
Culturally Sensitive Counselling in Nunavut: Implications of Inuit Traditional Knowledge

Christine Wihak
Noorfarah Merali
University of Alberta

ABSTRACT

The success of the Inuit people of Canada in seeking political autonomy resulted in the creation of the Nunavut territory. The new Government of Nunavut (GN) has instituted *Inuit Quajimajatiqangit* (IQ), the values, norms, and traditional knowledge of the Inuit, as formal policy to guide the delivery of health, social, and civil services in order to ensure their cultural sensitivity. This paper discusses four Inuit IQ principles adopted by the GN that directly relate to the counselling process: *Pilimmaksarniq* (the importance of felt or revealed truth), *Pijitsirniq* (community orientation), *Inuuqatigiitiarniq* (respect and non-interference), and *Aajiiqatigiingniq* (inclusive decision making). The paper also describes how non-Aboriginal counsellors working in the Nunavut context can apply these principles in their professional practice with Inuit clients.

RÉSUMÉ

La revendication réussie, de la part du peuple inuit du Canada, d'autonomie gouvernementale a entraîné la création du territoire du Nunavut. Le nouveau Gouvernement du Nunavut a institué en tant que politique officielle les principes *Inuit Quajimaatiqangit* (IQ), constituant les valeurs, les normes et les connaissances traditionnelles des Inuits. Cette politique IQ guidera les services sociaux et de santé, ainsi que d'autres services gouvernementaux, afin d'assurer que ces prestations soient adaptées à la culture des Inuits. Cet article examine quatre principes IQ des Inuits adoptés par le Gouvernement du Nunavut et liés directement au processus de counseling : *Pilimmaksarniq* (l'importance de la vérité ressentie ou révélée), *Pijitsirniq* (l'orientation communautaire), *Inuuqatigiitiarniq* (le respect et la non-ingérence) et *Aajiiqatigiingniq* (la prise de décision inclusive). Les auteures décrivent également comment les conseillers et conseillères non autochtones travaillant dans le Nunavut peuvent appliquer ces principes dans leur pratique professionnelle auprès de la clientèle inuit.

The new territory of Nunavut came into legal existence on April 1, 1999 as a result of the settlement of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NCLA). The renaming and transfer of control of this part of the Northwest Territories to the Inuit people represented the fruition of 25 years of Inuit effort to move towards political autonomy. The NCLA makes explicit that the new government will be founded on Inuit values and culture (Arnakak, 2002; Purich, 1991). The Government of Nunavut (GN) immediately initiated action to transform the inherited government structure into one based on the Inuit's own traditions and worldview. The Throne Speech to the Second Session of the First Legislative Assembly makes this goal clear: "Our government will . . . ensure that *Inuit Quajimajatuqangit* is the basis for all government decisions and actions" (GN,

1999). Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit or "IQ" has the literal meaning of "those which are long known by Inuit", but is more usually taken to mean Inuit traditional knowledge, culture, values, and language (Arnakak, 2002). The Bathurst Mandate, issued in August of 1999, requires government departments to develop working plans to ensure that their operations and services will reflect IQ principles, and to attempt to redirect health and social services in a manner that is respectful of the Inuit way of life (GN, 2000).

With these changes being put into place, the Government of Nunavut is the first public government in Canada to be fundamentally shaped by an Aboriginal worldview. Inuit cultural values, which had submerged below those of the mainstream culture, have suddenly assumed predominance. Since Inuit values and behaviours differ significantly from those of the dominant culture of Canada, it is imperative that non-Aboriginal counsellors working in the Nunavut context understand and are able to apply the IQ principles in their professional practice with Inuit clients. The purpose of this paper is to describe and discuss the implications of four of the Inuit IQ principles adopted by the Government of Nunavut that directly relate to the counselling process: *Pilimmaksarniq* (valuing knowledge gained through observation and experience), *Pijitsirniq* (community orientation), *Inuuqatigiitiarniq* (non-interference), and *Aajiqatigiingniq* (inclusive decision-making).

