

# MENTAL HEALTH IN MONGOLIA

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# INTRODUCTION

- Who am I?
- Dr Vanessa Jones, Clinical Psychologist. Member of the British Psychological Society.
- Undergraduate Degree in Psychology and Philosophy University of Sheffield, England.
- Masters Degree in Clinical & Cognitive Neuroscience, University of London.
- Doctorate in Clinical Psychology University of Birmingham.



- **Why am I here?**

- To learn about life and healthcare in Mongolia. To share my skills and knowledge.
- To gain experience of different ways of working and to bring back ideas to England.
- To learn about Mongolia and see the beautiful countryside!

- **Where am I working?**

- I am working two days at the National Centre for Maternal and Child Health. Two days at the Oncology Hospital and one day teaching at the Etugen Institute.



# MY WORK EXPERIENCE

- Oncology Service
- Eating Disorders Service
- Older adults
- Learning Disabilities
- Children and families
- In-patient ward: Psychosis
- Assertive Outreach: Working with chronic mental health
- Stress Management Groups
- Traumatic Brain Injury



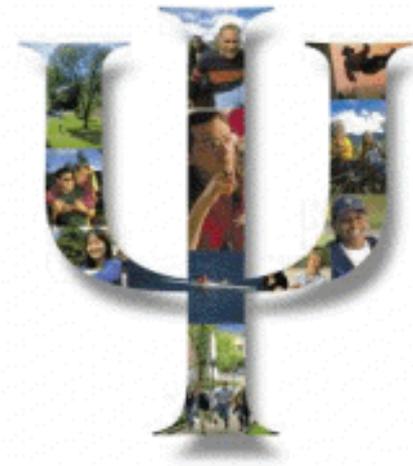
# AIMS

- To increase knowledge of mental health and psychology
- To increase understanding of the situation in Mongolia
- To think about the needs of Mongolia
- To think about what you can do to help



# WHAT IS CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY?

- Psychology uses science to understand people and society
- The way people think, feel, behave and how their bodies work.
- Situations, life experiences and health all affect these things.
- Clinical Psychology uses psychology to improve health – mind and body
- Uses this understanding to reduce psychological distress



# FOUR MAIN ROLES:

- Mental Health



## Physical Health



- Social Health  
(orphanages, homeless, domestic violence)



## Organisations (staff teams, ways of working)



# WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?



# WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?



- Health of the mind
- Connected to the body - if ill, mind is vulnerable to illness too.
- If mind is ill, body is vulnerable to illness (Centre for Disease Control, 2004)
- Mental health is a continuum. Mind is never 100% and never 0% (Keyes & Corey, 2002)
- We are all on the continuum and we all move up and down depending on our current life events
- Mental health is our mind's way of surviving difficult situations.



# MENTAL HEALTH AND STRESS

- Our brains can only do so much
- Stress is anything that uses up your brain



Good things take energy too

Our lives are full of stresses.

