

*CURRENT & FUTURE PERSPECTIVES:
Counselling, Psychology and
Counselling Skills*

Counselling in Scotland

SPRING/SUMMER 2007

POWER TO THE IMAGINATION

NEW VETTING SYSTEM

A CHALLENGE TO OUR ATHEISM

OPEN UP WHEN YOU'RE FEELING DOWN

COSCA 3RD ANNUAL COUNSELLING MEETING

UK GOVERNMENT REGULATION PLANS

BOOK REVIEW



COSCA
Counselling & Psychotherapy
in Scotland

Contents

- 03 **Editorial**
JOHN DODDS
- 04 **Power to the Imagination**
OBITUARY FOR RON BEASLEY
- 09 **New Vetting System**
BRIAN MAGEE
- 10 **A Challenge to our Atheism**
DR. V. CLIFFORD
- 14 **Open Up When You're Feeling Down**
TONY McLAREN
- 18 **COSCA 3rd Annual Counselling Meeting**
KAYE RICHARDS
- 22 **UK Government Regulation Plans**
BRIAN MAGEE
- 25 **Book Review**
FIONA MCCOL
- Gazette**

OFFICERS OF COSCA

Jonathan Wood **Convener**
Mary Toner **Vice Convener**

JOURNAL EDITORIAL GROUP

Brian Magee **brian@cosca.org.uk**
John Dodds **citrus30@hotmail.com**

STAFF

Brian Magee **Chief Executive**
Gillian Lester **Development Officer**
(Individuals & Courses)
Kathy McMillan **Recognition Scheme**
Development Officer
Marilyn Cunningham **Administrator**
Alan Smith **Book-keeper**

As a charity, COSCA welcomes donations or other assistance from benefactors who may have been helped by counselling or who wish to support the development of counselling in Scotland.

While all reasonable care is taken in the selection and verification of the material published in this journal, COSCA does not take responsibility for the accuracy of the statements made by the contributors or the advertisers. The views expressed in the journal are those of the individual contributors and are not necessarily of COSCA. Material published in this journal may not be reproduced without prior permission.

COSCA acknowledges the financial assistance received from the Scottish Executive.

Editorial



John Dodds

I am writing this in the week that Cho Seung-Hui killed 32 people at the Virginia Tech campus, and was struck by Ron Beasley's statement (in the moving obituary to him in this issue by Colin Kirkwood and Pam Beasley): "working in a violence culture is exhausting". Ron himself comes across as a man who was far from exhausted – but rather someone who devoted huge energy and commitment to his work and what he believed in. A role model for all of us, I feel.

This issue you'll find again a broad range of subject matter, some of it potentially controversial. I draw your attention in particular to Vicki Clifford's piece on religion and counselling (*A Challenge to our Atheism*). I'd welcome views on her article, and may invite further pieces on the topic – particularly since this one focusses on the Judeo-Christian tradition, and there's scope to look at the subject in the context of our multi-faith culture. Another topic, which is causing debate in the therapeutic community, is that of the imminent regulation of counselling.

Brian Magee gives us some insight into progress on the agenda with his article on the Government white paper.

While there is no letters column this time, we have the first of a what I hope will be a regular feature – book reviews. I'm looking for reviewers, too, so if you're interested, drop me an email. And don't forget I am always on the lookout for articles generally – so don't be shy: either drop me an email with a proposal, or send a completed piece. You'll find author guidelines on the website: www.cosca.org.uk

I'm keen that our journal is as "interactive" as possible. So, as well as asking for articles, why not let me know what you feel about the journal, what you'd like to see in our pages in the future, or send in something for the letters page.

John Dodds

Power

to the imagination

Colin Kirkwood with Pam Beasley

An appreciation of the life and work of Ronald Beasley (1923–2006)

Ronald Beasley, known to his family, friends and collaborators as Ron, has died at the age of 83. He was a man for all seasons, for the whole of life, a loving, thoughtful, questioning man, a man of independent mind, who never retired of his own volition.

In preparing to write this appreciation, I found myself thinking of the distinction Edwin Muir makes in his autobiography between the story and the fable: the story being the account of what happened, the fable reaching imaginatively to catch the deeper themes.

Ron was born in London on October 25, 1923. His parents were Presbyterians who both left the church, and his mother (who hailed from Bonnyrigg) later became a member of the Communist Party. Ron ran the youth club in the church, and it was the Presbyterian Church of England which sent him to Westhill College, one of a group of colleges at Selly Oak in Birmingham which provided training for ministry. Ron did a two year course on Christian education and youth leadership from 1945–47. It was there he met his wife, Pam, who was a fellow course member.

His first job was with the Presbyterian Settlement at East India Dock Road in the east end of London. He and Pam were married in London in 1949. From there he moved to work for the YMCA in Halifax. There followed eight years in North Shields where he was a member of staff at the Sir James Knott youth centre.

Continuing on their narrow road to the deep north, Ron and Pam moved to Edinburgh in 1959, where

Ron became the Church of Scotland's Senior Youth Organiser for Lothian and Tweeddale.

Early in the 1960s the idea emerged of using the basement of St George's West Church as a place where young people could meet and dance to loud music. Ron was in at the start of this project and did the weekly training of young participants from the Presbyterian and Anglican churches in the west end of the city.

Thus was born the famous Cephas Cellar, Cephas being Peter, the rock: a safe, strong meeting place. At weekends and during the Festival, this big open space was open to all hours of the morning. At breaks, when the music stopped and folk went to get food, you could if you chose go for five minutes to sit on the floor of the little low chapel. Anybody might come in and do something. Always there was this quiet time every evening.

