



# Latinx Immigrant Resilience in the *Midst* of Xenophobia, Change, and Challenges

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# Learning Outcomes

- Identify 3 culture-specific anchors for Latinxs
- Specify 3 sociopolitical factors affecting Latinx individuals and families
- In times of overt racism, specify 3-4 mental health consequences
- Identify 2-3 issues in multi-status families
- For clinicians, specify 2-3 defense mechanisms that may be enacted
- For clinicians, specify 2-3 “best practices” for culturally responsive engagement with Latinx clients and familias

# Dedicated to Dad, Mom y Mamá

Marí Estefana Zalidvar &



Apolinar Arredondo



# Premises about Latinx Immigrants

*La ambición nunca se llena.*

- Progressives
- Risk-takers; sense of toughness
- Planners
- Determined and proud people
- Optimistic
- Self-sacrificing
- About the collective good
- Humble

# What is Resilience?

## *Fortaleza—inner strength*

- ▶ Capacity to recover “quickly from adversity and difficulties.
- ▶ Ability to bounce back and forward.
- ▶ Successfully cope with crises with hope (*esperanza*) and humor.
- ▶ A person engages mental processes and behaviors to improve their situation, not allowing themselves to be stuck in spite of stressors.

# Taking a Culturally Responsive Approach

## **I. Awareness of Your Own Cultural Values and Biases about Latinx people**

- a. Awareness and Belief
- b. Knowledge
- c. Skills

## **II. Awareness of LATINX'S Worldviews**

- a. Awareness and Beliefs
- b. Knowledge
- c. Skills

## **III. Culturally Responsive Behaviors**

- a. Awareness and Beliefs
- b. Knowledge-culturally-relevant
- c. Skills

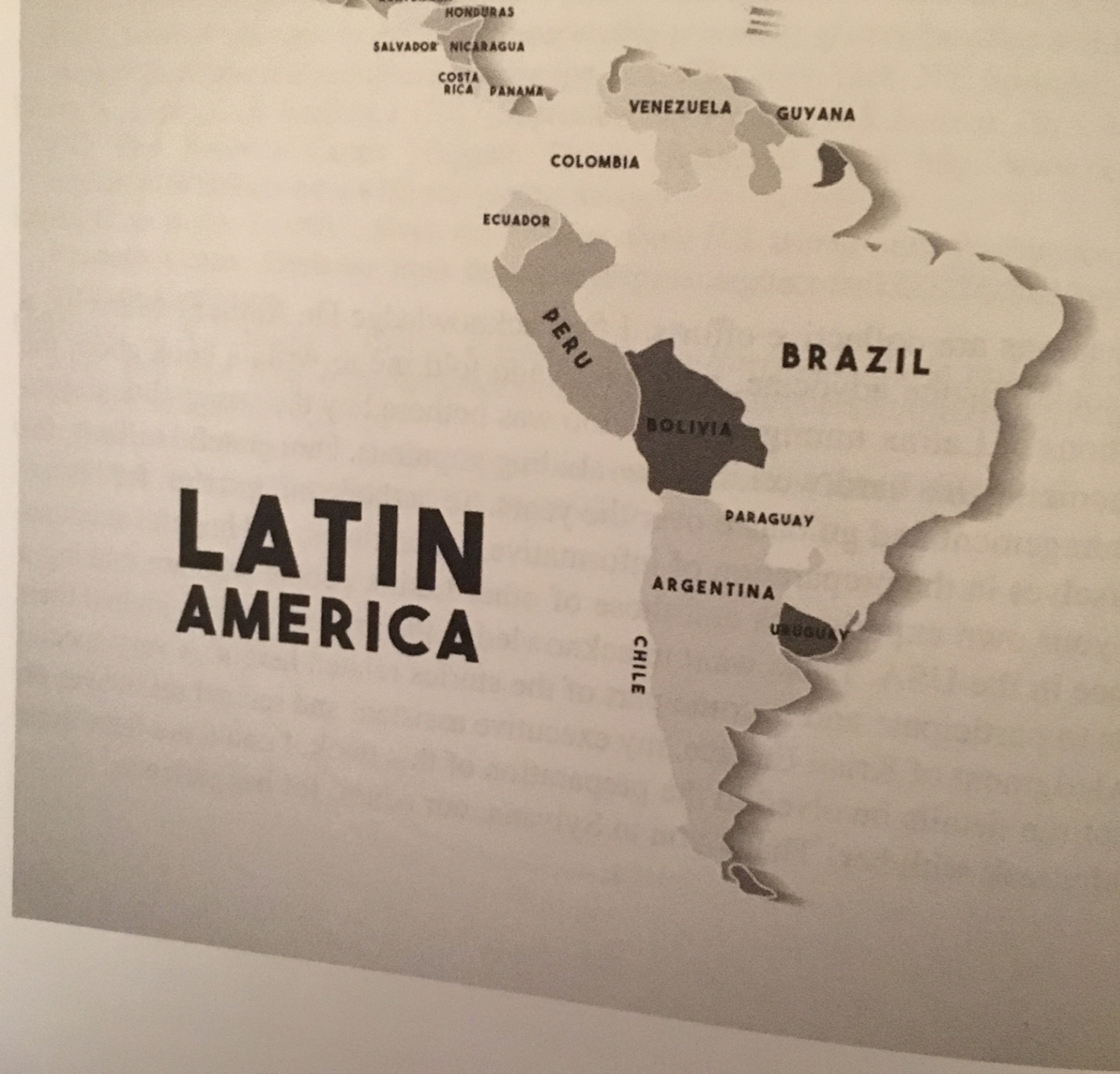
# Sí o No?

