

Best Practices for Using Metaphors in Multicultural Counseling Effectively

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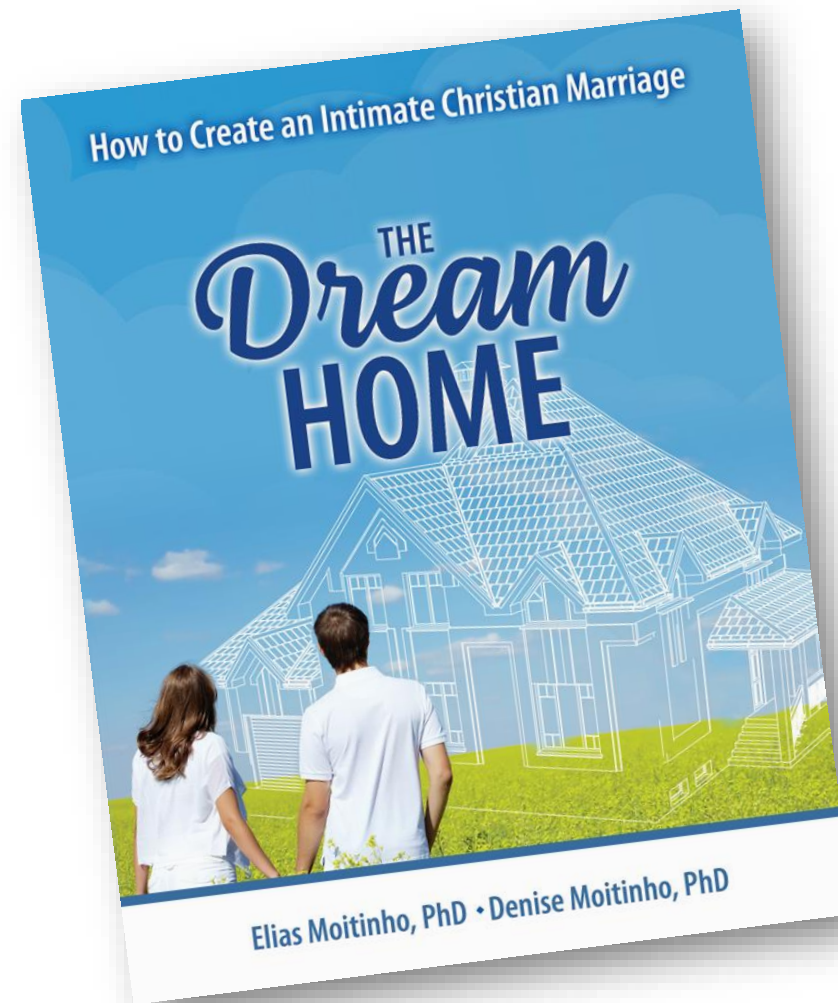
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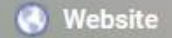


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Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- 1. Identify the creative use of metaphors, similes, and analogies in communication and counseling
- 2. Explore how to use biblical metaphors, similes, and analogies in the counseling setting effectively
- 3. Describe specific metaphors, similes, and analogies to use in a multicultural counseling setting

**We'll have some time for questions
at the end of the presentation.**



Learning Objective 1

Identify the creative use of metaphors, similes, and analogies in communication and counseling

I'm walking on eggshells!

My life is going down hill very fast!

The Initial Challenge

To decipher

How are
you feeling?

