

Society For the Promotion of Hospice Care

Workshop with Mal & Dianne McKissock of Bereavement C.A.R.E. Center, Australia

Co-organized with COC (Palliative Care) of the Hospital Authority, SPHC invited the McKissocks to conduct a lecture on "Complicated Grief" in September 2002. This couple is well known to many healthcare professionals, as they have conducted many workshops and seminars in Hong Kong for the past years. To face up the challenges of an ever-changing society, health care workers need to equip with skills to deal with complicated grief. This was one of the major reasons that participants joined the seminar. Nearly 180 health care professionals attended, which had filled the Lecture Theatre of Ruttonjee Hospital. Feedbacks from the participants were very positive. Many said the case presentation helped to put the knowledge into local perspective.

Besides the seminar, Mal and Dianne had also conducted a two-day workshop for SPHC. In the workshop, we further explored issues on complicated grief. Some participants verbalized that Mal and Dianne's approach had given them new insights in dealing with clients. Many participants stated that the role-plays had helped them to experience empathy and the gentleness of counseling.



Mal & Dianne were addressing "Complicated Grief" at the seminar.



Nearly 250 health care professionals attended Dr. Neimeyer's workshop on "Meaning Reconstruction".

One-Day Workshop with Dr. Robert Neimeyer of University of Memphis

In December 2002, we were honored to have Dr. Neimeyer to be a speaker at the Hong Kong International Cancer Congress (HKICC). He is an announced speaker, scholar and researcher in the area of grief and loss. Besides attending the HKICC, he had conducted a one-day workshop on "Meaning Reconstruction & Experience of Loss", co-organized by COC (Palliative Care) and SPHC. He had also kindly conducted an internal workshop for SPHC.

In here, the highlights of the one-day workshop are recapped. It was a stimulating workshop. Dr. Neimeyer was an animated speaker. It was difficult for the participants to get bored. As a practicing clinician, he had cited many relevant examples. In some of the cited examples, he acted out as if you had met his client, and led you to empathize with the person. Although there were more than 240 participants, each participant could take part in the exercise, and role-play in a smaller group. In a participant's evaluation form, one stated that this workshop was the best one he had ever attended in his 30-year career in the field of human service.

There is one insight that was quite enlightening. Dr. Neimeyer talked about clients being creative, and some were very good at expressing through art. A participant asked what if the client was not very creative... His answer was that he had never seen a client who was not creative. In other words, it is the skills of the counselor or therapist at test. Everybody is born creative; however, sometimes it is not being tapped on. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the professionals to upgrade their skills in order to be effective.