SLCC OTA Program

1210 – Cultural Project – Jewish

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**Journal Entries**

2-2-15

Began research online to find some various cultural issues. Lots to be found in the news. The Jewish culture is large, so there are lots of websites and information to be had.

2-5-15

I have been participating in a self-defense system called Krav Maga, which has Jewish roots. It was developed by the Jewish people during WWII to protect themselves against the Nazis. It is knows to be one of the most deadly practices known.

2-8-15

When thinking, “I really need to nosh some Jewish cuisine”, think the 9th South Delicatessen. Good food, awesome Reuben sandwiches.

2-11-15

I remembered reading about some breads specific to Jewish culture in culinary school. After going through one of my old books I found Challah. It’s a braided bread eaten on the Sabbath and holidays.

2-12-15

Attended Krav Maga again. I asked one of my instructors about his experience with the Jewish culture. He said that he’d be interested to talk with me about it, but we had to set up a time. To be continued…

2-14-15

Researched more websites about Jewish culture. Found the United Jewish Federation of Utah. <https://shalomutah.org/> Lots of interesting information. Very community based and focused. Doesn’t require participants to be Jewish.

2-17-15

Talked with my Krav Maga instructor. He had very little interaction with any detailed Jewish experience. His experiences revolved around the self-defense aspect which included little to no religious issues.

2-19-15

Attended Krav Maga training again. Later, because I was wearing a Krav shirt some of the kids asked about it. We had a discussion about the history during the period of its development and why it was born, etc.

2-21-15

Found a Jewish deli in Salt Lake. Feldmans Deli, 2005 east 2700 South. Went for lunch and had great food. Lox and schmear followed by a blintze. While these were not new food experiences to me, I am excited to know about these guys.

2-25-15

Continued to search online for new/ interesting Jewish resources. Lots out there. The hard part is finding something treatment relevant.

2-26-15

Discovered the free open house at Chabad Lubavitch of Utah on March 1st. That will be a great way to get more info/ experience in the culture.

3-1-15

Participated in the open house at Chabad Lubavitch of Utah. Lots of great experience. Definitely a very well enriched Jewish resource. I would probably refer people here first if they expressed an interest in learning about/ becoming part of the Jewish faith.

The Jewish culture has been around for a long time. About 2000 B.C.E. long time ago. There are approximately 14,000,000 followers currently. Their sacred texts include the Torah, Tanakh (Hebrew scriptures), and Talmud. With origins nearly 4000 years old, Judaism has a lot of history, however. Canaan is the region that is credited with the origin of the culture. This is the sight of modern day Israel and Palestine. If you’re not familiar with the recent events of this region, you should definitely check it out prior to having any long and drawn out political conversations with a Jewish client. Here is a potpourri of information that may, or may not, be useful in a clinical setting. The power resides in you and a practitioner.

The facts that I have chosen as bullet points and terms to be aware of are based on my idea that these would give you an understanding of some background for the culture. The terms could be useful if you hear your client use them. I would imagine it would increase your therapeutic rapport if you knew that a bris is performed on the 8th day after birth, or that their bible is called a Torah. I’m sure that the majority of these would not come up in a daily conversation, but may help you understand the intricacies of their dynamics.

* They believe in one solitary god.
* Does not interact with other gods but focus in on the world and people as a whole.
* Lineage is traced to a covenant made with god.
* Covenant stated that god would make them a sacred people and give them holy land.
* Primary figures include Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses.
* Moses received god’s law at Mt. Sinai.
* The Torah is the first of five books of the Hebrew bible.
* The bible itself is called a Tanakh.
* Other texts include Talmud and Midrash which are legal interpretations of the Torah.
* Some modern Jewish interpretations of the original texts vary from the orthodox focus, therefore having an understanding of your clients focus may help understanding some religious issues.
* The four main movements of Judaism now are Orthadox, Conservative, Reform, and Reconstructionist.
* Orthadox comprises the largest group of the practicing Jewish faith.
* They may also vary from traditional, to liberal, to religiously progressive.
* Judaism tends to prefer people that practice over belief.
* The name of the place of worship is called a synagogue.
* Religious leaders are known as rabbis.
* It is believed that the relationship between a person and his/ her creator that makes them Jewish, not necessarily practice or birthplace/ birth religion.
* Jewish law prohibits cruelty to animals and calls to end suffering when possible.
* Traditionally a beard is worn by Jewish men. Chasidic Jews do not adhere to this and with contemporary practices many men keep a shorter beard.
* Jewish males are circumcised on the 8th day of their birth.

Terminology to be aware of

* Kvetsh – to complain or whine, but in Yiddish literally means to squeeze or press.
* Feh! – used to express disgust or disapproval.
* Nu – a word that calls or a reply, like saying “so?” or “huh?”
* Oy vey – meaning dismay, grief, or exasperation.
* Schlep – to drag something you don’t really need or carry unwillingly.
* Schmooze – chat or make small talk.
* Maven – to sarcastically refer to someone as an expert.
* Brit Milah – also known as a bris, the day of circumcision on the 8th day after birth.
* Chanukkah – an 8 day holiday celebrating the rededication of the temple after it was defiled by Seleucid Greeks.
* Lox – smoked salmon, commonly served on a bagel.
* Challah – a sweet, eggy, yellow bread, usually braided, which is served on Shabbat and holidays.
* Dreidel – a small four-sided top used for games and gambling in the Jewish faith.
* Menorah – a sacred candelabrum with seven or eight branches used in the Temple.

Reflection

I have enjoyed researching the Jewish religion. After delving into a 4000 year old religion I have realized that I don’t know hardly anything about it. The Jewish faith is complex and full of history. I can see why a person can’t just convert to Judaism, but must undergo classes and worship to demonstrate their dedication. You must denounce any previous beliefs and fully devote yourself; pretty hard core.

Having some understanding of various cultures and religions is incredibly important if an OT practitioner wants to have an efficient clinical practice. With approximately 14,000,000 people taking part in some level of Jewish worship, it’s unlikely that we will complete a career with OT and NEVER serve a non-gentile. Multiple cultures and religions only help to create enrichment in the OT setting and provide some diversity. Overall the Jewish folk I talked to were very friendly and easy to get along with. I don’t think it would be difficult to work with and accommodate to their needs.

References

Fishman, S. B. Jewish Life and American Culture. (2000). State University of New York Press, Albany. Taken from. <https://books.google.com/books?id=LNKKI23R1vEC&pg=PA172&lpg=PA172&dq=jewish+culture+frustrations&source=bl&ots=yORWGLSgUX&sig=PYdHzQdu_4ClfbFyG0Ryljw0lFY&hl=en&sa=X&ei=xW7vVODzH5C1ogSatoHIAw&ved=0CB4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=jewish%20culture%20frustrations&f=false>

Jewish terms. Taken from. <http://www.jewfaq.org/glossary.htm>

Chabad Lubavitch of Utah <http://www.jewishutah.com/library/article_cdo/aid/45132/jewish/What-Makes-a-Jew-Jewish.htm>

9th South Delicatessen <http://www.9thsouthdeli.com/deli-menus/>

Feldman’s Deli <http://www.feldmansdeli.com/>

Patheos Library. Taken from. <http://www.patheos.com/Library/Judaism.html>