

psychology as put forth by Barbara Fredrickson, It allows for a positive recollection in the past to be identified, while simultaneously being acknowledged in the here and now.

The facilitator is a highly trained psychodramatist and psychologist who has conducted this type of workshop over the past several years. The most recent demonstration was an invited (sold-out) workshop conducted at Moreno's original stage in New York. It was a sold-out event. I mention this only to inform the committee that someone familiar with the research and psychodramatic methods will be conducting this workshop.

I believe this workshop would fit under the art and science category.

SYM-04: Investment in Mental Capacity - The Dutch Case on Positive Psychology - Part 1: Fundamental/Epidemiological Research

Time: Thursday, 24/Jun/2010: 13:00 - 14:30

SYM-04: 1

Investment in mental capacity - The Dutch case on positive psychology

Jan Walburg¹, Linda Bolier¹, Cretien Van Campen²

¹Trimbos Institute, Netherlands, The; ²Netherlands Institute for Social Research / SCP; jwalburg@trimbos.nl

Mental capacity, the ability of being resilient in everyday life and coping adequately with stresses and loss, is subject to great pressure while at the same time mental health becomes more important. Current society is demanding as people who used to work with their hands work nowadays with their heads. This knowledge driven economy puts high strains on peoples psycho-social capacities and can result in poor well-being, stress, psychological problems and burnout. To deal with this, prevention and investment in a positive mental health is an increasingly important element of public mental health strategy in the Netherlands, and in the empowerment of vulnerable groups in society, e.g. people with disabilities and mental disorders.

In this symposium we present recent Dutch efforts to incorporate elements of positive psychology in public health. After a general introduction into the investment in mental capacity in the Netherlands (1), four studies will be presented: the practical application of mental capacity among the general population including people with minor psychological complaints (2), a study shedding light on the dimensions in mental capacity ('positive mental health') in a large representative sample in the Netherlands (3), a study that relates mental capacity to mental disease (4) and finally the Dutch situation on mental capacity in an European Nordic vs. Southern perspective (5).

Presentations:

1. Jan Walburg
Investment in mental capacity. An introduction into the Dutch case on positive psychology
2. Linda Bolier, Ernst Bohlmeijer, Merel Haverman, Heleen Riper, Jan Walburg
Online promotion of well-being by the enhancement of public mental health: Preliminary results of a randomized controlled trial
3. Sanne Lamers, Gerben Westerhof & Ernst Bohlmeijer
Positive mental health is more than just the absence of psychopathology
4. Ad Bergsma, Ruut Veenhoven, Margreet ten Have, & Ron de Graaf
Most people with mental disorders are happy The association between mental disorders and feelings of happiness
5. Cretien van Campen and Marc van Santvoort
Do Northern European countries care better for the subjective well-being of people with chronic disabilities? The relative impact of personal competences and national policies

SYM-04: 2

Positive mental health is more than just the absence of psychopathology

Sanne M.A. Lamers, Gerben J. Westerhof, Ernst T. Bohlmeijer

University of Twente, Netherlands, The; s.m.a.lamers@utwente.nl

Background: Mental health has long been described as the absence of psychopathology. Today, mental health is also regarded as the presence of positive feelings (emotional well-being) and positive functioning in individual life (psychological well-being) and community life (social well-being). We examine how positive mental health according this definition relates to psychopathology across the lifespan.

Aim: This study examines the relation of positive mental health to psychopathology across the lifespan, focusing on whether positive mental health and psychopathology are two ends of one single continuum or two separate continua.

Methods: This study draws on data of the LISS panel (Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social sciences; CentERdata), a representative sample of 1,662 Dutch adults divided into five age groups: 18-29 (N=381); 30-49 (N=472); 50-64 (N=440); 65-74 (N=274); 75+ (N=95). Positive mental health was measured with the Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (MHC-SF) and psychopathology with the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI).

Results: Positive mental health was moderately and negatively related to psychopathology in all age groups. Confirmatory factor analyses showed the best fit for a model with two related but distinct factors for positive mental health and psychopathology. Older adults reported less psychopathology compared to younger adults. However, there were no age differences in positive mental health.

Conclusion: Positive mental health and psychopathology are two related but separate factors, showing positive mental health is a distinct indicator of mental well-being. Moreover, positive mental health and psychopathology show distinct patterns across the lifespan. The absence of psychopathology does not necessarily imply the presence of positive mental health, indicating an individual is only completely mentally healthy when the absence of mental illness is accompanied by the presence of positive mental health.

SYM-04: 3

Most people with mental disorders report to be happy

Ad Bergsma¹, Ron De Graaf², Margreet Ten Have², Ruut Veenhoven¹

¹Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands, The; ²Netherlands Institute for Mental Health and Addiction; bergsma@fsw.eur.nl

Four questions are addressed: 1) How (un)happy are people with and without mental disorders? 2) Are self-reports of happiness by people with a mental disorder valid? 3) What are the clinical characteristics associated with happiness among people with a mental disorder? 4) Does happiness predict recovery from mental disorders? A representative sample (N = 7076) of the Dutch population was interviewed with the Composite International Diagnostic Interview. Happiness was measured using a single question on how often respondents had felt happy during the last four weeks. Of the respondents with a mental disorder 68.4% reported they had felt often happy, compared to 89.1% without a disorder. The happiness ratings of people with mental disorders are valid. The unhappiness of people with mental disorders is associated with having a mood disorder and impaired emotional and social role functioning. Happiness enhances the chances of recovery from a mental disorder at follow-up. The implications are discussed.

SYM-04: 4

Do Northern European countries care better for the subjective well-being of people with chronic disabilities? The relative impact of personal competences and national policies

Cretien van Campen¹, Marc van Santvoort²

¹Netherlands Institute for Social Research / SCP, Netherlands, The; ²Bureau Onderzoek en Analyse, Amersfoort, The Netherlands; c.van.campen@scp.nl

Background

People with chronic disabilities report the lowest subjective well-being (SWB) in many countries. In some countries the gap in SWB with the non-disabled population is smaller than in other countries. Do the Northern countries care better for people with disabilities by means of public services? Or are the disabled more empowered with personal competences in these countries?

Aim

Data of the European Social Survey were analyzed to: 1) describe the inequity in SWB in 23 European countries, and 2) search for the main determinants of this inequity in SWB.

Methods

43,000 persons, including 2,846 persons with severe chronic disabilities were surveyed on a range of topics. SWB was measured with a four-item scale including satisfaction with life and happiness. Variables on disability, socio-demographics (age, gender, household composition), socio-economic status (level of education), work participation (paid work, voluntary work), perceived physical and mental health, country and personal competences (optimism, self-esteem, autonomy, perceived opportunities, future orientation, resilience, social isolation) were entered stepwise in regression models.

Results

The descriptive results showed that the differences in SWB between persons with and without chronic disabilities were smaller in North-European countries than in South- and East-European countries. Preliminary results from regression