



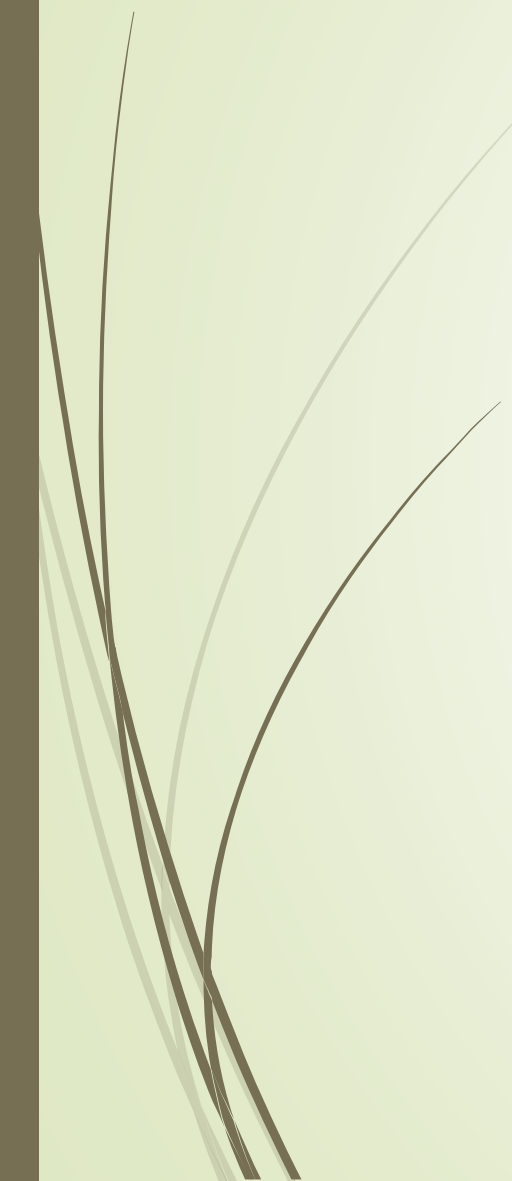
# Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma


Clinical Implications

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# Agenda

- Conceptualizing
  - Common Presentation
  - Assessment
  - Intervention
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# Understanding and Deconstructing Intergenerational Trauma in Treatment

- ▶ “Ghosts” in the families
- ▶ Trauma experienced by earlier generations, usually too traumatic or unspeakable (e.g., famine experienced from the Cultural Revolution), is carried through to the next generations without being verbalized or processed.
- ▶ Unspoken elements surround the lives of younger generations, affecting how they come to experience themselves, their parents and people around them, and the world.
- ▶ “Treatment is never just between two people, it is between the two people and their villages, ghosts, ancestors.”
- ▶ “Ironically, the mother has history but no memory, while the daughter has memory but no history” (Eng & Han, 2018, p.50-51).



# Common Presentation

- Mood distress
- Relationships distress
- Distress with/ desire to explore aspects of one's own cultural identity
- Stages of life
  - Entering adulthood (increased sense of wanting to know who they are, how and where they come from)



# Common Presentation (cont.)

- ▶ Stages of life (cont.)

- ▶ Becoming new parents (e.g., experiencing a new memory with your child may sometimes evoke a faraway memory of one's childhood, or lack thereof).

- ▶ Hong, 2020, p. 67

- ▶ Deaths/ losses

- ▶ Losses of one's own parents can sometimes mirror the loss of the tie they had to their cultural heritage, to the (un)spoken desire to find answers through them.



# Assessment

- ▶ Clients' own journey of formation and exploration of their own cultural identities
- ▶ Genogram
- ▶ Assess and be curious of absence or gaps in oral history within their families/communities
  - ▶ Kuang, 2018.
- ▶ Respect the pace and individual journey your clients are at
- ▶ Transference & Countertransference



# Intervention

- Naming and verbalizing
- Normalize and support the recognition of the impacts of intergenerational trauma
- Understanding and exploring the psychosomatic link
- Expanding and transforming the narrative – collective/ intergenerational healing
- Building meaning behind their behavioral and relational patterns
- Fostering curiosity
- Respect the pace and individual journey your clients are at
- Transference & Countertransference



Thank you!