

## **WORKSHOP 4: “A PERSON IS A PERSON THROUGH OTHER PERSONS” – HOW CULTURE & IDENTITY ARE CONSTRUCTED THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS & BELONGING**

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### Background.

Globalization and migration trigger reflections on Cultural Identity (CI) that are salient for cultural psychiatry. Clinicians’ CIs—the sum of family attachments and social belonging—are crucial aspects of helping relationships that must be acknowledged and well-integrated when working with families across cultures.

### Aims.

This workshop examines clinicians’ CI across time: (1) origins of CI, grounded in family and social relationships; (2) current commitments and relationships that confer lives and careers with meaning; and (3) CI projected into the future—what is stable and what is subject to change. Clinicians must understand changes over time of their CIs to accompany complex CIs of migrants in flux. Such exercises aim to help clinicians to identify their own CIs which may differ significantly across cultures. Key transdisciplinary ideas will be introduced to offer reflective weight and practical pathways for exploring CI: (1) the notion of “relational self” that situates the self through social relationships; (2) “making meaning” and “narrative resources”; and (3) “commitments” and “final vocabularies” versus “liquid modernity.”

### Methods.

Workshop participants will be provided with short readings in advance covering the key ideas. After introducing the participants, the workshop begins with a theoretical overview, followed by experiential activities, centered on two CI Interviews (CI-Ints) conducted by workshop leaders with participants, each followed by a “reflecting team” dialogue with workshop participants. A group dialogue about CI and the overall experience of the CI-Ints will be followed by a wrap-up by the workshop leaders.

### Potential Outcomes.

Through this workshop, participants will experience ways to examine the complexity and nuances of their CIs and integrate them into their own cultural-clinical encounters with families.

### Discussion.

Implications for the CI of health care workers as a tool for self-knowledge and working with families across cultural differences, including socio-cultural variables and professional and social commitments.

### Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Describe their own cultural identities with the notions introduced in the workshop; e.g., the relational self and their own deep commitments and non-negotiable values.
2. Practice thoughtful and judicious self-disclosure of their cultural identities to facilitate cultural-clinical encounters.

### References

Birhane A. Descartes was wrong: 'A person is a person through other persons.' Aeon Magazine 2017. Available from: <https://aeon.co/essays/take-your-time-the-seven-pillars-of-a-slow-thought-manifesto> [Last accessed on 2019 Sept 14].

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