The Wisdom of Traditional Eastern Cultures in career counseling

~~Inspirations to my work as career counselor and counselor educator

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Content

• To present problem-based reflection in career counseling from the wisdom of traditional eastern cultures.

• To propose the prototype of career counseling based on culture-inclusive psychology.
Wisdom of Traditional Eastern Cultures

儒學 (Confucianism: Confucius, 551-479 B. C.)

道家 (Taoism: Laozi, 570 B. C.-unknown)

佛學 (Buddhism: Buddha Gautama, 564-486 B. C.)
Problem-based reflection in career counseling

• Who am I?
• How to encounter with negative emotion (e.g. anxiety, depression) in CDM?
• How to handle the conflict with expectations of others in CDM?
• How to deal with uncertainty after CDM?
Zen Story: Who am I?
阿部 正雄Masao Abe（あべ まさお、1915 – 2006）
Zen and Western Thought (London: Macmillan; Univ.of Hawaii 1985)
Zen story
Three stages of enlightenment

• First, You see a mountain and you call it one.
• Then, you see a mountain and you call it otherwise.
• Eventually, you see a mountain and you call it likewise.

~~Song dynasty history of Zen Buddhism in China (1252), 17 scrolls 《五燈會元 卷17》
Zen Story: Who am I?
阿部 正雄Masao Abe（あべ まさお、1915 – 2006)
Zen and Western Thought (London: Macmillan; Univ.of Hawaii 1985)

• 自我本质
  – 「我是誰呢？」
  – 誰在問「我是誰？」
  – 是我在問『我是誰？』
  – 誰在問：「我在問：『我是誰？』」
  – 是我在問：『我在問：我是誰？』
  – Who am I?
  – Who is asking: "Who am I?"
  – I am asking: "Who am I?"
  – Who is asking: “I am asking: Who am I?“
  – I am asking: "I am asking: Who am I?"
Past

Who am I
Who am I
Who am I

Past
Past

I am asking

Present
Implication from Zen story (1)

What you already know about yourself

What you can still learn about yourself

What you cannot know or predict
There-&-then vs. Here-&-now

**Self-as-object**
What you already know about yourself

**Self-as-subject**
What you can still learn about your self

**What you cannot know or predict**
Implications from Zen story (2)
Narrative approach in career counseling

Landscape of identity

--- creativity/beauty/freedom/Straightforward ---

Landscape of action (story)

Past  present  future
Implications from Zen Story (3)
Career Construction of Macao Lesbians

Ching’s Life Theme: Striving to Sow The Seeds And Expecting Harvest

Confirmation of My Sexual Orientation
Being Outspoken Is My True Self
Everyone Should Have A Dream
I Am Dauntless
Breath of Freedom
It Is Not Yet Successful And More Effort Should Be Put
Is It Different? There Is No Difference!
Sow A Seed And Reap A Harvest
Short haircut incident

• “... in the year of junior three, I had my hair cut shorten to the ear, which against school regulation.

• In fact, I was not intended to challenge school rules, just because I felt very hot after gym class. Teacher X took me to the school principal, I was punished to suspended classes for a week on suspicion of homosexuality...

• Homosexuality in Catholic school of Macau regarded as a taboo ......., lesbian culture is prohibited strictly on campus. I was very angry, and felt frustrated.

• Ever since then, I became a student of trouble maker in teacher’s eye .......”

Who am I
Being Outspoken Is My True Self

• “……I think the haircut incident triggered out my inner self, shaping my future personality…

• ……this inspired me proactively to promote gender education,… if we don’t change the teacher’s idea, our next generation will bear incorrect knowledge of gender issues……”

Problem-based reflection in career counseling

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• How to deal with uncertainty after CDM?
Figure 1

The taxonomy of emotional and personality-related aspects of career-decision-making difficulties

~ Saka, Gati and Kelly (2008)
The West vs. The East
Designer Yang Liu
the Eastern way
Confucius: ~《大學 The Great Learning》