Too much stress = Mental ill  
health



# WHAT TYPES OF MENTAL HEALTH ARE THERE?

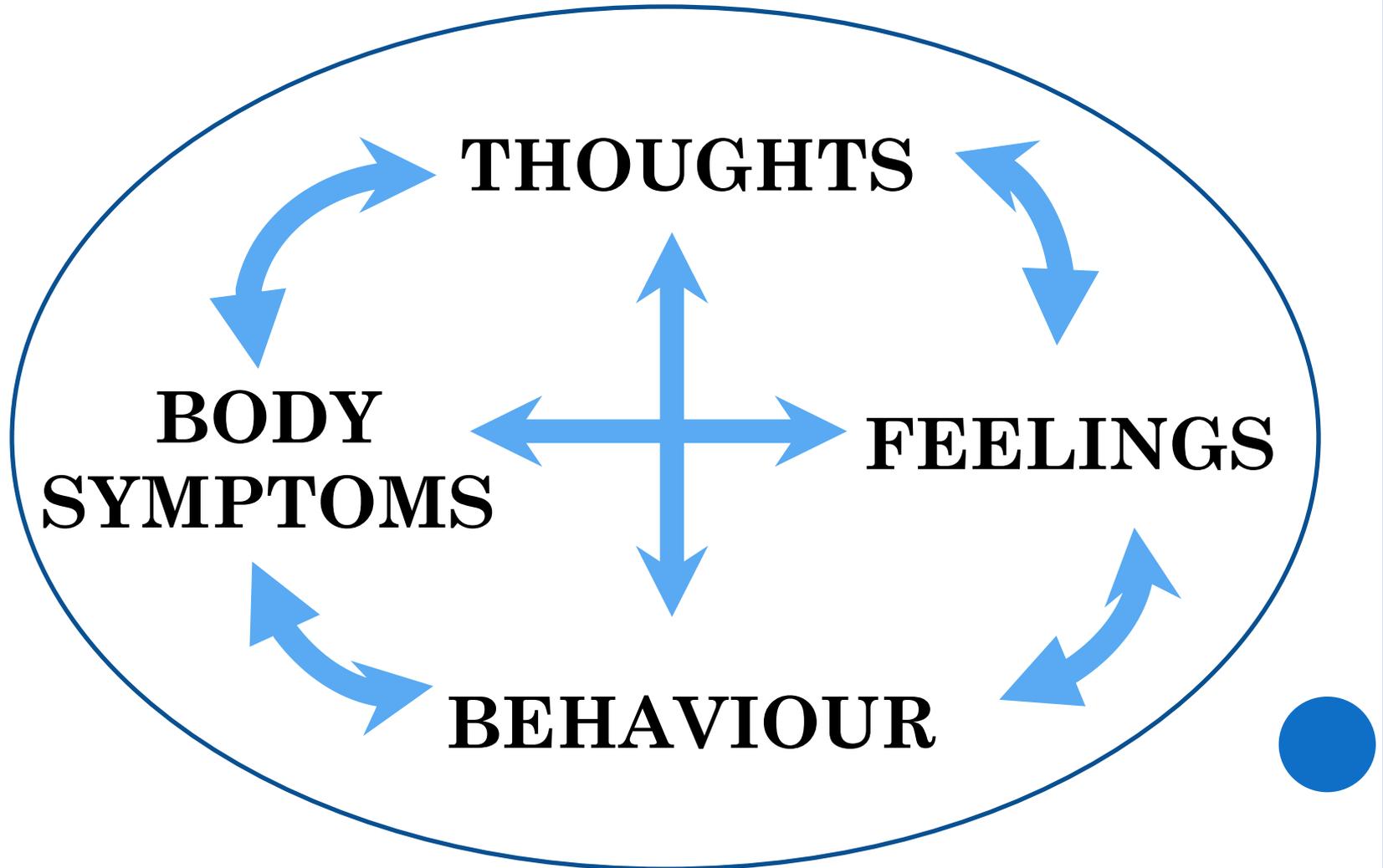


# TYPES OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Psychosis
- Eating Disorders
- Phobias
- Addictions
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Anger
- Mania
- Personality Disorder
- Learning Disability



# HOT CROSS BUN MODEL



# DEPRESSION

## THOUGHTS

- I am bad
- I am not important
- No-one likes me
- Think about killing self – suicide

## BODY SYMPTOMS

- Tired – want to sleep all time
- Can't sleep
- Heavy
- Slow



## FEELINGS

- Feel very sad all time
- Irritable

## BEHAVIOUR

- Do not want to do anything – no motivation
- Do not talk to people
- Do not look after self
- Stay in bed all day



# ANXIETY

## THOUGHTS

- What will happen next?
- It will go wrong
- They will think I am stupid
- They will find out I am no good



## BODY SYMPTOMS

- Heart racing
- Sweating
- Breathing fast
- Butterflies in tummy
- Nervous energy – hands, feet

## FEELINGS

- Worried      Panic
- Scared      Anxious

## BEHAVIOUR

- Avoid
- Check everything
- Do not look at people
- Speak quietly
- Make excuses
- Do not look after self



# WHY IS MENTAL ILL HEALTH A PROBLEM?

- Quality of Life: We can live with mental ill health **but** important to value ourselves and our happiness
- People with mental health problems are more likely to be out of work – not contributing to economic growth and using government services (Layard, 2004)
- Mental health problems affect people's relationships (Storrie, Ahern & Tuckett, 2010) and parenting (Barth, 2009)
- People in prison, the homeless and the unemployed are more likely to have mental health problems. (Kupers, 1999; National Institute of Mental Health, USA, 2005)

