

Latino Families in Therapy

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MULTICULTURALISM

Encompasses two different but related aspects

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

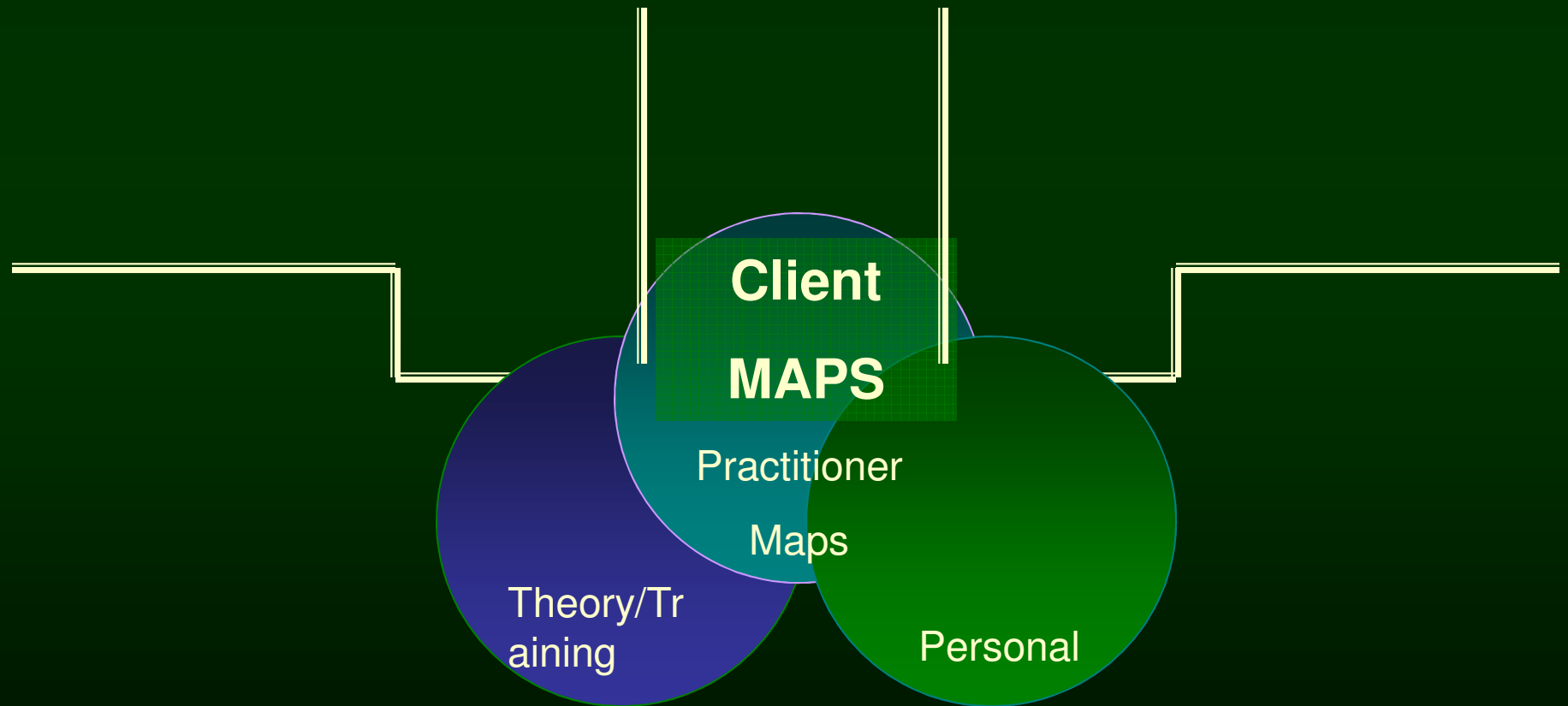
Values, beliefs and meaning differences
(ethnicity, religion, nationality)

RESPONSIVENESS

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Contextual Stressors tied to power differences
(gender, race, class) **EMPOWERMENT**

The Practice Encounter is not Culturally Neutral



Cultural Competence Courses

**Offer Culture-Specific
Competencies**

Culture-Specific Competence with Latinos

Equated with **ethnic values** such as:

- *Familismo* (family-centered lives)
- *Machismo* (men's predominance)
- *Personalismo* (social manners)
- *Respect* for parents and elders
- *Religiosity*

