

Presents

New understandings and effective ways of working with and healing from psychosis
Hart House – 7 Hart House Circle, University of Toronto – Ontario

Friday, June 13, 2014

Conference Foreword

The Psychosis 2.0 conference is conceived as a follow-up to the ground-breaking 2011 Leadership Project/INTAR conference which deconstructed the traditional bio-medical notion of psychosis, and offered a deeper, more hopeful analysis of the experience that is based in recovery, resilience, human diversity, acceptance and loving kindness. With Psychosis 2.0 the focus will be similarly broad and deep, as we explore trauma, adversity and alienation at the root of psychosis, and in turn, address the relationship and community as the basis for recovery transformation.

As coined by one philosopher, “society is madness”, so why is our mental health practice predicated on the pathologized and stigmatized individual? Evidence shows that society is the epigenetic matrix of psychosis so our concern for the apparent social root and psychological nature of psychosis should be primary, and the focus on the brain and neurochemistry secondary. We need a new conception of psychosis that grounds the problem in social reality, and looks for recovery in community development, inclusion and social justice. The conference will address that need by showing the social, political, inter-generational character of psychosis, and by sharing psychological knowledge and best practices that are informed by love, dignity and recovery transformation.

The Leadership Project

The Leadership Project started in 1999 with the initial idea of promoting leadership within the consumer/survivor and family communities. Our main goals quickly evolved into promoting a ‘Recovery’ vision for the Ontario mental health system, creating a space for critical dialogue between survivors, families and providers, and supporting the implementation of recovery values and best practices. To that end, the Leadership Project organizes recovery conferences, forums and workshops that are facilitated in partnership with psychiatric survivors, families and service providers.

Key Contributors and Sponsors

This conference is sponsored by the following agencies and organizations. We thank them for their support.



Conference Planning Group

The following people have contributed to planning this conference: Brian McKinnon, Carmen Carrasco, Heinz Klein, Karyn Baker, Kevin Healey and Leslie Morris.

Presentation Descriptions and Presenter Biographies

(In order of appearance)

John Read

“The Social Causes of Madness”

This presentation summarises the recent research demonstrating that hearing voices and having very unusual beliefs are not symptoms of an illness called 'schizophrenia' but are understandable reactions to life events and circumstances. The social causes of extreme distress, despair and disorientation include: poverty, childhood neglect and abuse, witnessing parental violence, early loss of parents, war trauma, discrimination and rape. The role of biological psychiatry, and the drug companies, in the minimization of the effects of social adversities will be discussed.

Bio: After working for nearly 20 years as a Clinical Psychologist and manager of mental health services in the UK and the USA Dr Read joined the University of Auckland, New Zealand. There he published over 100 papers in research journals, primarily on the relationship between adverse life events and psychosis. He also researches the negative effects of bio-genetic causal explanations on prejudice, and the role of the pharmaceutical industry in mental health. John is on the Executive Committee of the International Society for Psychological and Social Approaches to Psychosis (www.isps.org) and editor of the ISPS's scientific journal 'Psychosis'. In May 2013, Dr Read took up the post of Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Liverpool.

His books include: READ, J., DILLON, J. (eds.). (2013) Models of Madness: Psychological, Social and Biological Approaches to Psychosis, second edition – Routledge + GEEKIE, J., RANDAL, P., LAMPSHIRE, D., READ, J, (eds.). (2012). Experiencing Psychosis: Personal and Professional Perspectives – Routledge + READ, J., SANDERS P. (2010) A Straight Talking Introduction to the Causes of Mental Health Problems – PCCS Books + GEEKIE, J., READ, J. (2010). Making Sense of Madness: Contesting the Meaning of Schizophrenia – Routledge

Keris Myrick

“Medicalizing Political Struggle”

R.D. Laing stated psychosis is a sane response to an insane situation which eloquently captures the misinterpretation or medicalization of the responses to the daily stressors of discrimination and microaggressions experienced by people of color.

The exploration of the historical connections between institutional forces, psychiatric processes and "otherness" helps to contextualize the voice hearing experience for people of color.

Weaving personal story, film, images and sound we learn how Martin Luther King's "creative maladjustment" transforms political struggle into understanding, liberation and healing for voice hearers whose true voice has yet to be heard.

Bio: Keris Jän Myrick, MBA, MS, PhDc is a leading mental health advocate and non-profit executive, known for her innovative and inclusive approach to mental health reform and the public disclosure of her personal story. Ms. Myrick is currently President and CEO of Project Return Peer Support Network, a Los Angeles-based, peer-run non-profit organization. She is the President of National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

board of directors and is a consultant to the American Psychiatric Association (APA) Office of Minority and National Affairs (OMNA).

Her personal story has been featured in the New York Times' Lives Restored series and The Los Angeles Times. Keris was designated a "Game Changer" by Canadian Broadcast Centre (CBC) radio's The Current: Changing the Face of Schizophrenia.

Eleanor Longden	
"Hearing Voices: Recovery, Discovery and Transformation"	
	Talk Synopsis: Research has shown powerful links between painful life events and the experience of hearing voices. However, the association between voices and schizophrenia mean psychiatric services often respond to voice hearers in ways that maintain distress and disability rather than using people's life stories to promote healing and psychological growth. This lecture draws on the presenter's own experience of voice hearing, as well as Romme and Escher's 'construct' method, to show how voices can be understood in the context of life events, and suggests strategies for moving towards healing, recovery - and beyond.