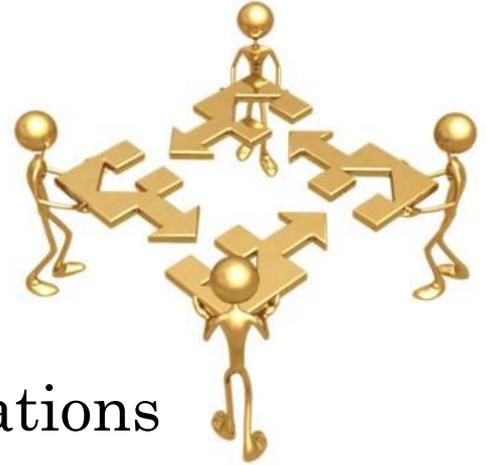


# WHO GETS MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS?



# WHO GETS MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS?

- 1 in 4 adults worldwide have mental health problems at any one time (WHO)
- Numbers for Mongolia?  
Changing societies at increasing risk due to changing roles and expectations
- Anyone can get mental health problems
- People are more likely to get mental health problems if: high stress, bad diet, bad sleep, bad health, money worries, family problems



# WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

- Mental Health services: Teams of trained professionals
- Can provide advice, medication, support, help back into work, counselling and more
- Psychology: understanding of how the person's problems started and what they can do to make them better.
- Understanding and empathy are very powerful
- Work-life balance: too much work will cause stress for anyone
- Health: Good health means less vulnerable to stress (Myers, Sweeney & Whitmer, 2000)



# PSYCHOLOGY IN MONGOLIA

- Very few psychology jobs
- Most work privately or as volunteer
- Difficult to find a private psychologist – even other psychologists do not know where to go to find one
  
- If they are employed: physical health services
- Training for doctors and nurses
- Short term therapy
- Research



# PHYSICAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOLOGY

- Psychology services can reduce spending on physical health problems e.g. heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, cancer and chronic pain (Hunsley, 2002)
- For example: fewer medical appointments, more healthy behaviours
- Stress-related disabilities: every \$1 spent on psychological treatment saved \$5 (Gonick, Farrow, Meier et al, 1981)
- Staff burnout, staff sickness and staff leaving their jobs
- Overstretched: One psychologist per whole hospital – if lucky



# MENTAL HEALTH IN MONGOLIA

- Mental health is not well understood
  - Western problem
- Mental health problems may not be recognised
- May be seen as a spiritual problem, not a psychological one
- No data: Do not know what sort of mental health problems Mongolians face or how many
- No services: Mental Health State hospital or nothing.
- Stigma



# WHAT WE DO KNOW?

- Alcoholism and domestic violence are widespread problems
- Both are bad for quality of life of the person and their friends/family
- Children in these families are at high risk of mental health problems and suicide



# WHERE NEXT?

- **What we need:**
- Somewhere people can go if have mild-moderate mental health problems
- I.e. Mental Health services: Teams of nurses, doctors, psychologists and social workers.
- Trained psychologists



- **Somewhere people can go if have mild-moderate mental health problems**
- **To do this we need:**
  - Doctors and nurses to know mental health problems when they see them
  - To refer people to the mental health services
  - Members of the public to know what mental health problems are
  - To know it is okay to ask for and receive help
- **To do this we need:** Research and public awareness campaigns



- **Mental Health services: Teams of nurses, doctors, psychologists and social workers.**
- **To do this we need:**
- Government bodies to understand what mental health is and why it is important to treat it
- To create jobs for people working in mental health
- **To do this we need: Research and public awareness campaigns**



