

4th World Congress on  
**Mental Health**

May 22-23, 2023 | London, UK

**DAY-1**  
**Keynote Forum**



4<sup>th</sup> World Congress on  
**MENTAL HEALTH**

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## Andrew Sofin

Brief Crisis Therapy Institute, Canada

### The de-stigmatization of Mental Illness has exacerbated the crisis in accessibility to Mental Health treatment

The de-stigmatization of mental illness has created a crisis in accessibility to mental health treatment. This keynote speech will explore the evolution in cultural attitudes and stigmas regarding psychotherapy and mental health treatment from Generation X to Generation Z. The intersection between de-stigmatization, barriers to care and the post-pandemic surge in demand for psychotherapy will also be explored. While reducing the stigma surrounding mental illness has been a crucial step towards promoting mental health, it has also created a new challenge. Many more people who historically would have shunned treatment due to the stigma now feel comfortable seeking out mental health treatment. This surge in demand has far outstripped the ability to train new therapists, fund treatment programs, and adjust social & public policy. This keynote will explore ways to increase access to mental health treatment with an emphasis on solutions that are empirically validated and readily available.

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#### Biography

Andrew Sofin is a licensed Psychotherapist and Couples & Family Therapist with a private practice in Montréal, Canada. His clinical focus is on Couples & Family Therapy, Eating Disorders, Depression, and Anxiety. He is a registered Marriage & Family Therapist of the Canadian Association for Marriage & Family Therapy, a Clinical Fellow of the American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy, a member of the Eating Disorders Association of Canada, and the Chapter Chair for Canada for the International Association for Eating Disorders Professionals. Additionally, he is the current President of the Canadian Association for Marriage & Family Therapy, the Founder of Couples Retreat at Ocean Coral, and the Co-founder of the Brief Crisis Therapy Institute. He is also a visiting Professor at the University of Guelph and holds an Advanced Certificate in Couple & Family Therapy Studies. With over twenty-five years of experience in private practice, residential treatment programs, and hospital settings in Boston and Montréal, he is an experienced and respected professional in his field.

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**Ke Guek Nee**

Heriot-Watt University, Malaysia

## Positive coping mechanism and psychological symptoms towards pregnant women's well-being

Positive coping skills and positive psychology-based interventions are a growing body of work within the field of maternal health. Positive coping styles has direct effects on perceived stress and depressive symptoms among pregnant women. This survey was conducted at an ultrasound clinic in Kuala Lumpur and Malaysian pregnant women were also recruited online via random sampling. Multiple regression analyses were used to determine multiple effects for four variables. Measures included hope (Adult Hope Scale), anxiety (Generalised Anxiety Disorder), depression (Edinburgh Postpartum Depression Scale), emotions (PANAS) and maternal well-being (Satisfaction with Life Scale). In a sample of 405 pregnant women, results showed negative correlation between depression, anxiety, and negative affect on maternal satisfaction while showing positive correlation between hope and positive affect on satisfaction. In addition, findings showed significantly negative correlation between hope and depression. There was no correlation between anxiety and negative effects on hope. In the stepwise regression model, depression explained 21% of the variance in maternal well-being, positive emotions further explained 24% of the variance, when negative emotions added to the regression model, 28% of variance was explained. Lastly, in analyzing the predictors of hope, positive emotions explained 16% of the variance, anxiety further explained 17% of the variance. Depression and negative affect were removed from the model suggesting that it did not predict hope. Hence, positive emotions and anxiety significantly predicted hope. Recommended that positive psychology intervention is included in the clinical treatment to enhance maternal health and well-being.