The Problem with Ethnic Values only

- They may **perpetuate stereotypes** because values:
- Are not static, they evolve
are Contextual (class, education, nationality, urban-rural)
- Latinos come from many different cultures & generations
- Many Latinos have bicultural or multicultural identities
- Similar values exist in other patriarchal cultures

Predictable Acculturation



Somewhat Unpredictable Acculturation- Inconsistencies or Contradictions



Culturally-Attuned Therapies

1. **CULTURAL ADAPTATION** of mainstream therapies, i.e.CBT for depressed adolescents by adding from the **top-down** cultural ways of joining such a warm friendly reception for Hispanics parents in **Spanish** (as *familism* and *personalismo*)
 - Or do we also need more
2. **CULTURE-SPECIFIC THERAPIES** developed from the **ground-up**? for example: “cuento” therapy

Cuento (storytelling) Therapy

- Puerto Rican adolescents suffering from anxiety, behavioral acting-out and poor self-esteem are seen in group therapy (Constantino et al, 1986)
- They role play Puerto Rican heroes and heroines that could become role models because they have coped successfully with similar issues. (Malgady et al., 1990)
- **a strength-based approach-within the culture**

Cultural Competence or “Cultural Humility”?

Practitioner’s self- reflection
about her or his own culture,
race, class, beliefs and values

Clients as Experts

on their culture and context

**Practitioners become aware of power
dynamics in the relationship with clients**

(Tervalon and Murray-Garcia, 1998)

MECA: a Culturally Responsive and Empowering Approach

Integrates Migration-Specific Competencies
(--may apply to other groups)

**What differences make a difference
for understanding immigrants?**

M



MULTIDIMENSIONAL

E



ECOLOGICAL

C



COMPARATIVE

Same 4 domains

A



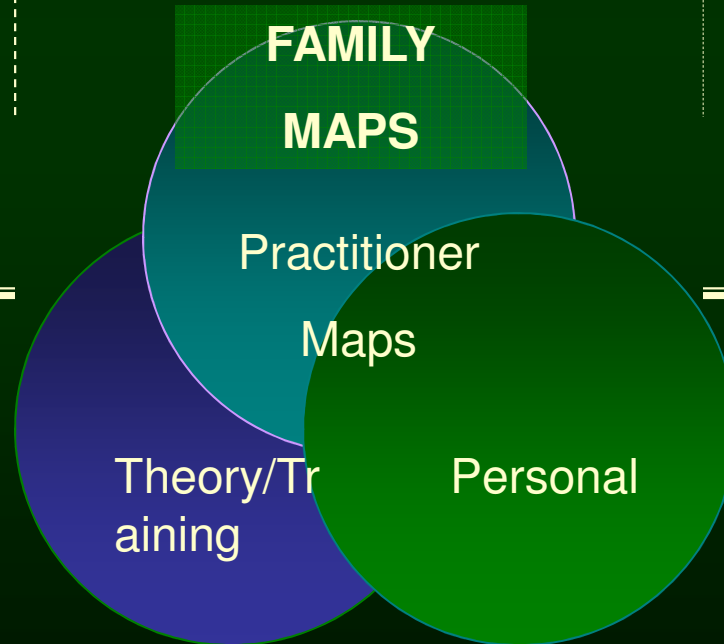
APPROACH

**ECOLOGICAL
CONTEXT**

**FAMILY
LIFE CYCLE**

**MIGRATION/
ACCULTURATION**

**FAMILY
ORGANIZATION**



ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT

- Community
- Work
- School
- Religion

MIGRATION/ ACCULTURATION

- Separations & Reunifications
- Trauma/ Undocumented
- Losses and Gains
- Cultural Identities

POWER DIFFERENCES
(discrimination, racism)