- 1. Puerto Ricans are American Citizens.
- 2. One in 10 hate crimes (2012-2016) victimize Latinxs.
- 3. Prejudice based on color affects Latinx people the most.
- 4. Depression and anxiety are the most common clinician diagnoses for Latinx women and men.
- 5. Latinxs continue to thrive because of family-centeredness and other cultural values.
- 6. Latinx people live in the “cultural borderlands”.
- 7. There is a correlations between religiosity and sense of well-being.



# 20 Spanish-Speaking Countries

- ▶ Mexico
- ▶ Central American countries
- ▶ Caribbean countries
- ▶ South American countries



Patricia Arredondo *Editor*



Latinx Immigrants

# Latinx Immigrants

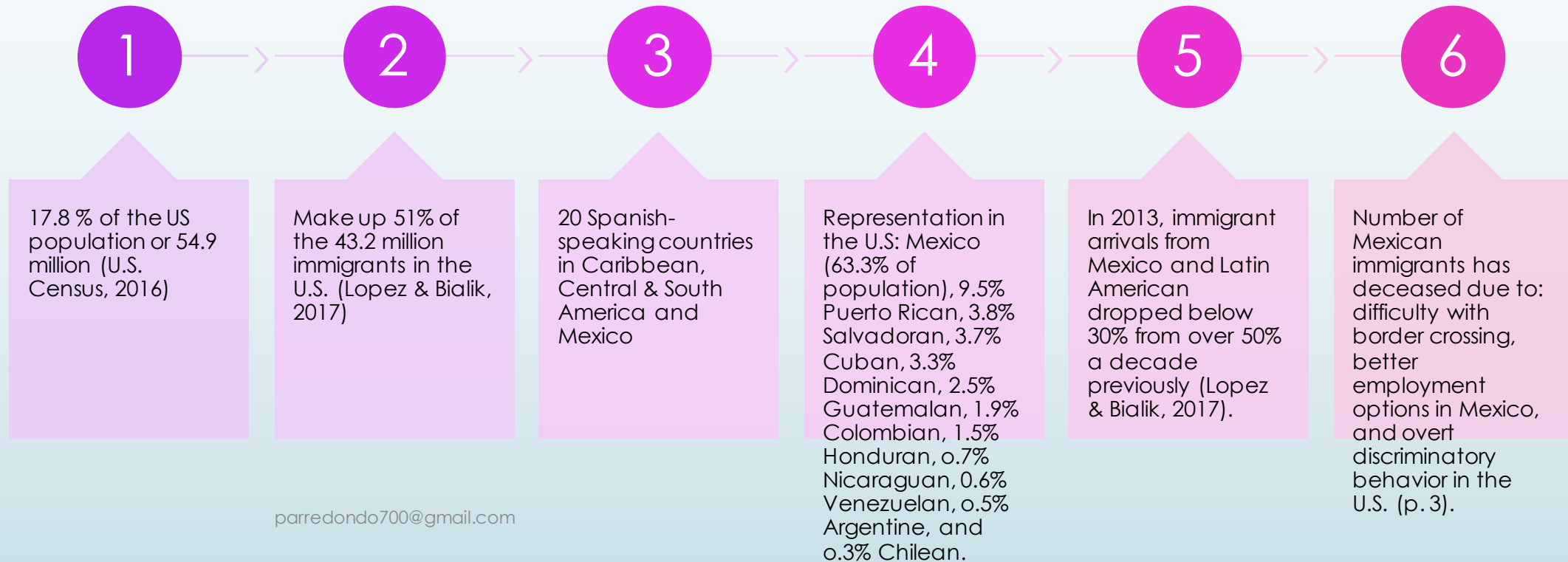
Transcending Acculturation and  
Xenophobia

