



Haha



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Esther Ha Foundation Day & Mental Health Day

Depicting a melancholic world through Edward Hopper's paintings

What is relationship-centered counseling?

When life makes it hard to breathe



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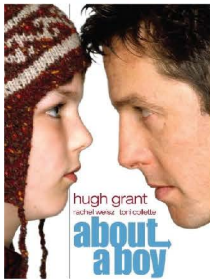
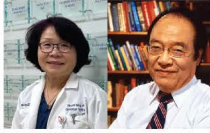
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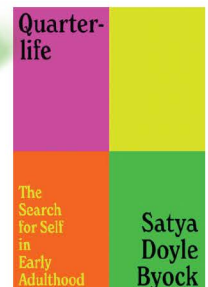
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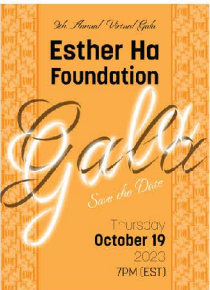
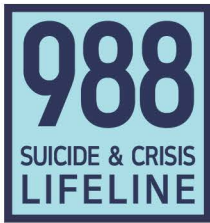


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Mission Statement

The Esther Ha Foundation is a 501c(3) Not-for-profit organization established in memory of our founder's daughter, Esther Ha. Our foundation works to provide mental health education, and to connect individuals with affordable resources. We stand out in our history of providing Korean language resources and support to local immi-

grant communities. We work together with mental health professionals and our members to provide evidence-based, culturally relevant assistance to those who seek to eliminate mental health stigma and support those who are struggling. We also use media coverage and social networks to raise mental health awareness. Furthermore, we



help people recognize their ongoing mental health issues and guide them to the care they need.

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Me Sook Hyun



What is Mental Health First Aid?

To get ourselves situated, let us refer to the familiar term: first aid. First aid is defined as the immediate or emergency care that one provides when someone is injured or ill before professional medical help arrives.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a program that extends the training of first aid to mental health and substance use challenges. By acquiring the skills taught through MHFA, individuals can develop a comprehensive understanding of mental health challenges and become capable of providing crucial support as the first line of assistance for those in need. When administering Mental Health First Aid to someone experiencing such challenges, it is of utmost importance to be fully pres-

ent, actively listen, and communicate effectively. Participants trained in a MHFA program (a.k.a. First Aiders) will be taught how to recognize signs and symptoms of a mental health or substance use challenge, listen non judgmentally and provide reassurance, and help a person to seek further assistance by referring the appropriate support and services. The verbal language, body language, tone of voice, and listening skills of a First Aider can all have a powerful impact on the person they assist and make a difference.

It is important to note that First Aiders are not capable of diagnosing or treating mental health or substance use challenges. Rather, their duty is to serve as a bridge between the person

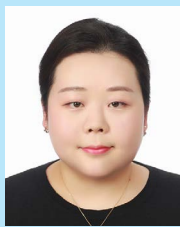


in crisis and professional supports. This role is a crucial and empowering role, as those trained in MHFA can provide the first step in someone's recovery journey and promote the wellbeing of the community as the number of people facing mental health challenges continue to increase. The fundamental vision and goal of the Mental Health First Aid program is to become an intervention as common as CPR that can direct people to receive the proper treatment before it's too late, as well as for MHFA training to be available and accessible to everyone in the U.S.

Mental Health First Aid

- Impressions of the one-day workshop

The Mental Health First Aid workshop was a great opportunity to learn practical ways to respond when you need to help someone with a mental challenge. The workshop taught people how to recognize people in need, recognize their symptoms, listen, reassure them, and connect them to the appropriate resources. We hope that this knowledge can spread to the Korean community and provide appropriate support.



Lee Shin-young
Columbia University
Graduate School,
Dept. of Social Work

Scrubbers ...



Linda Kwon

My name is Linda Kwon, and I have been an active participant of Tuesday and Saturday groups, as well as Healing Camp and Mental Health First Aid since the end of last year.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Dr. Soo-il Lee and Dr. Me Sook Hyun, who have invested a tremendous amount of hard work and time into strengthening the community and providing me with the honor of being able to engage as a participant of the Esther Ha Foundation.

When my teenage daughter was going through puberty, I felt as if I was descending into a dark tunnel with no end in sight, and struggled to endure those days. Each

time we had family-related issues, I would routinely knit and make dish scrubbers as a way to cope and comfort my tortured heart. I created each scrubber intentionally with meaning and decided to donate them to an organization that I also believe has intentionality and meaning. As such, I decided to share them among the families that participate in the Esther Ha Foundation's Healing Camp. Although it may be a small gesture, I am writing this in hopes of being able to spread joy through this gift.

It was an incredibly challenging time for me, and the persistent question that occupied my thoughts was why this was happening to me and my family.

Issues that receive attention in mental health

Mental health refers to the ability to think, feel, and behave in a normal and functional way without impairing one's daily life. However, the meaning of mental health can vary for individuals depending on the severity of mental health issues they may experience. Now, let's briefly explore some of the prominent mental health issues addressed in the United States.

Firstly, the COVID-19 pandemic, which began in 2020, has had a significant impact on mental health nationwide in the United States. Increased rates of depression, anxiety disorders, and stress symptoms have been observed due to factors such as social isolation, economic hardships, and health concerns. Consequently, accessibility to mental health services has become a significant concern.

Secondly, there has been a persistent increase in suicide rates in the United States, especially among adolescents and young adults. Factors such as societal pressures, mental health issues,

educational challenges, and economic difficulties have contributed to this increase. As a result, the importance of emergency mental health intervention and prevention services is underscored.

Thirdly, in the United States, there is a burgeoning movement to prioritize and promote equitable access to mental health services. Efforts are being made to enhance the accessibility and quality of mental health services, raise public awareness about mental health stigma, and emphasize the significance of stress management and self-care.

Fourthly, there has been a notable surge in interest regarding mental health and well-being. People are actively pursuing self-care practices and mental health programs to manage stress, prevent depression, and maintain mental balance. As a result, companies and schools are reinforcing mental health support and educational programs.



Dr. Lee Soo-il

Program Director at Lebanon Mental Hospital
Board Member of Esther Ha Foundation

Lastly, there is a growing public discourse surrounding mental health. Notable figures are openly sharing their mental health stories and leading conversations about mental health-related issues. This contributes to the reduction of stigma associated with mental health and provides hope and support to those in need. These issues continue to garner significant attention in the field of mental health in the United States, emphasizing the importance of improving mental health services and providing social support.



In the clinical field

“My son hits me like this”

Following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the cardiology department at the university hospital where I currently work has seen a surge not only in patients requiring medical treatments but also in the number of surgical procedures and operations. Hundreds of healthcare professionals, including myself, have been working under intense conditions to provide care to these patients. Apart from my duties at the hospital, I also treat patients at a Korean general internal medicine clinic once a week. At the clinic, aside from those

pointment as well, and we had advised him to call 911 if his son attempted to harm him again. However, upon hearing these words, he pretended as if nothing happened and swiftly left the clinic. This time around, I asked, “Did you call 911?”, and he acknowledged that he could no longer tolerate the abuse and did call 911. However, when the police arrived, they briefly spoke in English with the man’s son, before giving him a measly piece of paper and leaving the premises. After the police left, the man stated that his son had become even angrier and began to physically abuse him more severely, at which point the man started to fight back. Fortunately, he indicated that there were no serious injuries. The man shared that his son, in his late 20s, is unemployed and spends the entire day at home. Perhaps, the son was venting his frustrations in life on his father.

A few years ago, a middle-aged couple who lived with their daughter, who was in her early 30s, shared that they are terrified of living with her and are considering taking her to see a mental health professional. They revealed that whenever their daughter felt that things weren’t going her way, she would grab any object within reach and violently throw it at them, subjecting them to abuse. They pointed out that there have been instances in which she even picked up a knife and began to wave it around as she spoke harshly to the couple. They shared that they fear for their lives everyday, but they cannot even think of suggesting that their daughter go to see a professional, due to fear of retaliation. For parents in these situations, they often think, “I’ll do this for

my child” and “I’m sure things will get better with time,” as they endure the abuse and avoid seeking help. However, eventually, when parents reach a breaking point, they feel they can no longer take the abuse and end up in the hospital.

