

### **Exhibit 2-3: ACA Counselor Competencies: Counselors' Awareness of Their Own Cultural Values and Biases**

#### Attitudes and beliefs:

- Culturally skilled counselors have moved from being culturally unaware to being aware and sensitive to their own cultural heritages and to valuing and respecting differences.
- Culturally skilled counselors are aware of how their own cultural backgrounds, experiences, attitudes, values, and biases influence psychological processes.
- Culturally skilled counselors recognize the limits of their multicultural competence and expertise.
- Culturally skilled counselors are comfortable with differences that exist between themselves and their clients in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, and beliefs.

#### Knowledge:

- Culturally skilled counselors have specific knowledge about their own racial and cultural heritage and how it personally and professionally affects their definitions of normality, abnormality, and the process of counseling.
- Culturally skilled counselors possess knowledge and understanding of how oppression, racism, discrimination, and stereotyping affect them personally and in their work. This allows them to acknowledge their own racist attitudes, beliefs, and feelings. Although this standard applies to all groups, for White American counselors, it can mean that they understand how they may have directly or indirectly benefited from individual, institutional, and cultural racism.
- Culturally skilled counselors possess knowledge about their social impact on others. They are knowledgeable about communication style differences and how their style may clash with or foster the counseling process with minority clients. They anticipate the impact their style may have on others.

#### Skills:

- Culturally skilled counselors seek out educational, consultative, and training experiences to improve their understanding and effectiveness in working with culturally diverse populations. Being able to recognize the limits of their competencies, they seek consultation, seek further training or education, refer out to more qualified individuals or resources, or engage in a combination of these.
- Culturally skilled counselors are constantly seeking to understand themselves as racial and cultural beings and are actively seeking a nonracist identity.

*Source: American Counseling Association Web site ([http://www.counseling.org/docs/competencies/cross-cultural\\_competencies\\_and\\_objectives.pdf](http://www.counseling.org/docs/competencies/cross-cultural_competencies_and_objectives.pdf)). Adapted with permission.*