

## Therapeutic Interventions – Concurrent Sessions

Friday 20 September  
11.30am – 12.50pm

### Eliciting the stories of change

Rachel Clark, Hapori Ora Clinician, Odyssey House Christchurch

Nicola Mayall, Hapori Ora Clinician, Christchurch City Mission

Byron Strange, Hapori Ora Peer Support, Odyssey House Christchurch

Establishing a therapeutic alliance is necessary to beneficial substance treatment. Professionals have typically looked to the assessment process as an ideal time to begin creating rapport and a shared sense of purpose. Clients, on the other hand, can present at an initial assessment in a variety of states ranging from collaborative to downright hostile. It is not uncommon for clients to feel a power imbalance and withhold or fabricate information in order to feel safe.

It is the professional's job to establish this rapport and collect accurate information while building a sense of shared endeavour between worker and client, and all the time satisfying the reporting requirements of the structures they are working under.

In order to bridge the gap between professional responsibility and human story, the Hapori Ora Programme has been piloting the use of the TiHei-Wa Mauri Ora model in our assessments as a means of eliciting personal stories that highlight moments of great significance while also having a means of presenting these stories in a professional and measurable manner. This model is then used throughout treatment as a method of reporting further breakthroughs by the client. By applying this model to the clients and the professionals, it allows for a continual culture of personal discovery and growth to become the overall wairua of the programme, which invites new clients to also participate.

#### **Biographies of presenting authors**

Rachel's journey of recovery started 11 years ago when her eldest son was in the depths of addiction and, as part of his sentence, she requested he attend rehab. Rachel wanted to gain understanding and give back because she was so grateful for the changes she saw in the six months he was there. She studied for three years through Weltec and persevered through the Christchurch earthquakes, gaining a BA in AOD studies in January 2012. Rachel then spent 6½ years working in residential at Nova Trust and in June 2018 started at Hapori Ora.

Nicola's interest in human behaviour led her to undertake a degree in social work and to working in the social services field. While working in this area Nicola's interest grew and she undertook a Diploma in Gestalt Psychotherapy and began working one on one as a therapist. She was aware of the power of the group dynamic where both challenge and support from the group can

facilitate positive change. What she was not prepared for, but was extremely grateful for, was the personal learning and growth she underwent working with her amazing team and courageous clients.

Byron's life in addiction, and the behaviours which maintained his addictions, led him to isolation from family and the world around him. Byron has been in recovery for seven years and lives a life where meaningful connections with others are the norm. The things that were dysfunctional in himself and his life have become tools that may offer hope to others beginning their journey in recovery. More importantly perhaps is his experience with challenges of living as part of the world, while working through the consequences left in his future by his past.

## **Looking back, moving forward in action: Beyond the void**

*"Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results."*

Mary Allan, Alcohol and Drug Counsellor, Clinical Lecturer Post Graduate Addictions Studies

It is important as we work with people affected by addiction that we consider the role of trauma. As clinicians, a challenge is to find creative and respectful ways to allow clients to look back in order to be able to process trauma so the person and whānau can move forward.

In my clinical practice, I have developed a number of tools that are based in actions, methods, CBT and mindfulness that enable clients to develop their "caring observer role". Through the process of functional analysis (both in group and individual settings) clients develop the ability to look back and reflect on what drives certain behaviours. This empowers clients to make new choices.

It has been said that actions speak louder than words. The process of replaying difficult events from our past in a safe setting allows clients to be able to look at situations from new perspectives. Mindfulness strategies allow clients to create safe spaces which support them as they work through past traumatic events.

Addiction is about repetitive and ultimately harmful behaviors. Guiding clients through a safe process to look back (observe) and reflect on those events (role reversal) with new skills and strategies enables the emergence of new behavioural responses (with the support of the group) and successful experiences of choosing more functional coping responses, rather than alcohol and drugs.

Group exercises that clinicians can integrate into their everyday clinical work will be presented. The presentation will touch on the research of Tian Dayton TEP PhD, Bessel van der Kolk and Stephen Porges PhD.

