



Free Clinical-Educational Center for Fukushima Reconstruction

Newsletter from Heart of Fukushima

Vol.2

March, 2014

Six months has passed since the launch of the Fukushima Center and at the point of March 2nd, the users count up to 450 in total. On the days of the center we are starting to see the same faces and local community building staffs are beginning to join us.

However the acknowledgement of PTSD/PTSR of the people is still poor, the psychological reconstruction of the people of Fukushima still continues to be a struggle. In Fukushima, three years from the disaster, many people are still living in temporary housing, and chronic stress is continuing from the effect of the nuclear accident which has no vision to resolve. The dynamics of denial and regarding the disaster as something in the past is spread throughout the country, the disparity between the disaster area and the other areas, and between the individuals in the disaster areas are rising.

In thus circumstances, our center has started a community college from October and has invited professionals from various fields, holding lectures in which anyone can learn at ease. In addition, the collaboration with IsraAID has begun in full-scale, and through art therapy and group therapy workshops we have started trainings for professionals. On the 1st of March, local influential persons had come together and a tripartite talk was held in aiming to found a graduate university in Fukushima and a concrete vision was shared. Support groups, individual consultations, psychological interviews and various workshops are continuously held.

In this issue of the News Letter, we give you the detail of community college, a report of its commemorative opening lecture, the collaboration with IsraAID, and the activity report and the situation of the support groups of 2013. (Editor; Jeong a Nam)

Messages from Readers

We have received a message from Ms. Tara DeWorsop, Program Director of Japan ICU Foundation.

“The Japan ICU Foundation is keeping the people of Tohoku and those who support them in their thoughts and hearts. The road to recovery is long and, without generous and selfless people like yourselves, the world would be a darker place. Thank you for being a beacon of hope.”

We would like to show our sincere appreciation for the warm message, and ask for your continued kind cooperation.

Report of Community College

Toshinori Hanai, M.A.
Secretary-General of FCECFR

“We need hope for reconstruction. Future outlook is necessary. As we all know, the unclear future makes it difficult for us to recognize our stress and PTSD, and undermine our motivation to overcome them. The strength in which it brings us hope is, without any objection, education.”

(excerpt from a newsletter of FCECFR Community College opening issue.)

On October 26 and 27, 2013, the Free Clinical-Educational Center for Fukushima Reconstruction (FCECFR) started a “Community College” in the center. Every opening day of the center, it holds lectures by world leading professionals along with psycho-educational programs, pre-therapy programs, and support groups (Kotani, 2014).

In September 2013, we opened a free clinic targeted for PTSD/PTSD opening four days a month in Fukushima. Its opening was featured in the newspaper and people who had heard by word-of-mouth came to participate in the psycho-educational program and almost every participant presented some kind of traumatic or stress reaction. Despite the number of participants to the programs, there were few people seeking for treatment for PTSD/PTSD. This is the reality of Fukushima in September 2013, two and a half years after the earthquake. It is the result of the citizens’ lack of knowledge on PTSD/PTSD interwoven with the denial of malfunction caused by PTSD/PTSD. They talk about their anger towards greater authorization such as the Japanese government, Tokyo Electric Power Co., Inc.

“TEPCO”, Nuclear power station, and Tokyo (the major consumer of electricity generated by nuclear power plants). Yet, each individual showed difficulty in touching his or her experience of the disaster.

As we talk with the people gathered for the programs, we faced a major problem that they were unable to have a hope for the future. It was even harder for them to touch their pain of the present or past because of this fear or anxiety of not being able to have hope for the future. So, as a community intervention, we opened the community college which delivers and creates hope through “education”, in which it conveys knowledge towards future and next generations.



Dr. Shiraishi and participants in his lecture on Dec. 1, 2013

The purposes of the community college are; 1) to convey accurate knowledge, 2) to stimulate intellectual curiosity of citizens, especially high school and university students who are expected to lead next generations through encountering world leading knowledge, and 3) not just to reconstruct Fukushima but to generate new knowledge and create a base of knowledge which will deliver and contribute to the world in Fukushima.

Lectures so far were, on math/physics by Junichi Shiraishi, Ph.D. in Physics, child rearing which prevents school refusals by Kazunori Hashimoto, the director of FCECFR, Ph.D. in Education, and cutting-edge results on radiation contamination in Fukushima by Keitaro Tanoi, Ph.D. in Agriculture. The first lecture in 2014 will be on the current situation of radiation policy by Munemitsu Kikuchi, who was in charge of radiation countermeasures and now is the Manager of Koriyama city government in Fukushima.



