

Professor Dr. K.R. Sethuraman, Vice Chancellor, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth University, Pondicherry, India

Presentation Title: The Concept of Salutogenesis

Abstract:

Health professionals, who are mostly focused on the origin of diseases, need to move a little from chasing Pathogenesis to fostering Salutogenesis. Salutogenesis combines 'salus' in Latin meaning health and 'genesis' in Greek. Aaron Antonovsky – an Austrian medical sociologist – in his study of Nazi Holocaust survivors, coined the term Salutogenesis to explain why some of his study subjects managed to avoid succumbing to hardship and even did well under extreme stress.

Aaron Antonovsky said that relatively unstressed people were more resistant to illness. He proposed that the experience of well-being is based on Sense of Coherence (SOC). SOC determines how one responds to and copes with stressors. SOC has three components: **i) comprehensibility** (*what is happening?*), **ii) meaningfulness** (*why is it happening?*) and **iii) manageability** (*how to cope with it*)

To promote SOC and wellness, a therapist should interact with the clients to help them realize the 'what' and the 'why' of their illness, and also how they could cope with it.

Promoting wellness & optimal healing: Healing is a process of recovery, repair, renewal, and reintegration that contributes to physical, mental, social and spiritual health and well-being. Healing and cure are mutually complementary; both are essential for wellbeing.

Music therapist adopts healing-oriented practices and environments to create an optimal healing environment (OHE).

The four domains of OHE are:

- 1) Internal Domain – a music therapist attends to the internal factors of wanting to get well and focus on wholeness
- 2) Interpersonal Domain – a music-therapist uses 'musicking' to create a therapeutic relationship for wellness and promote holistic healing
- 3) Behavioural Domain – a music-therapist attends to the behavioural factors to promote a healthy lifestyle through music
- 4) External Domain – a music-therapist promotes equanimity, joy and symbiosis with nature with music and sound vibrations

To conclude, therapists need to move from, "What did I do today to treat disease / illness?" to asking this too: "What did I do today to create health/wellness?" Lifestyle-based wellness choices can maximise positive life experiences such as joy, vitality, serenity, happiness, self-actualisation, and other qualities, which make life worth living. Music therapy promotes wellness and healing by helping to create an optimal healing environment.