PILIMMAKSARNIQ

The principle of *Pilimmaksarniq* emphasizes valuing knowledge gained through observation and experience. It stems from the accepted fact among the Inuit community that the skills needed to ensure their success and survival in their own land were acquired by attending to both the nature of the land and other people's survival strategies, as well as through practice of various life skills (Arnakak, 2002; GN Department of Health and Social Services, 1999). This principle acknowledges that felt and revealed truth are more important and acceptable than logical/mathematical truth or scientific truth. Fernandez-Armesto (1998) distinguishes between these different types of knowledge by raising two key questions: "How do I tell right from wrong? How do I tell truth from falsehood?" (p. 3). The question of how to tell what is true must be answered before the question of right and wrong can be answered with certainty. Felt truth reflects an intuitive awareness of the factors that come to bear on a particular situation and how to appropriately respond to that situation. It can be based on direct, personal observation of previous situations and events, or alternatively, on a felt sense of psychological unity with spiritual or supernatural forces. Complementary to felt truth, revealed truth reflects knowledge gained through the culture's spiritual traditions that are passed down through the generations (Fernandez-Armesto, 1998).

The reverence for revealed truth in the Inuit culture is exemplified by their respect for the wisdom of Elders in the community, and by attempts to seek guidance from their repertoire of appropriate spiritual and moral responses to various

life circumstances and matters of daily living (Korhonen, 2002; Pauktutit, 1991). Similarly, shamanic healers in the Aboriginal and other unique cultural traditions often gain their credibility by having encountered and worked through hardship and misfortune; these life experiences are believed to deepen their relationships with benevolent spiritual forces and to provide them with the power to ward off malevolent spiritual influences (Koss-Chioino, 2000).

The Inuit belief in reincarnation elucidates how revealed truth can shape causal explanations for life events and typical reactions (Pauktutit, 1991). As described in Korhonen (2002), the Inuit will often explain why a person behaves a certain way in terms of the resemblance between the person and the diseased relative whose name he/she carries. This causal explanation of individual behaviour may dictate different intervention strategies than explanations that are based on the person's present circumstances. For example, altering a client's aggressive behaviour may require the counsellor to acknowledge the cultural explanation for his/her behaviour and consult with Elders who knew the diseased relative in order to obtain guidance about the most effective methods of behaviour modification.

In contrast to the ideas of felt and revealed truth as anchors for moral and appropriate behaviour, reasoned truth and scientific truth place value on logical thinking and analysis or systematic study of a situation to yield the most useful information to direct problem resolution (Fernandez-Armesto, 1998). These are the types of knowledge that tend to be accorded the most importance by advocates of the use of empirically validated approaches to counselling in the Canadian context (Hunsley, Dobson, Johnston, & Mikail, 1999a; Hunsley, Dobson, Johnston, & Mikail, 1999b). According to this paradigm of clinical practice, counselling strategies are evaluated to be beneficial in working with clients on the basis of scientific evidence gathered through highly controlled experimental studies comparing their effectiveness with non-intervention (Hunsley et al., 1999a, 1999b). Unfortunately, these studies rarely include the culturally different (Atkinson, Bui, & Mori, 2001). The discrepancy between the emphasis on felt and revealed truth in the Inuit worldview and the emphasis on reasoned or scientific truth in the identification of empirically validated counselling approaches could result in counsellors devaluing Inuit clients' rich knowledge base in their selection of therapeutic interventions.

Atkinson et al. (2001) argue that culturally sensitive counselling and empirical validation of treatment have inconsistent goals. Culturally sensitive counselling attends to the three key process variables of client characteristics, counsellor characteristics and intervention skills, and the nature of the therapeutic alliance. Client characteristics include the client's beliefs about the presenting problem and the knowledge that he/she brings to bear on its resolution. In contrast, the movement towards empirically validated therapies focuses on identifying treatments that work for particular problems regardless of client, therapist, and relationship factors. It is surmised that all cross-cultural counselling interactions are inevitably affected by the process variables (Atkinson et al.). Therefore, the

conceptualization of an appropriate counselling approach needs to be expanded to incorporate best practices for working with specific clients in specific cultural contexts and situations.

Arthur and Januszkowski's (2001) study of the multicultural competencies of Canadian counsellors suggests that in general, practitioners are attending to process variables. The 181 counsellors in their study who were randomly selected from the membership of the Canadian Counselling Association reported recognizing and acknowledging cultural differences between themselves and their clients. They also expressed an openness to learning about client's beliefs about their presenting problems. The following section describes how Inuit clients' beliefs in felt or revealed truth can be respected in the counselling process.

