

P02-338 - CHARACTERISTICS OF TRADITIONAL HEALING PRACTICES AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR MODERN PSYCHOTHERAPIES

A. Dalal

Psychology, University of Adelaide, Allahabad, India

The paper reviewed the relevance and richness of the traditional healing practices in India, and argued that they are based on complex psychological theories of mind and human nature. They provide practical solutions to personal, familial and social problems, and have been integrated within the communal life for centuries. The paper endeavoured to understand the way traditional healing works to alleviate human suffering and tried to delineate the role of cultural belief system. Some salient characteristics of these traditional practices were identified. The traditional healing practices primarily deal with psychological aspects of the problem. No matter what are the actual causes of the problem, be it organic, emotional or social, the suffering is viewed as a state of mind, a subjective experience. These folk therapies aim at changing the way people construe their world, the very objective toward which modern psychotherapies also work. It was argued that an in-depth study of folk wisdom inherent in traditional healing practices could lead to development of new psychotherapies appropriate for the present global society.