

## **Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Therapeutic Communities**

The premise on which our therapeutic communities are built is that its members are in need of habilitation, defined as cognitive development and concomitant behaviours. Due to impoverished environmental conditions in their youth and subsequently individuals fail to develop cognitive perspectives that are conducive to adoptive social functioning. Moreover, as a result of their developmental deficits such individuals are capable of creating pleasing fantasies about themselves and about their circumstances. This allows them to deny the existence, let alone the full extent, of their dysfunctionalities. These largely unconscious defence mechanisms obstruct change and the actualization of individual specific potential.

The goal of our therapeutic community is to promote development that is incompatible with sustaining denial and resistance to addressing specific dysfunctionalities. The goal is accomplished through environmental conditions empirically proven to be conducive to development. Such environmental conditions also have been referred to as a participatory democracy whereby everyone has a say, everyone is involved, and everyone is expected to empathically relate to each other. Through an integrated process, environmental conditions and the status of individuals are constantly evaluated to ensure optimal effectiveness by addressing, in a timely manner, variances from the conceptual ideal.

## The Use of Standardized Instruments to Augment Clinical Formulations

The premise of this workshop is that all mental health professionals ought to use standardized instruments to augment clinical assessment formulations and to augment formulations about the effectiveness of their clinical practice. Emphasis is on the concept AUGMENT, whereby the two activities inform each other with more or less equality.

The workshop is introductory and covers the basics of measurement in the social sciences. A sampling of standardized instruments is provided distinguishing between measures that are based on self report and those that measure ability.

The workshop also covers the statistical principles involved in interpreting scores and the practice principles involved in using standardized instruments. The goal is to demystify the use of standardized instruments and thereby entice workshop participants to learn more so that measurement becomes an essential integrated element in their practice.