- 知止而后有定
  When you know where to stop, you have stability.
- 定而后能靜
  When you have stability, you can be tranquil.
- 靜而后能安
  When you are tranquil, you can be at ease.
- 安而后能慮
  When you are at ease, you can be deliberate.
- 慮而后能得
  When you can deliberate you can attain your aims.

http://www.acmuller.net/con-dao/greatlearning.html
先放下 再提起
Buddhism: 止 meditation & 觀 contemplation

止 (to stop)  得 (getting all together)

定 (stability)  劇 (deliberate)

静 (tranquil)  安 (at ease)

無所住而生其心  
give rise to thoughts with no attachment
Implication: counseling skills

• MBSR (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction)

• PDPD (Psychological Displacement Paradigm in Diary-Writing)
Psychological Displacement Paradigm in Diary-Writing (PDPD)

- PDPD requires clients to write about their daily events using a fixed sequence of different personal pronouns (from I to you, then to he/she).

Gao Xing Jian
the winner of Nobel Prize of literature in 2000
The wisdom of West:
Effect of Psychological Displacement
(Nigro and Neisser 1983; Robinson and Swanson 1993)

first-person perspective

field perspective

third-person perspective

observed perspective
The wisdom of West: Effect of Psychological Displacement
(Ayduk & Kross, 2010; Kross & Ayduk, 2008)
The wisdom of East
Effectiveness of PDPD

ZEN 曹洞宗：正中來/偏中至/正中偏/偏中正/兼中到

- 正中偏 emotional intensity
- 偏中正 self-caring self-criticism
- 正中來 rational oriented

1st-person pronoun
2nd -person pronoun
3rd -person pronoun
Nature of I as pronoun
Nature of YOU as pronoun
Nature of S/HE as pronoun
The Experience of Psychological Displacement Paradigm in Diary-Writing on the Career Indecisiveness College Students
Yi-Jhen Lee, 2015

• Using the method of psychological displacement paradigm in diary writing as intervention, Case A (college, year 4) became (a) fully aware of her status in career indecisiveness, (b) sensed about the essence of career indecision, and (c) realize the meaning of indecisiveness and transformed it into next step.
• Case B (college, year 5) talked about her career indecision over and over again, experienced a lot of negative emotions, yet she turned out to be more objective via expending perspectives using the practice of PDPD.

• Case B finally cleared about the imbalance among her own desires, her parents’ values and the reality. In the culture of being a good daughter, Case B decided to make a compromise accepting the expectation of her parents.
Problem-based reflection in career counseling

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The West vs The East

• Be yourself
  – I have a dream

• Be yourself-in-relation
  – I have a family dream
Lü Siqing

- Notable recordings
  - Butterfly Lovers' Violin Concerto

Lü Siqing (Chinese: 呂思清; born 1969 in Qingdao, Shandong) is a Chinese violinist.

- In 1987, he won the first prize of the Paganini Competition; and in 1999, he was the winner of the Web Concert Hall International Competition.
Self-in-relation
Lü Siqing: violinist

• I have a dream,
• this is not only my own dream,
• but also my father's,
• and a dream for all who care about me,
• So I think......
• I can not let this dream disappear.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fut6N-OQVtg
Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Theory
環境對個體生涯發展的影響

http://nlyingst.iweb.bsu.edu/edpsy251/courseconcepts/251/bronfenbrenner.html
Super's Archway Model

Archway of Career Determinants

Developmental Stage

Role Self-Concepts

SELF

Role Self-Concepts

Developmental Stage

Achievement Personality

Interests

Values

Needs

Intelligence

Special Abilities

Biographical

Employment Practices

Social Policy

Labor Market

Society

The Economy

School Family

Community

Peer Groups
Self in the West vs. Self in the East
Self in the West vs. Self in the East

~ Designer Yang Liu
How do I find the best of both worlds, not to take account of the original self, but also take into account the expectations of others?
Wisdom of Confucius: Social harmony in conflict

- From a Confucian perspective, when personal goals or interests are incompatible with those of others, a self-cultivated person should follow the ethical principles of social order and maintain harmony as the first priority.

