LET'S TALK ABOUT... THERAPY AND MEDICATION

THIS SESSION:

Discussion: Understanding Psychotherapy and Medication

Discussion: The Value of Psychotherapy and Medication

Break (10 Minutes)

Discussion: Scepticism about Psychotherapy

THE PHILOSOPHY TOOLKIT

Conceptual analysis Abstract and general Distinctions and connections Reason and argument Constructive dialogue

DISCUSSION: UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOTHERAPY AND MEDICATION

DISCUSSION POINT: What are some of the similarities and differences between psychotherapy and medication?

DISCUSSION POINT: Should we understand the categories of psychotherapy and medication more in terms of their similarities (a unifying approach), or by their differences (a contrastive approach)?

DISCUSSION: THE VALUE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY AND MEDICATION

THOUGHT EXPERIMENT: Suppose hypothetically that we achieve an IDEAL SITUATION in the world of mental health medicine: there are PERFECT DRUGS for any mental health condition. For instance, there is medication for depression that completely alleviates depression, and has no ill-effects at all (no side-effects, no addiction or dependence), just one pill, and depression is simply cleared away. If we reached this ideal situation, should we do away with psychotherapy? Would the value of medication eclipse the value of psychotherapy, or would there still be some value to psychotherapy?

DISCUSSION: SCEPTICISM ABOUT PSYCHOTHERAPY

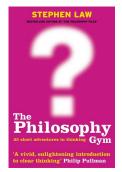
- Some are sceptical about psychotherapy: we can distinguish two forms of scepticism:
 - o Scepticism about the **effectiveness** of psychotherapy
 - Scepticism about the very idea of psychotherapy
- The latter is expressed by Thomas Szasz in his book *The Myth of Psychotherapy*

SZSAZ'S SCEPTICISM: In this book I shall argue that treatment means, and should only mean, a physicochemical intervention in the structure and function of the body aimed at combating or curing disease. The term *psychotherapy*, insofar as it is used to refer to two or more people speaking and listening to each other, is therefore a misnomer, and a misleading category. Because it may help people, psychotherapy may be thought and said to resemble regular medical treatment; but it is not such treatment. There is, properly speaking, no such thing as psychotherapy. Like mental illness, psychotherapy is a metaphor and a myth (p. x).

What are your thoughts on scepticism about psychotherapy?

RESOURCES

Our project has a new website: https://pmhnottingham.wixsite.com/home - here you can access the materials from the sessions, and post-session summaries and videos that aim to capture your philosophical ideas and relate them to other ideas in philosophy!



The Philosophy Gym by Stephen Law is a great book introducing philosophy

An accessible resource to learn about philosophy is the **philosophy bites podcast**: https://philosophybites.com/

Thomas Szasz was a psychiatrist but did philosophy of psychotherapy in his book **The Myth of Psychotherapy**

MAILING LIST (OPTIONAL)

Do you want to be part of the Philosophy of Mental Health @ Middle Street electronic mailing list? If so, email Craig.French@nottingham.ac.uk to join (with "Mailing List" in the subject header), or scan this QR code to join:

If you join the mailing list, we will only contact you to advertise events related to Philosophy of Mental Health @ Middle Street, and to distribute materials from these events.



FEEDBACK (OPTIONAL)

We value your views. With your feedback we can (1) improve the ways we discuss the ideas in the philosophy of mental health here at Middle Street Resource Centre, and in society, and (2) use your ideas to inform out thinking for future research and events on the philosophy of mental health. If you would like to provide feedback, please complete the feedback form overleaf.

Please note: the University of Nottingham processes your personal data for the purposes of showcasing the use and impact of UoN research. This can take place through various mechanisms, including statutory assessments such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF), and internal and external research awards and competitions. Please visit https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/utilities/privacy/privacy-information-for-visitors-correspondents-and-prospective-applicants.aspx for our Privacy Notice which provides further information on the purposes for which we may process your data and the legal basis for this.

FEEDBACK QUESTIONAIRRE

THERAPY AND MEDICATION

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CONTACT DETAILS (i.e., email or telephone):

Before this session, to what extent did you agree with the following? For each question, please place an X in the box that most closely represents how you feel.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Before this session, I knew how philosophy could					
be used to discuss therapy and medication					
I was comfortable with discussing the philosophy					
of mental health before this event					

After having participated in this session, to what extent do you agree with the following? For each question, please place an X in the box that most closely represents how you feel.

	Strongly	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly
	agree		agree nor		disagree
			disagree		
This session has increased my understanding of					
philosophical ideas about therapy and					
medication					
Philosophy is a useful discipline for thinking					
about and discussing therapy and medication					
This event provided me with tools to think about					
my experiences of therapy and medication					
I am more comfortable with discussing the					
philosophy of mental health after this event					
The session has shown me where to find					
resources for using philosophical approaches					
when talking about mental health					

1.	Which ideas covered	l interested vo	ou most, and w	hich do yo	ou think yo	ou will find r	nost helpful, a	and why?)

- 2. Was there anything about the event that we could have done better?
- 3. Is there anything else you would like to share?