- Reflect Feeling
- Empathize

I feel like
I'm in a
thick fog

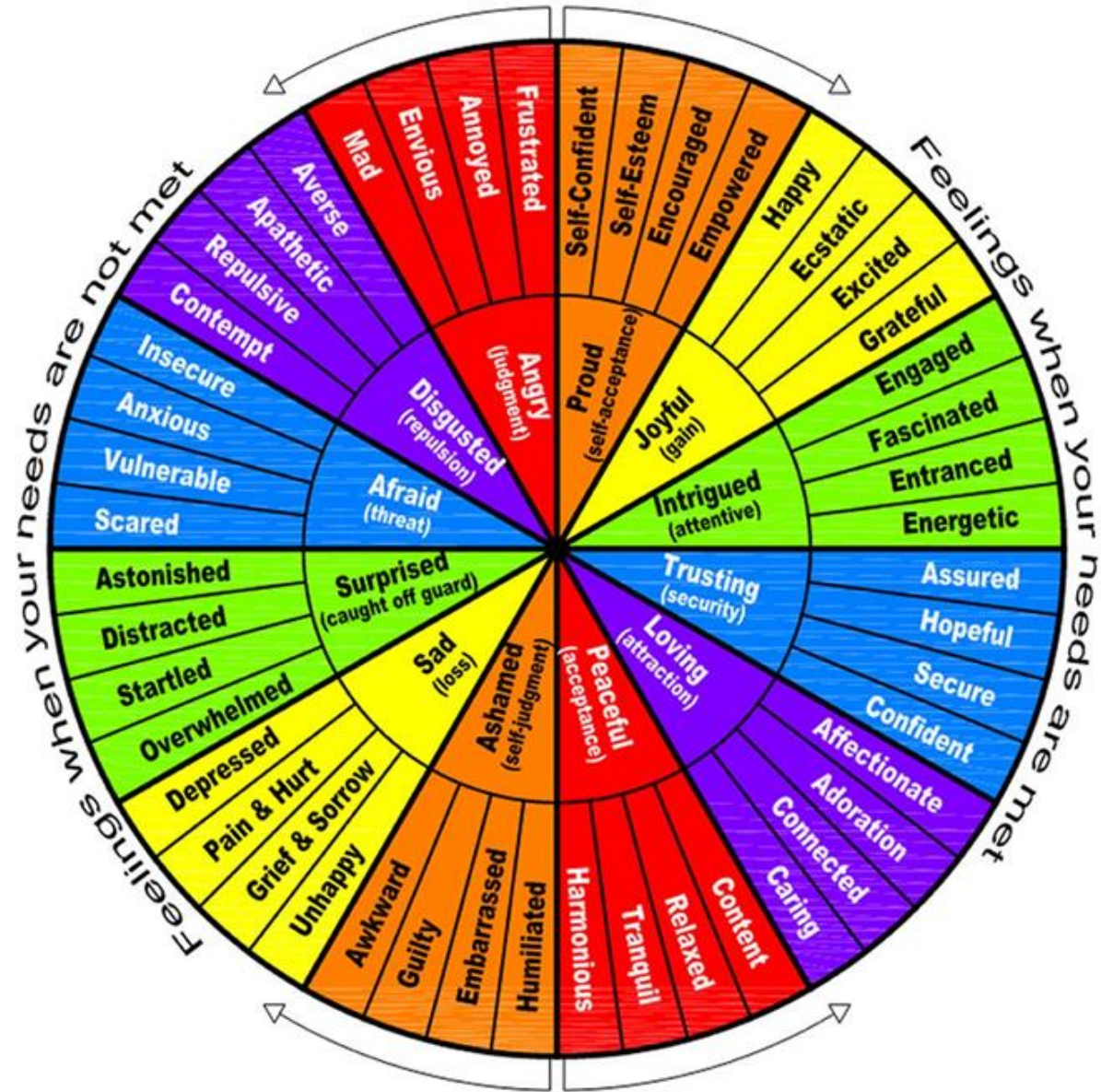
**"I AM UP AGAINST
THE WALL"**

My cup is
empty!

FIGURES OF SPEECH

A creative way to understand the client's world, feelings, situations, frame of reference, and experience.

Feelings Wheel (small version)



Phenomenological Interpretation

Counseling is “TALK THERAPY”