**CULTURAL VALUE
DIFFERENCES**

FAMILY LIFE CYCLE

- Ideals
- Meanings
- Timings
- Transitions

FAMILY ORGANIZATION

- Nuclear/ Extended Family
- Connectedness
- Hierarchies
- Communication Styles

FAMILY MAPS

Practitioner
Maps

Theory
Training

Personal

MECA-GENOGRAM

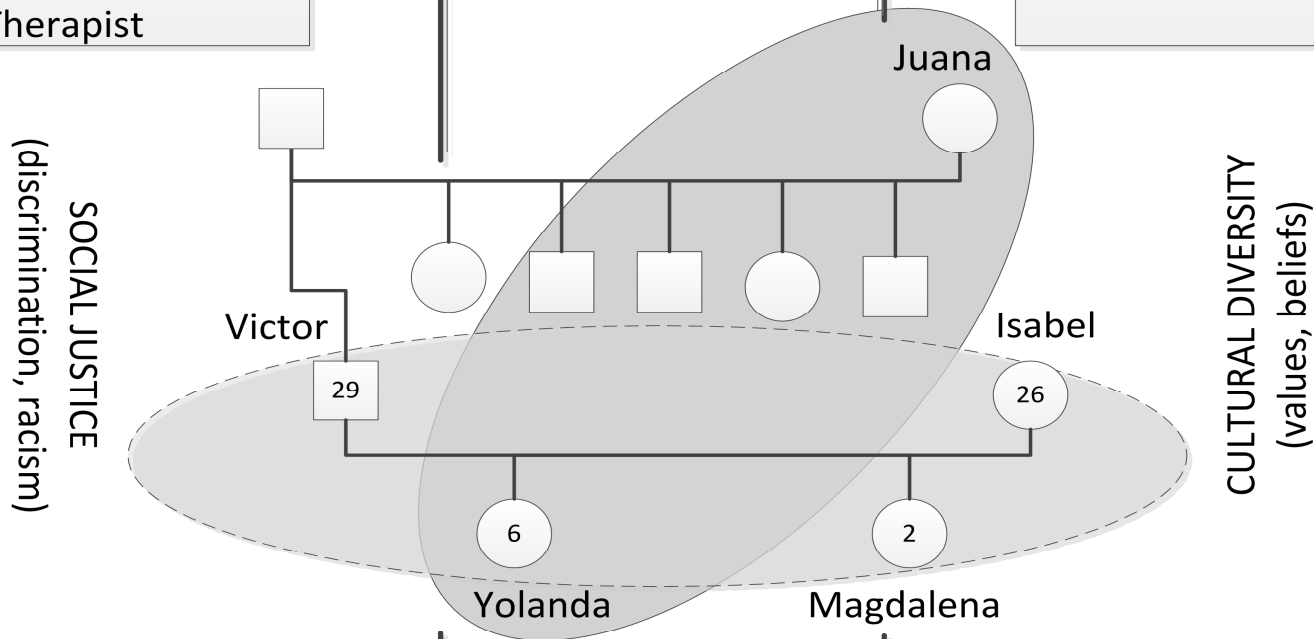
A tool for integrating the four
domains of culturally-attuned
assessment

Ecological Context

Isolated Trailer Park
Underemployed
Feel Discriminated by School
& CPS Report
Lack of After School Care
Distrustful of Therapist

Family Life Cycle

- Early Stages of Marriage
- Loyalty to Family of Origin
- Transition to School for Yolanda



Migration/Acculturation

Separations (2000,2001,2001)
Yolanda with GMother (2009)
Reunifications (2001 husband-wife)
Mother and Father with Yolanda (2009)
Disorienting Anxieties
Monolingual Spanish, low acculturation

Family Organization

- Strong Bonds w/paternal GMother
- Hi contact country of origin
- Family nuclearization due to migration

Migration

Transnational Families in a Globalized Context

- Immigrants today can keep up economic, cultural, and emotional ties with their countries through global technologies of communication
- These links offer the possibility of **living with two hearts instead of a broken heart** like immigrants did in the past, when communications were cumbersome and very expensive.
- *(Falicov, 2007; Baldassar, 2007; Bacigalupe and Lambe, 2011)*

Immigrants are part of a large relationship system

1. Those Who Left to Come Here
2. Those Who Stayed Behind
3. Those Who Come and Go
4. The Next Generation of Children and Grandchildren
5. Intermarried Couples of Immigrants with Nationals

PROBLEMS OR SYMPTOMS TIED TO MIGRATION

Depression, anxieties and fears, psychosomatic illnesses, behavior problems, substance abuse

May Appear in any Family Member Across Countries

- At the Time of Departure

- At a Later Time (i.e., life cycle events: illnesses, birth, death, divorce)

- At Reunion Among Separated Members

MIGRATION RELATIONAL STRESS

EXAMPLES OF CLINICAL PRACTICES

Separations
& Reunifications



Catching-Up Life
Narratives;
Reunion Celebrations

Coaxed, Unprepared
Migrations



“As-if” Preparations
Rebalancing Contracts

Marital Polarizations
(to stay/ to go back)



