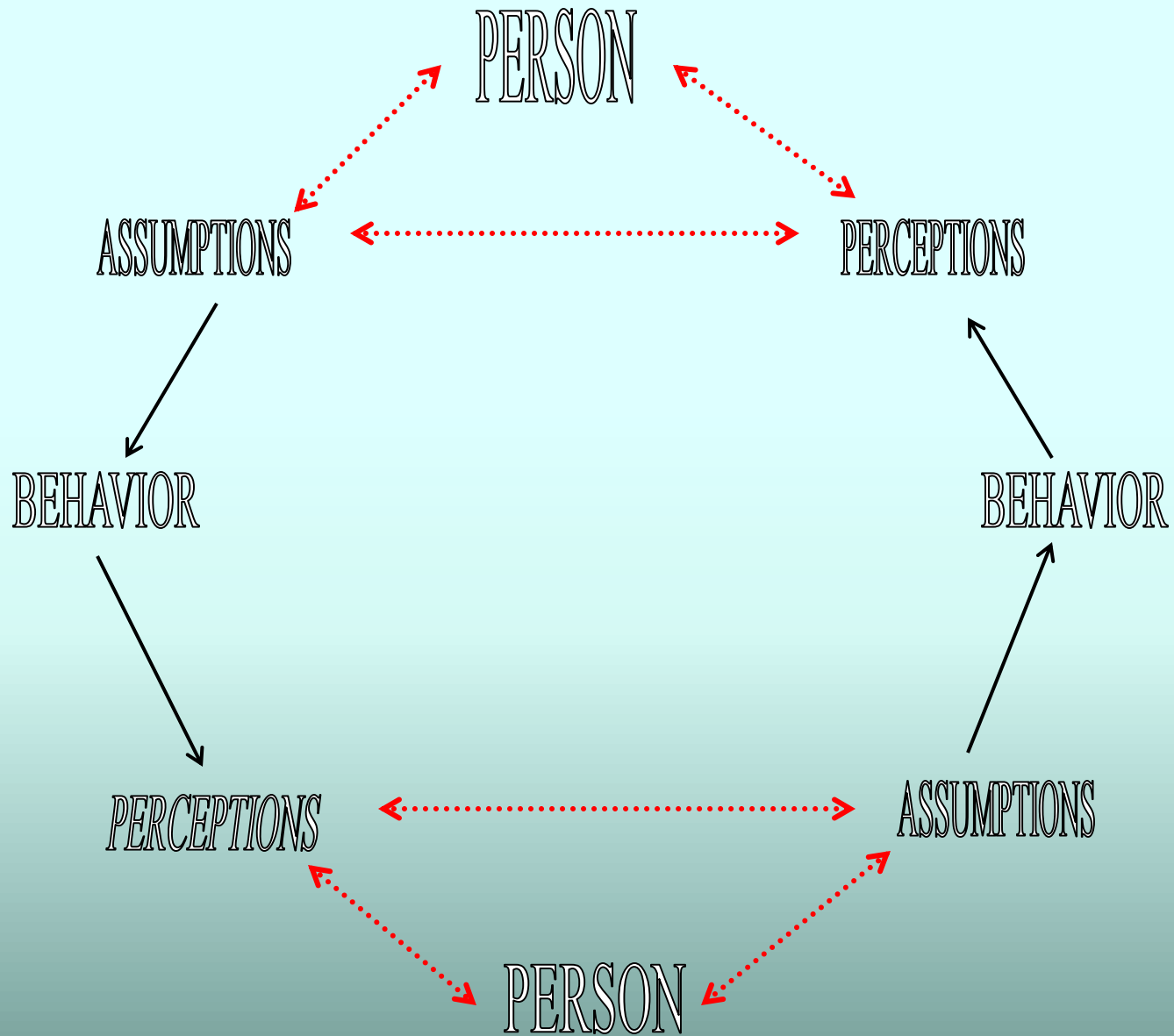
- Role and history
- Perceived opportunities and hierarchies
- Immigration
- Political strength of the community
- Acculturation
- Trauma

The Power to Define

- Important in all areas of functioning and service provision
 - Adaptational and security behaviors
 - Educational choices
 - Career choices and behaviors
 - Decisions regarding substance use/abuse
 - Sexual risk-taking behaviors
- Personal v. Societal Conceptions

Self-Knowledge as Service Providers

- Complex racial/cultural beings;
- Multiple reference group identities
- Our baggage/strengths/preconceptions are brought into the room
- “Cultural Competence” is more of a process than a place





Contact Information

The image shows a screenshot of the GCJFCS website. At the top left is the logo, which consists of a globe with two silhouettes of people's heads facing each other. To the right of the logo is the text "gulf coast JFCS". Below this is a navigation menu with the following items: Home, About GCJFCS, About You, Children & Family, Elderly & Disabled, Employment, Jewish Community, Mental Health, and Refugee. Below the navigation menu is a banner for "GCJF&CS Refugee Services". The banner features a close-up photograph of an elderly Black man's face. Overlaid on the right side of the photograph is the text "in times of need" in a large, white, serif font. To the right of the photograph, the text "GCJF&CS Refugee Services" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

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