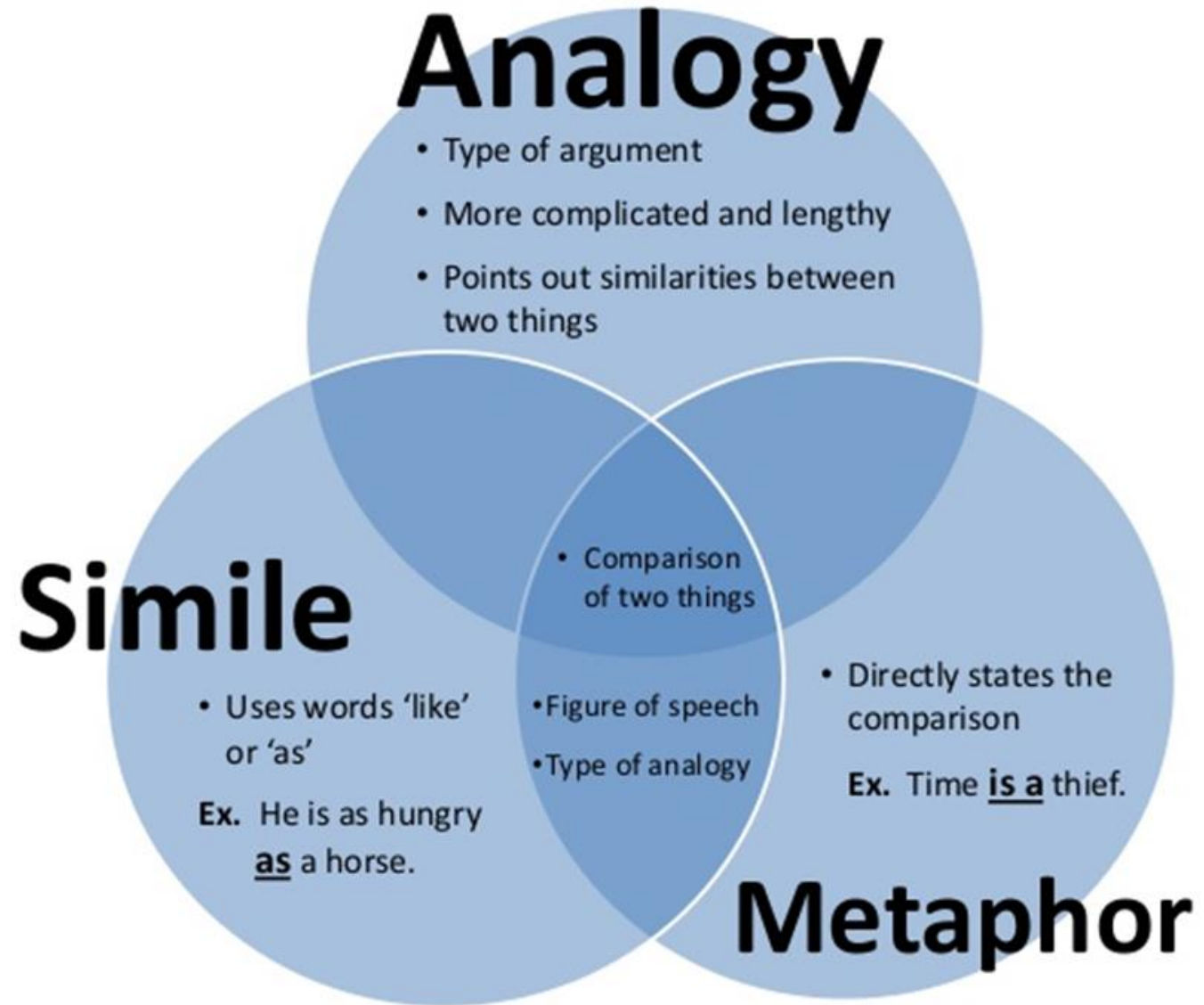
- People (our clients) use metaphors, similes, and analogies to:
 - Describe their situation
 - Conceptualize their life struggles
 - Express their emotions
 - Convey their perception of reality
 - Share their subjective perspectives
 - Try to make sense of their life
- “Metaphors help our minds find familiar patterns and build bridges between what is new and what is unknown by absorbing new ideas into already familiar concepts”

(Killick, Curry, & Myles, 2016, p. 2).

Figures of Speech



Comparison of two things



METAPHORS

SIMILES

ANALOGIES

- **ANALOGIES =** A is to B as C is to D
 - I'm as busy as a bee
- **METAPHORS =** A is B
 - My life is a roller-coaster
- **SIMILES =** A is like/as B
 - We fight like cats and dogs
 - They shall be as white as snow

**Allows us
into the
client's
world**



An example

Copyrighted Material
THE
FOUR
SEASONS
OF
MARRIAGE

Which Season of Marriage Are You In?