# The Strengths and Mindset that Underlie Resilience and “Success” Stories

(Excerpts from Latinx Immigrants)

- Guitar makers from Mexico—family legacy and tradition (Hipolito-Delgado)
- Post-“Maria”, Wilfredo left the island of Puerto Rico and settled in Texas. Three months later, he re-established his tattoo business. He enjoys using his art to help people remain connected to their homeland (Capielo, et al).
- “The migration experience propelled me to develop a unique place in my family...because I had some English language skills. I became a sort of ambassador for us.”  
(Cadenas, immigrant from Venezuela, PhD., junior faculty, and DACA leader)

# The Context: Demographics



# Demographic Realities 2005 & 2050

► White	67%	47%
► Latinx	14%	29%
► African American	13%	13%
► Asian American/PI	5%	9%
► Elderly	12%	19%
► Latinx current median age: 28		
► Consumer buying power \$1.3 trillion		

# Unauthorized Immigration

- In 2016, 12 million immigrants from Mexico in the U.S., 45% were undocumented
- Number of Mexican immigrants in U.S. undocumented has declined by more than 1 million since 2007.
- Mexican unauthorized immigrant adults are more likely to be long-term residents in the U.S. As of 2016, 80% had been in the country more than 10 years; 8% only less than 5 years.
- Short-term residents decline, and long-term residents rise.
- Apprehensions of more non-Mexican immigrants in 2017.

# Constructs for Understanding Latinx Immigrant Experiences

- Loss as with the Kubler-Ross model: shock/denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance
- Acculturation: processes of change—cognitively, emotionally and behaviorally. Manifests in dual consciousness (W.E. Dubois), and having to walk the cultural borderlands (Anzaldúa). Acculturative stress;
- Immigrants can understand their emotions of survivor's guilt, self-blame, or reluctance to speak about the past. Why context counts; try to not retraumatize.
- Immigration trauma: exposure to the process alone may be the traumatic experience let alone another incident (assault, seeing someone killed or die), immigration-specific assessments needed because typical trauma assessments do not pick it up.
- Consider the Adverse Childhood Survey and how necessary it is to include topics related to immigration for children. Children separated from parents, warehoused, alone for migration, etc.

# Post-Migration Years: Tasks

- Managing sociopolitical stressors
- Understanding and mediating developmental differences within the family and intergenerational tensions
- Managing losses and other emotions
- Persevering to meet goals



# The Sociopolitical Context--Stressors

- Racist talk about Latinx by the president continues; during the campaign, and now
- DHHS reported loss or 1475 children because of separation from parents (Wang, 2018)..
- Demonization of refugees from Central America is another example of racist attitudes; they identified one MS-13 person but you hear other rhetoric.
- Giving people from El Salvador refugee status took more than 10 years though the CIA was present in the country during their 12-year civil war. Temporary Protective Status was given to refugees but it will end in 2019.

# Stressors and Challenges

- Stressors related to housing, employment, education, access to healthcare, safety, and dealing with sociopolitical dynamics of racism, discrimination based on color and language, and hate crimes;
- Hate crimes in top 10 US cities were up 12.46% from previous year; 2016-2017 (The Conversation, academic journalism)
- **Six most targeted groups in 2016**, according to the FBI were African Americans, lesbians, gays and bisexuals, whites, Jews, Latinos, and Muslims. Race is the most common category comprising 57% of all hate crimes. AA were at the lowest proportion of hate crimes since 1992, though still the most targeted.
- Most common hate crimes were Anti-Black, anti-semitic, anti-gay, and any-Latinx.
- According to the FBI, **hate crimes toward Latinx people have increased by 15% in 2016, accounting for 10% of hate crimes overall.**
- Most hate crimes toward Latinx people are underreported for fear of the police, deportation possibilities, and retaliation in the neighborhood.