The university hospital that I work at requires that all admitted patients complete an initial interview process on the first day, regardless of their symptoms or diagnosis. Part of the interview screens for whether the patient has experienced or is experiencing any mental abuse or physical abuse within the home. In the event that there is a sign of abuse, a social worker is called immediately to intervene and meet with the family. If the abuse is confirmed, a discharge plan is set in place to ensure that the patient has a place to reside outside of the home where the abuse is taking place. A report is then filed to Adult Protective Services and the government agencies continue with follow-up care after discharge. Both the abuser and the abused live separate from one another, usually in protective facilities or homes of other relatives, where they stay until the abusive situation is somehow resolved.

However, in the majority of cases, many Korean patients do not have other relatives’ homes to go to, nor do they have the means to stay in protective facilities. Although the reports are written for the sake of the patient, there are many instances in which this backfires and causes more harm than good. For this reason, the internal medicine specialist that I work with at the Korean clinic ensures that he takes time to consult with patients and fully explain the details of Adult Protective Services as well as social services. We make certain that the patient consents to receive these supportive services and work on the report in front of them, and this is how we recommend all healthcare providers go



Wonhee Kang NP.

Northshore university hospital cardiology dept.
Board Member of Esther Ha Foundation

with medical issues, there are surprisingly many who are struggling with family problems and subsequent mental health problems. Regrettably, we have come to learn that there are also elderly patients who live with their adult children and are frequently subjected to abuse, being treated as prisoners.

A few months ago, a man in his early 60s visited the clinic for his treatment, when he said, “My son hits me like this”, and proceeded to show me his shoulders, head, knees, and back. He had mentioned this during his previous ap-

through this process.

The man in his 60s who reports being abused by his son receives medical treatment every three to four months. This is the second time this has happened, and both incidents were at the hands of his son. I find solace in knowing that although he rushed out of the clinic when we urged him to call the police the first time, the man remembered this the second time and took action. During our conversation, I advised him to refrain from saying anything, no matter how small or significant, that could provoke his son's anger, and to be mindful of triggers. I also urged him not to wait until the situation becomes dangerous but to call 911 if he feels that there is even a slight chance of his son hitting him. He was also provided with the contact information for social services to call when this happens. While I may not be certain of its effectiveness, it is crucial to emphasize that in the event of a dangerous situation, victims should not merely endure the abuse but summon the courage to take action.

On Trees and Personalities

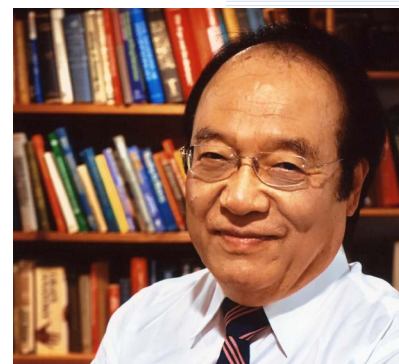


“Character is like a tree and reputation like a shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing.” — Abraham Lincoln

We cannot truly discern the true character of a tree. We can only perceive it through the shadow it casts. Shakespeare alluded to this idea through the character of MacBeth: “Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player...”

Similarly, we can only observe a person's personality through the shadows that are cast, which become visible in the presence of sunlight or when arranged by the angle of lighting. Without light, there is no shadow; without exposure to light, we cannot perceive a person's personality.

Time and again, I witness my own shadow taking on different forms, molded by the lights that surround me. Other people serve as the primary sources of these lights, compromising my illuminating environment. They empower me to sustain my fortunate existence, completely defying the cliché that ‘life is a bore’.



Ryang Suh, MD. Psychiatrist



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“Are you happy?”

Spaces visited in solitude have the potential to lead to recovery. I am not referring to the vacation spot you decide to travel to, but rather, a place where your heart can find rest, a moment away from your daily routine like a passing rain shower that leaves you refreshed—a place that is your own little secret. We all have one of those special spaces, and for me, it is at Barnes & Noble. The ambience of the bookstore gives me the space to breathe, and so I frequently visit the place.

On one particular day, as I opened the doors to Barnes & Noble, I immediately felt a sense of liberation as I stood surrounded by books. Suddenly, my phone rang, breaking the silence of the store. I promptly answered and discovered that it was my longtime friend from elementary school, whom I hadn't seen or spoken to in ages. She told me that some of our friends had decided to get together for some drinks and thought of me, prompting them to reach out. I spoke to each of these friends as they passed the phone around and asked, “How are you? How has life been?” Suddenly, one friend asked, “Are you happy?” Such an unexpected yet refreshing question left me at a loss for words. I simply laughed and told her that I would visit them

pondered it, it became evident how deeply it had struck me, judging by how serious my expression became. I continued to repeat the question to myself as I reflected on it and thought: Happiness is when one is satisfied and without any worries. It is when one experiences joy and hope, and it is a positive feeling. Some may say it is a state of being. However, just as the billions of people in this world have different faces, hardships, and lives, they also have different ways of seeking and feeling comfort and peace. If these are all different for each person, then happiness must also look different for everyone. And if that is the case, if someone asked me to describe happiness with colors, I think of nature's colors like purple, yellow, blue, white, red, and orange.

I was lost in these thoughts when I looked up and noticed a long metal container with a drawing of a pencil on the front. Carefully, I opened the container to find layers of precisely aligned colored pens. I couldn't help but laugh in awe as I thought about how much this very moment overlapped with the thoughts I had been having just a moment ago. I was amazed at how my brain was able to notice this association as well. The colored pens reminded me of Tibet's colorful prayer flag, Lungta, as well as the movie “Hector and the Search for Happiness.”

The movie follows the life of a psychiatrist, Hector, who becomes increasingly tired of his mundane life and decides to go on a quest to find the secret to happiness. In the finale, Hector finds that the secret is not to compare oneself with others and not to fear death, for when one fears death, they also

fear life. One particular scene left a strong impression on me when Hector went to find the old man at the temple of Tibet and came to see the Lungta prayer flag. As the prayer flag fluttered in the wind, adorned with scripture passages of hope, it spread the “Words of the Wind.”

As Hector watched it fly in the wind, the old man at the temple shared his words of grace, not to place happiness in the past or the future but to cherish the value of your existence, to pursue a meaningful life. And as you look at the clouds and sun align in harmony, to remember to be present in every moment.

As Hector turned away to leave, the old man said, “The meaning of happiness is to be invested in others' happiness.” This makes sense because what use would my personal happiness be if I were all alone on a stranded island with no one else to experience it with? In that case, any happiness would only bring anxiety and fear. It's because we have each other that we can experience happiness and learn to use our individual colors, like colored pens and the prayer flag, to create harmony.

The happiness that I dream of is not meant for me alone but is meant to be spread through seeds of altruism and shared with strangers. This dream has become my life's purpose and continues to illuminate my life. I desire to live a life in which we pamper ourselves and one another, standing shoulder to shoulder as we dance along to the rhythm of the prayer flag flying in the wind.

In the end, I opened my wallet and purchased a beautiful container of colored pens. If my friend calls and asks me again, “Are you happy?”, I will respond, “Only because you are walking through life with me,” and then I will ask, “Are you happy?” As I left the bookstore, my heart felt liberated as if a thousand Lungta prayer flags were flying and dancing in the wind.



Kwak Ae-ri,
Essayist

Protecting mental health through sports

Lee Hwang-yong,
President of CK Sports
Board Member of
Esther Ha Foundation

While most people would agree that exercise is vital for physical health, there remains a lack of awareness of the significance between exercise and mental health. Scientific research studies demonstrate that exercise is the most effective stress reliever as it generates endorphins and boosts positivity. Additionally, exercise and sports not only increase feelings of accomplishment and pride but also allow individuals to release their repressed emotions. In fact, routine exercise has been proven to be an indicator of positive mental health.

Participating in sports also fosters positive morale and influence within a community as a whole. Unfortunately, the immigrant community is not yet fully aware of the importance of engaging in sports, which has evidently caused adverse effects within the youth and young adult population.

The first generation of immigrants has invested immense energy into adjusting to America's culture, language, and lifestyle. Additionally, it was challenging for this generation to socialize with Americans who lived by an entirely different language and culture. Since the first generation lacked strong social connections to the community and were merely focused on surviving, they may have felt that they had no choice but to prioritize their materialistic needs. On top of that, the neighborhoods where immigrants generally reside were located in the suburbs and/or the outskirts of the city which lacked sports facilities and programs.

