

30<sup>th</sup> World

## PSYCHIATRISTS AND PSYCHOLOGISTS MEET

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**Understanding the effects of trauma and abuse in childhood****Lillian Gui**

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Unfortunately, when things start to go wrong, people often despair of being able to repair the damage. The efforts of the United Nations and the International Community of Non-Governmental Organizations to promote and protect the rights of the child have generated a wealth of information on the many questions facing the children of the world. Therefore, let us generate an understanding of child trauma and abuse in the Philippines. What is Trauma? Trauma literally means wound, injury or shock. A given stressful event is not traumatic in itself but may be so in its effect on a particular child. Thus, not every child who experiences an extremely stressful event will actually be traumatized, although some types of events are so extreme that they are likely to be traumatizing to most children. Trauma overwhelms a person's coping capacity and has long-term effects on functioning and well-being. Normal, protective responses to threats (fight, flight, or freeze) are activated by the perception of a threat. A child who has experienced trauma may continue to experience this defensive response into adulthood, even in situations that are not threatening. Not all children or adults who are exposed to potentially traumatic events experience long-term health problems. This may be due to protective factors, which help shield individuals from the lasting effects of trauma. Protective factors include: Parental knowledge of child development; healthy parent-child attachment; social connections; and social and emotional competence. According to the national child traumatic stress network trauma can occur anytime a child experiences an intense event that threatens or causes harm to his or her emotional and physical well-being. Trauma affects children both physically and psychologically. Exposure to multiple traumas for a prolonged period of time can lead to complex trauma. This type of exposure can have persistent neurological and emotional effects. Complex trauma can affect children across a variety of domains. These domains may include: Attachment, behavioral control, cognition, self-concept, biology, affect regulation and dissociation (NCTSN). In this workshop, we discussed about the symptoms of trauma, unhealthy ways of dealing with trauma, dealing with traumatized children and others. The different types of abuse, its effect on the child, as well as PTSD or Post traumatic stress disorder will be discussed.

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