

Filial Piety and elder Abuse within the Chinese Community: a clinician's perspective

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Statistics of physical assaults: elder abuse (aged 65 or older) in Auckland

Year	Ethnicity	Number	Rate per 100,000
2010	Asians	5	30
	European/Other peoples	61	51

(Source: NDSA, 2012)

Statistics: Hong Kong

- Between Jan to Sept 2011

- Total reported cases- 273

- Types of abuse

• Physical	204
• Psychological:	16
• Neglect	2
• Fiancial	32
• Abandonment	2
• Sexual	1
• Others:	1
• Multiple methods of abuse:	11

Male/ Female: 156/117

Relationship with abusers:

•Partner:	186
•Son:	24
•Daughters:	4
•Daughter-in-laws:	7
•Son-in-laws:	3
•Other relatives:	3
•Grandchildren:	2

This presentation

- Is not.....
 - about providing a workshop on Filial Piety
 - Is about
- Sharing of experience and suggesting a few hypotheses on elder abuse within the Chinese community
 - From the clinician's perspective

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2003)

- Filial:
 - Formal relating to the relationship of a son or daughter to their parents
 - Filial duty
- Piety:
 - A behaviour that shows respect for the religion
- For the Chinese, FP is more than the literal meaning

Chinese Beliefs regarding children and parents relationship- the traditional concept of filial piety 孝道

- A virtue respect for one's parents and ancestors.
- A prescription of obedience and indebtedness to parents.
 - Confucius once said: "In serving his parents, a filial son reveres them in daily life; he makes them happy while he nourishes them; he takes anxious care of them in sickness; he shows great sorrow over their death; and he sacrifices to them with solemnity."
- A bottom up obligation- to serve the parents and ancestors from the son or daughter.
- Correctness of children's behaviour are measured by the moral standard- that is, the filial behaviour
- Is the beginning of Ren (Benevolence) and Yi (Righteousness)- the human virtue.

孝 甲骨文像“子”
承老人行走，老
人仅以长发“𠂔”表示，
不如金文中老人形象
较完整，但用扶持老人
来表达“孝”，原意是一
致的。

The image shows the character '孝' (xiào) in seal script. It is a stylized, thick-lined character. The top part consists of three horizontal strokes that curve upwards, representing the long hair of an elderly person. Below this is a circular shape, and the bottom part is a vertical stroke that curves to the left, representing the lower body of a child supporting the elderly person.

順



Our Experience (the Vagus Centre)

Filial Piety and its cultural meaning

- Two constructs:
 - 孝道 Filial Piety (the overall concept of respect)- the start of a person's virtue
 - 孝順 (Filial obligation- the action to fulfil the filial piety requirement)
- Modification of filial relationship in the modern world
 - Filial piety as a traditional belief
 - Everyday practice of Filial obligation is undergoing changes due to:
 - the recent Chinese history (building economy)- money means love
 - “modernisation” eg One Child Policy, Nucleus family- does filial relationship still means bottom up or top down

Elderly- life after migration

- Moral standard changed and lack of governance in a new Country-subject o interpretation
- In-law conflicts
 - Arguments, verbal abuse
- Intrusion to adult children's privacy
 - Over-worries and “curiosity” about children's well being
- Loss of power from parents
 - Language
 - Unfamiliar with the social and legal system
 - Shame and poor networking
 - No mediators
 - Financial issues, retirement = no longer “a money machine”, obliged to contribute by using superannuation income (or benefits).
 - Being dumped with grandchildren

Prevention within the Chinese community

- Education, education and education- an ongoing process
 - via multi media campaign
- Encourage reporting by helping the elderly to demystify the meaning of shame, filial obligation to the family (top down approach)

Views of Chinese elderly

How to keep them safe

- Self sufficiency- keeping money under their account
- Maintaining good healthy and independence- no need to be looked after or cared for
- Networking for mutual support and sharing their stories
- Acceptance- the cultural differences between NZ and China, the generation gaps; the ageing process

Thank you

Bottom up Vs Top Down relationship

- Bottom up-
 - Serving parents, unconditional adherence to parental advice
 - Marriage (following parental instruction) as a way to fulfil obligation
- Top down
 - Meeting children's needs by parents
 - Taking care of grandchildren after retirement
 - More obligation from parents than from children to parents

West and East

- Individualistic VS. Collaborative

Retirement lifestyle



老人的日常生活



Primary Bonding