Oscillation Rituals
(odd days/ even days)

Life-Cycle Intersections
(divorce, death, illness)



Healing Rituals

Traumatic Passages



Testimony Rituals

New forms of SEPARATIONS and REUNIFICATIONS

- Grandparents and Extended Family
- Father
- **Father and Mother**
- **Mother** (*Feminization of Migration*)
 - Ratio of Latina women to men has increased considerably
- Children traveling alone

Pedro Flores and his family



Feminization of Migration: Lining up for day labor



New York Times, 8/15/2005

Table 1. Percent of children separated from mother only, father only, or both parents at some point in the migration

Separation	Chinese	Central American	Mexican
Mother only	23%	80%	42%
Father only	48%	96%	82%
Both parents concurrently	8%	80%	40%
		(Suárez-Orozco, C. et al., 2008)	

Impact of Separations in children and adolescents

- 53% of Hispanic substance abusing adolescents experienced separations from their mothers
- Ages at separation (7-10)
- Length of separation: 2.5-3.5 years (Santisteban et al. 2009)
- Poor school performance, depression, anxiety, anger, gangs
- (Suarez-Orozco et al.2008;Mitrani et al. 2004; Mena et al. 2014; Santisteban et al. 2011)

Transnational Professional Practices

- Practices during Separation
 - Practices during Reunification
- These are migration-specific competencies

RISKS IN SEPARATION

- Lacking a **Shared Family Story**
- Truth or **Lies**
- **Role Ambiguity** between Caretakers

Strengths: Cultural and Personal

- Resilience in coping with loss, trauma, poverty and discrimination
- Vision about the future
- Care for the next generation
- A spirit of acceptance yet struggle
- Endurance and hard work
- Valuing family bonds
- Pride in cultural traditions

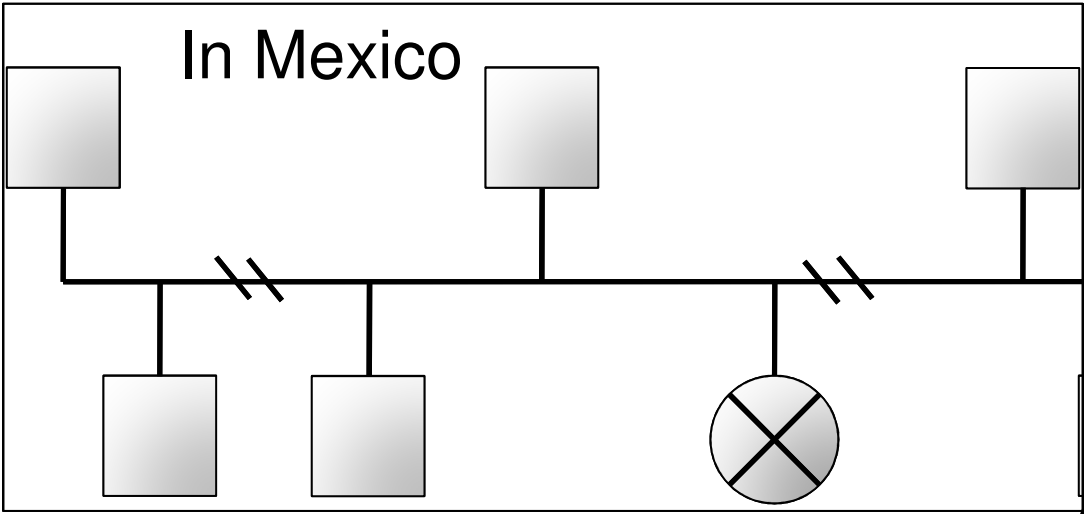
Practices during Separation
*On Communicating and Loving at
Long Distance*