Counselling Implications

The principle of *Pilimmaksarniq* has very positive connotations that can easily be used by non-Aboriginal counsellors to promote effective counselling processes and outcomes. The primacy of felt truth inherent in this principle identifies the Inuit people's trust in their own feelings and perceptions of problem situations, including their causal explanations for life events and their intuitive awareness of how to deal with various life circumstances. Counsellors working within the Nunavut context can solicit clients' own ideas and feelings about their presenting issues, and trust, accept, and validate their interpretations of the presenting problem as an accurate representation of their reality. They could listen for and review instances when clients successfully managed specific problems to highlight experiential learnings that could be applied to the clients' present situation. Depending on the perceived causes of the presenting problem, counsellors can design intervention options that draw on the idea of revealed truth to bring the client to resolve the problem in a culturally appropriate way. For an issue that is not spiritually based, this may simply involve having the client take small steps towards changing his/her life and reporting back on how each step was experienced. This process would be very similar to working with a client who is not culturally different. For this reason, Korhonen (2002) argues that in some cases, the process of cross-cultural counselling with Inuit clients may not be substantially different from current best practices in conventional counselling approaches.

In cases where the felt or revealed truths in a particular situation are linked to spiritual beliefs and experiences, counsellors may need to draw on clients' knowledge about how to create an appropriate experiential learning opportunity to address spiritual influences in their lives. These opportunities could take the form of rituals to facilitate communication with various spirits or ancestors who are believed to have an impact on the client's current life situation (Koss-Chioino, 2000). The ritual of *qilaniq* is often used in the Inuit culture to uncover the specific causes of a client's distress and identify appropriate intervention strategies (Korhonen, 2002). This traditional practice involves suspending a depressed individual's head in a light rope and asking yes or no questions about the causes of the depression and possible intervention options. The weight and force of the

individual's head is used to determine the answer to each question (Korhonen, 2002). In discussing how counsellors can make use of the indigenous healing approaches that may emerge out of such techniques when they are not qualified or trained in traditional healing, Koss-Chioino (2000) encourages counsellors to adopt the role of "clinical ethnographer" (p. 162); they can try to cultivate an openness to learning from clients about solutions to their problems that are derived from their own culture, acknowledge them as legitimate intervention possibilities, and encourage clients to seek out healing opportunities within their own communities as an adjunct to counselling if needed.

PIJITSIRNIQ

The principle of Pijitsirniq emphasizes the need to serve one's community. It stipulates that an individual gains authority, leadership, and respect from the group through community participation, as well as by placing the needs and interests of the community above individual needs and goals. This principle also highlights the idea that authority and respect from community members comes from knowledge, skill, experience, and wisdom demonstrated in the context of community-based interactions, rather than from the position one holds (Arnakak, 2002; GN Department of Health and Social Services, 1999). The emphasis on group versus individual needs and goals stands in direct contrast to the pathways for achieving optimal mental health and well-being in the psychodynamic, existential-humanistic, and cognitive-behavioural counselling paradigms. This incongruence between the underlying assumptions of mainstream counselling approaches and the cultural values of Aboriginal people has been heavily criticized. It has been argued that the counselling process needs to be modified to accommodate the value difference (Lafromboise & Jackson, 1996; Lafromboise, Trimble, & Mohatt, 1990; Sue & Sue, 2003).

Counselling Implications

There are a number of ways that the counselling process can be adapted to respond to the importance of the group in the worldview of Inuit clients. First, counsellors can consider adopting a self-in-relation or a self-in-system perspective when working in the Nunavut context. Taking this perspective involves asking about and listening for the client's collective narrative or story of involvement with, perceived responsibility or obligation to, and reverence or respect for members of the family, cultural group, or surrounding society as they impact the presenting problem (Cheatham et al., 2002a; Lafromboise & Jackson, 1996; Lafromboise et al., 1990). Second, the goals of the counselling process can be collaboratively derived with the client to ensure their consistency with group or communal goals. Alternatively, the counsellor can work to ensure that a client is emotionally prepared for and has explored the possible consequences of pursuing individual goals, such as negative reactions from family members or a reduction of community support. This counselling direction is consistent with the value placed

on harmony in relationships in the Aboriginal worldview (Garrett, 1999; Ho, 1987; Lafromboise & Jackson, 1996; Lafromboise et al., 1990; Sue & Sue, 2003). Third, members of the family or community should be included in the counselling sessions if appropriate (Lafromboise & Jackson, 1996).

Lafromboise and Jackson (1996) have used an approach called Network Therapy to involve key members of the community in achieving an understanding of and resolution to Aboriginal clients' presenting issues. Their Network Therapy approach is based on the idea that the support networks of Aboriginal people tend to include non-biological relatives in the community who often take responsibility for the problems of individual members. They have noted that these people may willingly participate in addressing the presenting concerns of individual community members in order to enable them to resume their group function and role. In determining who to involve in a network or community-based intervention approach, Cheatham et al. (2002b) point out that it is useful to identify the informal patterns of help-seeking and preferred sources of help within the culture. This can be accomplished by asking questions like: "Who goes to whom for assistance under what conditions for which types of problems/concerns?" (p. 303). By asking this kind of question, the specific community members who are believed to possess the wisdom, knowledge, and skill to provide assistance with the problem can become apparent.