The Lecture by Dr. Tanoi on Dec. 22, 2013

At the latest 4th lecture by Dr. Tanoi, he gave us current situations regarding a level of radiation contamination in agricultural crops, based on the scientific data, from 2011, when the nuclear power plant accident occurred, to 2013. Nowadays, in Japan, not just in Fukushima, many parents gather information regarding safety through newspaper, words of mouth, internet or

blogs. In the midst of various information, from which based on the scientific data to the unsupported, the more zealous parents depend on negative information without legitimate reasons, neurotically ban their children from going outside or even evacuate them outside of Fukushima prefecture. Hearing Dr. Tanoi, one of the participants, who happened to be a mother, spoke out; “It is different from food contamination, but I have not let my children play outside for being worried about radiation. Listening to your talk today, I feel I can let my children play outside some more.” When professionals deliver accurate knowledge based on the data, neurotic anxiety can be eased.

Aiming for the reconstruction of Fukushima, FCECFR seek to establish a “Institute for Advanced Studies of Sciences ; 高等科学大学院大学 (tentative title)” where scientists conducting world cutting edge research can gather in order to create a base to generate new knowledge in Fukushima. As we call for this foundation, powerful domestic and international scientists have showed their interests and raised their voices of support. Now it is moving towards its realization.

We are thriving for this community college to lead the psychological revival of Fukushima.

Heart for Fukushima -Request for your support-

FCECFR would like to request for your warm supports for running our center. Supports could be...

- ◆ Financial support
- ◆ Material support
- ◆ Knowledge, intellectual support (Giving workshops and lectures for both citizens and professionals, Sharing interesting and useful information/resources/researches)
- ◆ Manpower, human support (Visit us whenever the occasion arises, send us messages)

and more.....

Although “Heart for Fukushima” of individuals can be just a small light, gathering these lights could create a big fire. Please feel free to contact us and share your idea. We are waiting for your voice and are eager to co-work with you.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

IsraAID Activities Now and Future in Collaboration with FCECFR and EJ Center

Adi Foksheneanu

Japan Country Director, IsraAID

IsraAID has been working with FCECFR (Koriyama, Fukushima) and EJ Center (Miyagi, Sendai) in 2014 in conducting monthly professional workshops.



The Art Therapy Workshop by IsraAID on Mar. 1, 2014



The Stress-relieving and Team Building Workshop by IsraAID on Mar. 2, 2014

IsraAID has been working in Japan since 2011. The first IsraAID teams arrived on the ground 4 days after the tsunami and distributed aid, cleaned houses, created child-friendly spaces, and rebuilt schools. During this period, IsraAID discovered a worrying and rapidly growing need for psycho-social and post-traumatic care, and the organization launched the Japan IsraAID Support Program (JISP).

The JISP program aims to develop local psycho-social capacities, and its focus is on survivors from 8 cities in the Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures. To accomplish this, IsraAID has started working with Fukushima and EJ centre in 2014 to be able to provide trainings for professionals who work in the field of psycho-social care in Japan.

IsraAID and JISP intend to work with FCECFR and EJ centre on a monthly basis, providing intensive workshops to professionals on different art and group therapy techniques. The workshops are provided by experts arriving from Israel every month for providing such workshops in Japan. The partnership allows for in-depth seminars to take place, and to give professionals further practical and theoretical tools each month.

Thus far participants had workshops from experts arriving from Israel on the topic of Group Therapy and Psychodrama. Trainings on art therapy, movement therapy, and further trainings on psychodrama and group therapy are planned for the future.

IsraAID appreciates the partnership with Fukushima and EJ center as an opportunity to work with professionals and expand the psycho-social support system in Japan.



Support Group

Kayoko Hige, M.A.

Certified Registered Clinical Psychologist of FCECFR

We have been providing support group sessions once or twice a month at our Free Clinical-Educational Center for Fukushima Reconstruction since it has opened in September, 2013. The basis of this support group is the “Northeastern Model Support Group*”, which was designed specifically for people in the stricken area. Based on our practice in the East Japan Center for Free Clinical-Educational Service in Sendai, it has three 45 minute sessions consisting of a combination of ego-supportive group therapy and psycho-education. Each time we have several people to attend the group joined by several of our own staffs.