Practitioners's Transnational use of Technologies of Communication

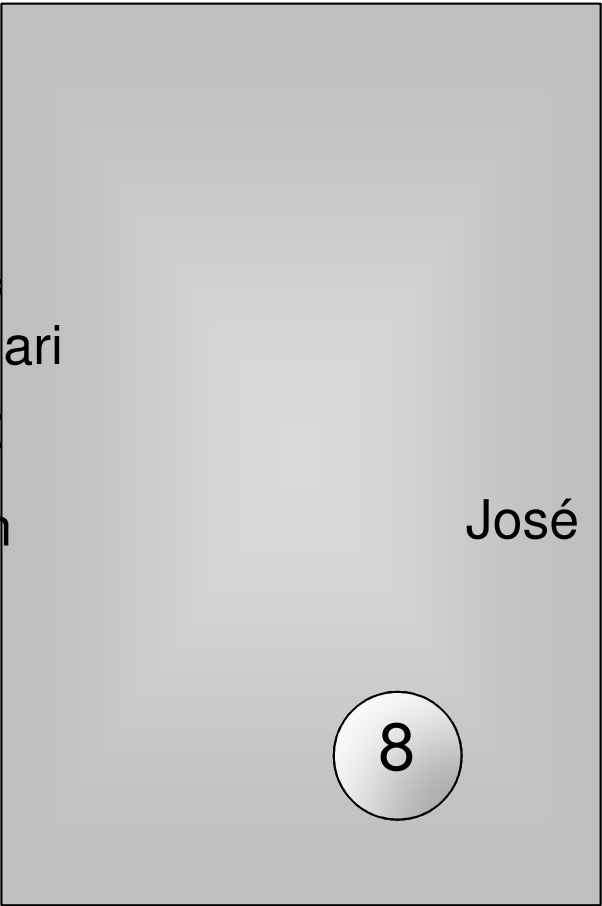
Practice in a globalized context can make use of transnational technologies (Skype, email, phone) to facilitate connections between here and there

Practices of Reunification

*Re-connecting and Repairing
Family Bonds*



Mari
Agustín



Diagnosis of Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity

Oscar was diagnosed by the school counselor and the teacher as having ADHD without consideration of the the child as new immigrant or the tensions of separation and reunification

Practices of Reunification

When children and parents reunite, it is important to:

- Make Meaning Out of the Separation
- Repair the Bond
- Restore a Strength-Based Family Story
- Restore Role Clarity
- Explore trauma (*pre-, during or post-migration*)
- Acknowledge fears of future separation

Trauma

Pre-migration trauma may be involved as precipitating event and additional motivation for economic migration

Possible Post- Reunification Trauma

At the time of reunification is there an **increased risk of child abuse?**

- Resilient parents may be asserting the parental authority they lost at separation.
- **Child Protective Service workers** may see physical discipline as a cultural trait and **do not integrate a family migration lens**

Repairing
Mexican and
Central American
Family Bonds



A Guide for
Mental Health
Professionals

ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT

- Community/Neighborhood
- Work
- School
- Religion

MIGRATION/ ACCULTURATION

- Separations & Reunifications
- Trauma/Undocumented
- Losses and Gains
- Cultural Identities

POWER DIFFERENCES
(discrimination, racism)

**CULTURAL VALUE
DIFFERENCES**

FAMILY LIFE CYCLE

- Ideals
- Meanings
- Timings
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FAMILY ORGANIZATION

- Nuclear/Extended Family
- Connectedness
- Hierarchies
- Communication Styles

FAMILY MAPS

Practitioner
Maps

Theory

Personal

Ecological Context

ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT

Community

Ethnic

Religious

Racial

Networks

Family

Peers

Friends

Living

Housing

Neighborhood

Safety

Work

Income

Schedule

Discrimination

Stability

Satisfaction

Schools

Achievement

Discipline

Parent Involvement

Racial/ Ethnic

Other Institutions

Legal

Medical

Mental Health

Recreating Community-La Cultura Cura: Your Culture Heals You



Colombians



Mexicans



Dominicans

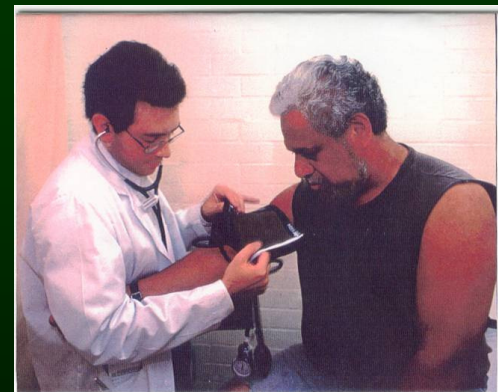
Re-Building Community

Increases social capital:

- protects against depression in women,
- alcohol abuse in men
- gang involvement in youth.