# Stressors

- ▶ **Effects of racism and overt hate speech:** distrust, fear to lie, keep children home from school (building a border wall for Halloween, or bullying kids by other kids, telling them to go back); increased anxiety—sleeplessness, sluggishness, poor appetite, somatic symptoms for adults and children alike).
- ▶ **Issues in multi-status families:** stigma of illegality; tensions because one child has privileges and others do not; parents who are undocumented and their children live in fear of possible deportation.

# Life Changes: effects “here and there”

- ▶ The post-migration period is about the collective good and interdependence not just one individual’s changes and adaptation. “Living the American dream” also requires continuing to **Honra a tus mayores y aprecia a tus menores** (Respect your elders and appreciate your children); it is about *familia* and *familismo*.
- ▶ Managing relationships with families back home; remittances. Considerable transnational behavior continues with check-ins, sending \$, continuing traditions, and so forth.
- ▶ Protective factors: the familia, one’s faith, siblings, ethnic pride/orgullo, traditions, hopefulness, determination to meet goals. **Cardoso & Thompson:** Immigration per se is not a “risk factor for a negative outcome”, but the negative experiences surrounding the immigration and acculturation process become the stressors and negative forces.

# Latinx Cultural Values as Sources of Strength

(values are one anchor)

- ▶ The family/familismo, networks, and systems of interdependence to combat strain of discrimination and daily microaggressions.
- ▶ If move here with a friend, there is a lot of interdependence for housing, employment, and other resources. Collective good.
- ▶ Roles, rules, and responsibilities for women and men are socialized.
- ▶ Respeto, obligation, and responsibility.
- ▶ Family closeness and interdependence can be a double-edged sword in mixed-status families.
- ▶ Study: 35% reported they believe there are shared values among Latinx people from different countries. 38% reported shared values with people in the home country and U.S.
- ▶ Acculturation leading to change: longer here, second or third generation, color, education and other resources may contribute to assimilation. Chileans prefer to identify as white, more readily marry individuals of European or White heritage, and avoid mixing with other Latinx groups (p. 8).

## Communication Demeanor and Behavior Grounded in Values of

- Amabilidad
- Simpatía
- Caridad
- Maintaining harmony; using dichos to scold or encourage,
- *No hay mal que bien no venga*
- *Honra tus mayores y aprecia tus menores*

# Spirituality and Religion

- Spirituality is a broad construct that includes humanistic values, religious affiliation, and beliefs in a higher power” (p. 188).
- Judeo-Christian, African, and indigenous beliefs merge into healing practices known as *curanderismo*. Though people may have healthcare coverage, they may still turn to a curandero for relief.
- Curanderismo can include deceased and present significant others.
- Client’s belief system supports spiritual and healing practices (Cervantes, 2010; Comas-Diaz, 1981, 2003). One’s faith and belief system of a higher power can be another anchor in times of challenge and adversity. People turn to prayer.
- For Latinx people, **Fortaleza** (*inner strength*), **esperanza** (*hope*), are two highly valued virtues for people facing adversity. Thus, healing beliefs generally involve the mind-body, and spirit

# Culturally Relevant Knowledge

- Connections to early religious practices, social connections and family tradition were important to current religiosity (Moreno & Cardemil, 2018), more so for immigrant Mexicans than U.S.-born Mexican Americans. Life stress motivates them to turn to their religious communities, especially those with financial stressors or who were undocumented.
- Religiosity helps individuals' psychological well-being.
- Explanations by external factors allows immigrants to explain life events caused by supernatural forces.



## Latina/o Dimensions of Family & Personal Identity

### **“A” Dimensions:**

Age/Generational Status  
Culture/Euro/Mestizo/Indigenous  
Gender/Marianismo/Machismo  
Language/Regional Accents  
Physical/Mental Status  
Phenotype  
Sexual Orientation  
Social Class

### **“B” Dimensions:**

Acculturation Status  
Citizenship Status  
Educational Background  
Place of Origin/Geographic Location  
Family Relationship Status/Familismo  
Religion/Spirituality/Folk Beliefs  
Work Experience  
Health Care Practices/Beliefs  
Identity Status (Self-referent labels)  
Economic Status

