

*Culture to Culture Foundation Chinese American Mental Health Scholarship 2007*

Speech by John Kangho Ang

Mental health issues are a stigma in any society and none more so than in traditional Chinese society. Mental health problems know no bounds and can affect people from all walks of life; social, economic and racial backgrounds are no barrier to common afflictions such as depression due to the stresses that modern day life can bring.

The highly publicized suicides of Hong Kong superstar Actor / Singer Leslie Cheung and highly successful Asian American Writer, Iris Chang, have brought mental health issues to the forefront of many Chinese people's thoughts.

Several years ago, a lady from Shanghai wanted to end her life due to her severe depression and her impending divorce due to her in-law's meddling in her marriage. She had no one to turn to due to her language and cultural barriers. I was able to work with a Chinese mental health social worker at San Jose Valley Medical Center to assist her. She went through a series of counseling and treatment and she is still around and happily married today.

There are some in the Chinese community who may go through the similar experience but do not know how to seek help or do not want to seek help. One of the roles of Culture to Culture Foundation is to provide these individuals with assistance, awareness, education, resources, and support on mental health issues. I am proud to be a recipient of the Culture to Culture Foundation scholarship. It is my desire to serve the community particularly the Chinese-speaking individuals and their families who suffer from mental health issues. Thank you, Culture to Culture Foundation.