GARY
CHAPMAN

Author of the best-selling book *The Five Love Languages*
Copyrighted Material

**What do you
hear from
clients?**

- **I broke down**
- **I'm crushed**
- **I'm in the pit**
- **I'm trapped**
- **I'm hitting my head against a wall**
- **I'm running in circles**
- **My life is a roller-coaster**
- **My mother is like an octopus**
- **I've been crying like a baby lately**
- **I'm completely lost**

**What does the
client mean?**

Client-Generated

Metaphors, Similes, and Analogies

- “provide a lens into the internal world of clients that combines their emotional reactions and experiences in an understandable manner and creates a bridge so clients’ internal worlds can be shared with the counselor”
- (Wagener, 2017, p. 153).

Client-Generated Metaphors

Six Categories

From:
Eckstein, D. & Russo, N. (2012)

CATEGORY	EXAMPLES
One's image of self	I'm a teakettle about to explode!
One's image of others	My husband's a locomotive barging into the house.
Relationship between self and self	My life is a barren wasteland.
One's image of situations	I keep beating myself up.
Relationship of self to another	Dealing with him, I'm trying to tame a wild lion.
Relationship of self to a situation	I'm slowly sinking in quicksand.

Eckstein, D. & Russo, N. (2012). Six types of counseling related metaphors: Theory and case study demonstration. International Florida Adlerian Society 17th Annual Conference; Kopp, R. & Eckstein, D. (2004). Using early memory metaphors and client-generated metaphors in Adlerian therapy. *Journal of Individual Psychology*, 60(2), 163-174.

Counselor-Generated

Metaphors, Similes, and Analogies

- “provide a tool to further guide and support clients in the pursuit of their goals”
- (Wagener, 2017, p. 153).

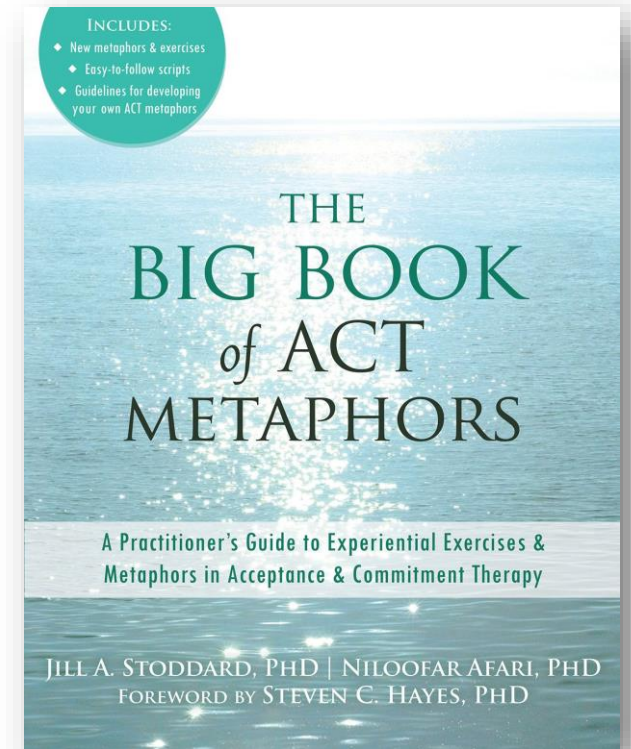
Acceptance Commitment Therapy (ACT)

- **Passengers on the Bus**



- **Thought Train**

Cognitive Defusion



Metaphors and CBT

- **'Black-and-white thinking' and 'mind-reading'**
- **Blinders and dark glasses**
 - A metaphor to educate clients about depression
- **Traffic lights**
 - A metaphor for children
- **The seeds of change**
 - A metaphor to help clients contemplate the nature of change

Metaphor Therapy and Clean Language as developed by David Grove (Grove, 1989).

“information about people’s private, subjective, and personally meaningful experiences may be efficiently represented as metaphors within the creative imagination.” p. 6

Using metaphors “An extremely efficient manner of increasing a client’s experiential awareness and acceptance” p. 10

Metaphors To Deal With Trauma

- Helps minimize anxiety-provoking feelings when clients are recounting the experience
- Helps clients reframe the traumatic experience by looking at it from a different angle

Metaphors To Deal With Trauma

- Helps “[deactivate] the defenses without heightening the anxiety by allowing patients to defocus on the issue itself and focus in the metaphoric domain”
- (Wirtztum, Van der Hart, & Friedman, 1988, p. 278).