I have been leading both the Youth and Young Adult Camp as well as the Exercise program through the Esther Ha Foundation for the past 20 years. In this role, I have witnessed firsthand the transformations of

students and experienced how sports can teach exercise techniques that improve social skills and mental health. This was especially helpful as it was evident to me that due to the Covid-19 pandemic and mandatory quarantine, many students had difficulty speaking and articulating their words.

Sports help to provide recovery to those who are experiencing isolation, loneliness, and depression. Research shows that sports have the same effects on one's mental health as antidepressants do. Moving forward, I intend on continuing to create new programs with the Esther Ha Foundation that focus on nurturing healthy bodies and healthy minds. I encourage everyone to participate!



Esther Ha Foundation Board of Directors. Meeting a New Face

The Esther Ha Foundation Board of Directors appointed Lee Hwang-Yong as a new director on December 26, 2022 in New York, where he served as an education commissioner for the 25th school district and as the president of the Korean American Youth Foundation. Lee Hwang-Yong accepted the position as a director to share his experience of directly engaging with youth and parents in the sports education field for the past 20 years, learning through trial and error.

Lee Hwang-Yong, a former national wrestling representative, like many wrestlers, has a cauliflower ear. This was caused by frequent collisions between the ear and the opponent's body during intense wrestling. When the cartilage in the ear is damaged and bleeding occurs, and

it remains untreated, the blood can harden, and the ear can change shape into a cauliflower-like appearance.

As a father of three, Lee Hwang-Yong explains that while wrestlers take pride in their "cauliflower ear" as a badge of honor, a "cauliflower heart" is a painful scar that one wants to hide. He emphasizes that vulnerable teenagers, much like the ear cartilage, have delicate hearts that are not easily visible. Lee has witnessed many cases where parents or those around them are unaware of their loved one's need for help because they do not express their feelings, leading to unfortunate results.

According to Lee, if left unattended, a difficult heart can lead to illness and eventually devel-

op into a "cauliflower heart." He is committed to using sports as a means to open the door to a resilient heart, not just for teenagers, but for anyone in need. Lee hopes to create a happier world in partnership with the Esther Ha Foundation.

Newly appointed director Lee Hwang-Yong has a background as a former national wrestling representative and has served as the president of the Korean-American Youth Foundation, a member of the New York City School District 25 Education Council, and a member of the operating committee for Bayside High School. Currently, he serves as a director of the New York City Wrestling Association, senior vice-president of the New York Korean Sports Association, and representative of CK Sports.



Lee Hwang-yong.



About A Boy

Are humans islands or not? In his poem **“No man is an island,”** the 17th-century English poet John Donne says, **“No man is an island at all.”** – **“No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.”**

However, there are some individuals who consider themselves to be islands. The protagonist of the movie “About a Boy,” Will, is one of them.

“In my opinion, all men are islands. And what’s more, now is the time to be one. This is an island age. A hundred years ago, you had to depend on other people. No one had TV, CDs, DVDs, videos, or home espresso makers. Actually, they didn’t have anything cool. Whereas now, you can make yourself a little island paradise.”

The movie revolves around two characters: Will, a childish and wealthy adult, and Marcus, an old-fashioned and mature child. Will is a jobless and rich man who lives off the royalties from his father’s song. He has no interest in family or children, and although he likes women, he tries to figure out how to withdraw like a fox when they start to invade his territory. He regards life as a “situation drama,” in which he is the main actor of a fixed role, and his partners are just temporary supporting actors. From the standpoint of social animals like humans, he is a ‘social outcast’.

Marcus, on the other hand, sings shabby old songs and behaves strangely in class. His mother, Fiona, is a music therapist for children but is a divorced and hippie woman with depression. Because of his mother, Marcus is a complete “out-

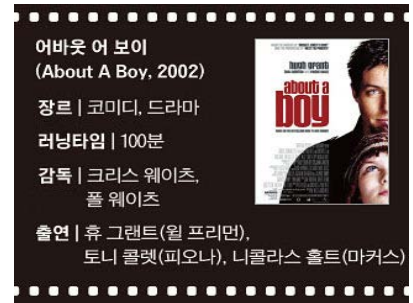
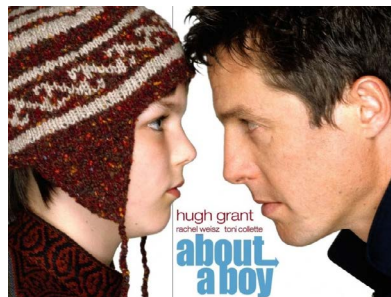
cast” at school. He is a lonely eccentric who was forced to become an adult because he was worried about his mother, who had previously attempted suicide.

The two meet by chance when Will attends a group for single parents with children for the purpose of finding a partner he can enjoy light-heartedly.

Will and Marcus become engaged in a fight amongst themselves but consequently learn to get along together instead of isolating themselves. Will teaches Marcus, who is initially passive, how to become a great man, but as time passes, Will himself matures into a responsible adult.

How do they support and encourage each other as they climb the stairs of maturity? This reminds me of what the fox says to the little prince in Antoine de Saint-Exupéry’s “The Little Prince,”

“What must I do, to tame you?” asked the little prince. “You must be very patient,” replied the fox. First you will sit down at a little distance from me—like that—in the grass. I shall look at you out of the corner of my eye, and you will say nothing. Words are the source of misunderstandings. But you will sit a little closer to me, every day. The next day



the little prince came back. “It would have been better to come back at the same hour;” said the fox.

In the movie, Marcus and Will repeat their encounters every day, just like the little prince who visits the fox every day at four o’clock.

A psychiatrist who is rooted in **Object Relations Theory** in psychoanalysis, Ryang Suh, maintains: “Repeating behavior signifies taming. We practice playing the piano or guitar repeatedly, and a great performance is the result of continuous practice. Likewise, we all repeat the process of adapting ourselves to the given environment, without even realizing it. We practice adapting to the human environment. The little prince becomes more and more tamed and adjusted to his immediate environment, the fox, every day at four o’clock.” – Practice makes perfect!

The movie “About a Boy” demonstrates how we become isolated and vulnerable when we are not connected to other people. When Fiona calls Will an egoist during an argument with him, he retorts that it’s that he is putting himself first, but that there’s nobody else. Fiona exclaims: **“Humans are not islands!”**

In today’s society, where the trend of living alone is accelerating, even more so after the Covid-19 pandemic, Will’s last line makes us think deeply: “Every man is an island.” And I stand by that. But clearly, some men are parts of island chains. Below the surface of the ocean they’re actually connected.

What is relationship-centered counseling?



With increasing awareness of mental health problems, psychotherapy has recently been featured in many Korean TV shows and movies. However, even with the rising popularity of psychotherapy in the media, it is impossible to fully imagine what happens behind the closed doors of the psychotherapy office. Many people still struggle with the idea of bringing their very private problems to talk to a stranger.

When I was preparing for a six-week seminar for the Korean community, I immediately thought of this wide gap between psychotherapy depicted in media and psychotherapy experienced by individual members of the community. Many people wonder about these questions: “Can a therapist really get to know me and understand my problem?” or “Would the therapist simply listen to what I’m saying without offering any real help?” In this seminar, I hoped that the participants would learn what psychotherapy is, and learn the basic theories and skills of psychotherapy that would be readily applicable to real life. Psychotherapy is not only about listening and empathizing, though these are fundamentally important aspects of therapy; the therapist works with the client to analyze the roots and causes of the problem, find solutions together, and implement behavioral changes in collaboration with the client. Statistics report that three out of four clients experience positive change after psycho-

therapy treatment, and this change often lasts even after the treatment phase has ended.

In this seminar, participants learned about four modalities of psychotherapy. First, in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, the triad of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors influence each other. Changes in thoughts and behaviors can eventually lead to changes in emotions. If we had been tormented by distorted thoughts about the self and the future, we can recognize and change this pattern, leading to healing anxiety, obsession, trauma, and phobia. Second, Dialectical Behavior Therapy is based on Eastern philosophy like Buddhism and focuses on “Mindfulness,” a principle of recognizing and accepting our own feelings at the moment. It also teaches real-life skills to help regulate distress, intending to decrease emotional dysregulation and thoughts of suicide and self-harm. Third, Interpersonal Psychotherapy focuses on four social domains including grief, interpersonal role disputes, role transitions, and interpersonal deficits. It can help assess and improve the interpersonal relationships around us, leading to the treatment of depression. Finally, Psychodynamic Psychotherapy originates from Freud’s psychoanalysis; it suggests that early childhood experiences and unconscious conflicts continue to shape the present. People suffering from deep-rooted problems of the self,



Kyu Young Oh, MD Psychotherapy

low self-esteem, interpersonal conflicts, and repressed emotions can benefit from this long-term therapy.

