

Synopsis of Presentation for the 1st Asia Schema Therapy Conference, Malaysia.

Speaker: Dr John Philip Louis

Title: Mental Health and its link to Schemas and Early Parenting Patterns

Schema Therapy (ST) has been effective in the treatment of a wide range of mental health conditions, such as affective disorders. One of its central constructs is Early Maladaptive Schemas (EMSs or “negative schemas”), which consists of a specific thought patterns, emotions, bodily sensations, and neurobiological reactions. EMSs are believed to be developed in childhood when one or more core emotional needs, such as Connection and Acceptance, Autonomy and Performance, Reasonable Limits, and Excessive Responsibility and Standards are not satisfactorily met. The positive counterpart of negative schemas is termed Early Adaptive Schemas (EASs or “positive schemas”); these are believed to develop during childhood when core emotional needs are adequately met by primary caregivers.

ST postulates links between early parenting experiences and EMSs and EASs. Negative parenting patterns are believed to contribute to the development of EMSs and presumably also to impede the development of EASs, and positive parenting patterns are believed to help prevent the development of the EMSs and facilitate the development of EASs. This presentation will highlight the various types of parenting interactions through a parenting programme known as “Good Enough Parenting”, and its links to EASs, EMSs, mental health and personality disorders.