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Title: Accessing Ancestral Wisdom as a Resource in Difficult Times, Using Focusing Oriented Psychotherapies

Format: A combination of lecture and experiential workshop

Equipment: An Easel

Description:

Our ancestors are often an untapped resource inside and outside the psychotherapist's consulting room. A variety of communities continue age-old spiritual traditions by honoring and revering their ancestors. Yet, many of us do not think of our grandparents, great grandparents and other family members as spiritual benefactors that can help us cope with difficult emotions and difficult times. In this workshop, participants will [1] become more acquainted with cultures that feature connection with ancestors as an integral part of their ontology and spiritual practices, [2] will learn and apply specific FOT questions and techniques that facilitate dialogue with ancestral family members, and [3] will learn how gratitude practice that includes our ancestors can uplift us and provide us with a more expansive perspective on our difficulties.

Summary:

Our ancestors can become a refuge we go to for strength, inspiration, wisdom and solace in times of adversity. FOT can facilitate an embodied experience of connection with our ancestors, where we can feel unconditionally loved, cared for and guided by them. Participants will learn Focusing questions and techniques that can facilitate connection and support from people in their lineage.

Bio:

Beilah Ross is a Clinical Social Worker in private practice in Boston. She earned a certificate in Traumatic Stress Studies from The Trauma Center in 2001, earned certification as a Focusing-Oriented Therapist in 2009, and has been actively involved in the Focusing community since 2006. She has been greatly inspired by Shirley Turcotte's contributions in Aboriginal Focusing Oriented Therapy.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to list cultures that feature connection with ancestors as an integral part of their ontology and spiritual practices.
2. Participants will learn and apply specific FOT questions and techniques that facilitate dialogue with ancestral family members.
3. Participants will be able to identify how gratitude practice can benefit mental and physical health, and they will be able to explain how FOT techniques can expand this practice to include one's ancestors.

Citations:

Ross, B. (2015) Keeper of the Flame: Healing Inter-generational Trauma Using Focusing-Oriented Therapy. *The Folio*, Vol. 26, 1, 127-136

Schiffer, J. J. PhD Candidate (2011). Critical perspectives on vicarious and intergenerational trauma: cases from Aboriginal child welfare in Canada. *Anthropology and Education*, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Turcotte, S. (2008). Focusing and relational consideration of unresolved trauma. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Turcotte, S. (2012) Focusing-Oriented Therapy and Complex Trauma Workshop, New York, NY.

Turcotte, S. and Schiffer, J. (2014) Aboriginal Focusing-Oriented Therapy. In G. Madison (ed) *Emerging Practice in Focusing-Oriented Therapy: Innovative Theory and Applications* (pp.48-63).. London, UK: Jessica Kingsley.

Continuing Education

If attended in its entirety, this course qualifies for:



The International Focusing Institute is approved by the **American Psychological Association** to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. **CE Hours/Credits 1.75**. The International Focusing Institute maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

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