Implication: Counseling goal

• The primary goal of counseling for the distressed individual is the restoration of psychosocial homeostasis by assisting in self-coordination and self-relation coordination.

Implication: Counseling tasks

1. Increasing self-awareness and self-understanding,
2. Coordination of the self with related others,
3. Employing multiple conflict resolution strategies, and

Chinese Indigenous Well-Being and Mental Health

- Confucianism
  - Relationship harmony
- Taoism
  - Dialectical coping
- Buddhism
  - Nonattachment on mental health

Dialectical coping
(derived from Taoism)

• Principle of change
  – “I believe that the problems in my life don’t last forever”

• Principle of contradiction
  – “When I experience difficulties, I remind myself that misfortune coexists with blessings”

• Principle of holism
  – “In understanding the obstacles in my life, I can see the interconnections between negative and positive events”

Nonattachment
(based on Buddhism)

• A balanced state that is not affected by either external or internal stimuli; in other words, well-being is not dependent on specific circumstances (Sahdra, Shaver, & Brown, 2010; Wallace & Shapiro, 2006).

  — “I can accept the flow of events in my life without hanging onto them or pushing them away.”


• 斷受 離受 不受: 「以不受一切法故，而於諸漏心得解脫。」~~法華經化城喻品 出離心
Nonattachment on mental health
(based on Buddhism)

• Nonattachment demonstrated the most adaptive effects on mental health: the only and strongest protective factor against negative affect and psychological distress.

Problem-based reflection in career counseling

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The West: Theories of career uncertainty

- Career construction
- Jungian Synchronicity
- Happenstance learning theory
- Chaos theory of careers
The East:
Theories of career uncertainty
What’s YUAN

縁

YUAN

happenstances
Coincidence
chance
serendipity
The West: YUAN as the unplanned in Butterfly model


Figure 6.7 The Butterfly model of careers.
Buddhism: Nature of YUAN
YUAN happened between cause and effect

因
(願)

cause

果
(景)

effect

缘

YUAN
Buddhism: Nature of YUAN

因緣俱足 = 果

cause

Yuan

effect
Semantograph of Yuan/Indigenous meaning of Yuan

Li (李迪琛) (in progress). The psychological meaning of Yuan: A qualitative research based on narrative career counseling theory
N=286
Female=217, #of associated terms=2840, M=13.09;
Male=69, #of associated terms=999, M=13.17

Li (李迪琛) (in progress). The psychological meaning of Yuan: A qualitative research based on narrative career counseling theory
Indigenous meaning of Yuan

- **Sentimental Yuan 情份**
  - marriage
  - Friendship
  - Interpersonal ship
  - Kinship

- **Yuan Feng 緣份**
  - Connection
  - Coincident
  - Synchronicity

- **Arises & Ceases 生滅**
  - Yuan arise
  - Yuan cease
  - Let slip
  - Breaking up

- **Kama 因果**
  - Cause/effect
  - Chance

Li (in progress). The psychological meaning of Yuan: A qualitative research based on narrative career counseling theory
Personal meaning of Yuan

• **Yuan**...feels like a force outside of you, and push those belongs to you to your side.

• **Yuan**...just like I choose my major, and vise versa, it’s a kind of mutual attraction

• **Yuan**...like an invisible silk thread, connecting a lot of people and things related to me..., with the thread penetrating my life, life will be shaped. I know it exists, while unpredictable......

Li （李迪琛）(in progress). The psychological meaning of Yuan: A qualitative research based on narrative career counseling theory
Personal meaning of Yuan

• Q: Yuan equals chance?
• A: NO!!!
• Q: Then what?
• A: It’s connecting I and the chance (e.g., people or events)
YUAN: connecting the dots

• you can’t connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards

• 你無法預先把點點滴滴串連起來；只有在未來回顧時，你才會明白那些點點滴滴是如何串在一起的。

• So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something: your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever.

