**Discussion: Diversity and Health Assessments**

May 2012, Alice Randall wrote an article for *The New York Times* on the cultural factors that encouraged black women to maintain a weight above what is considered healthy. Randall explained—from her observations and her personal experience as a black woman—that many African-American communities and cultures consider women who are overweight to be more beautiful and desirable than women at a healthier weight. As she put it, “Many black women are fat because we want to be” (Randall, 2012).

Randall’s statements sparked a great deal of controversy and debate; however, they emphasize an underlying reality in the healthcare field: different populations, cultures, and groups have diverse beliefs and practices that impact their health. Nurses and healthcare professionals should be aware of this reality and adapt their health assessment techniques and recommendations to accommodate diversity.

In this Discussion, you will consider different socioeconomic, spiritual, lifestyle, and other cultural factors that should be taken into considerations when building a health history for patients with diverse backgrounds. Your Instructor will assign a case study to you for this Discussion.

**To prepare:**

* Reflect on your experiences as a nurse and on the information provided in this week’s Learning Resources on diversity issues in health assessments.
* By Day 1 of this week, you will be assigned a case study by your Instructor. ***Note***: Please see the “Course Announcements” section of the classroom for your case study assignment.
* Reflect on the specific socioeconomic, spiritual, lifestyle, and other cultural factors related to the health of the patient assigned to you.
* Consider how you would build a health history for the patient. What questions would you ask, and how would you frame them to be sensitive to the patient’s background, lifestyle, and culture? Develop five targeted questions you would ask the patient to build his or her health history and to assess his or her health risks.
* Think about the challenges associated with communicating with patients from a variety of specific populations. What strategies can you as a nurse employ to be sensitive to different cultural factors while gathering the pertinent information?