

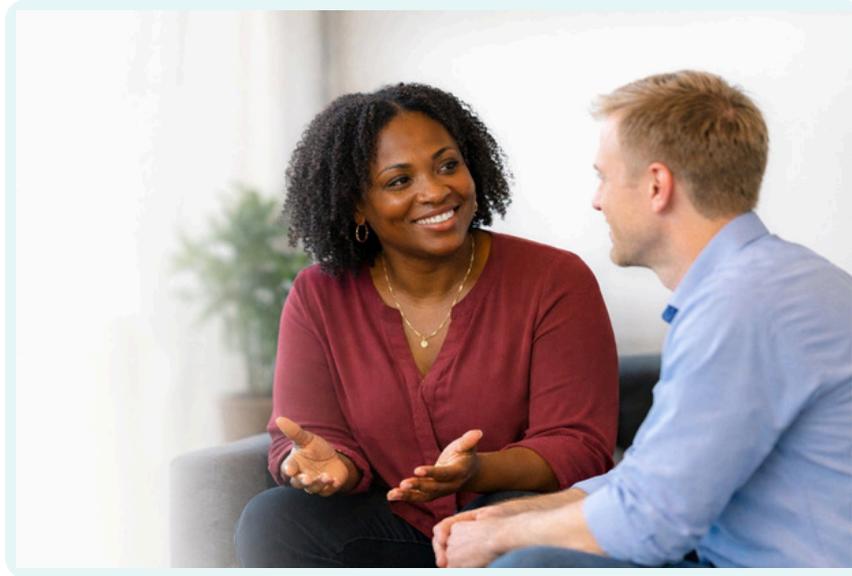


# Leading With Cultural Humility



*Five Practices That Build Trust Across Difference*

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## Before You Begin

Cultural humility is not a destination. It is a practice. It asks us to stay curious, stay honest, and stay willing to learn from the people we serve and lead.

Competence suggests mastery. Humility invites relationship. And relationship is where trust lives.

**These five practices are a place to start, not a checklist to finish.**



## 1 Name What You Do Not Know

Humility begins with honesty. You do not need to be an expert on every culture. You need to be willing to say, "I want to understand. Will you help me learn?"

**Try this:** Before your next meeting, ask yourself, "What assumptions am I carrying?"

## 2 Listen to Understand, Not to Respond

When someone shares their experience, resist the urge to relate, fix, or explain. Presence is more powerful than a perfect response. Sometimes the most healing thing you can offer is your full attention.

**Try this:** Practice listening for 60 seconds without planning your reply.

## 3 Examine Your Own Cultural Lens

We all see the world through a lens shaped by our upbringing, language, faith, and community. Cultural humility asks us to recognize that our lens is one of many. It is valid, but it is not universal.

**Try this:** Write down three values from your own culture that shape how you lead, teach, or care for others.

## 4 Repair Without Defensiveness

Mistakes happen. When you cause harm, even unintentionally, the response matters more than the intent. A simple, sincere acknowledgment builds more trust than a lengthy explanation.

**Try this:** "Thank you for telling me. I want to do better."

## 5 Make Room for Voices That Are Often Missed

Cultural humility is not only personal. It is structural. Look at who has a seat at the table, who gets heard in meetings, whose traditions are honored in policies and practices. Then make room.

**Try this:** Audit one process, form, or meeting. Ask: whose experience is centered here, and whose is missing?

### ● Reflection

*Which of these five practices feels most alive in your work right now?*

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*Where is one place you could practice deeper humility this week?*

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### Ready to go deeper?

Elisme Consulting Services LLC offers trauma-informed training and consulting on cultural humility, leadership, and community engagement for organizations ready to grow.

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