

mentalhealth academy

Disaster Mental Health Counseling
Credential Course

C-DMHC
Lecture 5 of 6 (Module 2)

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Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this lecture, you'll have:

- Increased knowledge about the use of psycho-social approach to disaster mental health counseling.
- Acquired new knowledge about the use of culturally situated disaster counseling skills.
- Augmented knowledge about the role and benefit of counselor-client collaborations

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Associated Reading

West-Olatunji, C., Goodman, R., Templeton, L., & Mehta, S. (2011). Creating cultural competence: An outreach immersion experience in southern Africa. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 33, 335-346.

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Introduction to Topics Being Covered

- A Culture-centered Model
- C-DMHC Interventions
- Community-wide Interventions

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Relevance to Practitioners

- Counselors need to prepare for the effects of climate change to meet the ever-increasing need for disaster mental health services.
- Global deployment of mental health professionals will require an increase in cultural competence.

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Case Illustration

After being deployed in post-Katrina New Orleans, I returned to my teaching responsibilities and shared my experiences with the students in my "Counseling in Community Settings" course. This allowed me the opportunity to debrief with them over several weeks and think critically about how I as teaching them to prepare for careers as mental health counselors. Based upon our discussions over the semester, I began to formulate an idea for an innovative approach to disaster mental health counseling that incorporated an understanding of multicultural counseling. Once the course had concluded, there were several students who were interested in engaging in outreach to survivors in New Orleans. After returning home from that deployment, my students and I drafted the initial version of the Culture-centered Disaster Mental Health Counseling (C-DMHC) model. Our motto of, "**flexible, mobile, and responsive**" has served us well.



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A Culture-centered Model

- Commitment to prevention
- Promote self-awareness, self-knowledge, and wellness
- Use a strength-based orientation
- Counselors as consultants; community stakeholders as providers

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A Culture-centered Model

- Implements a train-the-trainer model
 - Uses existing resources
 - Requires minimal funding
 - Relies on little interaction with other government systems
- Is rich in cultural context

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A Culture-centered Model

- Step 1: Assess
- Step 2: Consult
- Step 3: Move
- Step 4: Apply
- Step 5: Integrate
- Step 6: Reflect

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C-DMHC Interventions

Example: Use of indigenous and culture-centered healing practices that promote empowerment and voice.

Systemic (COMMUNITY-WIDE) interventions:

- **Promote sustainable resilience**
 - Builds sense of community
 - Facilitates existing strengths of community
 - Focuses on empowerment
- **Aid in Healing Various Types of Trauma**
 - Giving voice is healing
- **Are Culture-centred**
 - Bringing in voices from community members
 - Testifying

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Systemic (COMMUNITY-WIDE) Interventions

- **Select Culture-centered Interventions.**
 - Dialogue with community stakeholders to determine appropriate creative projects.
- **Consider both cognitive and expressive mediums.**
 - Written and verbal; Artistic and non-verbal.
- **Facilitate presentation of creative projects to community.**
 - Community selects presentation venue.

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The AIDS Memorial Quilt

- Created by the NAMES Project Foundation, www.aidsquilt.org
- Celebrates lives of individuals lost to HIV/AIDS around the U.S.

"The Quilt gives us our most direct feelings back; our feelings of belonging, our sense of precariousness of life, why it is worth clinging to, how it can be lived, how tragically it can be lost, how beautifully, after all, it can be relinquished, and how vibrantly it can be remembered."

Quote from participant, www.thebody.com/content/art852.html

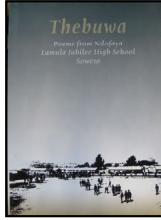


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“THEBUWA”
Poetry of High School Students

- **Thebuwa:** Poems from Ddofaya Lamula Jubilee High School Soweto.
 - **Thebuwa:** To Speak.
 - Share feelings, critique society, give testimony.
- Should I?
Should I speak what's on my mind?
Should I be the eye of the blind?
Should I open my heart about cruelty in this land?*
- Excerpt from Judge Love's "Should I?"

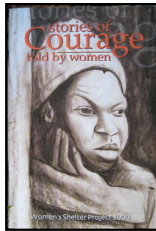


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Stories of Courage
Women Survivors of Abuse

- Stories of Courage, Told by Women; Women's Shelter Project 2000.
 - Personal experiences of women at the Women's Shelter in Gaborone, Botswana.
 - Narrative story telling focuses on experiences of abuse, coping and resilience, and systemic issues.
- "To all those abused women out here, my message is: you can get help. You do not have to put up with abuse in whatever form."*
- Excerpt from "He Didn't Buy the Goats"



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Rite of Passage (ROP)
Programs for Marginalized Youth




Rite of passage – a definition:
A ritual or ceremony signifying an event in a person's life indicative of a transition from one stage to another, as from childhood to adulthood.

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Cross-cultural Examples
Rite of Passage (ROP) Programs

- Bar/Bat mitzvah
- Vision quest
- Quinceañera
- Debutante ball
- Genpuku
- Rumspringa
- Schoolies week (graduation)
- Walkabout



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Rite of passage (ROP) programs

- Are holistic in design.
- Support the idea that children don't just become adults.
- They must be taught to become mature, responsible adults.
- Focus on instilling strong, positive sense of self and achievement.
- Aim to restore a sense of empowerment to communities through its culture-centered curricular focus.

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Types of ROP as Interventions
With Marginalized Youth

- Church-based:
 - Young Lions and Daughters of Imani
- School-based:
 - Charter Rite of Passage High School
 - Rites of Passage at BASE High School
- Community-based:
 - Ifetayo Cultural Arts facility, Inc.
 - Sisters of Tomorrow
- Government-funded:
 - Louis Armstrong Manhood Development Program

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**Types of ROP as Interventions
With Marginalized Youth**

- University-Community collaboration (research-oriented):
 - Academic STARS
 - Rite of Passage (juvenile justice)
- Wilderness:
 - Summer Youth Journeys
 - Deep Wilds Wilderness Living Skills (school)
- Single-sex:
 - A Journey Towards Womanhood
 - Boys II Men Training Academy
- Mixed-sex:
 - Rites of Passage Institute

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Rite of Passage as Tradition

- Person is not considered an adult simply because of age.
- "Woman" is defined by how well a girl has mastered the skills required by the community in order to live responsibly and productively.
- Council of elders role: Mentors, leaders, and spiritual guides.

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Dimensions of Rite of Passage Programs

- Leadership
- Purpose
- Climate
- High expectations
- Ritual, rites, and rediscovery



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Benefits

- Helps faculty, students, and practitioners to increase their understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity in the world.
- Relies on existing community resources, incorporates communities' value-laden coping strategies, and emphasizes prevention as a community-wide intervention.
- Gathers the expertise of international experts in disaster mental health using digital resource.

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Limitations

- The research on C-DMHC is relatively new. Thus, there aren't enough resources to expediently acquire new skills.
- Few supervisors have training in the area of C-DMHC to work with early career counselors and counselors-in-training.

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Next Steps

- **Think about it!** What would you pack if you knew you were going to be deployed to a community where the weather was different, the accent was different, and the cultural mores were different than you were used to?
Make a list of the items and then consider which items are personal, which items are for your clinical activity.
- **Complete Assessment 11.**

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Resources

Website:

Peruse the XULA Center for Traumatic Stress Research website (<https://www.xula.edu/ctsr/>) and view the resources on disaster mental health counselling.

Which resources seem to be most helpful?

What else would you like to see?

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