

9<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress on **MENTAL HEALTH**

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**Combining positive psychotherapy and mind-body medicine to provide quick diagnostics and help in transcultural situation****Polina R. Efremova<sup>1</sup> and Heidi Jackson<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>NGO WAPP Support Project, Russian Federation<sup>2</sup>Center for Mind Body Medicine, Washington, USA

**Statement of the problem:** During the last few years, people have been meeting transcultural experiences more often than ever and the problem of understanding the differences and finding similarities is becoming crucial. At the same time, tragic events, such as the war in Ukraine, have led to an increase of traumatized clients, such as refugees, which demand from the mental health care system methods that provide high cultural sensitivity. The ability to understand cultural patterns of grieving, overcoming traumatic experiences, expressing emotions and asking for support demand the need to provide more specific help to each client. At the same time, some of the instruments should be applicable to any culture, so that urgent help for large groups of people is possible. Due to the lack of resources for long-term therapy in the system, these methods should also prove their effectiveness in short-term work. Therefore, the aim of this workshop is to combine two methods – positive psychotherapy and mind-body medicine – in order to provide urgent help to people regardless of their cultural or social background.

**Methodology & theoretical orientation:** Positive psychotherapy (PPT) – founded by Nossrat Peseshkian in 1968 – is a short-term humanistic method based on the psychodynamic model of conflicts and focusing on transcultural differences. PPT suggests analyzing human experiences through 4 dimensions - body (physical reactions, illnesses and feelings), activity or achievement (actions and decisions made in the situation), contact and relations (social support and relations included in the conflict), and meaning/fantasy (person's hopes, fears, expectations and concepts in the situation), which together form the individual balance model of the person.

The Center for Mind Body Medicine (CMBM) founded by Dr James Gordon in 1991 uses meditation for the conscious mind to directly affect the workings of the brain and the rest of the physical body. The techniques exert their effect on the hypothalamus, which exercises control over the autonomic nervous system (which controls heart rate, blood pressure etc.), the endocrine (glandular) system and the immune system. Mind-body medicine provides instruments of self-help that can be harmonically combined with the balance model from PPT. Soft-belly breathing, biofeedback and autogenics and the shaking and dancing techniques influence the body sphere, the group factor relates to the relationship sphere, the writing practice discloses the actions needed and the imaginary and drawing skills reveal the content of the fantasy sphere.

**Findings:** Both of these approaches integrate western and eastern experiences in treatment and influence clients whatever their cultural background. Thus, this workshop will demonstrate some of the instruments of diagnostics and interventions, which may help mental health professionals to provide effective and gentle help with limited resources.

**Conclusion and significance:** The current situation of traumatized clients from varying cultures is causing tremendous pressure on mental health professionals and some structured instruments, such as the balance model and MBM techniques, though having their limitations, will help to cope with the challenges they are facing.

**Biography**

Heidi Jackson is Faculty and a Supervisor at the Center for Mind Body Medicine. Heidi worked as an Oncology Nurse and Complementary Therapist with Oncology and Palliative care Patients for many years in Dublin and then on a career break in 2016 trained with the Center for Mind Body Medicine. Since then Heidi has been providing Mind Body Skills Groups both in person in and around Dublin and most recently online with the NHS. Heidi's interest is providing MBM to healthcare workers to prevent 'burnout' and to provide groups to the many Ukrainian refugees who have arrived in Ireland. She is part of a Global team giving training to healthcare workers/psychologists and educators across the globe. Heidi's mission is to help bring Mind Body Medicine to Ireland/ Britain and across the globe.