### **“C” Dimensions:**

Personal/Familial/Historical Eras/ Events  
Sociopolitical Forces/Institutional Experiences

## Immigration is a defining moment for one's identity development and salience of multiple identities in the "cultural borderlands"

- Inclusive identity
- Multiracial identity/colorism: mestizaje from birth
- Gender identity and gender socialization.
- LGBTQ, gender, religious and/or spiritual
- Ex: Cubans arriving in the Peter Pan movement were separated from their family of origin, often leading to distress in the B dimension with respect to education and employment; sense of loss followed them.
- DACA individuals: Here by the age of 16 and no older than 31.
- Regardless, immigrants live in the cultural borderlands though color, education, employment, and geographic location can mitigate the acculturation process.

# Clinician's Best Practices

- ▶ Think analytically about the client and client family: history, sociopolitical context, development stage (s), career/life goals. Do perspective-taking.
- ▶ Families are often operating in the crossroads for years and years. There are life-cycle transitions individuals are going through at different times.
- ▶ See individual with their multiple dimensions of identity, not just their national heritage; work with the entire person and help them to recognize their assets; how they have done it before.
- ▶ **Solution-focused and pragmatic.**

# Additional Clinical Practices

- ▶ Falicov: MECA: multidimensional ecosystemic, comparative approach invites attention to **four areas: migration, ecological context, family organization, and family life cycle**. Also gives the therapist the opportunity to consider multiple cultural contexts in which they and the family are embedded—race, social class, religion, occupation, and language.
- ▶ Allow individuals to express emotions in their primary language—Spanish
- ▶ Use narrative, storytelling approaches.
- ▶ Always discuss family, here and there
- ▶ Affirm individual and family coping mechanisms; ask how they get through the tough times.
- ▶ Assist in stress management (avoid re-traumatizing)
- ▶ Inquire about traditions or other behaviors that are helpful to get through the day, week, etc.
- ▶ Share a favorite *dicho* (older folks)

# Familial Stories and Sense-making

Excerpts from *Latinx Immigrants* (Arredondo, 2018)

- ▶ “*Guantamera...Guajia Guantanamera*”. This was one of the first songs I learned as a child. I vividly recall the emotional calls from Cuba one time a month, and my mother’s sorrow from family distance and the embargo.”

(40-year old, woman PhD, university administrator)

“My re-immigration into the U.S. was spurred by the devastating earthquake of 1976. The earthquake killed approximately 22,000 people and left another million homeless. The foundation to our home was destroyed and my mother had left Guatemala for a job in the U.S. just four days earlier. I was left in the care of my grandmother until my mother was established. (45 year old, woman, PhD, faculty, spouse and mother)

# Necessary Knowledge about Latinx Individuals and Familias

- Experiences with everyday racism and microaggressions
- Precipitators of anxiety, stress, and depression
- Family styles and “traditional” roles, rules and responsibilities for women and men
- Ethnic identity expression and relevance (pride)
- Immigrant-specific pre to post migration motivation, change, cultural buffers, and resilience
- Acculturation can be a long-term change process.

# Developing an asset-based Mindset about Latinx Individuals

- ▶ Cultural curiosity: from monolithic to complex thinking about individuals' uniquenesses;
- ▶ Latinx people want the best for their children;
- ▶ Recognizing “B Dimensions” as assets; achievements and aspirations;
- ▶ Values of *familismo*, *simpatía*, *respeto* matter

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*Culturally  
Responsive*  
**Counseling**  
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**Dr. Arredondo** has dedicated her career to advancing multicultural competencies and social justice principles. A scholar-practitioner, she has authored and co-authored seven books and more than 100 journal articles, book chapters, and bilingual video productions. Her areas of scholarship include Latinx and immigrant mental health, women's leadership, organizational diversity, and multicultural competency development. Her most recent book is *Latinx Immigrants: Transcending Acculturation and Xenophobia* (Springer, 2018). It discusses experiences about immigrants from 11 countries.

For her servant leadership, Dr. Arredondo was recognized as a Business Leader of Color by Chicago United in 2016. Most recently, she was named by APA as *Changemaker: Top 25 Women of Color Psychologist*. In higher education, Dr. Arredondo has been a tenured full professor and senior administrator with ASU and the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee and senior administrator. She served as president of The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Chicago campus. Currently, she is Faculty Fellow, Fielding Graduate University and President of the Arredondo Advisory Group based in Phoenix.

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