Formal Training on the TC Approach

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Background

• The Therapeutic Community (TC) movement in Asia began in the Philippines in the early 1970s.

• In the decades that followed, more rehabs were established employing the TC methods and practices that were inherited from that pioneer TC program.

• It was this same program that made it across the waters to our Asian neighbors.

• It was not until the mid-1990s that efforts to provide formal training on the TC were initiated by Daytop International, however, for only a few years.
Background

• The TC continued to be the program of choice for most rehab operators as it was a unique and “glamorous” program.

• Hence rose many organizations that ran their program without having a proper understanding of the rationale and mechanics of the TC.

• For most, it was like putting a saddle on a donkey and calling it a horse.

• Not surprisingly, the TC approach developed a questionable reputation and some critics have even deemed it to be an abusive and inhumane form of treatment.
The SELF Experience

• When we established SELF in 1992, we were similarly situated.

• We implemented the TC methods brought in by a Daytop-trained professional but lacked the indepth knowledge and understanding of the principles.

• Through trainings in the mid-90s, and the workshops offered by the AFTC, our understanding of its principles improved.

• We spent the first 8 years in search for a permanent home.
Formal Training on the TC Approach
The SELF Culture – “STRICT YET CARING”

**Strict ... yet not Abusive**

**Caring ... but not Enabling**
Implementing Guidelines

Everything we do in SELF must conform with being...

- RESPECTFUL
- LOGICAL
- PRACTICAL
The Philippine Challenge

• A major challenge that we face in the Philippines, which we believe holds true with our Asian neighbors as well, is the reality that most of our admissions involve a **considerable degree of coercion**.

• Rare is the case where we admit clients who have come of their own volition; we deal mostly with clients who are **not ready to be in the program** but are brought by their families anyway.
Two-pronged Approach

1. THE INDUCTION PHASE.

- Before joining the program, new admissions are housed in the Evaluation and Motivation Unit (EMU).

- Unlike in the old program where clients were made to go straight to the Prospect Chair, the Induction Phase provides a period where they are screened to determine their physical and mental health and establish their fitness to join the community.

- They are also given a thorough orientation to the TC approach with the end goal of getting them to join the program voluntarily.
Two-pronged Approach

2. FAMILY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

• We have made the participation of families an integral part of our program.

• Families must undergo a parallel program that teaches them the “ways” and disciplines of the TC.

• Major decisions on the process of the resident are made in consultation with the family.

• SELF’s experience shows that the TC is indeed culturally adaptive as long the core principles are adhered to.
Early Teaching Initiatives

• In 2007, 15 years since our founding, we found an opportunity to give back.

• During the 7th AFTC conference, Bro. Ronald Drahozal, Founder of the APON rehab center in Bangladesh approached me here in Bangkok desperately asking for training.

• I said we would be happy to help, but APON did not have funds for the travel to SELF.

• Happily, Fr. Lambertus Somar of Kasih Mulia Foundation (KMF) in Indonesia offered to shoulder the plane fare.
Early Teaching Initiatives

• Thus began our collaboration with KMF to promote the TC as the approach of choice.

• Since that initial training initiative, SELF has developed a BASIC and an ADVANCED TC MANAGEMENT COURSE for rehab staff.

• We have trained some 50 Asian practitioners and over 200 frontline personnel of the Philippines Department of Health through immersive training experiences.

• Mentoring programs where senior staff visit rehab centers to conduct on site program and staff evaluation and training.
BRO RONALD DRAHOZAL
Founder and Executive Director
APON Rehabilitation Center
Bangladesh
Died on October 15, 2018
at the age of 80.
International Institute of Therapeutic Communities (IITC)

• In 2017, on the occasion of SELF’s 25th anniversary, a group of international TC practitioners set up the International Institute of Therapeutic Communities (IITC) that will provide formal training on the TC approach and conduct research for evidence-based practices.

• The IITC will be housed in the Msgr. William O’Brien & Fr. Lambertus Somar Building – a Learning Center currently being built in partnership with the Kasih Mulia Foundation.

• Inauguration is scheduled in the first semester of 2019.
Msgr. William O’Brien &
Fr. Lambertus Somar Building

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF THERAPEUTIC
COMMUNITIES

“Learning and Innovation”
IITC Training Curriculum

• A curriculum responsive to the needs of practitioners in Asia.
  ✓ Core Principles of the TC;
  ✓ Essential STRUCTURAL and CULTURAL components of the TC;
  ✓ METHODS and PRACTICES with emphasis on its roots;
  ✓ Co-Occurring Disorders in the TC;
  ✓ Interplay of Caring for Residents and their Families while maintaining the COMMUNITY as the healer.

• We are reviewing the **TC Training Curriculum** developed by SAMSA.

• The **TC Standards Support Package** and **Training Course** developed by ATCA.
IITC Training Curriculum

• We are going to ensure that it covers the core principle of “Community as Method”

• We will also take into account the critical distinction between TRAINING (practical instruction on how to do things) and EDUCATION (developing an understanding of the reasons for doing things).

• We will also establish links with institutions of higher learning in the Philippines and Asia.

• Needless to say, the IITC welcomes all help to accomplish its mission.
The TC is very much alive in the Philippines and Asia. Formal training is however essential to keep the spirit of this great program vibrant.
Thank you!