Members are encouraged to attend the whole pack of three sessions and talk about anything associated with their 3.11 experiences, but some people cannot make it and stays for only one or two sessions. Even when they can attend the whole three sessions, people do not talk much about their own experiences of 3.11 and its aftermath.

The difference from the support group in Sendai is that people talk anyway. Silence is not dominant in the group sessions but some members just keep talking about war and family history, for example. Most of the members are elderly people and two or three women come together as a group. They are from the same neighborhood-oriented community and they have been tied strongly for a long time. They talk a lot to each other in the group maybe the same way as they usually do. They criticize and discuss about public policy energetically but cannot feel free to talk about their own 3.11 experience and concerns about nuclear accidents. They admit that the support group is

necessary for people in Fukushima, but not for themselves. It seems that they cannot talk directly about the loss and anxiety associated with 3.11 experiences, but instead talk about other traumas in their lives. It does not mean their trauma from 3.11 and the aftermath is already resolved and regarded as one of the distinguished events in their lives. They still cannot accept they have trauma from 3.11 and its aftermath, especially nuclear accidents, since it is not something in the past, but a current event.

Why young people do not come to the center, the reason might be because it is hard for them to accept the facts and talk of their feelings and experiences to overcome this desperate reality. Nuclear problems are much deeper and a more pressing concern for young people than the elderly. Fortunately, there seems to be a stable local community. Our task is to develop a therapeutic community by taking advantage of that.

Even though people do not talk much about their trauma in the group sessions, some people do during the breaks between sessions. The framework of the support group has not functioned well enough yet but our new community is working now as a big container. This is a hope, not a little one. Young people from Tokyo have started to come to the center and attend the support group to think about the future in Fukushima and Japan. To take it as a real problem of our own and not someone else's problem, we need to start by getting along with our own hearts. This will be a long-term challenge for us.

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The Opening Commemorative Lecture of Community College

Ai Yoshida, M.A.

Certified Registered Clinical Psychologist of FCECFR

On 27th, October 2013, the opening commemorative lecture of community college titled “The excitement of quantum mechanics” was held in Free Clinical-Educational Center for Fukushima Reconstruction (FCECFR) in Koriyama. The lecture started in a warm atmosphere made with the gathered participants. Dr. Shiraishi opened with the question “What is 1? Please share us how you feel about it.” Participants tried to respond by putting in to words, such as, “1 is ○○”, “It comes after zero”, but they didn’t seem to fit. Then Dr. Shiraishi wrote “1 = identity” on a white board and said, “Establish identity on your sheet of paper.” From this point, uncanny feelings began to spread among the participants.

Dr. Shiraishi explained quantum mechanics as “something that describes a discrete world”, and told several episodes about drawing figures and quantum mechanics in a discrete way, just as he had mentioned. The lecture itself was an experience of the world of quantum mechanics.

Every figure started from deciding 1 by placing a dot and a line. This became ones’ identity. I was surprised to see how easy it was to define identity by drawing a line on a paper. During the lecture, whenever a participant would raise his/her voice saying “I feel uncanny”, Dr. Shiraishi

would simply answer “Quantum mechanics is that kind of thing.” However, continuing to cope with this uncanny feeling, my interest toward it gradually grew and the sense of excitement appeared.

In the end, Dr. Kotani, the organizer addressed that “Uncanny feelings are everywhere in Tohoku region.” Ever since the disaster the people and the communities of Tohoku region may have been holding these uncanny feelings within themselves. How do we make access and how do we interact with these existing yet invisible uncanny feelings inside oneself? This is exactly the theme of psychology. To have experienced a space to interact with the uncanny feelings that are usually unseen and unfelt, and simply addressing it as “it is that kind of thing”, was very meaningful to me.

From the participants, there were voices that recommended adolescents to experience this lecture. The lecture today was different from school work, but was something that made us use both our mind and brain through the world of quantum mechanics. I felt a wish for all the young people who have the future, to activate their brain, to be rich in wisdom, and to experience “excitement”, and to become more energetic.

For psychological revival, facing the reality by using correct knowledge and wisdom of each person is crucial. I thought the commemorative lecture “The excitement of quantum mechanics” was best for the opening of the community college, which aims to achieve wisdom and to become energetic through learning.

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