

Cross-Cultural Issues in Mental Health: A Philosophical Perspective

Dr. Elena Popa

September 29th 18:00 (Bishkek Time)

Meeting ID: 981 0112 3672 (Password: 619884)

<https://zoom.us/j/98101123672?pwd=VTdCMkZhWDU5V0VSOGIwVGRYMXc1UT09>

Approaching mental health on a global scale with particular reference to low- and mid-income countries raises issues concerning the disregard of the local context and values and the imposition of values characteristic of the Global North. Seeking a philosophical viewpoint to surmount these problems, I will argue for a framework in psychiatry that incorporates value pluralism, particularly in relation to the Global South context, while also emphasizing personal values such as the choice of treatment. In sketching out this framework, my aim is to use a philosophical perspective to overcome the clash between universalism and relativism about psychiatric categories by focusing on how overlaps between cultures can contribute to ontology-building.

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