Interestingly, many studies have repeatedly found that the trust and relationship between the therapist and the client is the most important contributor to the success of therapy, beyond specific skills and therapy modalities. It truly highlights the nature of psychotherapy as a special relationship between the two. As in any relationship, the therapist and the client might face challenges during the treatment, but the client can gradually learn to find new, healthier ways of dealing with their problems through these challenges. When there are inevitable problems in life, I hope you consider psychotherapy as one of the many helpful options.



Esther Ha Foundation Helpline
1-800-713-9336

Esther Ha Foundation Day & Mental Health Day



Pamphlet and Helpline Magnets



Registration area... line up, please.



Is everyone now ready?



People who volunteer for the Esther Ha Foundation



Now do this... follow me.



While marching and clapping...



It seems like I'm not the only one who's having fun!



Now, where can I find it?



I was such a great dancer when I was younger...



Keep the balloon off the ground (Group game)



The more stickers I take, the more rewards I get!



Mental health quiz! O or X? That's the question.



This mental health quiz is very complicated



If you chose 'O' for this question, please come to me.



LOL, I am the final winner!



The final five people! Who will be the last one standing?



I feel amazing after beating all the other participants



President Yong Hwa Ha is greeting everyone.



The woman is listening to the saddening story that the father is retelling.



He is praying for everyone who has been hurt...



We can't lose. With the sing-along, the mood is up!



Baritone singer Yong Kwang Yoo has a touching performance



With the youth band- 1



Today is such a happy day! Hooray!



With the youth band - 2



Mental health activity with Dr. Lee



Kakaotalk Friend Guide by E.D. Hyun



Volunteer Kyung Mi Lee introduces MHFA



Volunteer Yujung Yang introduces Healing Camp



Volunteer Jenny Cho introduces Helpline



Volunteer Myung Suk Yun introduces Support Group



The MC SJ Jung shouts, "Does anyone have this raffle ticket?"



Listen to the cheers for the 1st place winner...Ugh, I envy you



See you again at next year's Esther Ha Foundation Day



Thanks to the volunteers who helped make the event a success

One day that I received care

Review of participation in Esther Ha Foundation Day & Mental Health Day

Choi Myeong-eun
Penguin Random House Art Director

As I attended the second Esther Ha Foundation Day yesterday, it would be perfect to say that everything went really good. Feeling the help of many volunteers who worked behind the scenes for this event, it was time to realize again that the Esther Ha Foundation is an organization essential to immigrant society where many people serve with affection and a sense of belonging. The Haknesia venue where we practiced serving the community was great, and Director Seung-jin Jeong's officiate was so warm and brought us together. I saw people with tears in their eyes as they

sang nursery rhymes that reminded them of their childhood. I hoped that seeing young children volunteering to play musical instruments would be a precious memory that will remain in their lives for a long time. Above all, I was truly grateful that the famous vocalist Yoo Yeong-kwang came to brighten up the time and give all of us great pleasure. I was surprised to hear that Esther Ha Foundation has connections with 4,500 people. Thank you very much for all the hard work you put in every day without a day off.

2nd Generation Interview

A Young Adult's Take on Mental Health & Family Relationships

Erin.hong

Psychology Major at
Bernard University

People often consider the perspectives of children and adults, but not so much for young adults: the ambiguous, “in-between” stage of your life when you are no longer a child who needs to be nurtured and cared for, but not a completely mature, stand-alone adult either. You know you’ll have to take flight into the real world quite soon, but you also just want to take shelter under someone’s wing for a bit. No matter how much older we get, our longing for a sense of warmth and comfort stays the same, and family is typically where we first receive that warmth. As an only child, I was fortunate to have been raised by supportive, loving, and open-minded parents. And yet, they still seem to be subconsciously closed off to the unfamiliar topic of addressing mental illness, getting therapy, and finding healthier ways to cope. One day, I realized that I was becoming more and more like them; their everyday habits and views have inevitably seeped into my life.

I am a third-year undergraduate student attending Barnard College of Columbia University and majoring in Psychology. I have interviewed three other college students, Angelina (19 y/o; Biology major; Queens, NY), Michelle (21 y/o; Environmental Science major; Queens, NY), and Stanley (19 y/o; Sequential Art major; Queens, NY), who shared their honest and vulnerable responses on the topic of mental health and their relationship with their parents. Although I cannot account for all of the different struggles of every young adult, my hope is that the parents who read this may come to understand their children, as well as the significance of mental health, a little better.

How do you cope with your negative emotions?

Angelina: “I used to be very suppressive and never talk to anyone about it, but that was very hard on me. I felt very burdened having to go through it alone. But now there are people who are there for me so I feel more open and feel like I have to talk to someone and have a way to express it to get it out there. It’s healthier for me.”

Stanley: “Sometimes, I just let the stuff flow naturally and reflect on myself if I’m seeing bad patterns occur. I’m not entirely sure whether these tactics are effective or not, but I am seeing that talking to friends and being more willing to be social helps a bit better than living in my head all the time.”

Who do you usually go to when you need to relieve stress or talk about what’s on your mind?

Angelina: “I feel like it’s my older sister. She understands my values as a

Christian when other people don’t, so that’s what helps me. But it’s still hard to talk about deep things, so I try to throw it in nonchalantly. It’s hard but it’s getting better.”

Stanley: “I used to go to my friends to relieve stress whether that be to ask for advice, vent, or whatnot. I do that a lot less now because I’ve been in too many of those situations of talking about my problems and no one understanding and therefore not knowing what to say to me, where nothing is actually gained from these conversations. I feel worse because I’m more aware than ever that I am truly alone when it comes to this. Nowadays, I go to myself, or I read up on old ‘essays’ I wrote when I was more resilient and optimistic, to try and find answers that I now forgot.”

How easy is it for you to talk about your problems with family members?

Angelina: “I don’t really think I talk about mental health with family. They never addressed mental health issues either. I feel like nobody would understand, and me talking about it wouldn’t help the situation. It’s also very personal. But I’ll probably tell them about the situations I encounter in life.”

Michelle: “I’m more comfortable telling my mom than my dad. My dad tells me to tell him my problems but his responses aren’t necessarily what I want to hear, and I don’t like them, so I don’t tend to share. He’s very traditional and doesn’t have enough context to fully understand me.”



Erin.hong, Psychology Major at Bernard University



Stanley: *“It’s super hard to talk about my problems with family members. There’s a generational disconnect so I assume I won’t be getting what I want from them. I flat out lie about not having problems. My sister asked if I’m depressed, and I said no to not ruin the mood with my issues. I’ve tried talking about my problems with them, but they don’t understand, and just like everyone else, they don’t really remember what I say and nothing changes after, so I’m once again wasting my energy trying to create change that never comes. Because of this repeated history, I stopped trying.”*

What do you wish your parents did differently?

Michelle: *“My dad’s closed off because he wants his own way. When my brother, dad, and I are shopping or playing at an arcade, he’ll go back to the car and not participate. You don’t have to play the game with me. It’s more about just being in there with your child. You just have to be present, show that you’re interested. The only interactions we have together are like going to the supermarket. My family doesn’t sit together for dinner. We usually just eat separately even though we’re in the same house.”*

Angelina: *“Be better listeners. They also have bad tempers.”*

Stanley: *“Parents say things that they don’t really mean. Not just parents, but it can be extra damaging coming from them. A lot of other people are more quick to forget, but these things stick with me forever. For example, I really wish my dad didn’t say “what does that have to do with me?” when, on the rarest occasion, I opened up about something very personal that I had issue with him. Or I wish my mom stopped victimizing herself and making things seem so black-and-white*

as if the whole world is against her. They can be very narrow-minded, self-centered, and even cold-hearted when it comes to our relationship.”

What has been your biggest worry these days?