(Vega et al, 1991; Vigil, 2002, Smorowski et al, 2009)

A Free Community Health Clinic in Trailers Operating in The Parking Lot of a Public School



Community Empowerment Group: UCSD Medical Student-Run Free Clinic

- **Weekly Participants:** underserved, uninsured, isolated patients and medical students, physicians, psychologists, social workers
- **Facilitator or “promotora”:** experienced community member/ STRENGTH BASED
- Discussion of current issues in ALL of our lives and communities. Clients are the experts. Topics for discussion: forgiveness, gratitude, self-care...
- Crafts, fund-raising and celebrations

BELIEFS ABOUT HEALTH & CURE

Conventional

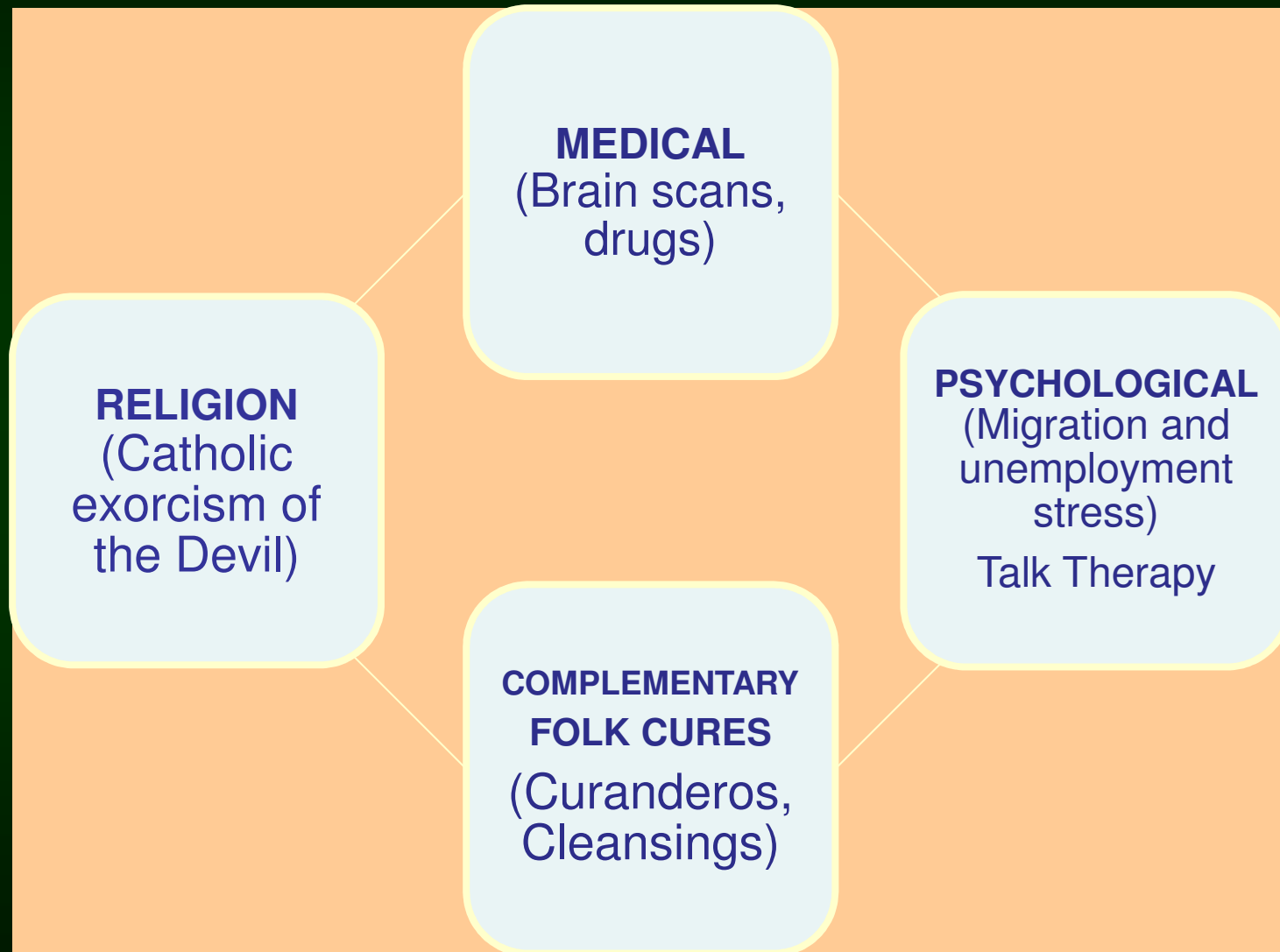
Complementary
in Latino Folk Medicine

	Medical	Religious	Witchcraft	Folk Illness
Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Common universal illnesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Life tragedies ▪ Illnesses ▪ Stresses ▪ Sin & Guilt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mal Puesto ▪ Ghosts ▪ Bewitchment ▪ Jealousy, envy, anger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mal de Ojo ▪ Susto ▪ Empacho ▪ Ataque de nervios
Helpers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physicians ▪ Psycho-therapists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Priests ▪ Pastors ▪ Prayers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ White & Black witches ▪ Espiritistas ▪ Santeros 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Curanderos ▪ Yerberos ▪ Sobadores

