

## Theme B Poster Abstract (ISCAR 2008 in UCSD)

### Rethinking the notion of 'cure' and 'support' for mental disability through the reciprocal supporting community of 'Urakawa Bethel House'

Mihoko Ishiwatari (Rikkyo University) and Hiroaki Ishiguro (Rikkyo University)

#### Abstract:

'Urakawa Bethel House' is the reciprocal support community for the persons with 'mental disability' and their supporting staffs in Hokkaido, Japan. People with loss of coordination disorder, psychotic depression and other types of complex mental disability gather there to work and talk. People who left hospital started it in 1978. Now they manage a kelp factory and a welfare shop in Urakawa town. The notion of 'cure' and 'support' for mental disability will be discussed through examining one newcomer's narrative about his trajectory of participation to the community.

In psychotherapy, therapists are usually privileged to judge what is indicated by client's action and what is required for the client. We doubt the privileged position of 'supporting specialist' for the treatment. Holzkamp (1992) as a critical psychologist insists on the mediated and two-sided account between an individual and his environment, in which 'meaning structure' mediated by social world is the determinant for human action, and also such 'meaning structure' can be changed by an individual person. He emphasizes the particularity of 'meaning structure' for individual, too. Individuals confront societal relations only from the standpoint of their particular position in their own world. It is their everyday grounds that regulate their particular concrete conditions for their actions.

In this presentation, one newcomer's narrative about his life especially before and after participating in the community will be shown as the main data. His trajectory in the participation indicates his positioning change in the community and what the community is for him. What did he find and appropriate in the community? Why do so many persons with mental disability come to the community? The reconsideration about the notion of 'cure' and 'support' for persons with mental disability suggests the general issue for personal development and community support.

#### Reference List

- Holzkamp, K (1992) *On Doing Psychology Critically: Theory & Psychology*, 2 (2), pp.193-204.
- Teo, T. (1998) *Klaus Holzkamp And The Rise And Decline Of German Critical Psychology: History of Psychology*, Vol.1, No3, pp. 25-253.