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Positive psychotherapy/psychiatry: Transcultural challenges in mental health and wellness

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This session will present and discuss the importance of culture, multiculturalism and Positive Psychotherapy (PPT). Globalization contributes to the exchange of cultural values. Though the global economy is often discussed and debated as globalization, its cultural aspects are the least noticed and appreciated. Nonetheless, humans think, believe, and behave through culture and in the process create and sustain culture. According to sociologist George Herbert Mead, it is through this interactive relationship between humans and culture that has evolved over time because of globalization. Realizing that culture is an essential determinant in human reality, mental health professionals are forced to recognize that multicultural-minded people will no longer be satisfied with traditional conceptions and models of the human psyche that forces one's experiences into an individually-centered or technocratic framework. Rather, a deliberate, cultural reflection is needed to account for the diversity of the human condition and humans' innate capacities in an adequate way; hence, PPT. PPT is an integrative multicultural approach to therapy founded in 1968 in Germany. The rationale for the session is to discuss PPT, as a scientifically sound and effective therapeutic theory and model that integrates different psychological philosophical, religious and sociological perspectives to bear in order to empower people to become his/her own advocates of health. Positive psychotherapy is practiced in more than 33 countries with roughly over 40 independent centers and institutions throughout the world. PPT has been successfully applied in many cultures in remedying symptoms and psychological disorders with an indication for individual psychotherapy such as depression, anxiety, sexual disturbances, stress, aggression, phobic symptoms, nervousness, stomach ailments, learning difficulties, as well as a wide range of psychosomatic disorders. For example, the multicultural and faceted nature of PPT is evidenced in group therapy and family therapy for disorders and conflict situations as well as child and youth therapy. In medicine, PPT has been especially helpful for general practitioners and internal medicine doctors by providing basic psychosomatic treatment methods. Outside of therapeutic settings, therapist use PPT as a primary prevention by supplying information and training to school principals and vice-principals, school psychologists, parent(s) groups, in teaching kindergarten teachers, and other educational settings. As a metatheory, PPT practitioners use techniques from other modalities as well when needed by the clients. Hence, the flexible nature of PPT also for it to be used effectively in individual therapy, group therapy and education settings.