February, 2018 in Australia

Culture and Family Therapy

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IN SEARCH OF DIVERSIFIED FAMILIES
The Development, Ecology, and Future of Family Therapy in Asia

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

2018
10/25-28
TAIPEI

This year in Tsukuba, Japan, we had a wonderful experience of dialogue among family therapists from not only Asia but also other parts of the world. We had a great time learning, inspiring, stimulating, and challenging one another.

In the coming year, we would like to invite you to Taiwan and continue the exchange. We look forward to another round of dialogue on our mutual concern on family therapy, including the status quo establishment of family therapy in different parts of Asia and the world, how the profession has been evolving in each area, and how we would like to further develop from here. The activities will focus on three parts: Culture, Training and Dialogue.

Practitioners and researchers from all parts of the world who are interested in couple, family, and therapy are most welcomed. We will also focus on engaging in dialogues on culture-related issues in family and relationship, locally established training systems, and how can we enrich our dialogue among us, as well as develop further collaborations along the way.

Please mark the dates for this event! Further announcement will come shortly.

Hao-Wei Wang, M.D.
Chair of the AAFT 5th Conference Organizing Committee
Menu

• Cultural Sensitivity
• Japanese culture and family
• My own family story
• Hikikomori adolescents who withdraw from social life
• Case Presentation
• Dialogue/Discussion
In Search for my Cultural Identity

• Cultural Identity as a Person
  – “Go West”
  – Look East

• Cultural Identity as a Japanese (Asian) therapist
  – What are we (culture, family, person) in Asia?
    • Cultural, family resilience?
  – What are we as family therapists?
    • Strength/Shortcoming?
Person of the Therapist Training

• “Person” include...
  – Individual, Family, Culture, Ethnicity/Race,
  – Gender, Sexuality, Spirituality

• Exploring/Sharing own “Person” in a safe container.

• Sensitivity to yourself.

• Sensitivity to the clients
High School Exchange Student in the USA
High School Yearbook in 1976, USA.
“Tiki comes to Granite Falls”

• How different this small town from Tokyo, Japan. My school used to be much larger than GFHS.
• But if you look at individuals very carefully, you will find people are the same across the world. We cry when we are sad, and laugh when we are happy.
• I am a Japanese, and you are Americans, but we are all people of the earth.
• Cultural Relativist Position
  – Maximizing the differences (alpha bias)

• Cultural Universalist Position
  – Maximizing the similarities (beta bias)

Ref) Hare-Mustin (1988)
I was in London for F.T. training.
Individualism

• Self-Reliance
• Assertiveness

Collectivism

• Harmony
• Sensitivity
Silence

Verbalize
(Confession)
Lifelong Parent/Child Relationship

• Family Life Cycle
  – Adolescents never leave home
  – Parents never launch children

• Filial Piety
  – Respecting elders (parents)
## Family Life Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica McGoldrick</th>
<th>Takeshi Tamura</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Young Adult: Leaving home</td>
<td>Never leave home; Belonging to a family of origin until marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The new couple: Joining of individuals through marriage</td>
<td>The new couple: Joining of families through marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families with young children: Accepting new members into the system</td>
<td>Strong mother/child bonding kicks father out of the family system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families with adolescents: Flexible boundaries for children’s independence</td>
<td>Parents remain emotionally attached to grown-up children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launching children</td>
<td>Never launch children, stay emotionally connected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families in later life; Maintain own functioning in the face of decline</td>
<td>Trying to be independent, but seeking support from children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Family Life Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica McGoldrick</th>
<th>In Japan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leaving home</td>
<td><em>Never</em> leave home emotionally</td>
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<td>The new couple: Joining of individuals through marriage</td>
<td>The new couple: Joining of families through marriage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Launching children</td>
<td><em>Never</em> launch children, stay emotionally connected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Families in later life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender

• Traditional pattern for older generation
  – Women to stay home, care taker
  – Men to stay outside,

• Egalitarian pattern for new generation
My Family Story

• Extended/nuclear family
• Gender
• Attachment with my parents
• Filial Piety
• Family Crisis
• Attachment with my children
Filial Piety

- Life-long parent/child relationship
- Responsibility, Obligation
Grandfather’s message on their Golden Wedding

- Fire get old to become ashes
- and warm up the next fire
- The fire embraced by ashes warms up the ashes
- Supporting each other
- Human life is the same
Attachment to my Children

• Projecting HOPE.