In addition to shaping how the counselling process should proceed with Inuit clients, the principle of Pijitsirniq has important implications for establishing counsellor credibility. Its emphasis on community involvement suggests that voluntary service to the Inuit community or participation in community activities is a prerequisite for gaining clients' respect, and consequently, for successful relationship-building. Although simultaneous facilitation of counselling sessions and other forms of participation in clients' cultural community might be considered to represent a potentially harmful dual relationship in the counselling profession (Canadian Psychological Association, 2000; Corey, 2001; Schulz, 2000), relationship-oriented cultures like the Inuit culture would likely view singular relationships to be more problematic. Extrapolating from the principle of Pijitsirniq, these would signify a low level of counsellor engagement in serving community interests. When the first author was working in Nunavut, she attended community feasts and games, which assisted greatly in establishing rapport with clients. Furthermore, clients would expect to be acknowledged in social settings. Ignoring their presence would be considered to be extremely strange and inappropriate behaviour.

Paniagua (1994) noted that Aboriginal people in North America tend to regard participation in the community to be as important as a counsellor's behaviour in the therapy sessions. For this reason, the American Psychological Association (2002) has amended its ethics code to state that "Multiple relationships that would not reasonably be expected to cause impairment or risk exploitation or harm are not unethical" (p. 1065). Gottlieb (1993) has outlined three criteria for evaluating whether participation in dual relationships with clients

may be harmful: (a) the extent of the power-differential between the client and counsellor in the interaction being contemplated outside of the counselling relationship, (b) the duration of the involvement outside of the counselling process, and (c) whether the counselling relationship has been terminated or is approaching termination. Enduring dual relationships that occur simultaneously with the counselling process and are characterized by a high counsellor-client power differential are believed to have the greatest potential for harm or exploitation of the client. Continuing counsellor participation in the Inuit community would serve to equalize the status of the client and counsellor through the counsellor's attempt to step out of his/her hierarchical traditional counselling role. Therefore, this type of simultaneous relationship with clients can be viewed to be beneficial rather than harmful.

Given the emphasis in the Inuit culture on felt and revealed truth, another way that non-Aboriginal counsellors may achieve credibility in their helping role is through the use of self-disclosure. To be effective, this self-disclosure would need to focus on counsellors' own experiences of working through problems or life events that are similar to those that the client is currently dealing with. Such disclosures would allow counsellors to demonstrate some level of wisdom through their own experiential learning. For example, when the first author was facilitating a trauma treatment program for Inuit survivors of childhood sexual abuse, her co-therapist introduced herself by sharing her own experience of childhood sexual abuse and struggle to recover from it. The Inuit clients very quickly began to disclose their experiences and expressed more confidence that the treatment program would be helpful. Another type of self-disclosure that may be useful in helping Inuit clients appreciate that counsellors possess the knowledge, skill, and wisdom to assist them involves sharing general observations and learnings from working with other clients who have struggled with similar presenting issues. Corey (2001) notes that if counsellor self-disclosure is directed towards the client rather than towards reorienting the counselling process to focus on the counsellor's needs, it can be very useful for the purpose of creating a solid therapeutic alliance.

INUUQATIGIITTIARNIQ

Stemming from the community orientation of the Inuit people, the principle of Inuuqatigiittiarniq postulates that individual behaviour should be viewed within the larger community context. Respect, tolerance, and forbearance of others' actions are encouraged to promote peaceful coexistence among community members. These attributes are seen as the defining core of mature and civilized behaviour (Arnakak, 2002; GN Department of Health and Social Services, 1999). This principle therefore asserts the importance of non-interference in the Aboriginal worldview. Sue and Sue (2003) describe non-interference as an observational stance in relation to other people's lives and behaviour that leads an individual to refrain from acting impulsively towards members of the family or

community. They discuss a number of consequences of taking an observational stance, such as active avoidance of interpersonal conflict and passivity in response to negative life events that have an interpersonal basis (e.g. relationship difficulties).