Angelina: *“What I’m supposed to do with my life. What church, what career, what people. Also friendships and more social things because it’s not like you work hard and you get it. It’s a lot of trial and error.”*

Stanley: *“My antisocial tendencies, my fatigue at every moment of life, my incapability to move on from past losses, whether or not I’m truly being a good person or if I’m backpeddling into old bad habits, my incapability to be vulnerable and honest with my negative emotions in person with friends and family, whether I’ll ever meet someone who actually understands what I’m saying and how I’m feeling, whether I’m gonna end my life with suicide and not by living it completely and then dying naturally at an old age.”*

Even if you believe that you’ve tried your best to help, working towards the wrong goal will only yield barren results. If a parent truly wants to help their child, we desire for our parents to consider our needs and what we would want the most from our parents at that moment, before they impose their own beliefs and assumptions of what they think we feel. Even if it might not be the parent’s intent, their words or actions of “concern” may be damaging and come off as insensitive or hurtful. It is more than necessary for parents to be aware of how they come off to their child, for they could become the very perpetrators of emotional or verbal abuse. I think it would be helpful for families to know each other’s love languages so that they are aware of what makes the other feel most loved, respected, and appreciated.

I find that honest, calm, and clear communication is crucial in maintaining a healthy relationship, especially between a parent and their child who may be going through something, regardless of how big or small the matter is. Young adults feel unappreciated and misunderstood when parents display forceful or condescending attitudes, as if they know and understand everything we are going through. Of course, they have been in our shoes for particular stages of life and so they surely have more experience and wisdom to be shared. However, we are living out our own lives in a different generation, and our experiences and realizations will be different from our parents’ in numerous ways. Rather than trying to teach, blame, correct, or fix us, simply seeing us as an individual human being, empathizing with us like a friend, expressing patience and compassion through healthy, reassuring conversations and words of affirmation, and most importantly, being an active listener, can go a long way. Giving tips and life advice may be helpful but it can often come off as patronizing and pointless nagging. Sometimes, all we need is for someone to show that they are willing to listen to our story with an open mind, to be present and available for us so that we don’t have to carry the heavy burden alone. That way, we can slowly build up our self-esteem, self-worth, and resilience. I hope that our parents take advantage of their capability and determination to provide their kids with the resources and support that they wished they had in the past.

We acknowledge that being a parent is really difficult, so we don’t expect ours to be perfect. Even so, I learned that parents possess a sense of responsibility and dignity to be the perfect, ideal adult model for their children. Thus, adults feel pressured to hide their flaws and brokenness that they’re embarrassed or ashamed to reveal. But too often do first-generation adults live with past traumas and painful experiences that are left untreated,

unaddressed, and suppressed, only to be piled up into a dark mass of anger, frustration, and unexplainably complex emotions. Unfortunately, a lot of that ends up being projected onto the child in unhealthy ways. We wish for our parents to prevent the same negative experiences and their detrimental ways of coping from being passed onto their child. We wish for adults to realize that just like how we need a physical check-up every once in a while, our fragile minds and hearts need a mental and emotional check-up too, whether that be getting therapy, counseling, or simply listening to each other without judgment, for both the parent and child. We don't want our parents to turn a blind eye, to devalue the problems we face, to think that resources like therapy are for the weak and the ill. We want our parents to be open to talking about men-

tal health and take more seriously the fact that mental and emotional illnesses need to be treated because it is not something that will simply go away with ignorance; it is similar to an open wound that will fester and worsen in pain from a lack of attention and care. We should not wait until we reach a level of unbearable suffering to seek help.

Thus, parents should take steps to educate themselves on available resources so that they are no longer silent on this issue and can be more knowledgeable and supportive of their child. If parents notice any signs of mental distress in their child, I sincerely hope they will not be their first bystander, but the first person to guide them to lead a healthy, content, and independent life for themselves. They may not be able to solve it completely, but that is

why we have trained professionals in this field.

Life cannot and is not meant to be lived alone. Not only young adults, but also our parents need someone to lean on just like how their child needs them as a stable foundation to grow up healthy and well. I want to tell my parents that admitting our weaknesses and seeking support from others is not something to be ashamed about. Even as grown adults, we are all a work in progress, still developing and still learning to become better people for ourselves and for others. We're all just looking for someone who can understand us, and frankly, I don't think some of us ever will. Despite it all, the best we can do is let down our walls, open up our hearts, and seek ways in which the important people in our lives feel most loved and safe. □

eHaha library

Quarterlife:

The Search for Self in Early Adulthood

One prominent phenomenon that has emerged after the pandemic is the crisis in mental health among individuals in their 20s. This issue is becoming increasingly apparent not only in South Korea but also within the Korean-American community, where depression and suicide have become significant concerns. Society sends a dual gaze towards young adults, portraying this phase as the "best time," the "youthful years," and an age of fearless exploration. However, consider this: it is during this period that young adults should receive significant attention and protection from their parents and society.

Satya Doyle Byock, a psychoanalyst, discusses the book "The Gravity of Adulthood" as follows: "This book is intended for those who feel the weight of the world pressing upon them at the 1/4

point of life, where the invisible gravitational force hinders their progress, causing them to oscillate between the burden of their trivial concerns and the heaviness of the world. Society often fixates on the private lives and fame of numerous quarter-life musicians, athletes, and actors but tends to mock them in a similar obsessive manner when they truly strive for a healthy life, make mistakes, or exhibit signs of mental health concerns. This attitude is mirrored within communities and families." Informed by Jungian psychology, the author, Satya Doyle Byock, designates the 1/4 point of life, a stage that is neither childhood nor adulthood, as the "quarter-life" cycle. By differentiating this phase as a psychologically distinct stage, Byock provides an accurate guide to navigate the struggles and di-

lemmas faced by young adults.

Satya Doyle Byock, a psychotherapist, psychoanalyst, writer, and director of The Salome Institute of Jungian Studies, focuses on analytical psychology, trauma research, history, and social justice in his work. He has dedicated himself to psychological research and therapy specifically tailored to individuals in their early to mid-20s, influenced by Jungian psychology.



Satya Doyle Byock

When life makes it hard to breathe

Kwak Kyung-suk, Member of Family Support Group

Poet Sang-byung Chun always said that life on earth is like going on a picnic from heaven.

“I’ll go back to heaven again. /Hand in hand with the dew/that melts at a touch of the dawning day,/I’ll go back to heaven again./With the dusk, together, just us two,/at a sign from a cloud after playing on the slopes/I’ll go back to heaven again./At the end of my outing to this beautiful world/I’ll go back and say: It was beautiful”

This is the full text of his poem “Back To Heaven”, engraved on his tombstone.

We all come into this world, living in laughter and in tears, entangling ourselves with one another, before returning to where we once came from. If you think about it, even the most seemingly insignificant encounters with people can be deemed fate. Then how much more fateful is it that certain people are chosen to become a family and live together, eat together, and experience life’s joys and sorrows together? This is fate at its finest. That is, until one of them leaves this world with no warning, leaving the others immersed in shock and grief. All that is left is a longingness paired with an unbearable pain, as one day is endured

after another.

When we go on a picnic, we find ourselves surrounded by paths, mountains, rivers, forests, and sometimes even beaches. The paths we walk are not always lined with flowers. In fact, the path may be rocky, muddy, and sloped. The mountains would have both uphill and downhill roads with sharp turns, and every now and then, we’d see a low valley that gives us an opportunity to breathe. The rivers would give us the space to enjoy a nice swim and an attempt to catch slippery fish with our bare hands. When we were younger, we would recklessly run to the river on a hot summer day and play in the water until we got tired. And when we would walk through the forests, we’d encounter all species of birds of which we did not know the names of, that would sing us their songs. Even on these hot days, we were able to find a shady area to rest and enjoy the breeze. Sometimes, we would go to the beach; there, we’d watch as the sky met the sea, and looking out into the horizon, my heart would be free of any worries or troubles. I liked that I always had the comfort of my family wherever I went. I wanted to be with

them forever, if it was possible. Although it hurts to see the people we met in this life go first, let us remember: once our own picnic on this earth comes to an end, we will be reunited with them up in heaven. The Esther Ha Foundation’s Bereavement group provides those who are grieving the loss of their loved ones with a stepping stone to take a breath and find some rest. When life makes it hard for you to breathe, I will walk through the neighborhood and embrace the spring rain and moist air. I will meet my gaze with the yellow baby dandelion blooming ever so daintily on the roadside. I will give a nod at the tulips that stand upright with esteem. And I will look up and whisper to the sky: “I’m doing well. Let’s continue to be well until we meet again.”