Example of Metaphors used by Veterans to Describe their experience with PTSD

- **“PTSD in Control (Having Survived Trauma)”**
-
- **“Controlling PTSD (Surviving PTSD)”**
-
- **“Veteran in Control (Survivor’s Mission)”**

Example of Metaphors used by Veterans to Describe their experience with PTSD

- **Describe the physiological effects of PTSD:**
 - being easily “set off”, “suffocating”, being “on guard”, “hiding”, being in “combat mode”
- **Describe the effects of PTSD on one’s disposition:**
 - being a “Tazmanian Devil”, being overly “mission oriented”, being a “zombie”
 - **overly identifying with the warrior** - relying on “Colonel” persona and being a “Spartan Warrior”
- **Describe PTSD itself:**
 - [PTSD] “tears away” and “breaks down”, PTSD as a “load”, PTSD as “baggage”, PTSD as a “battle”

Learning Objective 2

Explore how to
Use biblical
metaphors,
similes, and
analogies in the
counseling
setting
effectively

What are some metaphors, similes, or analogies in the Bible?



A Few Metaphors, Similes, Analogies in the Bible

- “The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer” (Psalm 18: 2 NIV)
- Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path (Psalm 119:105 NIV).
- “You are the salt of the earth” (Matt. 5:13)
- “You are the light of the world” (Matt. 5:14)
- “Be born again” (John 3)

- The Church is the Bride of Christ
- The Church is the Body of Christ
- The Church is the Family of God

**A Few
Metaphors,
Similes,
Analogies in
the Bible**

**The kingdom of
heaven is like a
mustard seed,**

**The Lord is my
Shepherd**

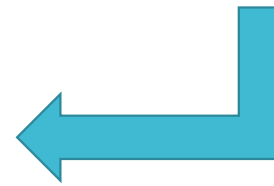
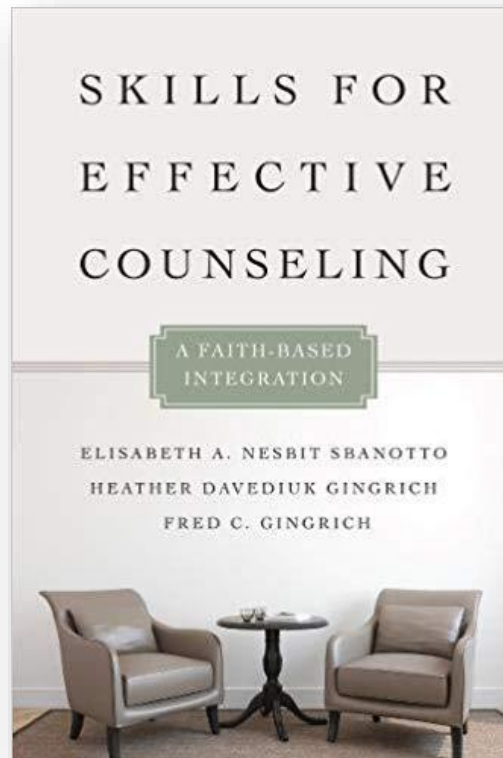
**The kingdom of heaven
is like a treasure hidden
in a field.**

Jesus
"I am"
Sayings
in the
Gospel of
John

I am the bread of life	John 6:35
I am the light of the world	John 8:12
I am the door	John 10:9
I am the good shepherd	John 10:11
I am the resurrection and the life	John 11:25
I am the way, the truth, and the life	John 14:6
I am the true vine	John 15:1

An example for using metaphor within a Christian counseling setting

“Counselees who have been abused as children may, for example, have erroneous perceptions of God (Gingrich, 2013). Counselors may find that God is viewed as unsafe, particularly if the counselee’s abuse was at the hands of his or her father. Therefore, introducing the metaphor of *God as father* can potentially tease out an underlying belief that no one is safe, particularly father figures. The counselee’s assumption may fit better with a metaphor of *God as judge*. Changing the metaphor to *Jesus the Good Shepherd* may help the counselee’s perception to shift to a more accurate, realistic one.”