The strength of the belief in non-interference on the part of the Inuit was evident during the 10-year period that the first author of this paper spent working as a counsellor educator in Nunavut. A 30-year-old female counselling student shared her story of being raped by an uncle as a teenager. She was living in an outpost camp at the time, and went from tent to tent asking for help. The client reported that no one helped her because as a hunter, her uncle played a more important role in the community than she did. In situations such as this one, the values of the Aboriginal culture come into deep conflict with the values of the Canadian justice system, which dictates interference and the use of punishment as the appropriate response to inappropriate behaviour (Ross, 1992). Pauktutit, the Inuit Women's Association, recognizes that there are fundamental differences between traditional Inuit values and those of other Canadians in these cases, particularly with respect to issues of social control (Pauktutit, 1991).

Counselling Implications

In order to understand and to make use of the idea of non-interference in counselling Inuit clients, non-Aboriginal counsellors need to cultivate an appreciating rather than depreciating view of this cultural practice. Matsumoto (2000) explains that all cultural values and behaviours emerged to promote the survival of the group and served important functions in the original contexts in which they developed. In a hunter and gatherer society like Nunavut, the unity of the group is essential to foster the equitable distribution of the scarce natural resources of the land, including the assurance that food and shelter can be shared by all. In relation to this idea, Sue and Sue (2003) discuss how having an external locus of control is commonly viewed by counsellors to represent a negative state. They differentiate between various sources of a client's external locus of control, which include chance or luck, malevolent forces such as evil spirits or experiences of racism and discrimination, and benevolent cultural forces, such as community orientation, God's grace, or fate. These authors note that the Aboriginal idea of non-interference is viewed as a benevolent cultural dictate rather than as a malevolent force influencing their lives.

It would be difficult to argue, however, that the woman in the example drawn from the first author's experience working in Nunavut viewed other community members' reluctance to help her as a positive thing. While counsellors need to understand that the practice of non-interference serves important community functions, this does not necessarily mean that it will be functional in all present situations or for all members of Inuit society. In situations where it may adversely affect specific members of the group, the communal goals underlying the concept of non-interference can provide guidance about how to intervene in culturally appropriate ways in the Nunavut context. As is evident from community

willingness to become involved in the Network Therapy process (Lafromboise & Jackson, 1996; Lafromboise et al., 1990), when a counsellor can relate an individual's presenting problem to difficulties performing his/her usual group function/role, or to a diminished contribution to the family or community, other people will often be willing to provide assistance or to become engaged in the intervention process.

AAJIIQATIGIINGNIQ

The principle of Aajiiqatigiingniq addresses how decisions should be made in Inuit society. It encourages inclusive decision-making by all members of the family or community who may be affected by the outcome of a particular decision. The decision-making process involves three steps: (a) soliciting each individual's view of the situation to be addressed, (b) comparing these views, and (c) integrating the contrasting perspectives to identify common goals to shape the final decision (Arnakak, 2002; GN Department of Health and Social Services, 1999). Therefore, this principle calls for a collaborative problem-solving approach that aims to create a climate where all parties in a situation understand each other and are relatively satisfied with decisions that may affect them. It dictates the use of a similar approach in the counselling process.

Counselling Implications

Walker and LaDue (1986) advise counsellors to refrain from using highly directive approaches or counselling techniques based on "expert" models, such as cognitive-behavioural therapy, when working with Aboriginal clients. It follows from this suggestion that counsellors working in the Nunavut context also need to consider the possible inappropriateness of advice-giving and aim to seek to understand what their clients deem to be the best path to problem resolution. The emphasis on collaborative problem solving in the principle of Aajiiqatigiingniq is consistent with how the counselling process is generally conceptualized; in most counselling approaches, the client tends to be recognized as the expert on his/her own life experience and the counsellor acts to facilitate the process of moving the person towards desired goals and outcomes. This point of congruence between the Inuit belief system and the nature of counselling substantiates Korhonen's (2002) idea that working with the Inuit people may not always require radical changes in one's counselling approach. For example, a client disclosed to the first author that he could hear the voice of his dead girlfriend, who had ended her life a few months earlier. He reported that the voice was telling him to join her by committing suicide too. The client was worried that he might be pressured into killing himself, which would hurt his father very much. The client and counsellor collaborated in developing a response to the girlfriend's voice, emphasizing that he was not ready to die. Having this response gave the client the confidence to resist the message of the voice, and he reported being much less troubled by it.