• Projecting ANXIETY.
Attachment

• Connection
• Love
• Intimacy
• Relationship
Attachment

• Childhood
  – Toward Parents (Guardian)

• Adulthood
  – Couple, Partnership (Horizontal)
  – Parent/Child (Vertical)
  – Primary Group in the Community
    • e.g. Classmates in school, Colleagues in workplace, Friends in neighborhood
    • Sense of Belonging
    • Share the same “Air”
Adult Attachment

• In the Family
  – Horizontal (couple, partnership)
  – Vertical/Generational (parent/child)

• In the Society
  – Individualism
    • Independence
  – Collectivism
    • Attachment in the primary group
      – (school, workplace, community network)
Attachment Theory

• Secure Attachment

• Insecure Attachment
  1. Anxiously Attached (clinging)
     • Enmeshed relationship
     • Dependency, Substance abuse
     • Domestic Violence (spousal, parent/child)
     • In-law conflict
  2. Fearful-Avoidant
     • Loner
     • Hikikomori (social withdrawal), School Refusal
     • Absent father, Distant marriage
Connected or Separated

- Individualism vs. Collectivism
- Explicit vs. Implicit expression of emotion
- Autonomy vs. Filial Piety
- Inter-dependence (Amae) vs. Independence
- Enmeshment vs. Disengagement
Confidence

SECURE Attachment

COLLECTIVISM
• Intimacy
• Happy Marriage

CLINGING
• Enmeshment
• Projection
• Abuse, Violence

INSECURE Attachment

INDIVIDUALISM
• Self-Reliance
• Freedom

AVOIDANT
• Disengaged
• Divorce, Separation
• Isolation

Fear/Anxiety
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connectedness</th>
<th>Separateness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attachment</td>
<td>Independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security, Support</td>
<td>Self-Reliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relying On</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Isolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projection</td>
<td>Disengagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enmeshment</td>
<td>Loneliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Differentiation (M. Bowen)

• Ability to move around separated/connected according to the situation.
  – Comfortably Connected.
  – Comfortably Separated.

• Fear of Isolation
  – Obsessively Connected.

• Fear of Intimacy
  – Obsessively Separated.
Mindfulness of Others

• https://www.facebook.com/dkthehuman/videos/897449253740190/
Who comes first?

Self

Others
Self-Centered

Self

Assertiveness, speak out!

Others
Others-Centered

Enryo 遠慮

Self

- Putting others first
- Sensitivity to others
- Self-sacrifice
- Maintain harmony
OUTSTANDING

• The nail that sticks out gets hammered in.
  – The best policy is to keep your head down
• Tall trees catch much wind.
## Communication Pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensitive (Non-assertive)</th>
<th>Assertive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Others-Centered (Others &gt; Self)</td>
<td>Self-Centered (Self &gt; Others)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self in a GROUP</td>
<td>Self as Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>group-reliant</td>
<td>Self-reliant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony (Group oriented)</td>
<td>Outstanding (individual oriented)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implicit message</td>
<td>Explicit message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependency, enmeshed</td>
<td>Independence, differentiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain connectedness</td>
<td>Maintain Separateness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay together and DO NOTHING</td>
<td>DO SOMETHING and leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internalize the pain</td>
<td>Externalize the pain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**
- When the focus is on others, it is considered non-assertive.
- When the focus is on oneself, it is considered assertive.
- Harmony (Group oriented) indicates a group-centric approach, while outstanding (individual oriented) indicates an individual-centric approach.
Giving is the Best Communication

- Dr Prajak Arunthong's Story
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7s22HX18wDY
Social Withdrawal (Hikikomori)

• Avoid social participation
  – e.g. School, training, employment

• Avoid social contacts
  – e.g. friends, colleagues

• Stay home for long time period
  – months, years, decades
Social Withdrawal (Hikikomori)

• Age
  – (Pre-adolescents: 6-12 years old)
  – Adolescents: teenager
  – Post-Adolescents: 20s, 30s, 40s
• Male (80%) > Female (20%)
• 1-2% of (18-25) age population in Japan.
• Exclude mental disorders
  – e.g. Schizophrenia, ADHD, Asperger, Depression
Hikikomori (Social Withdrawal) Case

• Adolescent Developmental Process
  – Individuation, Socialization

• Non-Assertive Parenting

• Gender Patter

• Hidden, Unresolved Marital Conflict

• In-law Conflict
  – Mother-in-law vs. Daughter-in-law

• Trauma in the family of origin
Therapy Process

1. Individual Sessions with Mother
2. Couple’s Sessions
3. Family Sessions
   - Parents and the Adolescent
4. Individual Sessions with the Adolescent
Hikikomori Recovering Phases

1. Conflict Phase
   – aggression

2. Withdrawal Phase

3. Experimental Phase
   – failure and success

4. Recovering Phase
   – socialization
Hikikomori and Japanese Culture

• Parent/Child Attachment
  – Never “leave home”
  – Hikiomori vs. Young Homelessness

• Gender in the family
  – Enmeshed Mother
  – Disengaged Father
  – Distant Marriage
Hikikomori and Japanese Culture

• Social Change after the War
  – Rapid Economic Growth in 1950s-80s
    • High expectation for academic achievement
    • Traditional Gender Pattern
      – “Educational Mom”
  – Economic Stagnation in 1990+
    • Stability, No change, Protectiveness

• Sensitivity in the Collective Society
  – Mindfulness of others
  – Non-assertive Parenting, Passivity

• Internet, On-line games
## Cultural Solution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>East</th>
<th>West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stability</strong></td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure relationship with isolated individuals</td>
<td>Secure individuals out of dysfunctional relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration in Group</td>
<td>Individuation of Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-dependence</td>
<td>Independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay Together and Calm</td>
<td>Act Out and Leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internalize the pain</td>
<td>Externalize the pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive, Silence</td>
<td>Active, Verbalize</td>
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