

## PhD Completion Seminar: A phenomenological study into African refugee men's wellness seeking behaviours, inclusive of community, spirit and ancestral connections

**Andrew Harris**

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**4-5pm Tuesday 25 August 2015**

**Rm 515, Level 5, 207 Bouverie Street, Carlton**

The aim of this study was to inform therapy with African male refugees in Tasmania through the elaboration of African-derived approaches to problems. A secondary aim was to critique and re-inform Western therapeutic approaches and cultural assumptions.

The study spanned over nine years and included field work in South Africa. This talk will explore African approaches to problems, and the barriers presented by Western research and therapeutic approaches, and its assumptions of individualised human existence.



Andrew currently works as a privately practising psychologist in Queensland and Tasmania. His training in psychology was grounded in an uneasy conjunction of his pragmatic professional identity as a certified civil engineer and environmental scientist, together with a proclivity for psychodynamic therapy and an interest in existential and post-modern philosophical and therapeutic models. In particular, Narrative Therapy strongly informed Andrew's work with marginalised client groups including Aboriginal and African communities.

This PhD project commenced in 2006 after two years in the role of Co-ordinator of the Phoenix Centre, a dedicated centre for torture-trauma recovery in Hobart, Tasmania. The client base at that time was comprised primarily of refugee entrants from the African countries of Sudan, Ethiopia and Sierra Leone, which prompted a desire for culturally informed practise.