ESTHER HA
FOUNDATION

H.O.P.E
Healing Of Painful Emotions

Family Support Group for Bereaved Families

Since 2021, the Esther Foundation has been conducting weekly family support group sessions for those who have experienced the pain of losing a loved one. Through Zoom meetings, participants share their stories of grief and provide guidance on overcoming the pain that arises from their experiences of separation. These sessions take place every Friday from 8:00 PM for a duration of 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Inquiry about participation: 917-993-2377

Depicting a melancholic world through Edward Hopper's paintings

Han Dae-su, Singer

Edward Hopper is one of my favorite American painters that I have been influenced by as a musician and as a photographer. His subject matter is unique in that the people in the painting are always in their own deep thoughts, isolated from their surroundings. In other words, his painting's main theme is, "Isolation".

When I first saw his paintings at the Whitney Museum in 1967, I was a student in photography. Going to school by day and working in a restaurant as assistant chef at the very famous upper east side restaurant called, "Serendipity 3". I saw many stars dining in the restaurant, such as; Barbara Streisand, Andy Warhol, Faye Dunaway, Jean Shrimpton and my most favorite star, Mr. John Lennon of the Beatles.

Although the pay was good, it was very hard working until 1AM to earn my tuition and pay my apartment rent in the East Village. In the late 60's East Village was a slum where many drug

dealers and prostitutes were the residents. I had no choice but to live there, because the rent was cheap, only \$50 per month for one bedroom. But my roommates were cockroaches and mice running around all the time. But I had to finish photography school and I was determined to be somebody.

This was when I experienced Edward Hopper's painting. His work spoke to my loneliness and isolation. I finally realized how utterly alone I am in this world, especially in an asphalt jungle called, "New York City". I felt abandoned by my parents and my family and I had no close friends. Just the dishwasher named "Tico" and the head chef, "Mr. Ho". Couple of my classmates were nice, but we all had no time nor money. We all had desperate lives, trying to survive and get a job as a photographer for "Life" or "Newsweek" or our most cherished magazine, "National Geographic", when we graduated.

What Hopper's painting said to me was, "Yes you are alone, yes you are

alienated from society and yes you are an average middle-class nobody, but you have to accept this reality and push on with the main purpose of survival". And he continued, "Survival is good because you will have moments of joy and success but remember, you are alone and you have to deal with it" Wow, that struck my head and his paintings taught me to accept my alienation as is, and continue to strive to achieve your goals no matter what. Because this is the fact of life" Amen, I got you Mr. Hopper. I will push on and I will graduate even if I have a bloody nose. I finally graduated with flying colors and returned to Korea and worked for :Korea Design and Packaging Center as head photographer and also won "Guk Jun" (National Art Foundation) award and later worked for The Korea Herald as cultural writer/photographer.

Along with Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko, Edward Hopper remained as my favorite artist who spoke the truth of human condition- "we were born alone,



People Working Overnight 1942.

“If you could say it in words, there would be no reason to paint. The lack of communication between the people is the reflection of my own loneliness. It could be the whole human condition”

- Edward Hopper (1882-1967)



Overtime Work 1940.

we live alone and we die alone”.

Hopper was born in 1882 in Nyack New York, a yacht-building center on the Hudson River north of New York City. He was one of two children of a comfortably well-off family. His parents, of mostly Dutch ancestry, were Elizabeth Griffiths Smith and Garret Henry Hopper, a dry-goods merchant. In developing his self-image and individualistic philosophy of life, Hopper was influenced by the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson. He later said, “I admire him greatly...I read him over and over again.” Hopper began art studies with a correspondence course in 1899. Soon he transferred to the New York School of Art and Design, the forerunner of Parson School of Design. Hopper had to endure years of struggle to make a living. He had to work as an illustrator and knock on doors of magazine publishers and advertising agencies to make ends meet.

In 1923 he met a fellow artist, Josephine Nivison and they got married the following year. They were the opposites. She was short, gregarious and sociable, he

was tall, secretive and shy. I saw their half an hour interview on television one day, and I was shocked to see his wife doing all the talking and he was just sitting and listening. She took over the stage. as they say, “the opposites attract”, haha. But with his wife’s help, he was able to show his paintings at the Brooklyn Museum with some success. One of them, The Mansard Roof, was purchased by the museum for its permanent collection for the sum of \$100. The critics generally raved about his work; one stated, “What vitality, force and directness! Observe what can be done with the homeliest subject. Hopper sold all his watercolors at a one-man show the following year and finally decided to put illustration behind him.

From that point on, Hopper was able to concentrate on his painting alone and bought a townhouse in West Village, 3 Washington Square North which still stands there with pride. He died at the age of 84 in 1967. His wife bequeathed their joint collection of more than three thousand works to the Whitney Museum of American Art. Papers and draw-

ings in the Hopper home passed into the custody of family friend Arthayer Sanborn. Other significant paintings by Hopper are held by the MOMA, New York, The Des Moines Art Center, and the Art Institute of Chicago. In 2018, his painting called Chop Suey (1929) was sold for \$92 million, becoming the most expensive of Hopper’s works ever bought at auction.

When I heard that Whitney Museum was holding a retrospective of Hopper’s entire collection, I was elated and went to the museum immediately. I saw so many of his paintings that I never saw before. In the vast three floors of Whitney Museum space, there were so many Hopper fans that I had to maneuver myself to see the paintings. And they were GREAT!



Mr. Han Dae-su and his daughter Yang-ho



The Mansard Roof 1923.

Esther Ha Foundation

2023 Events

No.	DATE	PROGRAM
1	Feb. 25	Mental Heal First Aid
2	Feb.8 – Mar. 22	Mental Heal Seminar with Psychiatric Professionals
3	Mar. 26	Help Line Volunteers Workshop
4	Apr. 6- Jun. 22	Counseling & Job Coaching (12 Weeks)
5	Apr. 24	Mental Health Seminar with Psychiatric Professionals
6	May	Mental Heal First Aid
7	May 26-May 27	Adult Healing Camp
8	May 30	E-Haha Mental Health Magazine (Vol. 2)
9	June	Mental Heal First Aid
10	July	Esther Ha Foundation Day
11	August	Youth & Young Adult Healing Camp
12	September	Gala Preparation
13	Oct. 19	9th Annual GALA
14	November	Anger Management
15	December	Adult Healing Camp
16	December	E-Haha Mental Health Magazine (Vol. 3)

All Year Programs

No.	DATE	PROGRAM
1	24/7/365	Help Ling Telephone Counseling
2	Every Tuesday 8PM	Parents Support Group(Korean)
3	Every Saturday 5:30PM	Youth& Young Adult Support Group(English)
4	Every Friday 8PM	Weekly Grief Support Group
5	Every Monday & Thursday 10AM	Media for Public Mental Health Awareness (AM 1660 & FM87.7)



After completing Mental Health First Aid training, group photo



Job Coaching & Computer



FM87.7 Media Mental Health Awareness



Adult Healing Camp



Youth Healing Camp

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Misun Chang

Weon Hi Kang



Radio and the Esther Ha Foundation

As a child, my mother always taught me to express my emotions in moderation. She told me not to be too overjoyed nor too dejected, and I never thought to question this. I lived with this mentality and even as I aged and became a wife and a mother, I lived by this virtue. However, I didn't realize how much it had been affecting my mental health until I decided to participate in group therapy for the first time. When I decided to engage in therapy, I had been experiencing symptoms of depression and panic disorder for approximately a year and a half. During group therapy, there was one particular session during which we received a workbook to follow along as we listened to a lecture by the group counselor. That day, the words in the workbook stated that we ought to honestly and openly express our emotions to the fullest, and the exercise challenged us to articulate our various emotions using our words. This task was particularly difficult and shocking for me because I had never been taught how to do this. As I read the instructions in the workbook, all I could do was stare blankly at the words and think, "Is it really okay? Am I truly allowed to openly and fully express myself?"

From that day forward, I began to make it an intentional practice to do what I want and say what I want without restraining myself. I went to the movie theater alone to watch the theater's first showing of the day, got my nails done in bright colors, tried drinking alcohol, and bought clothes that I normally would not wear. For the first time, I experienced what it felt like to be free. When I realized that the mentality that I had been taught growing up had been holding me back, I became a free person and experienced happiness for the first time.