### **Biography of presenting author**

Mary is a qualified social worker and alcohol and drug counsellor. Her current roles include working at the Salvation Army Bridge programme in Wellington. Mary has been working as a part-time clinical lecturer in Post Graduate Addictions studies for Otago University and the National Addiction Centre for the past 10 years. She has a background as a probation officer

and has facilitated alcohol and drug groups in prisons. Mary is passionate about group work and action methods, having done three years of psychodrama training.

## **Self-authoring futures: A visual methodology for transformation**

Hamish Oakley-Brown, Support Worker, Te Wairua Northland, Odyssey

We know addiction treatment is a transformative process. As practitioners and support workers, we look for ways to smooth the path in this precarious journey. We could say this voyage leads the individual on an uncomfortable expedition through time. Beginning at the middle of their stories they often advance into direct confrontation with their past only to stumble unsuspectingly into some yet unrealised future.

Art journaling provides a creative and innovative approach for people in treatment services to create their own maps to navigate this daunting course. When we create a vessel for safe reflection on the past, it generates capacity in the individual to move forward and opens a door on possibility. Person-centered and empowering, art journaling is a visual and tactile framework that promotes this capacity. It constructs a safe space where individuals can begin to re-contextualise their pasts and be vulnerable enough to re-imagine their futures.

This presentation will utilise case studies and art journaling extracts to show this work in progress. We will discuss how Symbol and Image can be employed as a powerful strategy to manage unhelpful internal dialogues and structure the re-orientation of personal narrative. Attendees will learn how to utilise art journaling as a venue grounded in the present that supports tāngata whai ora with soft thinking about the past and planning for the future.

### **Biography of presenting author**

Hamish is a freelance arts facilitator and manager of Te Kowhai Print Trust, a community-owned not-for-profit arts organisation. Hamish tutors and facilitates community arts events. He specialises in art projects promoting wellbeing through arts inclusion, including alternative education initiatives such as Te Kakano Ahau and Te Kowhai's Youth Scholarship Programme. As the recipient of Like Minds Like Us media grants award last year, he facilitated Open Books, a visual discourse on recovery for and by people in recovery. Hamish has worked for Odyssey House since 2013.

## **Transformation and wellbeing looking back, moving forward through the eyes of the 'Observer-Self'**

Bo Donna Roe, Advanced (AOD) Practitioner/Clinical Supervisor, Te Utuhina Manaakitanga Rotorua

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, Roberta Assiagoli, an Italian psychiatrist and pioneer in the fields of humanistic and transpersonal psychology, developed methods and techniques known as

psychosynthesis. This model of practice has its own professional body and school of teaching. Author Molly Young Brown is one of Assiagoli's predecessors. This presentation demonstrates one of the key tools used in psychosynthesis model of practice, the 'Observer-Self'. I would like to share this because it is fundamental to optimal transformation and recovery.

The Observer-Self is part of our metacognition that allows us to notice our body sensations, our thoughts and feelings, without having to take action. It is similar to a mind movie without judgment. Like a muscle, it needs to be exercised with specific exercises to perform well. As you develop this part of yourself, it provides a safe place to reflect by looking back and then moving forward. Research shows that life's experiences mould us all; affecting each of us individually and as a whānau. The organic process that sustains the ongoing psychological and physical pain of trauma is individual in its nature yet collective in the whānau environment. As the manifestations from these experiences grow, the debilitating effects can lead to many symptoms of poor mental health and physical conditions and addictions. I use this intervention on a daily basis in individual and group settings and have found it highly beneficial for transformation and wellbeing.

### **Biography of presenting author**

Bo's past 40 years have been a humbling experience for her through personal experiences of trauma, loss and grief as a daughter, mother, grandmother, sister, and also through her work as an AOD practitioner. As she continues on this journey of life, Bo's compassion and empathy for people continues to evolve and grow. Her passion for connecting with others drives her thirst for knowledge and strong desire to provide innovative support and encouraging facilitation that evokes self-actualising and human transformation for those affected by trauma and addiction.