(Sbanotto, Gingrich, Gingrich, 2016, p. 197)

Using
metaphors
to help
strengthen a
client
self-identity

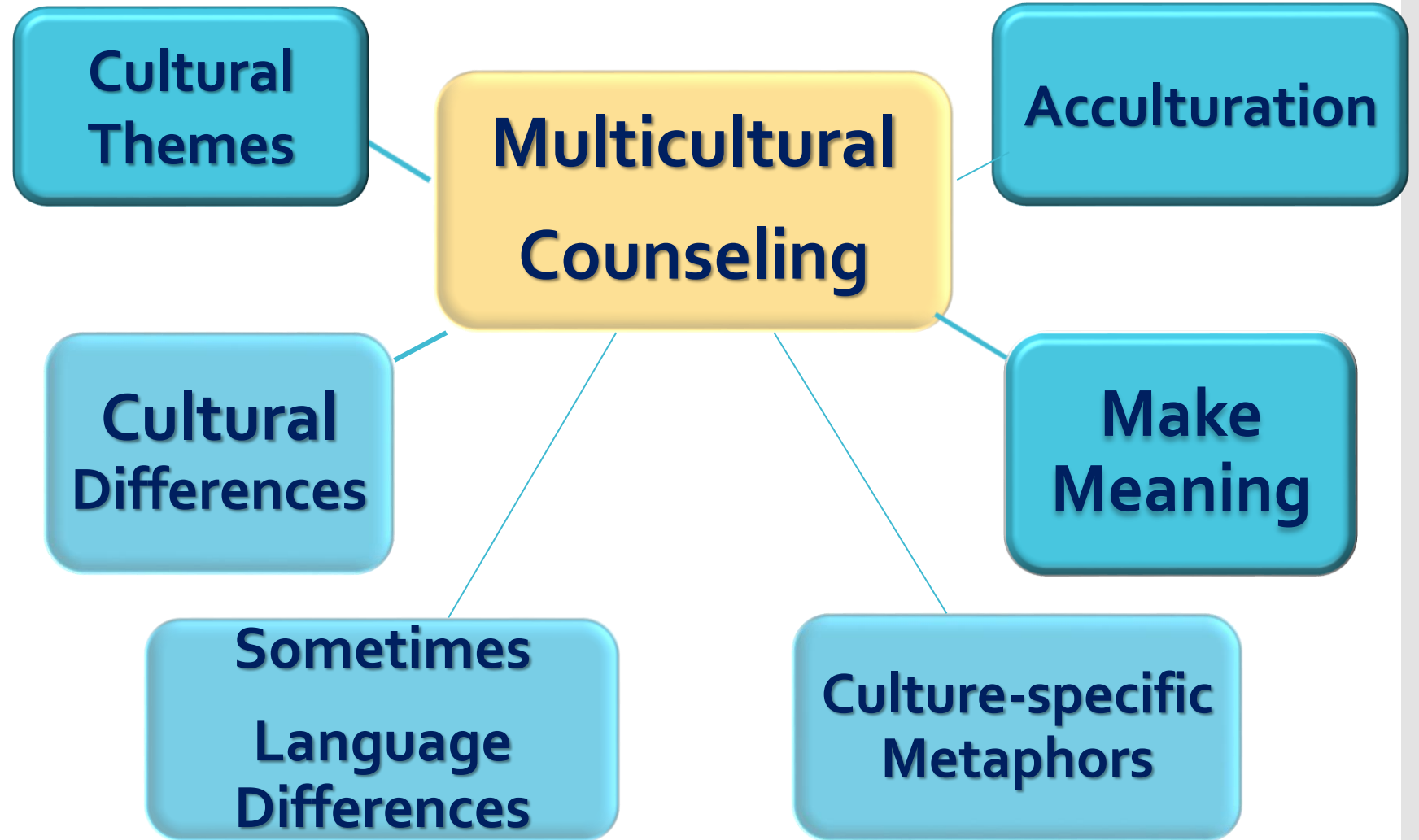
- I am a child of God – 1 John 3:1
- I am a new creation – 2 Cor. 5:17
- I am God's masterpiece – Eph. 2:10
- I am more than a conqueror – Rom. 8:37
- I am an ambassador – 2 Cor. 5:20

- Explore how client's self-concept
- Help client replace negative self-concept with new identity