After immigrating to New York and becoming involved with radio broadcasting, I became acquainted with the Esther Ha Foundation and was pleasantly surprised to learn that the organization was providing group counseling. This organization has been creating the foundation to address mental health issues within the Korean Community of New York and New Jersey and has been especially helpful during the Covid-19 pandemic in shedding light on mental health issues. The Esther Ha Foundation's 24-hour helpline provides comfort and support to those experiencing death, isolation, and loneliness; for those who are unable to engage in-person, the organization ensures to maintain their bond with the Korean community by providing seminars and healing camps online. I am truly grateful for the hard work and dedication that the foundation provides for its community.

The life of an immigrant is evidently difficult and challenging. Whether we are rich or poor, educated or uneducated,



Hyang-il Kim

Voice of New York Radio (FM87.7) Production Director

or come from a high socioeconomic class or a low one, we as immigrants are forced to make sacrifices everyday to merely survive. Some boast that they are successful because they've raised their children well, but this effort to encourage themselves does not hide the shame that we often feel when we look introspectively at ourselves out of fear that we would have to face our lacking and inadequate selves.

The Esther Ha Foundation creates a space for us to come together and speak openly about these fears as well as to struggle through them together, while also supplying each other with strength. It is through this space that has allowed numerous individuals to gain the courage to face these fears, to find their way out of what felt like a tunnel with no light or end to be seen, and to gain the courage to live. The fact that the Esther Ha Foundation has been there to walk with the people who have taken their small steps and chances towards healing is a gratifying and thankful matter in itself.

Just as I experienced freedom from being able to openly express myself and embrace my emotions as they are, I genuinely hope that the fellow Korean immigrants in our community who have been hiding their emotions, unaware that those emotions need to be relieved, will seek healing with the support of the Esther Ha Foundation. □



Following my wife to the Esther Ha Foundation!

David Myonguk Kim Helpline Volunteer

This is the story of my fate with the Esther Ha Foundation. It turns out that fate does not exist only between people, but also between people and organizations. At least, that was the case for me.

My wife, Isabel Kim, had previously experienced both psychosomatic and psychological symptoms and had to meet with countless doctors and undergo numerous treatments. She experienced the negative effects of panic disorder daily and seemed to be preparing herself for the end of her life. Each morning, she would wake up with her entire body in tremors, pleading to me, "Honey, I think I'm going to die today." Yet, all I could do in those moments was to hold her hands helplessly and pray for her healing. Six more months passed, and my wife showed no improvement nor any desire for improvement. As a final effort to heal, she decided to travel to our motherland in Korea. Before leaving for her trip, she had a list of arrangements that she wanted to complete in the States, and it felt as if we were making preparations for her death. Fortunately, when she arrived in Korea, she met a good friend who introduced us to an accomplished doctor, and he eventually helped my wife to recover from

her sickness. Within three months of treatment, my wife was showing tremendous progress. When I went to Kennedy Airport in NYC to pick up my wife, I was pleasantly surprised and relieved to see that the woman who was frighteningly pale and sickly only a few months ago, was now looking radiantly healthy. My first words when I saw her were, "Thank you, God!"

From December 2, 2022 to December 3, 2022, the Esther Ha Foundation hosted the 5th annual seminar for their helpline. My wife, after her long journey to health, now wanted to share her story and help those suffering through similar pains. She enrolled in the seminar and took her first step towards becoming a helpline volunteer.

The seminar was scheduled from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. and out of my desire to keep my wife protected, I decided to accompany her as her personal bodyguard. As fate would have it, this is how I also became a member of the 5th class of helpline volunteers.

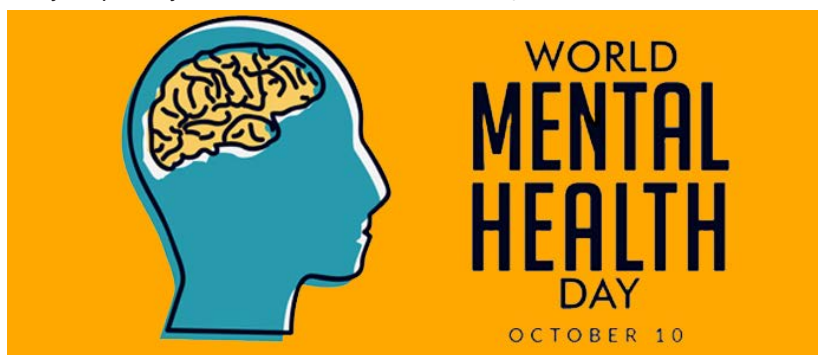
The two-day seminar opened a new road for me, and I am so grateful that I decided to enroll. I genuinely appreciate all the wonderful people I met through the Esther Ha Foundation, including the executive director, Me Sook Hyun.

After successfully completing the seminar, my wife and I each continue to serve as helpline volunteers on weekends. Additionally, we completed a 6-week Mental Health Seminar course led by licensed psychologist, Dr. Gyu Young Oh, whose teachings were invaluable. The course was comprehensive and covered even the most minute details of mental health. It was also a great pleasure to be able to meet monthly with the other helpline volunteers. An even greater pleasure was when Ms. Isabel Yoon began to host weekly hiking groups on Tuesdays. My wife and I participated in the hiking trips and experienced good food and even better conversations with other members of the group.

Some may say that I've reached my final years, but as a man in his 70s, I've been revitalized and energized by volunteering for the Esther Ha Foundation's helpline, and I have come to cherish what I've learned and those I've met along the way. I am especially grateful to President Yong-Hwa Ha for establishing an invaluable organization in memory of Esther Ha and wish for the best for all helpline volunteers!



David Myonguk Kim/ Help Line 5th Cohort Graduate/
Pastor at New York Korean United Methodist Church (UMC)



Mental Health Referral Information

Child Center of NY

If you are feeling overwhelmed and are struggling alone, it's only natural that you receive help from others. The Child Center of NY is a children's counseling center in Queens, NY. It serves as an empowering and inclusive community with a mission to provide not only children and adolescents, but also adults and families with the skills, opportunities, and emotional support to build healthy, happy, and enriching lives.

Many children and families are faced with challenges that arise from various circumstances, whether it be that the individual is diagnosed with a chronic condition, faces abuse or neglect at home, struggles with substance use, or encounters difficulty in an academic or social setting. Moreover, families may work long hours, have language barriers (as immigrants), grapple with issues of poverty, and more. The Child Center seeks to improve the physical, social, mental, and emotional health

and wellbeing of their clients. They aim to equip them with the resources that were absent or inaccessible in their lives. With practical and effective approaches, the center ignites a spark of hope in the lives of children, teens, and adults as it guides them on their paths to overcome hindrances and reach their goals to become better individuals, daughters and sons, students, parents, and other meaningful roles that they carry out in their community.

The Child Center of NY offers programs in 6 areas: early childhood education, behavioral health and primary care, health homes and integrated care, prevention & family support, residential services, and youth development.

If you are seeking counseling or therapy, or feel a tugging at your heart to take action and get the help you need in any of these social services, you may contact The Child Center of NY at 718-651-7770 or via email info@childcenterny.org. You may also check out their website, www.childcenterny.org



for more information on their programs or locations closest to you.