Case

- Depression
- Persecutory Hallucinations (child protective services) head lasers, energy control through walls)
- Psychotic Break
- Cures?

Community Collaborative Treatment of psychosis in a 42-year-old Mexican client



ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT

- Community
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- School
- Religion

MIGRATION/ ACCULTURATION

- Separations & Reunifications
- Trauma/Undocumented
- Losses and Gains
- Cultural Identities

POWER DIFFERENCES
(discrimination, racism)

VALUE DIFFERENCES

FAMILY LIFE CYCLE

- Ideals/Generation
- Meanings/Timings
- Transitions

FAMILY ORGANIZATION

- Nuclear/Extended Family/Couples
- Connectedness
- Hierarchies
- Communication Styles

FAMILY MAPS

Practitioner
Maps

Personal

Theory/Training

Family Organization



Euro-American Models Of Attachment

Parent-Child Emotional Ties
Based on Ritualized Everyday
Practices

Mary Cassatt

Collectivistic Systems of Care

Children may develop multiple attachments being raised by parenting relatives



Family Size & Practitioner's Ideals

	<u>SMALL FAMILIES</u>	(LARGE FAMILIES)
PARENTHOOD	Intensive	Extensive
INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION	High	Limited
CONTROL	Democratic	Authoritarian
KIN NETWORK	Exclusion	Inclusion
VALUES	Individualism Ambition Autonomy	Collectivism Duty Integration
COUPLE	Romantic	Parental
SIBLINGS	Small/ Peripheral	Large/ Central
PROBLEMS	Magnified	Minimized

Grandmothers

- ◆ They are often “Other-Mothers”
- ◆ Are integral to the lives of minority youth
- ◆ Inquire and include Latino grandchild-grandparent relationships in our studies

The Grandmother

A Cultural Strength

and a Practice
Resource with
Children and
Adolescents

Individuals who have been raised with corporal punishment but manage to break the cycle and make their own homes violence free, have had a grandmother nearby who recognized the injustice and contained the feelings of the child.

(Miller, A. 1997, Gomez, M. 1999)

Family Life Cycle

Life Cycle: Childhood

ETHNOTHEORIES of CHILD REARING

- **Good Manners and Consideration of Others**
(Relational focus, aggression control and shaming);
“**bien educado**” (well educated, obedient)
vs. Autonomy and Self-Maximization
(Individual focus, assertiveness, permissiveness and explaining)

(Harwood et al., 1995; Domenech-Rodriguez, 2006, 2009)

Life Cycle: Adolescence

Generational Conflicts linked to different expectations:

The children of immigrants grow up observing the individualistic democratic values of **small families** while the parents have grown up with the collectivistic hierarchical values of **large families**

CEFSA

3 issues relevant to Adolescent/Parent Conflict:

C: Cultural Value Differences

EF: Ecological Fears

SA: Separation Anxiety

(and fears of losing children to a “different mentality”)

(Pumariega and Rothe, 2010; Parra-Cardona et al. 2009, Smith, 2006)

Immigrant Parents Fear Losing Daughter to College in “Real Women Have Curves”



**CULTURAL
MENTORS/co
mmunity
programs**

“Reciprocal Biculturalism” as Solution?

- Adolescents embrace parents' culture/ language and countries (some Hispanicism)
- Parents involved in U.S. culture/language (some Americanization)

(Smorowski and Bacallao, 2011- Becoming Bicultural)

Bicultural Prevention Programs

- *Entre Dos Mundos* (Between Two Worlds)
-----a bicultural skills program (Smorowski & Bacallao, 2011) using multiple family groups and parent-child psychodrama
- *Familias Unidas* (United Families)---parent involvement across contexts (Coatworth et al.,2002) using parent-adolescent discussion groups

END