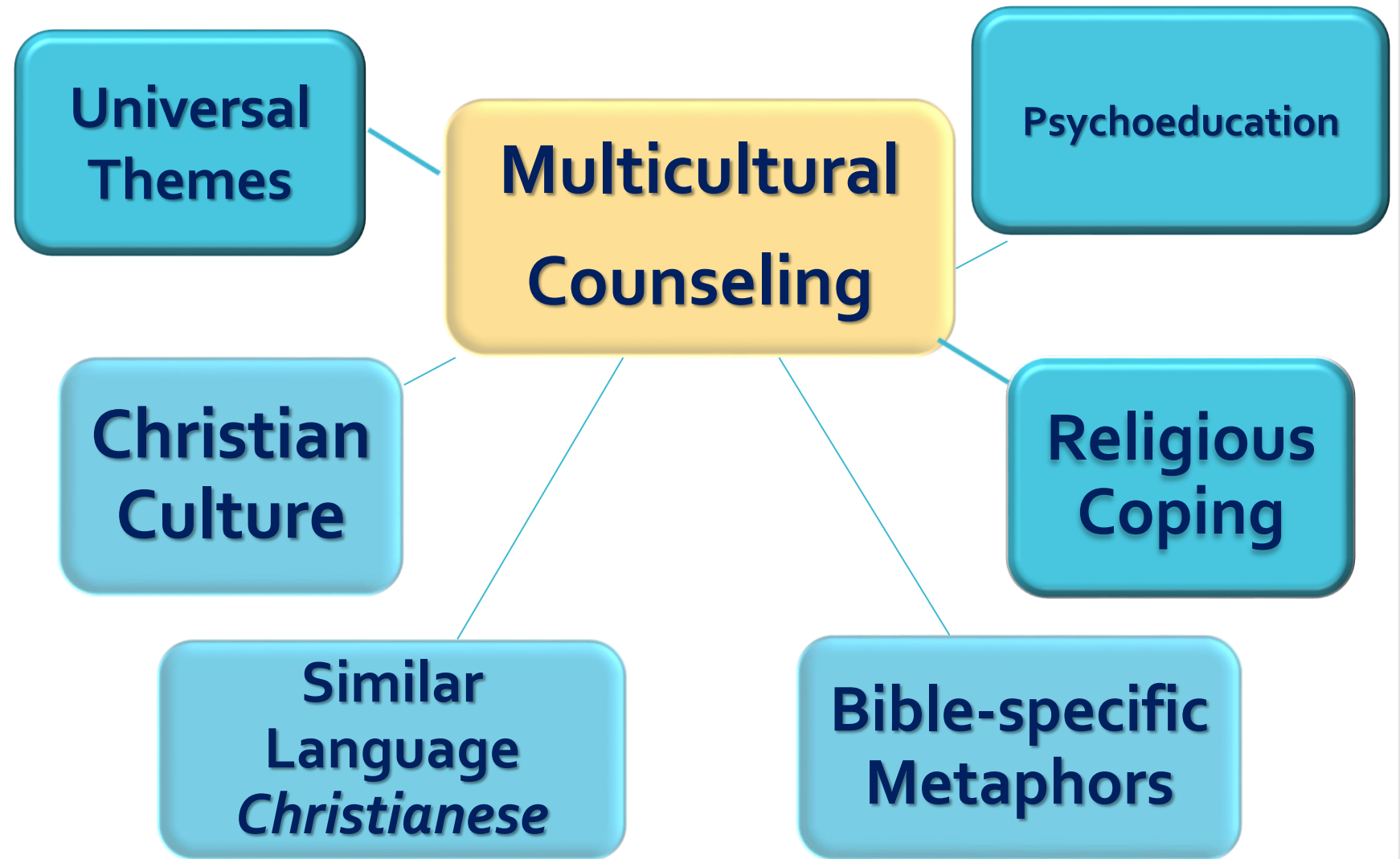
Learning
Objective 3
**Describe
specific
metaphors,
similes, and
analogies to use
in a
multicultural
counseling
setting**



**Potential
Challenges**
when using
Metaphors
in
Multicultural
Counseling



**Potential
Strategies**
*when using
Metaphors
Multicultural
Counseling*



**Using
biblical
metaphors
with
Christian
clients from
diverse
backgrounds**

The Advantage of Christian Counseling:

- Common “Christian culture”
- Clients are open and receptive to Scriptures and Christian concepts
- Clients may be familiar with biblical metaphors
- We help client find meaning from a biblical perspective