In addition to defining the counsellor's role in a client's decision-making process, the self-in-system perspective underlying the principle of Aajiiqatigiingniq makes it important to consult the client about other people who may be affected by the work to be done in the counselling sessions, and to consider involving these individuals in the problem-solving process. The interdependence of the lives of members of Aboriginal communities was one of the key factors instigating the development of the Network Therapy approach (Lafromboise & Jackson, 1996). Questions similar to the one outlined by Cheatham et al. (2002b) in the section of this paper describing the principle of Pijitsirniq can assist in the identification of the client's network of relationships, including both biological and non-biological relatives.

DIRECTIONS FOR PRACTICE

This paper has outlined key aspects of the Inuit worldview in relation to the counselling process. It has also described strategies that non-Aboriginal counsellors working in the Nunavut context can use to implement the IQ principles adopted by the Government of Nunavut in their interventions with Inuit clients. In addition to directing how the counselling process might proceed with Inuit clients, the IQ principles discussed in this paper have important implications for the application and interpretation of professional codes of ethics.

Most ethical codes are based on the perspective of the dominant culture and are applied without taking cultural differences into account (Pederson, 1995). Ridley, Liddle, Hill, and Lee (2001) present a model of culturally sensitive ethical practice to guide counsellors in using information about culture to shape their problem-solving processes with diverse clients. Their model includes two stages: critical reflection and creative problem solving. In the critical reflection stage, counsellors are encouraged to think about their implicit assumptions about culture as they relate to the client's presenting problem. This includes a consideration of their own cultural values and beliefs. They are also prompted to identify and consider all cultural data relevant to their work with the client. In this stage, counsellors are advised to use their knowledge about the client's culture and about counselling theories and techniques to interpret ethical principles and to develop a culturally sensitive conceptualization of the presenting problem. In the creative problem-solving stage that follows, counsellors are encouraged to solicit suggestions from the client and other professionals or community members about appropriate ways for the counselling process to proceed. Then they are expected to examine the goodness-of-fit between each possible counselling direction and the cultural context of the problem (Ridley et al., 2001). The match between a particular intervention or decision-making strategy and the client's needs and presenting problem will likely be affected by the client's degree of identification with his/her culture of origin or ethnic group (i.e. his/her level of racial or cultural identity development).

Critical reflection on the implications of the Inuit IQ principles for ethical practice in the Canadian context suggests a need to reorder the application of

ethical principles when working with Inuit clients who strongly identify with the values of their indigenous culture. In the Nunavut context, it appears that socially-based ethical principles, such as the Principles of Responsibility to Society and Integrity in Relationships in the Canadian Psychological Association's (2000) ethics code and the Canadian Counselling Association's ethics code (Schulz, 2000), should be assigned primacy over individually-based principles, such as the Principles of Respect for the Dignity of Persons and Responsible Caring/Non-Maleficence. Furthermore, it appears that the Principle of Integrity in Relationships may need to be reinterpreted to identify singular relationships to be damaging to the therapeutic alliance and to construe non-sexual dual roles involving limited power differentials between counsellors and clients as a potential facilitating factor.

The application of the individually focused principles of Respect for the Dignity of Persons and Responsible Caring in Nunavut, which emphasize valuing cultural differences and preventing harm to clients (CPA, 2000; Schulz, 2000), requires an ongoing exploration of the impact of a client's individual behaviour on the family and community that he/she is part of. These ethical principles also mandate the incorporation of IQ principles in counselling practice in the Nunavut context. In order to ensure cultural sensitivity and accurate interpretations of ethics codes when working with Inuit clients, non-Aboriginal counsellors are advised to engage in a constant self-monitoring process to determine whether their relational style and interventions are compatible with the IQ principles and with the level of cultural identification of the Inuit clients they are working with. When any inconsistencies arise, the counselling process can be redirected to make it more congruent with the Inuit way of life.

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About the Authors

Christine Wihak is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta, doing research on development of multicultural counselling competence. She has spent over 10 years in Nunavut working in a variety of roles, including education of counsellors, and has an ongoing consulting relationship with the Government of Nunavut to assist with the development of mental health programs that incorporate Inuit Qqujimatatuqangit.

Dr. Noorfarah Merali is an Assistant Professor in the CPA-Accredited Graduate Program in Counselling Psychology at the University of Alberta. She is a specialist in cross-cultural counselling and is actively involved in government, settlement agency, and community-based cross-cultural mental health initiatives.

Address correspondence to Dr. Noorfarah Merali, Assistant Professor of Counselling Psychology, Department of Educational Psychology, 6-102 Education Centre North, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, CANADA, T6G 2G5 Email: <noorfarah.merali@ualberta.ca>.