• 所以你得相信，眼前你經歷的種種，將來多少會連結在一起。你得信任某個東西，直覺也好，命運也好，生命也好，或者業力。

YUAN: connecting the dots

YUAN: connecting the dots
YUAN: Connecting the dots

Types of Yuan

順境緣
Good Yuan
- 居安思危
- 感恩珍惜
- 懺悔慚愧

逆境緣
Bad Yuan
- 逆眾上緣
- 面對接受
- 伺機而動
Bad Yuan: Adversity

• “In the face of adversity Yuan, you can not follow the road you want to go, however, it gives you a new direction......

• In this new direction, pondering the significance of its existence, I found a new way.”

• “在逆境緣當中，你不能按照你自己想要的那條路去走，它給了你一個新的方向。然後你在這個新的方向上面反而發現了新的道路。”我自己可能就是當新的方向出現的時候，我就去思考它存在的意義，然後在新的方向上發現了新的道路，從此走上了康莊大道。”
The West and The East
Theories of career uncertainty
Implication: Counseling goal

Strengthen both **the planned & the planning** in career development

- ‘In battle plans are useless, but planning is indispensable’—Pryor & Bright (2011).

**To aware and to accept the unplanned**

- To identity the nature of a good Yuan & a bad Yuan
- To cultivate positive attitude toward Yuan
Attitude toward Yuan

- Optimism
- Curiosity
- Openness
- Flexibility
- Self-efficacy
- Adaptability

YUAN
Implication: Counseling task

- Hold positive attitude toward the unplanned events
- Recall & Identify the advantage of Yuan in Client’s past experience
- Acknowledge the meaning of Yuan
- Appreciate the encounter of adversity Yuan
- Take positive career actions with the blessing of Yuan

- Incorporate Yuan into career trajectories
- Yuan favors only the prepared mind
Content

• To present problem-based reflection in career counseling from the wisdom of traditional eastern cultures.

• To propose the prototype for career counseling based on culture-inclusive psychology---“one-mind, many mentalities” (Shweder, 2000).
Culture-inclusive Psychology

Culture-inclusive knowledge

Located wisdom

Indigenous wisdom
Culture-inclusive Psychology

Example: MBSR

MBSR

Zen & Meditation
Localized wisdom

Jon Kabat-zinn’s
Indigenous wisdom

Jon Kabat-zinn’s
Culture-inclusive Career Counseling


Chinese Career Net: CCN

Holland & Narratives
Localized wisdom

Book of CNANGE
Indigenous wisdom
華人生涯網 Chinese Career Net

兼融理性與直觀之 生涯資訊與輔導系統

這裡，有天，有地，人在其中。
這裡，有理性分析，有限無想，生命在其中。
邀您，在嘗試、反思、直觀中，活出意義。
Culture-inclusive Career Counseling

Example 2: Huang (黃素菲) (2014) Construct Interdisciplinary Curriculum by Career Interest Code Within Major for Multiple Career Paths
Career Interest Code Within Major
Culture-inclusive Career Counseling

C-U-C model of CDM

• Stage I: Consciousness
  – clients are aware of their own problem consciously, and carry on career exploration rationally.
  – Most of the problems are supposed to be solved sequentially & logically at this stage.
  – If the client is still having a difficult following decision, go over to the second stage.
C-U-C model of CDM

• Stage II: Unconsciousness
  – Mindfulness & Meditation
  – Career fantasy
  – Dream work
C-U-C model of CDM

- Stage III: Coordination
  - 直覺之覺（awareness of intuition）
  - 君子求缺（searching for suboptimization）
  - 中庸之道（Doctrine of the Mean）
  - 表達性書寫（expressive writing）
Counselor as Agent
Culture-inclusive Career Counseling

- Culture-inclusive knowledge
- Problem-based reflection
- Western wisdom
- Eastern wisdom
Counselor as Agent

Reflection in action
Reflection on action
Reflection for action

CONCLUSION

凤凰涅槃

PHOENIX NIRVANA

Phoenix: A symbol from the Eastern and Western ancient legend

Nirvana (from nir {un} and vana [binding] is not a paradise in the beyond, but is a state or trait of mental coolness breaking the cycle of Samsara.
::The END::
Thank you for your Attention!

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