

Bloorview
KIDS REHAB

Perspectives of TBI Through a Multicultural Lens

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Καλώς ήρθατε
Willkommen
Bienvenue!
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Bienvenido

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Canada's Ethnocultural Mosaic 2006 Census

- Canada is home to more than 200 ethnic groups
- 47.6% of Canadian born population identified with more than 1 ethnic origin
- Ontario is home to more than half of Canada's visible minorities
- Toronto takes in more than 40% of all newcomers to Canada

Statistics Canada 2006

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Ethno Cultural Framework 2009/03/12 3

Cultural Belief Systems

- At time of injury, core developmental task is to assign a cause or find meaning around the TBI event
- Helps people to make sense of an event that is unimaginable
- Constructions of reality and narratives shape ways of coping and patterns of behaviour

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EMPOWERING **DISEMPowering**

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Beliefs About the Cause of Disability

- In the face of a tragic event, people often assign a cause around "why" the event has happened
 - "Why me?"
 - "Why now?"
 - "Why us?"
- We construct an explanation or narrative that helps to organize our experience
- These narratives are shaped by one's experiences, personal and religious beliefs, and cultural norms

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He's just sick!
Bad luck
Mental
CRAZY
FATE
GOD'S WILL

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Explanatory Model of TBI

- Beliefs about what caused the TBI and what might influence the outcome
- Views influence interpretation of events, help seeking behaviour, and approach to rehab

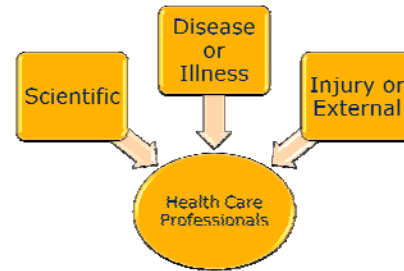
All of us come up with reasons why something happens. I'm wondering what you thought about why Aru got hit by a car?

Why did it happen when it did?

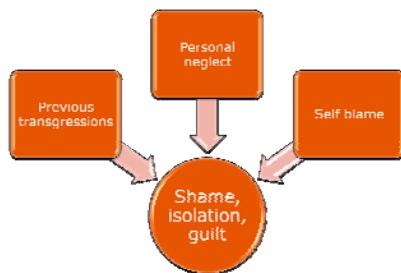
How might Aru's TBI be viewed by family, friends, people in your community, or people back home?

What do you think will help him get better?

Biological Model



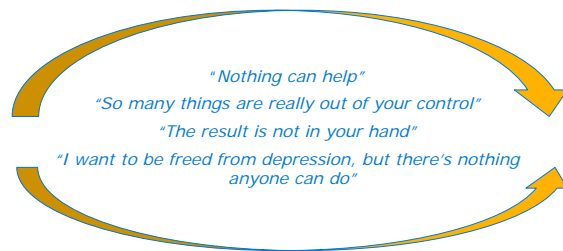
Self Attribution Model



Supernatural Beliefs & Divine Forces



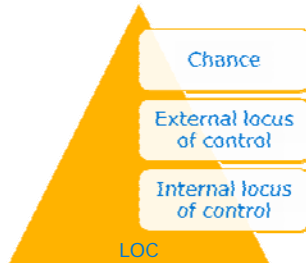
Fate



Psychiatric Sequelae of TBI: An "Embarrassing" Illness

- Viewed as a character weakness
- Reflects on status and social standing of family
- Reduced prospect of arranged marriages
- Family learns to live with and tolerate any kind of abnormal behaviour
- Emotional problems such as anger, hurt, and frustration are translated into physical ailments
- Families may cover up due to shame and embarrassment

Beliefs About Mastery and Control of Disability



Internal Locus of Control

- Can affect outcome of situation
- Solutions come from within the person or family
- Personal control over the environment and one's fate
- Play an active role in the recovery process and in rehabilitation



External Locus of Control

- Outcomes do not depend on the individual's or family's behaviour
- Minimizes one's role in recovery
- Control is in the hands of others or divine intervention
- Externalize responsibility for change to others
- Relegates control to others or divine forces



Disability is Due to "Chance"

- Disability seen as bad luck
- Fate determines recovery
- Minimizes importance of one's role or professional's role in recovery
- Less amenable to rational directed therapies
- May inhibit individual to engage in rehabilitation as it is in the hands of fate or a higher power
- Marginal relationship with professionals



LOC and TBI Outcomes

- Poorer outcomes in those from CALD backgrounds (n = 32) compared to those from ESB (n = 38) - may be attributed to LOC beliefs about injury and recovery (Saltapidas & Ponsford, 2007)
- LOC beliefs influence coping styles and psychological well-being (Sastry, 1998)
- LOC has been found to influence outcome following TBI (Moore & Stambrook, 1992; Moore, Stambrook & Wilson, 1991)

Implications for Professionals

- Inquire about narratives about TBI, belief systems, and help seeking practices
- Assess fit of health beliefs between the family and health-care system
- Affirm each family member's narrative, using them as a basis for joining
- Understanding and appreciation of differences in beliefs is an intervention strategy
- **Be aware of own attitudes and biases about different cultural belief systems**



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From disability to possibility

Thank you

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