Exterior view of Child Center of NY building

Healing Trekking Camp

Park Do-jun, Helpline Volunteer



We used Covid-19 as an excuse
 To let our bodies and hearts close in on themselves for an indefinite amount of time
 When it was difficult to even take a step out the front door
 the Healing Hiking Camp helped me to move forward
 At a time when I was afraid that people would forget about my very existence
 It gave me the courage to break the chains that I had tied me down for so long
 And paved the path for new and meaningful experiences in my ordinary life
 It allowed me to lay down the burdens of this life and tread through unfamiliar grounds
 To focus solely on myself and strengthen my soul
 So, I left
 With expectations low, eyes wide open, and my baggage light, I left to go anywhere
 Anywhere peaceful where I would not be entangled with others
 Where I'd be ready to leave everything behind and not think about the things to come
 So I went, with no destination, and no return date
 No preparation and no promises, being led by wherever my feet would take me

And then I would return
 Only to prepare to leave once more
 It felt like a high - a natural high that one can only get from the scenery
 From these houses and alleys and
 A different sky
 We travel to places so as not to be too much of a burden to the other,
 and we make sure to return so as not to arrive too late,
 so as not to be too weary for the next day's travel
 And when we return, we return with our hands held together
 When you find another you waiting in an unfamiliar place, come back holding hands
 Let us embark on a winter trip together
 Faces cold but our hearts warm
 Our feet paving the way through the crunchy snow,
 As sweet as hot chocolate on a frigid winter night

These good old days come back to me
 the snow starts to fall
 When I reminisce our winter trip
 and suddenly miss you dearly
 I will tell you how much I loved you 🤗😊😁😮😊

Editor's Note



Chang Misun,
 e-Haha Chief Editor
 Board Member of
 Esther Ha Foundation

While admiring the artwork of Edward Hopper, together with the article sent to singer Han Dae-su, I became curious about the actual number of colors we can distinguish. It is commonly believed that people can only distinguish three colors: red, green, and blue. However, in reality, our cone cells interact and combine, allowing us to perceive an infinite number of colors. Numerous colors exist in the natural world that cannot be expressed through language.

In art, we can represent our desired subjects using only five primary colors: red, blue, yellow, white, and black. However, it is extremely challenging for artists to create a painting using only primary colors. They mix, layer, and subtract pigments to complete their artwork. Similarly, our lives are akin to this process. We constantly encounter diverse experiences, emotions, and unexpected situations. Sometimes, challenging colors may emerge within us. Despite our efforts

to erase these colors on our own, they may instead become more muddled. Fortunately, there are individuals who liberate us from uncomfortable colors. They open our hearts and share their experiences. I express my gratitude to those who have submitted their manuscripts to eHaha magazine. Through the wisdom and experiences of the authors, we will discover new colors and landscapes, enabling us to grow.

What We Have Done (01/01/2022 ~ 12/31/2022)

PROGRAM NAME	TIME/PLACE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	CUMULATIVE MEMBERS
Adult Healing Camp	8 hours x 2 Days	56	401
Anger Management Seminar	12 Weeks Course	120	974
Esther Ha Foundation Day		140	140
Help Line	Everyday 24/7/365	229	1,586
Mental Health Seminar with Psychiatric Professionals		170	419
Parents support Group	Every Tuesday	831	6,356
Radio Broadcasting for Mental Health Public Awareness (FM87.7 & AM1660)	Every Thursday	52 Panels	408 Panels
Weekly Grief Support Group	Every Friday	135	303
Youth & Young Adult Support Group	Every Saturday	524	4,334
Youth & Young Adult Healing Camp	8 Hours x 2 Days	24	281
COVID-19 Individual Professional Counseling			199
COVID-19 Webinar			220
Grief Mind Therapy		40	85
Healing Concert	Englewood Hospital Northwell Hospital		2,889
Mental Health First Aid	8 Hours Course	67	845
S.T.E.P.S. (Single-Mother's Transitional Employment and Psychological Support) Program	16 Weeks Course	140	140
Total		2,528	19,580



Mental Health First Aid



Help Line Outreach



Participants of the Healing Camp actively listening to others' pain.

Program

<p>800-713-9336 Help Line</p>	<p>The Help Line provides free phone consultations for people in crisis with psychological distress. Available 24/7/365</p>
<p>Mental Health First Aid</p>	<p>This course teaches the process of how to personally help someone with a mental illness, or someone experiencing a mental health crisis. It is 8 hours, covering topics such as depression, anxiety, suicide, and substance use.</p>
<p>Parents Support Group</p>	<p>Our Parent Support Group is designed to help parents struggling with a variety of the family problems which immigrant parents often face. Korean-language, Every Tuesday at 8PM</p>
<p>Youth & Young Adult Support Group</p>	<p>Our Youth & Young Adult Support Group aims to help young people solve their psychological difficulties together in a supportive environment. English-language, Every Saturday at 5:30PM</p>
<p>Healing Camp</p>	<p>Healing Camp is a 2-day group counseling program led by a mental health professional. Psychological problems are shared with the group members, and participants find emotional resolution through talking with each other.</p>
<p>Mental Health Seminar</p>	<p>These seminars, led by mental health professionals, educate viewers on a variety of mental health topics. This raises awareness and understanding, while allowing participants the opportunity to ask professionals questions.</p>
<p>Bereaved Family Members' Self-Help Group</p>	<p>This is a self-help group for bereaved family members who have lost a loved one. Through this group they comfort each other and gain courage. Every Friday at 8PM</p>
<p>Anger Management Seminar</p>	<p>A 12-week course, designed to help participants control and manage their anger.</p>
<p>Community Awareness Activities through Media</p>	<p>Through the radio, YouTube, TikTok and other means, our foundation engages with the community by regularly promoting its programs, while educating the audience on mental health.</p>

Foundation Activity Photos



Group photo at Help Line Awards Ceremony.



Presidential Volunteer Service Award Ceremony.



5th Cohort Help Line Education.



Adult Healing Camp held in May.



Grant Award received from Nanum Foundation



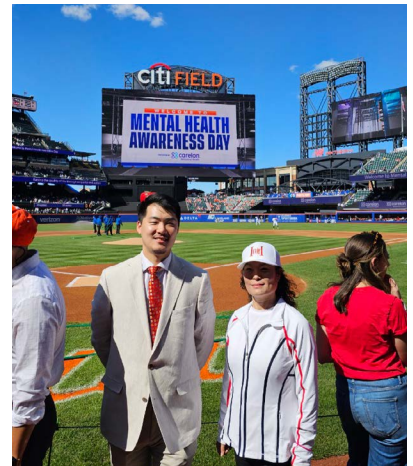
Chairman Ha Yong-hwa and Ms. Kim Kyung-sook at the Presidential Volunteer Service Award Ceremony.



Estherha Foundation Board of Directors.



Parent Support Group.

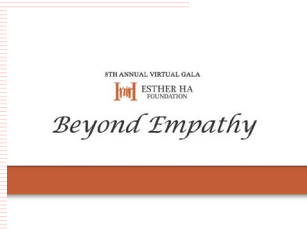


Eddie Ha (IUA Vice President) and Hyun Mi-sook (Executive Director) at Mental Health Awareness Day held at CitiField Stadium.



Youth Healing Camp.

2022 Esther Ha Foundation 8th Virtual Gala



Ha Yong-hwa (Foundation Chairman)



Eddie Ha (IUA Vice President, Gala Host)



헬프라인 정신적인 고통을 겪고 있는 사람들을 위한 무료상담전화 24시간 365일 이용 가능 800-713-9336



David Cheong (Gala Performer)



Christina Lovely (Gala Singer)



정신적 문제가 있거나 정신적 위기를 겪고있는 사람을 돕는 방법을 배우는 코스 / 8시간 과정으로 우울증, 불안, 자살, 물질사용장애 등에 관해 학습



An Jin-oh (Job Coach)



Hyun Mi-sook (Foundation Executive Director)



John Buran (Flushing Bank President & CEO, Donor)

9th Annual Virtual Gala

Esther Ha Foundation

Gala

Save the Date

Thursday
October 19

2023

7PM (EST)

A fundraising gala is an event held to raise funds for the organization operation, program operation and development, social projects, etc. The original term has a meaning of a festival or feast.

Also, a virtual gala refers to a gala that is accessed online rather than an in person gala.

There are various ways to hold a gala, but it is mainly held in the form of admission and ticket sales, donations, raffle, and auctions.

In the meaning of gala, it can help achieve the purpose for a better society through gala, and provide networking opportunities to promote social solidarity and understanding while interacting with various people of the same will.

Also during the gala, you can also experience the pleasure of art, culture, and entertainment.

If you want to participate in the Esther Ha Foundation's gala, you can participate by accessing the QR code below.

Alternatively, if you apply through the Foundation's website www.estherhafoundation.org or email (estherhafoundation1@gmail.com), you can participate by obtaining the Gala website in advance and joining the link on the day of the Gala.





Yes! This is the Esther Ha Foundation helpline.



The helpline provides telephone counseling for individuals who are experiencing emotional difficulties. When feeling overwhelmed or in need of someone's assistance, you can reach out to the helpline. The helpline is available 24/7, 365 days a year in Korean.



**HELP
LINE**
24 HOURS

1-800-713-9336