Universal Metaphors

Wounds and Scars

- “ In many cases, a healed wound may leave a **scar as a reminder that successful healing has taken place.** Although the scar may be ugly, annoying, a topic of conversation or not as favorable as regular tissue, it is still **an image of success signifying that a wound has healed.**”

Peter D. Ladd

**Country/
Culture-
based
Metaphors**



**Country/
Culture-
based
Metaphors**



Working with a Metaphor in Counseling

- **When clients kill the analogy/metaphor**
 - Counselor can expand/explore
 - “what makes you think it’s dead?”
- **Assessment**
 - Let’s you know what the person feels, thinks about the situation
- **Counselor can provide hope**
 - E.g., Landscaping companies revives dead lawns

Exploring a Metaphor in the Counseling Process

- **What is it like to be in the hole?**
 - dark, lonely, scary,
- **How do you feel in the hole?**
 - Trapped, alone, forgotten
- **What have you tried to do to get out of the hole?**
 - "... " (self-medication)
- **How did your attempt help you?**
 - "... " (not effective)
- **What would your next option or attempt be?**
 - "I am here ..."

Take a look at this source:

Pinter, P. Slowly Digging Out of Depression's Darkness: A metaphorical description of my personal inner battles. Retrieved from https://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/3568752/jewish/Slowly-Digging-Out-of-Depressions-Darkness.htm

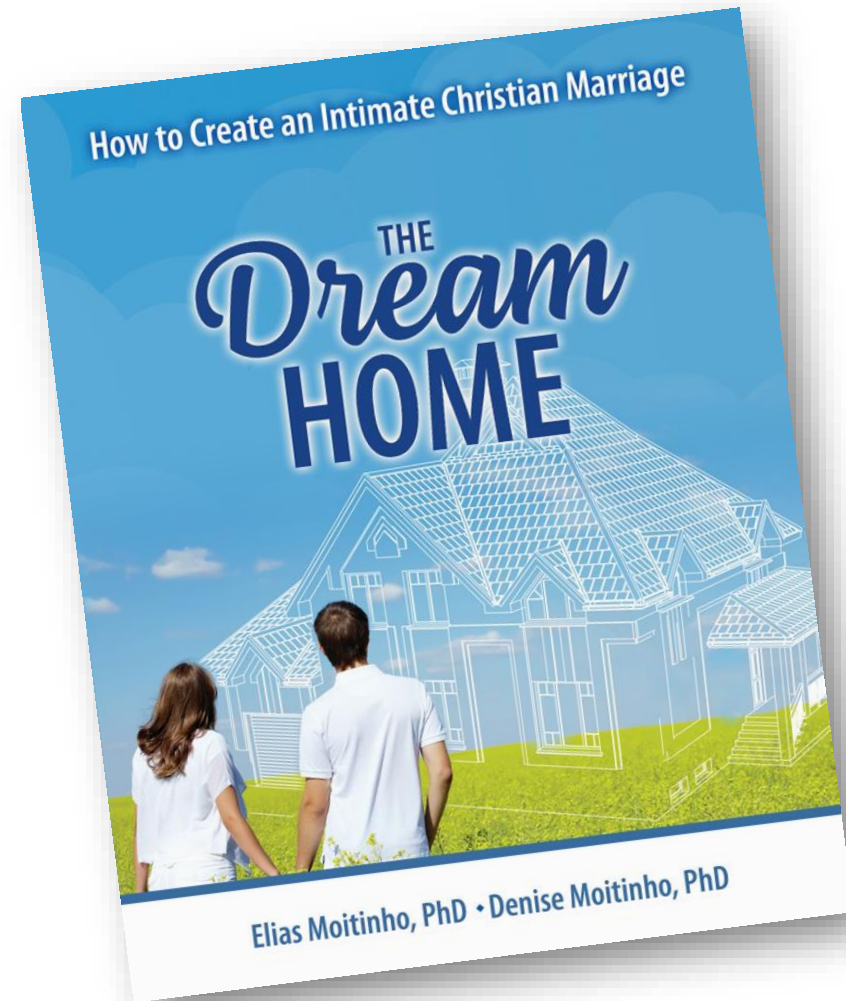
*Thank
you*



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