

Cross Cultural Newsletter

10th December 2013

Dear Members

Once again, we have come to the end of another fruitful year. However, before we break for our well-deserved holidays, there are more tasks to complete. I must therefore apologise for this belated newsletter.

Our last meeting was on 25th of November at which **Prue Fisher** gave us a very enlightening talk about Critical Health Psychology: dilemma in cross cultural applications. On the service, the subject seems novel to me. But in fact, the principles are very much closer to our hearts and our daily practices. Because of the novelty, I do not feel worthy enough to provide a summary of Prue's talk but only to highlight the main areas Prue expounded on. Those interested, please send for the DVD.

Prue introduced her work, discussed the nature of critical health psychology and used a specific clinical case illustrating the dilemma of working with the model cross culturally.

Prue works at the National Women's Health Psychology Service, where she has established a programme which automatically screens for Family Violence, and also operated an Adolescent Multidisciplinary Clinic for young women with complex gynaecological conditions.

Having introduced her work, Prue highlighted the principles of Critical Psychology which not only draws on traditional evidence based research but also embraces many principles from sociology including social justice, post modernism and gender studies. In order to help clients, therapeutic strategies need to extend far beyond the boundaries of individual approaches to embrace a wider social context such as advocacy and recruiting new resources. This is especially important to many migrants for whom resources are limited.

Prue then used the case of an Indian lady suffering from Pain disorder consequent of complications from delivery to illustrate both the

applications of Critical Health Psychology and the dilemmas in cross cultural practice. As therapeutic input involved multiple disciplines, a comprehensive bio-psychosocial formulation would facilitate the coordination of various disciplines. The case also illustrates dilemmas encountered e.g. the blurring of roles between being client's advocate and clinician.

Lastly, Prue summarised various dilemmas intending to stimulate further discussions. The dilemmas included research, advocacy, ethical problems, and how therapy would need to be different when dealing with people from various migrant populations.

The talk stimulated much discussion. There were also many suggestions from the audience which helped to widen Prue's resources. As in the past few meetings, the discussions went well into the night. We did not finish until 8.30 pm. The DVD would include such discussions.

This evening's meeting have further confirmed that cross cultural meetings do not only provide our members with opportunities to widen their knowledge, but also an arena for them to congregate, confer, and more importantly, to share experiences with each other. To further these latter functions, our plans for next year would be to have more interactive sessions like this. By inviting a panel to discuss with the audience about practical issues through case studies (modified for confidentiality reasons), it is hoped that we could attain the goal of further broadening of our experiences and clinical horizon.

HIGHLIGHT OF NEXT YEARS PRESENTATIONS.

At this juncture, our plans are to have a few more practical sessions including that on family therapy for other cultures such as the Indian family (as suggested by one of our members); inviting the police to discuss further some of the practical difficulties with managing and reporting violence and sexual abuse amongst some of the

migrant clients in whom shame is often a deterrent; and management of Qi Gong induced disorders.

Lastly, we expect to start again next year in February.

On behalf of the Cross Cultural Interest Group, let me wish you all another fruitful and rewarding year.

May I wish a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you all!

Yours sincerely,

S Wong

For Cross Cultural Interest group.

For a more accurate rendition of the presentation, please request the DVD from Diane Evans at dianee@adhb.govt.nz - please send a \$2 stamp to help cover costs.

See you in February!!

