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創意藝術 治療交流

邁進身心靈健康工作坊及研討會

Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore Creative Arts Therapy Exchange:
Symposium and Workshops Towards Health on Body, Mind and Spirit

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Documentation



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2) 6 & 7 July 2015: Compassion Fatigue & Ethical Practice Part 1 & Part 2

Compassion fatigue is something that as caregivers, in whatever capacity, experience from the roles and responsibilities that we assume when living with, working with or being with others that require our attention and care. Oftentimes our own self-care is minimized and/or ignored in order to prioritize the needs of others. Unfortunately, left neglected this leads to compassion fatigue that further leads to compromised levels of care that then impacts our intended positive intention(s). As a professional psychodynamic art psychotherapist I have witnessed first-hand how creative self-expression can begin to address this important concept, proactively re-frame and re-define our roles and expectations of ourselves and others, and to prevent full-fledged burnout. Art therapy is a non-intrusive, easily accessible, strengths-based and creative modality that strategically promotes self-awareness and self-expression either through verbal and/or nonverbal means.

Professional therapists are guided by established best practices and ethics, and they have a responsibility to sensitively monitor their own mental health and wellbeing in order to remain effective especially while working with vulnerable groups of people.

Objective(s) of the workshop

- 1) Participants will be able to define compassion fatigue as it relates to their experience.
- 2) Participants will learn two creative techniques to acknowledge and address any stress and/or frustration that they may experience from their role(s) as caregiver.
- 3) Participants will create an art object that will serve to enhance their interaction(s) with those in their care.

Art experiential (series provided over 2 sessions)

- 1) Create a visual name card for yourself using both sides of the cardstock; write your roles on one side, your job/job description on the other and use visuals where you like. This aimed to focus participants and to have them consider their professional self in a guided exercise.
- 2) Create an artwork depicting your work setting including your space. This provided the opportunity for participants to reflect on the physical layout of the setting and how they fit into the blueprint.
- 3) Create a sculpture that represents your workload. Oftentimes we discuss how busy we are and may unknowingly become disgruntled and may even distort our perception of our current situation and/or our perceived expectations of others. This activity creatively depicts our busyness and the participant has authority over how this is created, reduced and/or addressed.
- 4) List your passions & successes. This served to acknowledge the positive aspects of what we do and to reframe perhaps some of our misguided negative preoccupations.
- 5) List your challenges & frustrations. This brought into focus the reality of working in such a profession and to acknowledge that often we encounter and address many difficult situations and dilemmas as part of our daily working experience.
- 6) Words of hope, support, encouragement. Each participant contributed a word to the group list and then individually selected one of the words to create multiple miniature objects that were then used for the next activity (#7).

7) Solidarity exchange. Participants exchanged their word object with each member of the group and collected these in their own basket. This served to illustrate that one does not work in isolation and that we must support each other as a way to also support ourselves. Collaboration, networking and building sustaining relationships were at the core of this activity.

This workshop provided a series of activities for participants to explore self-care, compassion fatigue, and ethics as related to their own professional practice. It also served to illustrate how engagement in the arts can effectively enhance one's overall experience, to find ways to self-care, to find balance, and to find ways to become rejuvenated so that they can continue with making a profound impact on the lives of those they provide services to.

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Online resources:

www.healthycaregiving.com
www.compassionfatigue.org

Words of Appreciation:

The generous hospitality of all those that organized this symposium and series of workshops is greatly appreciated. Thank-you for extending your kind invitation to present my clinical and academic experiences, observations and perspective, and to develop our links and networks within Asia. It is through such professional exchange that knowledge is shared and embraced, and through which the field of art(s) therapy is further cultivated. Again, thank-you.