Peace through Health: Reflecting the McMaster Experience

Joanna Santa Barbara,
Graeme MacQueen, Stephanie Archer,
Sarah Brownrigg, Avita Sooknanan,
Jesleen Rana

Plan of Session

- Evolution of Peace through Health (PtH) at McMaster (Graeme)
- PtH education at Mac (Joanna)
- PtH elective for medical students (Avita)
- PtH elective for Occupational Therapy students (Sarah and Stephanie)
- What we've learned (Joanna and Jesleen)
- The future of PtH (Graeme)
- Dialogue
- Feedback on both content and medium

Evolution of Peace through Health at McMaster

Graeme MacQueen, Ph.D.

What we've taught

Joanna Santa Barbara MB.BS.

Objectives of course

The student will understand the potential and limitations of work for peace from one social sector – the health sector.

- *Knowledge*
- *Skills*
- *Values*

Curriculum

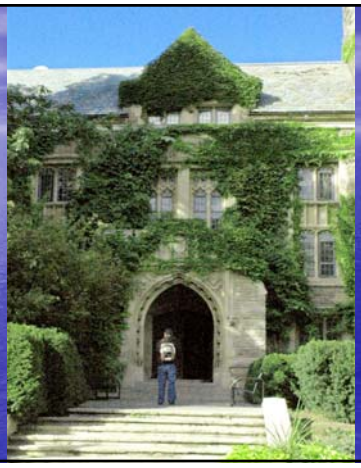
- Concepts of health, peace, PtH
- War systems and peace systems
- Impact of war on health
- Multi-track peacebuilding
- Mechanisms of PtH
- Cultural sensitivity
- Evaluation in PtH
- Values and ethics in PtH
- Human rights in PtH
- Tools for approaching a problem
- Primary prevention
- Secondary prevention
- Tertiary prevention
- Extending the concepts – structural and ecological violence

Modes of teaching

- lectures
- guest lectures
- e-learning module
- student presentations
- group work
- films
- drama – actors, puppets
- reading
- writing
- Observation of advocacy work
- Updates of project work

Appraisal

- Short reflections, integrating learning
- Student presentations
- Essay *or* presentation at conference
- Peer appraisal of group skills
- Exam



Peace Through Health Elective

McMaster University

Organizers

- McMaster med students run an International Health Committee that coordinates:
  - awareness events (for medical students, and the university at large)
  - plan global health education
  - assist with international electives

McMaster and Peace Through Health

- As McMaster students, we are very fortunate to have faculty resources/mentors/role models to assist and teach students the importance of Peace Through Health.
- The theme of "thinking globally, acting locally" can be extracted from the theory of Peace Through Health and inspires students to focus on the health of marginalized populations.

Sessions

- 6 sessions at McMaster:
  - 1st year med students introduce peers to the topic of global health, indicators of health, definitions
  - Focus on War and Its impact on Health
  - Peace Through Health Theory
  - Social Determinants of Health During Conflict
  - How to make global health part of your career
  - Aboriginal Health and Culture Sensitivity

Rationale

- Moral
  - Students come to medicine wanting to "Help People!"
  - While individuals in need of *help* exist everywhere, we must be aware of the extent of "*everywhere*"
- Professional
  - Medical professionals are in a unique position to: [1]provide essential aid, [2]show neutrality in their commentary on conflict, [3]have their voices heard and their opinions viewed as "authoritative"
  - This role demands a basic understanding of the issues
- Skill Development
  - Patient health is determined by more than just biological disease
  - An understanding of the many determinants of health allow us to *do our jobs better* and appreciate the necessary treatments that don't fit on an Rx/ pad

Resources

- E-learning Module

http://65.39.131.180/ContentPage.aspx?name=DELI_Peace_Through_Health

Introduction
Violence and War
Health and Peacework
Strategies for Peace Through Health

More Information…

- www.macmeds.ca/ihp

PEACE THROUGH

HEALTH

What is Occupational Therapy?

Occupational therapy (OT) is a health profession concerned with ***promoting health and well-being through occupation***.

Occupation refers to ***everything that people do during the course of everyday life*** (CAOT Position Statement on Everyday Occupations and Health, 2003).

The primary goal of OT is to enable people to ***participate in the occupations which give meaning and purpose to their lives***.

Why an OT Peace Through Health Elective?

- OT literature support engagement in meaningful occupations as a diversion for individuals during stressful situations, providing the opportunity to help one another, and fostering a sense of community (McColl, 2002).
- Inspired by the medical elective
- Part of an Evidence Based Practice Project

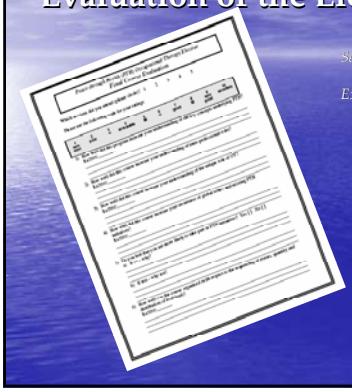
The Elective

- 5 sessions over 5 weeks
- 16 student participants, 4 faculty participants, 4 student facilitators

Objectives:

- Understand the key concepts underlying PTH
- Understand, explore, and define the unique role of OT in PTH
- Discuss and understand issues concerning PTH within a global context
- Discuss inter-professional roles of health professionals in PTH
- Learn about current PTH initiatives and how to participate in them

Evaluation of the Elective



Session Feedback Forms

Exit Questionnaire

Conclusions/Future Directions

✓ Interest

✓ Applicability

"It was both worldly and applicable close to home."

✓ Future directions

- Introduction of a PTH elective in the OT curriculum.

Final Thought

"It helps to open your eyes and get out of the bubble we live our lives in; it makes you uncomfortable but that [dis]comfort can bring about change in how you want to live your life."

Resources

CAOT Position Statement on Everyday Occupations and Health (2003) available from http://www.caot.ca

McColl, M. (2002). Occupation in stressful times. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 56, 3, 350 – 353.*

What we've learned

Students

- Peace Studies students and experienced practitioners are assets to class
- Students can run elective courses

Instructors

- Guest speakers expand range of expertise
- Students are inspired by practitioners
- Very enjoyable to teach

Content

- Undergrad course and electives popular and enjoyed by students
- Contribution of fieldwork to teaching
- Tendency to focus too little on the material from Peace Studies

Learning modes

- We've attached importance to multiple modes of learning and students do likewise

Appraisal

- Exams present a challenge if demanding application of ideas; students are in mode of reproducing ideas for exams.

What we hope

- Students following health tracks use their knowledge of peace processes
- Students following other tracks use their knowledge of peace processes on multiple tracks.