- **Trained psychologists**

- **To do this we need:**

- In-house training

- International relations

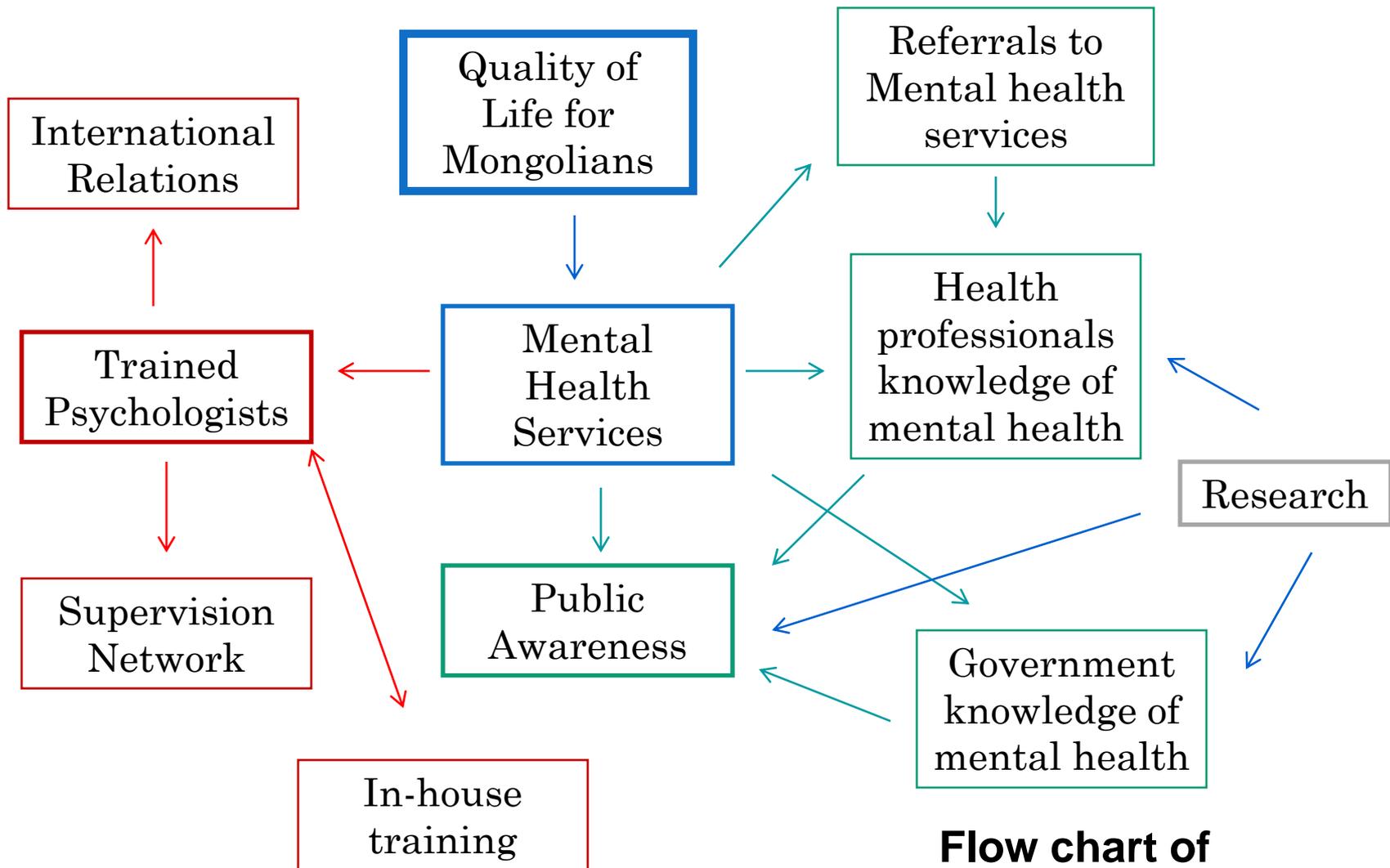
- Peer-training



- **To do this I am:** organising a psychology supervision network

- Share ideas, forum to contact other psychologists, arrange joint training opportunities.





**Flow chart of  
Development of Mental  
Health Services in  
Mongolia**



# WHAT CAN YOU DO?



# WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Need to know what mental health problems people in Mongolia have: Need research
- Every country is different – but similar too: work life pressures, family pressures, changing society. Naïve to think any country is free of mental health.
- What is the social and economic impact of these mental health problems? Need Research
- Evidence drives governmental change and service provision.
- If Mongolia is to become a first world country, it needs to focus on both quality of life for it's people and the economic impact on the country.
- Public Awareness



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