Study & Practice Series No. 1: The Paradox of Social Justice Practice and Self-Care

May 23, 2014

California State University, Fresno

Henry Madden Library 2206

DESCRIPTION

This retreat series is an opportunity to participate in caring, critical discussion of social justice issues and professional practice with students and professionals in a safe environment of guided self-care and trust. The series is suitable for students interested in learning how to integrate their studies with their anticipated professional work and professionals interested in learning best practices and how to collaboratively practice community-centered, trusting and transparent advocacy on social justice issues.
The first seminar in this series will take place May 23, 2014 at Fresno State and will be facilitated by Kris Clarke, Ph.D, of the Department of Social Work Education. Tools for Peace, a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to strengthening and supporting emotional and social intelligence as well as academic and professional success, will participate. The focus of this retreat will be on developing trust and understanding the impact of stress on our bodies and minds. We will work on building concrete skills to develop positive connections to enhance our capacity for kindness, compassion and collaboration. The seminar will offer a special session on neurodecolonization with Dr. Michael Yellow Bird of Humboldt State University to better understand the ways that external and internal colonization has impacted our minds.

AGENDA

9.00-9.15 Coffee and sign in

9.15-9.30 Welcome: Kris Clarke

9.30-9.45 Opening meditation: Loren Witcher

9.45-10.45 Decolonization: Michael Yellow Bird
This session discusses how the results of neuroscientific research can be applied to decolonizing social work interventions to enhance human well-being. The presenter focuses on neurodecolonization, a conceptual framework which he created, that uses mindfulness research to facilitate an examination of the ways in which the human brain is affected by the negative effects of colonization and how traditional, Indigenous Peoples' cultural activities can positively change neural networks and enable Indigenous individuals and communities to overcome the traumas associated with colonialism.

10.45-11.15 Questions

11.15-11.30 Break

11.30-12.30 Stress and well-being: Loren Witcher
Becoming aware of our state of mind, and how our habits, prejudices, and
emotions affect our experience. The science behind the positive effects of kindness and compassion.

12.30-1.15 Lunch

1.15-1.30: Focusing exercise: Loren Witcher

1.30-1.40: Introduction to group discussions: Kris Clarke

1.45-2.30: Group discussions
During this session, we will organize into smaller groups and discuss situations in which there was a tension between trying "make the world better" and trying to take care of ourselves: what were some of the challenges, barriers, and solutions? How did we care for ourselves?

2.30-3.00: Debriefing with panel discussion (Michael, Loren, Kris)

3.00-3.15: Closing meditation: Loren

4 CEUs offered by the Department of Social Work Education, California State University, Fresno

Guest Speakers:

**Loren Witcher**, BFA, RISD, is Program Manager, Camp Director, and Lead Facilitator of Tools for Peace, a 501 (c)3 organization that aims to inspire people of all ages to develop kindness and compassion in everyday life. Loren has over ten years of experience leading Tools for Peace inservice programs teaching mindfulness and meditation techniques to youth and adults. He has studied and practiced meditation under the guidance of Lama Chodak Gyatso Nubpa since 1998.

**Dr. Michael Yellow Bird** is a citizen of the Three Affiliated Tribes, the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara. He is Professor and the Director of Graduate Education in the Department of Social Work at Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA. He is the author of numerous scholarly articles and the co-editor of four books: For Indigenous Eyes Only: The Decolonization Handbook, 2005 (with Dr. Waziyatawin); For Indigenous Minds Only: A Decolonization Handbook (2012); Indigenous Social Work around the

His teaching, writing, research, and community work focus on Social Work with Indigenous Peoples, Decolonizing Social Work, Neurodecolonization, and Paleo Social Work.

**Organizer and Facilitator:**

**Kris Clarke**, Ph.D is an Associate Professor at the Department of Social Work Education, Fresno State University. She grew up in Fresno, but lived in Finland for over 20 years where she completed her graduate studies in international relations/development studies and social work. Dr. Clarke served for 7 years as the Finnish national representative for the European Union public health project AIDS & Mobility in the field of HIV/AIDS and immigrant rights. She currently works with several community projects in Fresno, including the needle exchange, and serves on the board of Centerforce, Heritage Fresno, and the Fresno Free Medical Clinic. Dr. Clarke has published on issues related to immigration, multiculturalism, HIV, and international social work. Contact: tel. 559.278.2985; email: kclarke@csufresno.edu

**Co-Organizer:**

**Monte Jewell**, J.D., is Executive Director of Fresno Rape Counseling Services, a 501(c)3 community-based organization working to end rape and sexual violence. Monte has advocated continuously and actively for rape and sexual violence survivors and policies since 1995. He served as trial and appellate counsel in Hendershott v. Westphal (Mont. Sup. Ct. No. 10-0434, en banc) which recognized the right of partner abuse victims in Montana to refuse court-ordered alternative dispute resolution. In 2004, he served as amicus counsel for a coalition of anti-violence groups in Massee v. Thompson (Mont. Sup. Ct. No. 03-0567) which recognized civil liability for Montana law enforcement for failure to follow victim protection statutes. He serves currently as the Valley Regional Representative for the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault, as a member of the CSU Fresno Criminology Department Advisory Committee and on the Montana State Bar Association Ethics Committee. Contact: tel. 406.546.1414; email: mjewell@rcsfresno.org.
Sponsors:

The **Literatures, Arts and Cultures of the Americas (LACA) Program** at Fresno State is an innovative interdisciplinary project aimed at exploring cultural productions, practices, and traditions throughout the Americas. Bringing together research-active scholars and artists from throughout the university, LACA includes historians, writers, literary scholars, anthropologists, artists, art historians, philosophers, musicians, and critics and theorists. Our interests include not only the literary and artistic traditions of North, Central, and South America, but also the peoples and historical processes who shape and are shaped by these cultural expressions.

The **Department of Social Work Education (DSWE) at Fresno State** is specifically committed to the education of social workers at the bachelor's and master's levels who will provide social welfare services and leadership within the central San Joaquin Valley. Graduates of both programs intervene with individuals, families, groups, and other small systems as well as with human service agencies, voluntary organizations, neighborhoods, and communities.