

Psychotherapy, Is it successful in Asian countries?

Narasappa Kumaraswamy
University Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia

Mental health refers to the individuals' capacity for harmonious relationship with others in the environment. However, this is possible only if s/he is comfortable and happy about himself/herself. WHO recognises health as a state of physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of a disease or infirmity? Psychologists have recognised that "positive health" accompanies many more dimensions, which are interdependent, and defect in any dimension could interfere with integration of personality. Mental illness seen in Asian countries related to religion & belief system. Psychotherapists in Asian countries should well versed in cultural belief system otherwise he is not successful as therapist

Psychotherapy is a form of therapy where the use psychological principles as part of treatment. Mainly psychotherapy will be applied to treat psychological & psychiatric disorders. Psychotherapy is not very successful in Asian countries as majority of patients still rely on Medical model. In addition most of the Asian countries have still cling on to the deep rooted beliefs. Still Stigma towards mental illness is prevalent. Mental illness in the family seen as a curse from God and the first consultation will be of a traditional healer.

When we talk about psychotherapy in Asian countries, culture and belief play an important role. Each society has its own "belief system" which is deep rooted. Hence, in the psychotherapy sessions, the therapist should be well versed with the cultural belief and integrating with the therapy the patients will be much benefited. My experiences with clients religious/spiritual content in psychotherapy sessions, and how their identity may have influenced the way they interacted with religious spiritual material, special reference to cases seen in Malaysia, Brunei and India will be discussed.

Biography

Narasappa Kumaraswamy, Ph.D. holder in Clinical Psychology with 38 years of professional experience, working as Professor Madya at school of medicine, university Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia. Earlier he worked in India, Brunei & Japan. He has published 65 scholarly papers & 10 book chapters. He was key note speaker at Asian congress of Health psychology conference held at Taiwan (2010) invited speaker at international congress of Rehabilitation (2011) International Conference on Counseling, Psychotherapy & Wellbeing (2012) Invited symposium speaker at Asian congress of Cognitive Behavior Therapy to be held in Tokyo Japan (2013) Guest speaker at many local conferences. He is the recipient of International Mentoring award from APA (2003) Distinguished psychologist award from APA (2011) His area of Specialization in stress management, Psychotherapy & cognitive Behavior therapy.

kumsi2000@gmail.com