Bio: Eleanor Longden is an award-winning postgraduate researcher with a specialist interest in psychosis, trauma, and dissociation, and has lectured and published internationally on ways to promote creative, person-centred approaches to understanding and recovering from overwhelming events. She is a three times TED speaker, a trustee of Soteria UK and Intervoices: The International Network for Training, Education, and Research into Hearing Voices, and the author of 'Learning From the Voices in my Head' (TED Books, New York: 2013).

Will Hall	
"Learning From the Open Dialogue Experience"	
	"Psychosis does not exist" is just one of many provocative concepts behind Western Finland's Open Dialogue, a new approach to crisis that is rich with applications. Low use of medications, team approach, working with families and relationships, dialogic listening, non-hierarchy and openness among professionals, non-diagnostic language, and expectation of recovery all combine to achieve the best outcomes in the world: 83% of patients returned to their jobs or studies and were not receiving government disability, and 77% did not have psychotic symptoms in a five-year follow-up study. This basic introduction to Open Dialogue asks, What vital lessons can all of us learn from these successful practices?

Bio: Will Hall MA, DipIPW is a therapist, trainer, and schizophrenia diagnosis survivor. He has taught internationally on innovations in the social response to psychosis, and his writing has appeared in the Journal of Best Practices in Mental Health, Oxford University Press's Community Mental Health Care: An Interdisciplinary Approach, and Psychology Tomorrow. Author of the 'Harm Reduction Guide To Coming Off Psychiatric Drugs', Will is host of Madness Radio and a co-founder of PracticeRecovery.com. He completed a certificate in Open Dialogue with Dr. Jaakko Seikkula, Dr. Mary Olson, and faculty at the Institute for Dialogic Practice. www.willhall.net

Terms and concepts used to describe journeys through mental distress

Resilience Survival **Rebirth** **Moving On** Journey **Freedom**
Strength **Discovery** **Transformation** Endurance
Self-determination Empowerment **Control** Healing
Social justice **Emotional strength** Liberation
Independence **Recovery** **Living** Getting better **Hope**

Michael Cornwall

"If madness/psychosis isn't what psychiatry says it is, then what is it?"

Synopsis: Michael will lead us in beginning to formulate a succinct answer to the question, "If madness/psychosis isn't what psychiatry says it is, then what is it?" He also will share proven ways of lovingly being with others in extreme states and performing self-care when we are in extreme states.

Bio: Michael Cornwall, Ph.D., a veteran of his own initiatory madness, has been serving people in extreme states for over 35 years, while also being a human rights political activist, aiding those endangered by the medical model of psychiatry.

Michael served at medication-free madness sanctuaries and completed doctoral research on Jungian John Weir Perry's Diabasis House.

He leads San Francisco Bay Area and Esalen Institute workshops and conferences on re-visioning madness and fostering ways to lovingly respond to our own and others' extreme states.

Michael is a blogger on Mad in America (madinamerica.com) and can be contacted through his Web site, What is Madness? (michaelcornwall.com).

Rufus May

"No Fear Psychosis: Honouring the method in the madness"

As Shakespeare wrote in Hamlet there is method in one's madness. What gets called psychosis are meaningful responses to troubling life experiences. If we look together at the possible symbolic meanings that psychosis represents new possibilities can emerge. Stories will be told which show the value of honouring the meaningfulness of mad experiences and both collective and individual approaches to learning from and responding to this.

Bio: Rufus May has worked as a psychologist in mental health services for over 18 years. He is interested in a compassionate and holistic approach to psychosis rooted in his own experiences as a teenager of 'powerfully dreaming while awake' and the limitations of biomedical psychiatric treatment. His work was featured in the Channel 4 documentary the Doctor Who Hears Voices. He has worked with hearing voices groups for 12 years, and the talking with voices/voice dialogue approach for 8 years. He also is interested in a community development approach to mental health, including developing inclusive educational spaces around emancipatory approaches to emotional wellbeing and living in what is very often a mad world.

Conference Location and Accommodation

* Hotel

📍 Hart House

Hotel Info:

Holiday Inn Bloor-Yorkville
280 Bloor West (St. George Subway)
Phone: 1 877 660 8550

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John Read (UK) - Keris Myrick (US) - Eleanor Longden (UK)

Will Hall (US) - Michael Cornwall (US) - Rufus May (UK)

Main Conference Registration Fee is \$160.00 per person.

A limited number of registrations at \$90 are offered to peer-workers, family members and consumers attached to community agencies. Bursaries \$40 (limited – first come, first serve) are available for people requiring financial assistance.

Registration Information

First Name		Last Name	
Organization	Full Price (\$ 160)	Peer Worker/Family (\$ 90)	CS Bursary (\$ 40)
Phone		E-Mail	

Please indicate (X)

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The **registration fee** covers lunch and refreshment breaks. Mail your registration and the attached cheque or money order. Your registration will be confirmed when payment is received. We need a registration form for each person attending the conference (please copy).

**Make cheques payable to Alternatives and mail registration(s) to:
Alternatives, 1245 Danforth Avenue, Toronto ON M4J 1M8**

Contact Information:

**Brian McKinnon 416 285 7996 ext 227
bmckinnon@alternativestoronto.org**

Cancellation Policy:

Refunds will be issued for cancellations, subject to a \$30.00 processing fee. Delegate substitutions are welcome. In the event of unforeseen circumstances (flight cancellations, etc.) the Conference Planning Committee reserves the right to reschedule, relocate or cancel