

5th CIFA Regional Symposium

Following the exciting and successful 4th Regional Symposium at the East China University of Science and Technology in Shanghai, China in November 2014, it is time to welcome you to the 5th CIFA Regional Symposium to be held from 3rd to 5th November 2016 at the National Museum of Korea at Ichon-dong, Korea. CIFA and Korean Association of Family Relations (KAFF) are joining hands to co-organize this Regional Symposium.

In recognition of the legacy of the traditional values and the new waves of modernism, CIFA has chosen "Asian Families: Change & Consistency" as the main theme of the symposium, with four sub-themes, namely The Future of Asian Family: Aging issues and Diversity of Marriage; Contemporary Issues on Parenting; Family Happiness and Family Practice in Asia. We believe the symposium will provide an excellent opportunity for academics/professionals, government, private, and the third sector representatives and graduate students to raise thought provoking questions on how to maintain a balance between the old and new, and work hand-in-hand to formulate effective policies, develop evidence-based and innovative measures, and provide timely support and intervention to families in coping with these changes.

Highlights of the 5th CIFA Regional Symposium will include Opening Ceremony, Keynote speeches, plenary sessions, Wofoo 3A Project 2016 Final Round Adjudication & Award Presentation Ceremony, paper presentations at concurrent sessions, poster presentation, pre-Symposium Agency Visit (on 2 November), post-Symposium Workshop (on 6 November), Gala Dinner and Closing Ceremony.

Seoul, the capital city of South Korea, is a historical metropolitan city which had been the capital city of Chosun (Yi's Dynasty) over 500 years and contains five UNESCO World Heritage sites. Participants to the Symposium can surely enjoy their stay in this beautiful city where emerges the old and new faces of Korea.

CIFA looks forward to a fruitful and exciting Symposium, with your full support and active participation. Watch out for the Symposium website and register for this exciting symposium in Korea!

You may like to see more about Korea and the National Museum of the Korea from the links below:
National Museum of Korea:
<http://www.museum.go.kr>
Korea Tourism Organization:
<http://www.visitkorea.or.kr/>

Wofoo 3A Project 2016

As the Secretariat is still receiving many enquiries and requests for extension, the 3A Project Committee has decided to extend the deadline for submission of the initial application to 31st March, 2016. As a result, the announcement of first round result will be rescheduled to 8th April, 2016. Below are some important days of the Wofoo 3A Project 2016:

- i. Deadline for submission of Projects for 2nd Round Adjudication – 30th May, 2016
- ii. Second Round Adjudication Interview Session – 14th and 15th July, 2016
- iii. Announcement of Second Round Adjudication Results – 25th July, 2016
- iv. Final Round Adjudication at the National Museum of Korea, Seoul – 4th November, 2016 (Friday)
- v. Award Presentation Ceremony at the Gala Dinner – 4th November, 2016 (Friday)

For more information of the Wofoo 3A Project, you are most welcome to visit our CIFA website at
<http://www.cifa-net.org>

Revamped CIFA website

With the feedback from viewers of the CIFA website, the WEP Development Committee has taken action to make improvements. The revamped CIFA website is user friendly to provide information on the work of CIFA and viewers can have much quicker access to it. Please take a look at the revamped website at www.cifa-net.org. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please send these to cifasecretariat@gmail.com.



**Newsletter of Consortium of Institutes
on Family in the Asian Region**

Converging Professional Wisdom For Family Well-being

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Message from Mrs. Patricia CHU Chairperson CIFA

During this first quarter of 2016, the Council is busily engaged in the preparation of the 5th CIFA Regional Symposium to be co-organized with the Korean Association of Family Relations. It will be held from 3-5 November, 2016 at the National Museum of Korea. We have extended an invitation to Mrs. Renata Kaczmarek of the Focal Point on Family of the United Nations to be our Guest of Honour at the Opening Ceremony and Award Presentation Ceremony of the Wofoo 3A Project 2016. We are expecting an exciting and fruitful Symposium. So make sure to mark your diary and join us in the historic and beautiful city of Seoul where the new meets the old.

In this issue, apart from providing updated information on the Regional Symposium, we have included an abstract of paper presented by Prof. Jack M. Richman on the topic of Conceptualizing Couple and Family Development for Use in Social Work Practice, highlighting family development in China, a report on the training program attended by a group of social workers from Mainland China. We have also included updated information on the Wofoo 3A Project 2016 and good news of the revamped website. You are encouraged to keep abreast of the development of CIFA and I invite you to play more active part so that the momentum created thus far can be further sustained.

