

# Culture Shock

1

- Culture shock is a feeling of dislocation, of being out of place in a new culture.
- Culture shock is the term we use to describe the feelings of confusion and uncertainty that are experienced when you come into contact with a culture that is vastly different from your own.
- Culture shock can be commonly seen in foreign students, immigrants and refugees.
- Suddenly, you find yourself unable to understand, communicate, and function effectively.

# IMPORTANCE OF STUDY OF CULTURE FOR A SOCIAL WORKER

# Cultural Competence vs. Cultural Awareness

3

- Cultural competence:  
The ability to effectively  
operate within  
different cultural contexts
- Cultural awareness:  
Sensitivity and understanding toward  
members of other ethnic groups

# SOURCES OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE

4

- A professional social worker become familiar with backgrounds of client groups with whom (s)he works with
  - research literature
  - visit the cultural community
  - interview key respondents
  - become participant observer

# CULTURAL COMPETENCE

5

- It is very much important to study about the culture for helping professionals such as social workers.
- “cultural competence”— understanding the specific culture, language, social and economic distinctions of particular people and families—more important than ever.

The NASW *Code of Ethics* refers to cultural competence in section <sup>6</sup> 1.05

- **1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity**
- (a) Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.
- (b) Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients' cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients' cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.

- It can be argued that effective care is impossible without a working knowledge and understanding of a person's or group's culture and background.
- A social worker with cultural competency is in a position to serve better (even as an outsider) by understanding and accepting the diverse beliefs, norms and values of local culture .

- Culturally competent social workers are also better able to address issues of gender and help persons with disabilities, older adults, and vulnerable people.
- A working knowledge of these groups' cultures and values helps social workers tailor care so it is effective and appropriate for their clients' needs.