



## **Culture & Person-Centered Practices – Deanna Yadollahi: Culture in Person-Centered Planning**

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### **SPEAKER(S)**

**Deanna Yadollahi**

Hi, my name is Deanna Yadollahi. My pronouns are they/them and I am a disability activist. I am here to talk to you today about the importance of person-centered planning and particularly, culture in person-centered planning. I think that person-centered planning means dropping everything that you know about how to serve people and letting the individual guide how an individual is served.

“Individual” being the keyword and really individualizing how a person is served. I think that it's extremely important for us to embrace diversity and celebrate different cultures and that comes with centering cultural diversity in person-centered planning.

So, let's take a scenario for example. If I were the one who you were going to be serving, we were going to meet for the first time, and you were wondering how to greet me; you would want to let me guide the interaction so that I can show you. Is it going to be a hug? Is it going to be a handshake? Is it going to be a kiss on the cheek? Is it going to be multiple kisses on the cheek? That is one example of why culture is important in person-centered planning, because it would really be necessary for me to have my ability to maintain my own culture in how we interact with each other so that we are individualizing it and letting me be true to who I am and to the culture that I come from.

A little bit about me: my mom is Mexican, and my dad is Iranian. When I visit my family, each side of my family - so let's say my mom's family or my dad's family - I really have to code switch. I have to code switch, not only my language, but also what I wear and how I say hello. Also, the topics that we talk about, the pace that we talk - all of that is influenced.

So, with my mom's side of the family, I can dress similarly to them, which is more Americanized really. I can be conservative, but I can also be showing skin.

Whereas, with my dad's side of the family, that is a huge no. I would need to cover myself up. I would need to make sure I'm not cursing. And this is not to say that all people from their cultures are this way, but I do have to be sensitive to the tone and the context of each of their mannerisms, and as groups of people.

So not all Mexicans, but my mom's side of the family are very liberal in terms of what you wear and how you talk and how you dress. Whereas, not all Iranians, but my dad's side of the family are more conservative about what you wear and how you talk and how you dress.



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So that would be another thing to pay attention to, what is the unspoken dress code of the family that you're serving and how can you better fit within that? It would be best to be overdressed rather than underdressed in my opinion.

So, to be a little too conservative, if you are going out to meet a family for the first time, it would just make people feel more comfortable to not be offended by clothing or amount of skin shown.

Thank you so much for watching this video, I hope that you enjoyed it and I hope that it helps you understand the importance of culture with person-centered planning.