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Movement for Global Mental Health
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Meet the new **MGMH's International Advisory Board**

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The Global Summit on Mental Health Culture Change

by *Barbara Van Dahlen, Ph.D.*
Founder & President, Give an Hour

Many well-respected organizations around the world are focusing on mental health in new and innovative ways. Some of these efforts are making great strides in the areas of research and service delivery.



But no convening has brought together thought leaders, stakeholders, policy makers and change agents to focus exclusively on addressing culture as a primary barrier to changing the way we think about, talk about and address emotional well-being and mental health.

A Global Summit on Mental Health Culture Change (GSMHCC) is being planned that will serve to showcase successful efforts, forge new alliances and begin to create a strategic vision to eradicate the fear, shame and guilt that prevents those who are suffering from receiving the compassionate care they deserve. [Give an Hour](#) - through the [Campaign to Change Direction](#) - is leading the planning effort for this convening which is scheduled to take place in the United States in Los Angeles, California in the spring of 2017. Give an Hour is honored to partner with other organizations working to improve mental health and well-being such as the Movement for Global Mental Health on this important effort.

The Entertainment Community and Culture Change

Culture is driven by many factors - but in today's technology based, social media focused, global society, our entertainers often play a significant role in shaping, maintaining or disrupting our culture. Today there are almost as many cell-phone subscriptions (6.8 billion) as there are people on this earth (7 billion). This creates a tremendous opportunity for champions to deliver coordinated messages that will drive culture change and reach those who are in need.

In addition, many celebrities have shared their own stories of emotional pain and struggle - and others have expressed a desire to assist with efforts to remove barriers that prevent those who suffer from receiving care. Hosting the Summit in Southern California creates opportunities to engage the entertainment industry in new and creative ways.

Oren Moverman, award winning writer and filmmaker (the Messenger, Love & Mercy, Time Out of Mind) is one member of the entertainment community who is using his considerable talent, his platform and his upcoming feature film to draw attention to the need to change the culture of mental health. The Dinner, based on the best selling novel by Herman Koch and starring Richard Gere, Laura Linney, Steve Coogan and Rebecca Hall, is a powerful psychological thriller that explores the consequences of unaddressed trauma and mental illness in the lives of two families.

A red-carpet screening of the US premier of this eagerly anticipated film is planned as the perfect opening event for the Summit.

By bringing together advocates, world leaders and the entertainment industry, we will create an opportunity for an important conversation – a conversation recognizing that it's time to change the culture of mental health. It's time to remove barriers so that we can all talk openly about our emotional well-being – as well as our emotional pain. By changing our culture we will change minds, attitudes and behaviors. By changing our culture we will increase access to care for those who are suffering.

More information regarding specific dates and details for the Global Summit for Mental Health Culture Change will be available soon on www.changedirection.org and www.globalmentalhealth.org



Prepare yourselves ...

The 5th Global Mental Health Summit of the MGMH is planned to take place in February 2018 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Watch this space for more information.

THE LANCET

Suicide in Indigenous Australians: a “catastrophic crisis”

Suicide prevention programmes for Indigenous Australians have been reported to be failing. An Indigenous-led national response to the crisis is needed, say experts. Sophie Cousins reports.

[Continue reading](#)

THE LANCET Psychiatry

Psychiatry's response to mass traumatisation and the global refugee crisis

After years of suffering, hunger, and war throughout Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, millions of people have been displaced from their homes. In 2015, an estimated 34 000 people per day were added to the 65 million displaced worldwide, of whom 21·3 million are refugees, living in camps, ruins, or on the streets.¹ In 2015, approximately 10·8 million refugees were children and young people and it has been demonstrated that those living in refugee camps, particularly adolescents, are exposed to high levels of physical and sexual violence and little access to shelter, food, water, and education.

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Life can be a challenge!!!

by JUANITA KOTZÉ (South Africa)

I stand in front of the mirror sometimes with my reflection looking back at me. As I stand there open to my own judgement, I realise some truth and strengths - knowing who I really am. Does this lady understand the meaning of living with a mental disorder?

Here is a little bit of a background check into my life.

I enjoyed the best things in life. Yes, I had many days which turned into years of unnecessary problems in my life. There are always those little problems, which become mountains. Without those "mountains", we would have no character, we would all be the same, and that would be boring.

I was diagnosed with schizophrenia at the age of 12 years. My mom says that I got stuck emotionally at age 14, but I think I've progressed in recent years. I led a sheltered life and knew little of the big wide world. I completed high school with lots of support from my family. After leaving home I lived in my first psychiatric care centre, had my first engagement, my first pet ... I did all the first time things. Eventually I became a bit out of control, so I moved to another residential facility, the **Thandanani Centre** for persons with severe mental disorders, where I was taught to own my disorder and be responsible for my actions. One thing I've learnt is that life is full of options. It's just choosing the right option you are willing and wanting to take. Being in a place where all around you there is encouragement and motivation to "be the best you can be" helps me to try new things and achieve.

I have my negatives, but I'm more of an optimist. My creative and artistic side is where I live. At Thandanani Centre, I've learned skills in scroll sawing, to use the dremel and have mastered the interstasia technique. Today, I am self-employed at the age of 24. My artwork had been exhibited at a city art gallery.

I am an energetic person. I have learnt a lot about how to manage my behaviour through NLP coaching and I'm still working at trying not to sweat the small stuff, but that's ok.

But as I stand in front of that mirror, I realise that if I really want to achieve and be the best I need to work at it, no one else but that person staring back at me from the mirror can do it. Yes it's so nice to have all the support I need, but that's not going to help me climb the steps to where I see myself going. It's hard. But even people who don't have a mental disorder struggle with life's speed bumps, it's how you tend to deal with it that helps you keep going or not. I can give up, or I can lift myself off the ground, dust myself off and try again. Never give up hope in myself and my dreams. Life will always move forward even if I choose to stand still. These are the clichés that help me to do the best in my life and owning my mental disorder.

So having a mental disorder can seem like it's the end of the world. I say RUBBISH! You can be that person you dream of. If I can do it so can you!! Never give up!



LISBON INSTITUTE
of Global Mental Health

Lisbon International Learning Program on Mental Health Policy and Services

As a new and innovative development of the International Master on Mental Health Policy and Services (NOVA University of Lisbon), we will organize during the year 2017 an International Learning Program for mental health leaders and professionals willing to develop public health skills in mental health policy and services, with a special emphasis on low- and middle-income countries.

[Find out more](#)

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