

Introduction: Purpose, Structure, and Contents of the Book

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Seventeen years have passed since the first World Congress on Mental Health and Deafness at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, in October 1998. That conference was presided over by Dr. Barbara Brauer and organized in collaboration with the European Society for Mental Health and Deafness. During the intervening years, five more world congresses have been held—in Copenhagen, Denmark (2000); Worcester, South Africa (2005); Brisbane, Australia (2009); Monterrey, Mexico (2012); and, most recently, in Belfast, Ireland (2014). This volume presents thirteen papers selected from the presentations at the fifth World Congress, which was organized by the Department of Psychology at the Autonomous University of Nuevo León (Mexico) and was presided over by Benito Estrada Aranda and Ines Sleeboom-van Raaij. The contributors offer insights and perspectives from eight different countries.

The resulting book is divided into three parts—mental health issues and treatment, deaf populations, and deaf children and their families. In the first part, the contributors take an in-depth look at specific challenges and treatment modalities. Exploring mental health issues and deafness from a human rights perspective, Ana María García García and Javier Muñoz Bravo argue that adequate mental health care should be recognized as a human right and protected by international rules. Ines Sleeboom-van Raaij describes the psychopharmacological treatment of deaf and hard of hearing patients and warns of the frequent and special side effects they experience. Benito Estrada Aranda writes of the challenges and opportunities surrounding the development of mental health and deafness services in countries (e.g., Mexico) that provide no specific public mental health services

for deaf people. Lieke Doornkate presents a newly developed treatment in the field of mental health and deafness for families with deaf members: eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) therapy. Her chapter is one of the first accounts of this new treatment. Karen Tinsley reviews another new therapeutic approach for use with deaf patients that promises to be a viable and effective option: equine-assisted counseling. The first part closes with a chapter by Irene Leigh on the psychosocial implications of cochlear implants.

Part 2 focuses on deaf populations. In the first chapter, Katerina Antonopoulou, Kika Hadjikakou, and Maria Charalambous examine the relationship between self-esteem and cultural identity among deaf and hard of hearing adults in Greece and Cyprus. Johannes Fellingner addresses the creation, objectives, and services of a clinic in Austria that has been providing public health care to deaf people since 1991. This part concludes with the results of a qualitative study by Poorna Kushalnagar, Melissa Draganac-Hawk, and Donald L. Patrick. These researchers conducted interviews with young deaf and hard of hearing people from Spanish-speaking homes in the United States in an effort to discover the relationship between language differences at home, at school, and in the community, as well as the perceived quality of life for this population.

The third and final part of the book contains four chapters. It begins with Tiejo van Gent's overview of the epidemiology, etiology, and cultural, linguistic, and developmental aspects of mental health and related issues found among deaf children and adolescents. Van Gent follows this up with a discussion of the research on specific psychopathological aspects of mental health symptoms. Joanna Kobosko reports on a study of deaf adolescents with hearing parents, paying special attention to the relationship between a hearing mother and her deaf child and to language development disorders. The volume concludes with a case study of a severely deaf prelocutive child diagnosed as autistic. The authors, Benito Estrada Aranda, Georgina Mitre Fajardo, and Ricardo Canal Bedia, discuss the challenges in these cases, where the symptoms of one condition may mask the symptoms of another.

Taken all together, these chapters explore issues that are important in the specialized area of mental health and deafness. The contributors bring many years of collective experience to the field, and most of them are pioneers of mental health and deafness services in their respective countries as well as members of the European Society for Mental Health and Deafness. They have participated as presenters at the past six world congresses on mental health and deafness.