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**Biography**

Ke Guek Nee is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Heriot-Watt University Malaysia. Her research focuses on Preventive Measures of Problematic Internet Usage, Cyber Wellness, Organizational Psychology, Coaching Psychology, and Leadership. With her passion for research, she has secured numerous research grants from National and International Funding Agencies. In addition, her research works have also been covered by news media and other media platforms. Recently, she published a book entitled 'Cyber Wellness: Internet Addiction and Prevention. A Guide for Practitioners' and developed the Positive Emotion-Resilience-Coping Efficacy (PERCE) Model for the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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*Ke Guek Nee*

*Heriot-Watt University, Malaysia*

### **Cyber wellness in 21st century: Positive Psychology and CBT intervention for youth**

Cyber Wellness is an important topic in 21st century. The rapid evolution of technology has led to tremendous growth in the number of Internet users. Along with it came the issue of problematic Internet practices which negatively impact the psychological and behavioral well-being of users. The research developed three types of preventive interventions, namely Psychological Intervention Program – Internet Use for Youth (PIP-IU-Y), Online Pornography Viewing for Youth (PIP-OP-Y), and Online Gaming for Youth (PIP-OG-Y). Specifically, it aims to reduce maladaptive psychological and behavioral symptoms in association with Problematic Internet Usage (PIU). The interventions aspire to remedy this global issue by integrating Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Positive Psychology approaches to promote healthier internet usage habits and behaviors. Each intervention describes a fundamental principle of types of internet issues and how it relates in practice to become an effective program in helping youths. The findings of these studies provide empirical support for the efficacy of the designed programs in forestalling symptoms of PIU among youths. These preventive programs, share hopes and light with many parents, educationists, mental health care practitioners, and decision-makers in building flourishing and resilient future leaders. The findings complement existing research and practical knowledge, paving the way forward toward fostering exemplary Cyber Wellness in global communities.

#### **Recent Publication**

1. Ke, G. N. (2022). Cyber Wellness: Internet addiction and prevention. A guide for practitioners. Eliva Press.

#### **Biography**

Ke Guek Nee is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Heriot-Watt University Malaysia. Her research focuses on Preventive Measures of Problematic Internet Usage, Cyber Wellness, Organizational Psychology, Coaching Psychology, and Leadership. With her passion for research, she has secured numerous research grants from National and International Funding Agencies. In addition, her research works have also been covered by news media and other media platforms. Recently, she published a book entitled 'Cyber Wellness: Internet Addiction and Prevention. A Guide for Practitioners' and developed the Positive Emotion-Resilience-Coping Efficacy (PERCE) Model for the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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**DAY-1**  
Workshop



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## *Andrew Sofin, Dina Bednar, Julia Imanoff*

*Brief Crisis Therapy Institute, Canada*

### **Brief Crisis Therapy: Overcoming stigma and promoting hope in Crisis Therapy**

**Statement of Problem:** The pandemic has exacerbated the devastating mental health crisis globally. Service centers and hospitals are strained by the limited number mental health professionals to address the ever-growing demand for support by the public. Those who were most marginalized during the pandemic are the people who have been impacted the most.

**Background:** This model was developed specifically to address these populations by offering free counseling services; ‘Three for Free’ through the Canadian Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. The Brief Crisis Therapy (BCT) model is a new integrative model developed inductively by a team of Couple and Family Therapists during the pandemic to deal with the needs of the community, by asking clients ‘what their best hopes were’ and by being curious about their specific needs and wants.

**Methodology & Theoretical Orientation:** Post-modernist, co-constructive approach to therapy where the client’s perspective and experiences are viewed as just as important as the therapists if not more.

**Findings:** The BCT Three-Session model focuses on client’s strengths, the client as expert, and a next step by the end of each session or and on their best hopes. This modality has high satisfaction rates among therapists who learn and apply it (n=24) with confidence scores increasing on average from 3 to 10 on a 10-point Likert Scale. When applying this model, therapists utilize everything about the individuals we work with in a way that increases hope, activates strengths, and provides the opportunity for co-construction of solutions and next steps. The BCT model is one of inclusion, respect, fairness, and celebrating the uniqueness of each person as a therapeutic intervention.

**Conclusion & Significance:** Self and social stigma limits potential for post traumatic growth. Mental health professionals need to address the discrimination of marginalized groups that experience greater rates of self and social stigma.