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CONCEPTUALIZING COUPLE AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT FOR USE IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE



JACK M. RICHMAN
DEAN AND PROFESSOR/SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Challenges of Contemporary Families in China

Rapid economic and social development in China are producing opportunities for a better standard of living for many families but also associated with significant stress, which has possibly led to rising family instability, divorce and re-marriage. Divorce and re-marriage rates which have increased over 200% since 1979, are expected to continue rising. (Wang & Zhou, 2010). The family dissolution rate in China's urban areas is in the 35 to 39 percent range. As the society witnesses more stressful couples and families, the need for mental health services is growing. Furthermore, due to the competitive nature of the market economy, work-life has become more fast-paced and competitive, especially in the private-owned companies in China. (Yan Yu, 2013). Family therapy, as one of the mental health services, has therefore become increasingly available. (Epstein, Curtis, Edwards, Young, & Le Zheng, 2014)

Critical Role of Family and High Value of Family Relations

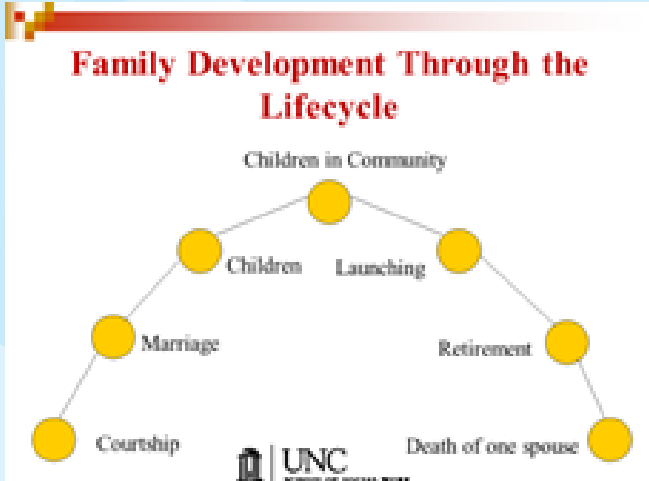
Family is a central construct in Chinese life. Although central, it is also a changing construct as China has become an increasingly international nation. (Dias, Chan, Ungvarsky, Oraker, and Cleare-Hoffman, 2011). However, the family unit still plays a critical role in the well-being of its members. Accordingly, there is a high value placed on one's ability to maintain and prioritize family relationships. (Epstein, Curtis, Edwards, Young, & Le Zheng, 2014). Family therapy, among all mental services, is comparatively more popular in China.

Family Size and Family Structure

Xiaotong Fei, the founding Father of Sociology and Anthropology in China, pointed out a misconception about Chinese family size and structure. On average a Chinese family in the past did not have a dozen or more but 4 to 6 people; nor did it have five generations living under the same roof as fictions or movies portrayed. (Xu & Xia, 2014).

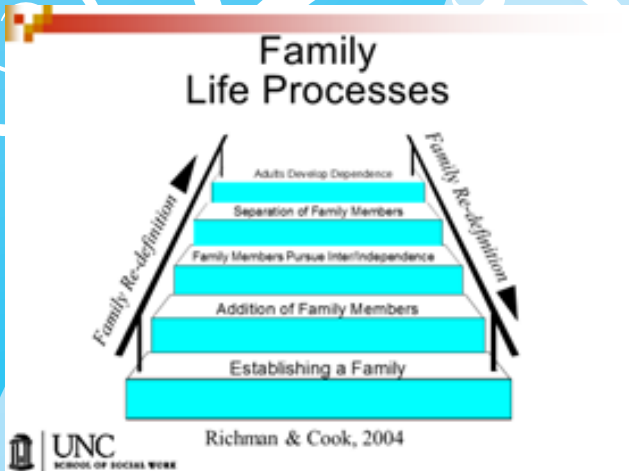
Family Development through the Life Cycle

Each family will be developed through the life cycle: going through stages of courtship, marriage, birth of children, children in community, launching, retirement and death of one spouse.



