

The 9th Annual Meeting of the Chinese Association for Mental Health, Psychological Therapy and Psychological Counseling Professional Committee.

OPENING REMARKS

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Good morning everyone. I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all of the participants, presenters and guests of the 9th Annual Meeting of the Chinese Association for Mental Health, Psychological Therapy and Psychological Counseling Professional Committee. I would like to thank the organizing committee and academic committee of the conference for bringing together such an interesting group of presenters and topics. This is an exciting program with a variety of panels and workshops on psychoanalytic topics and topics from other forms of therapy all dedicated to helping the people we work with achieve a better and more constructive life. We look forward to a very productive, engaging and interactive conference.

In addition to the conference committee's work I would, also, like to take a moment and recognize Dr. Tong of the Wuhan Hospital for Psychotherapy and the Wuhan Mental Health Center and her staff for all their hard work in helping to make these days of thinking and learning together, possible.

We are here today because of the "Chinese-American Continual Training Project for Senior Psychodynamic Psychotherapists." Psychoanalysis, in the world and in the U.S., joins many other forms of psychotherapies in an attempt to repair human suffering. The suffering people endure is not a national problem but a global problem. It is this kind of conference that encourages us to share what we do and to learn from each other what approaches are available to people in need of help. We must learn from one another if we are to find solutions that are constructive. This does not mean just a learning atmosphere of agreement. It

includes an appropriate space for debate and disagreement. It is often in the heat of debate and discussion that creative solutions emerge.

Psychoanalysis is one of the oldest forms of psychotherapy. It began as Freud sought new ways of working with the problems of his day. Psychoanalysis has evolved from its early fledgling state to a very complex theory. Today it is seen as a theory with many different branches. These branches represent the application of psychoanalytic therapy from many different perspectives. This tree provides only a glance of the complex knowledge base that represents our current total composite theory. Most of these psychoanalytic traditions appreciate and share a biological/psychological and socio-cultural perspective. Some, like contemporary conflict theory, focus intensely on the unconscious fantasies that are represented in the patient's behaviour as complex compromises. Others like object relations theory focus on the internal stories or narratives that guide the individual over the course of development. Still others like interpersonal theory look for the nature of the problem in interpersonal patterns. Others, like Horney, looked at the cultural influences to explain the problems people struggle with. Recently, psychoanalytic theory has focused more intensively on various psychopathologies like pathological narcissism and the borderline pathologies. These efforts have evolved into Self Psychology, the Intersubjective and the Relational perspectives.

There are psychoanalytic practitioners who work for a lifetime in studying just one tradition but many more psychoanalysts work with multiple models expanding their own tradition and adding to others.

Today we live in a pluralistic theoretical state. It is from this state, that discoveries are made. Sometimes these discoveries or contributions are made from the very heart and safety of our practices. Othertimes they are moulded from the heat of the debate between different points of view. As new findings or new explanations emerge they find a way to integrate into the local school of thought and then often populate the broader theories. This is how a science

grows and it is our belief that the notion of science is an ideal for psychoanalysis. It is an ideal that we should continue to nurture and contribute to. However, we will continue to be made up of separate groups from different cultures with their own theories, organizations, journals, and their own meetings. These groups will continue making important contributions. How we welcome and assess these contributions will have a large impact on how well we can grow as a mental health profession. From our perspective, theory development is never finished, understanding the human being is never complete, hopefully its always growing. The challenge for us is to recognize the current reality of our psychoanalytic landscape, and to develop ways and means, places and platforms, like todays conference, so that we can talk to one another about our approaches. Productive communication and discourse -- and any chance at increasing integration requires that every advocate be able to present his or her position as clearly and forcefully as possible, to the widest possible audience.

Welcome to the conference. Welcome to Wuhan. Let's get together and listen to one another: agree, disagree, agree to disagree and find new solutions to the suffering of our patient's. Thank you.