

Keynote: Becoming Resilient : Overturning Common Sense

“We can not even know of what a body is capable what forces belong to it or what they are preparing for.” - Deleuze (1977)

How might we engage with the concept of resilience in a world obsessed with the measurement and cataloguing of deficits and virtues alike – with predicting outcomes, producing certainty and the reification of stable identity.

This address takes Deleuze’s paraphrase of the 17th century philosopher, Spinoza as a point of departure from common sense views of identity.

Can resilience be possessed by some as a personal quality enhancing their coping skills or might resilience be a vital aspect of living which passes through us?

Perhaps resilience bounces back towards us and enables the unsettling of dogmatic beliefs and a stable sense of identity. Inquiry shifts from the moral; What kind of person am I? How should I live? to an ethical position of wonder; What else might there be? What might I be capable of?

This presentation invites an ethical exploration of desire – its capture and resistance – and the politics of identity; illustrated by men’s journeys of struggle with violence, sexuality and belonging and the discovery of ethics and generous forms of love in the face of adversity.

Workshop: Becoming Ethical : Holding A Relationship Focus In Work With Men Who Have Engaged In Violence And Abusive Behaviour.

This workshop will explore the ethical concept of reaching towards the world of the other, in work with men who have engaged in abusive relationship practices.

The central motif holds a passionate interest in otherness as the antithesis of violence. The workshop will focus on interest in otherness both in the counseling relationship and in relationships of significance for the man and his community.

The workshop will illustrate possibilities for moving beyond reactive investments in relationship paradigms which are based on cultural and moral imperatives for desire, love and forgiveness that demand conformity and suppress difference. The production of ethical windows or moments of ethical realization and expression which promote an openness to otherness, respect of difference and generous forms of love, will be highlighted.

An emphasis will be placed on developing processes of careful preparation which enable readiness for participation in safe, respectful and novel conversations with family and community members.