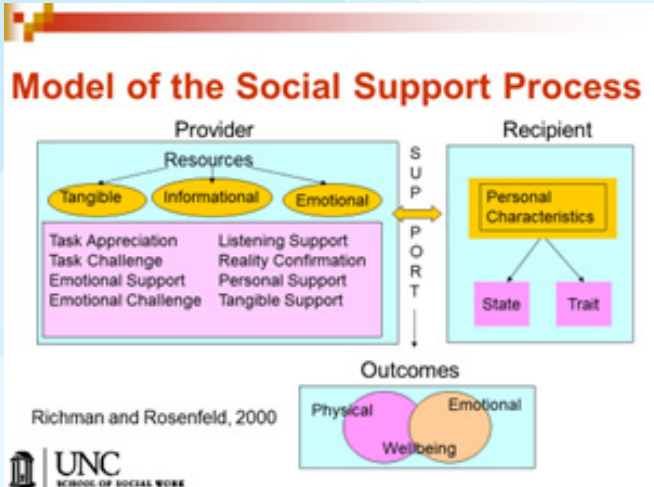
Family Life Processes (Richman & Cook, 2004)

According to the Family Life Processes Model delineated by Richman & Cook (2004), family life process is an on-going and changing process. Family Re-definition would commence with "Establishing a Family", "Addition of Family Members", "Family Members pursue Inter/Independence", "Separation of Family Members" and "Adults Develop Dependence".



Model of Social Support Process

Social support is an exchange of resources between a provider and recipient where enacted behaviors are perceived by the recipient as enhancing their well-being. Social support would include the following: listening support, emotional support, reality confirmation support, task appreciation support, task challenge support, tangible support and personal assistance support.



Benefits of Social Support found in Research Studies:

Social Support increases:

- Physical and mental well-being
- Recovery for victims of rape
- Job performance and work innovation
- Coping for at-risk families
- Academic and behavioral adjustment
- Performance on examinations & achievement tests
- School adjustment, school grades, and school attendance
- Students' ability to handle daily school hassles

Social Support decreases:

- Stress and burnout
- Morbidity
- Feelings of loss
- Adolescent depression
- Delinquent behaviors
- School drop-out rate

In conclusion, the models on Family Development and Social Support are both pragmatic for conceptualizing modern and changing families and they may serve as a family therapy practice tool in helping stressful families.

Note: This paper is abstracted from the plenary presentation of Prof. Jack Richman at the CIFA 4th Regional Symposium held in Shanghai, China in November 2014.

Training Program on Family-Oriented Social Services

November 16 – 18, 2015

Dr. Miranda CHUNG

Chairman of Research & Training Committee



In past decades, we have witnessed increasing recognition and support to the development of social services to meet the changing needs of the families in Mainland China. Social workers have expressed strong commitment to the social development of their country and passion for the well-being of their people. In meeting the challenges arisen from the rapid social and economic development, they have continuously endeavored to expand the arenas of the social services and advance the quality of their practice. More opportunities for training and service practice sharing are earnestly needed.

CIFA, with its mission of "Converging Professional Wisdom for Family Well-Being" in the Asian Region, has made proactive responses to their training needs. In the past year, CIFA had co-organized with Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association (HKYWCA) a 3-day training cum agency visits between November 16 and 18, 2015. This training program has served to provide an opportunity for 22 family professionals and administrators from Guangdong, Mainland China to share the successful practice experiences in Hong Kong. HKYWCA is a renowned Non-Government Organization, rendering a comprehensive range of social services to the families and communities. In particular, it has delineated innovative Family Wellness Centers, stressing family harmony and giving hope and support to all family members. In recent years, its services have a clear family orientation and a growing emphasis on intergenerational love, support and volunteering work.

The learning goals of the 3-day Training Program have comprised of: 1) Understanding of social services in Hong Kong, including family, youth and elderly services as well as continuing education & vocational training; 2) Understanding the orientation and goals of various social services; 3) Development of family-oriented social services and operational strategies; and 4) Sharing of a successful inter-generational project "Ha Chai Daddy". The training program highly encouraged professional sharing of successful practice experiences and strategies in overcoming the challenges encountered. An evaluation meeting with the leaders of the Mainland family professionals, Ms. Li ZANG (Chief Executive of 3 Social Service Centers) and Ms. Wei HE (Secretary General of Guangdong Association of Social Work Education and Practice) and their colleagues was held immediately after the training. They all found the training program and agency visits very fruitful and inspiring while the sharing with professionals and meeting with volunteers were amazing experiences. In particular, they were impressed by the innovative family wellness services and intergenerational volunteer project. Lastly, the colleagues of HKYWCA were deeply appreciated for their strong professional identity and commitment to social work, clear mission and vision, and excellent team spirit.

In the light of the increasing demand for professional training and practice sharing, CIFA is in the process of drawing up a list of resource persons/experts in Asia, encouraging active sharing of practice wisdom and contribution to regional training in future.