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### Biography

Andrew Sofin is a Registered Marriage & Family Therapist, Registered Psychotherapist, and a Licensed Therapist in Quebec for couples and families. He is also a Clinical Fellow of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy. He serves as the Clinical Director of Couples Retreat at Ocean Coral and has a private practice in Montreal, Canada. He completed his graduate studies at Antioch University (USA), specializing in Couple and Family Therapy. He has many years of professional experience working in hospitals, residential programs, and private practice in Boston, Massachusetts. Currently, he is the President of the Canadian Association for Marriage & Family Therapy.

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Julia Imanoff is an Advanced Practice Nurse with a specialty in Perinatal Nursing from the Canadian Nurses Association, with 12 years of experience working with families. She has also worked in education and research for over a decade at the University of Calgary, where she is currently completing her Ph.D. She has extensive experience in both qualitative and quantitative research methods and has managed large multi-site longitudinal datasets. In addition, she is a certified Mindfulness Facilitator and has recently launched an introductory Mindfulness podcast through the University of Calgary. She also has a private practice with The Family Nurse Parenting Services Inc., which is a parenting support service in Alberta, Canada.

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Dina Bednar is a Registered Psychotherapist, Registered Marriage and Family Therapist, and an American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy Approved Supervisor. She served at a Children's Mental Health Clinic in Hamilton, Ontario for 17 years and is currently in private practice in Ancaster, Ontario. She is also the Associate Director and instructor in the SFBT certificate program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE, University of Toronto), the Co-director of the Canadian Solution-Focused Center, and Co-editor of the Canadian SFBT Newsletter. She trains group internationally on SFBT, working with children and adolescents and Single Session Therapy.

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# Mental Health

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## DAY-2 Keynote Forum



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## *Leslie Hunt Palumbo*

Licensed Clinical Social Worker, USA

### **Mindfulness and grief: The missing ingredient in griefwork**

**Statement of the Problem:** It is estimated that 90% of people who seek mental health services do so for some form of unresolved grief, suggesting the dire need for an updated approach to bereavement. Mindfulness practice helps not only to endure grief, but to transcend and even expand the very best of human qualities as a result of it. Author of *The Wisdom of Grief* and a psychotherapist in private practice for 20 years, the presenter shares her expertise and success in implementing mindfulness practice during each phase of grief in order to help people move fluidly through all levels of this challenging but universal human experience.

**Method:** The author describes the particular mindfulness practices applied to distinct aspects of grief that shift the process from one solely of misery to one of grace and wisdom. Specific contemplations are outlined as antidotes to common grieving stumbling blocks such as anger, guilt, isolation, resistance, and depression. Detachment in the griefwork process of identity reformation is discussed. Qualitative results and specific anecdotal outcomes demonstrating clients' increased sense of inner strength; improved self-perception; increased forgiveness in fraught relationships; documented decrease in depression; and enhanced connection with life elements beyond the self are explained.

**Discussion:** Mindfulness applied to the grieving process has huge implications for prevention in mental health care, releasing people from the residual guilt, anger, and unresolved sorrow so common to grief and loss and thereby expanding empathy, compassion, forgiveness, and mercy. Through bringing greater meaning and context to the process, it assists in turning traumas into great sources of inner wealth.

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#### **Biography**

Leslie Hunt Palumbo, LCSW, is a Psychotherapist, Grief Counselor, and Author who has worked extensively in Bereavement and Mindfulness over the past 20 years. In addition to her clinical training and experience, she has trained with Pema Chodron and Eckhart Tolle. A special focus is working with the bereaved, both as a gentle guide for families through the hospice experience and as a facilitator, helping people access the peace available even in the midst of great loss. She has taught Mindfulness during loss to individuals, small groups and workshops throughout the world, and is currently leading retreats, group & individual teachings on the Gifts of Grief. Explore the book, *The Wisdom of Grief: Mining the Treasure Inherent in Great Loss* at [www.wisdomofgrief.com](http://www.wisdomofgrief.com), and find out more at [www.lesliepalumbo.com](http://www.lesliepalumbo.com) or visit her at [www.facebook.com/wisdomofgrief](https://www.facebook.com/wisdomofgrief).

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