



School of Health Professions

After Work Lectures

Finding meaning through occupation

Seeking asylum in the United Kingdom

Claire Smith

Senior Lecturer in Occupational Therapy
at Teesside University

Tuesday, 8 October 2013, 18:00–19:00

TN E0.54, Technikumstrasse 71, 8400 Winterthur



School of Health Professions

Technikumstrasse 71
Postfach
CH-8401 Winterthur

Phone +41 58 937 63 02
Fax +41 58 935 63 02

E-Mail info.gesundheit@zhaw.ch
Web www.gesundheit.zhaw.ch



Claire Smith

Claire Smith is a Senior Lecturer in Occupational Therapy at Teesside University. Since qualifying in 1991 she has worked in a number of adult mental health services across the North East of England. In 1999 she completed a Masters in Counselling and joined the occupational therapy teaching team to deliver on aspects of mental health, communication and professional development. More latterly she was employed part time as a psychological therapist in a specialist primary care service for refugees, as well as providing supervision for therapists and training on mental health and refugee issues.

Finding meaning through occupation

People seeking asylum face many challenges to active engagement in everyday life. They are subject to a range of social, legal and political challenges which exclude them from participation in mainstream society, exacerbating social exclusion and occupational deprivation.

This lecture aims to illuminate individuals' experience of occupation before leaving their home country, during the asylum process and (where relevant) after seeking asylum. The session will provide an opportunity for the exploration of the role of occupational issues during asylum, using a mixture of literature and early research findings from a phenomenological study to promote awareness of the impact of asylum through the critical daily dimensions of occupation.

The resulting themes focus on the meaning given to occupation by the individual and the impact of the asylum process on their ability to find dignified and meaningful occupations. The presentation highlights the impact of the absence of occupations, and the potential for occupation to promote integration and foster health and well-being. We will explore the value and meaning ascribed to occupations across culture and at times of major life transition.

Occupation may never be more important than when people face such a truly global transition as migration, where it may influence all aspects of the individual and their occupational life – what they do, what they can be, and what they aspire to become.

Tuesday, 8 October 2013, 18:00–19:00
TN E0.54, Technikumstrasse 71, 8400 Winterthur