It wasn't long before they realised that many of the kids who came there had problems, so some of the volunteers got training in what we would now call counselling skills. Ron realised that for some youngsters in need of care a residential experience was required, and Cephas House in Ravelston Park Place was bought. To it would come young volunteer helpers, and young teenagers who had been pushed out of home or the Royal Edinburgh Hospital or the Polmont Borstal. Ron and Pam did a four-year stint living in as house parents. Apart from the evening meal, which was always cooked by a Miss Hall, the people in the house were responsible for everything else. They would sign up for cooking and cleaning jobs, and held a house meeting every Monday night, as well as going out to the pictures or to ten pin bowling.

From his early years, Ron was involved with Jock Sutherland, the socially-oriented psychoanalyst, then Director of the Tavistock Clinic in London and later

co-founder of the Scottish Institute of Human Relations in Edinburgh.

Around 1966 Ron had a sabbatical year in the USA where he studied in the Department of Psychiatry and Religion at the Union Theological Seminary, from which he gained a tremendous amount.

When the Council of West End Churches was formed, Ron became its Community Service Officer with the task of coordinating all that the five churches were doing with young people.

Ron and Pam moved to a smallholding in Blackness in West Lothian, where they lived for fourteen years, and Pam was able to grow fruit and vegetables. Ron was invited by Sister Consolata of the Roman Catholic Convent of the Good Shepherd in Colinton, to go and work as a bridge between the sisters in the order and the lay members of the community.

This was the period, in Scotland, when the Children's Hearing System began, as a radical alternative to the Juvenile Courts, making possible a dialogue between troubled children, their families, volunteer panel members, social workers and the courts, a dialogue conducted by lay members of children's panels, served by professional reporters. Ron became the first chair of the Children's Panel in Edinburgh, and the training of panel members in Edinburgh was done in Cephas House.

Ron's next job represented another creative leap, this time to the post of Head of Community Affairs at Wester Hailes Education Centre (known as WHEC), an innovative Secondary School, Community Education and Sports Centre in one of Edinburgh's peripheral housing schemes. He worked there for ten years until he was retired on the bureaucratic grounds that he had reached the age of sixty five.

Ron was chairman of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation for six years, travelling to Czechoslovakia, India, South Korea and Russia.

Meanwhile, Ron had been for many years chair of the Scottish Association for Counselling which had formed back in the 1970s. It was in this capacity that I first met him, when appointed me as researcher on the SAC/Scottish Health Education Group's Directory of Counselling Resources in Scotland project. It was a great learning experience. Ron was an attentive, diligent, enabling and collegial chair, and I always felt fully supported by him.

It was, I think, around 1989 that he became Student Counsellor at Queen Margaret College, a post from which he was again obliged to retire six years later when they found out he was seventy one. From there he went to work at Couple Counselling Scotland, continuing as a volunteer counsellor at Edinburgh and Lothian Marriage Counselling Service into the last year of his life. He never stopped working: at the time of his death he was preparing for publication his book entitled *Letters to God from the Wilderness*, which is now being printed.

In telling this story of Ron's life with Pam's help, I have tried to follow a linear sequence. In fact that is impossible, because his life always ran along several parallel tracks. It might be better to imagine it as a tapestry, a weave of differently coloured threads creating multiple moving pictures. I have omitted to mention his twenty five year role as Assistant Chair of the Polmont Young Offenders Institution Board of Governors for which he received the MBE; his and Pam's membership of the Iona Community; his long eldership at Pilton Old Kirk when Rev Ian Reid was minister; his leadership of training courses for young adults at Glenmore Lodge; the workcamps he ran in Scotland, Finland, Iceland and Poland; his work as an elder on the Edinburgh Presbytery where he

sought to raise the profile of the lay elder; his role as a conscientious objector during world war two and as a lifelong pacifist; his ecumenism; and his long involvement with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy of which he became a Fellow, Trustee and latterly a Governor.



I have also left out the story of Ron and Pam's family life, their children Gail, Mark, Joy and Scott; Mark's tragic death at the age of sixteen in a cycling accident; the sound of his beautiful voice serenading Pam on the occasion of their fiftieth wedding anniversary; and his public finale, the third annual Wester Hailes Community Lecture delivered five weeks to the day before he died, as feisty, straight-talking and life-affirming as ever. He called it Education is For Life – This Life.

Ron was a great one for jumping over walls, knocking at promising doors, pushing boundaries, asking irritating questions. He was fearless. He was unimpressed by status. He disliked sycophancy, but he was not oppositional. He was principled rather than pragmatic. Some found this irritating, some took it in their stride. But he was not indifferent to his impact on others, offering on at least one occasion to step aside if it was felt that his involvement might be inhibiting the flourishing of the project in question. In fact, as Elizabeth Templeton pointed out in her eulogy at the Service of Celebration in a packed-out St Giles Cathedral, the many ill-typed letters he sent reflected his sincerity, his integrity and his loving-kindness: the letters always ended with the word SHALOM.

How are we to make sense of all this? I find it useful to think of Ron's life as an embodiment of, and a response to, some of the core themes of his era, the era of the depression, the thirties, the war, the postwar hopes, achievements and disappointments the eruption of libertarianism in the late 50s and 60s, the class conflict of the 70s, the reaction of Thatcherism, and the ambiguity (and ambivalence) of Blairism. At the heart of this period there has been a great deep river of popular hope and determination to create real democracy and through it the reality (not simply the rhetoric) of social justice. That hope has not been fully realised, and that determination has been baulked to a considerable extent. Although various elites have jostled to lead, name and channel these hopes, they are best seen as reflecting the aspirations of ordinary people. The core of those aspirations was that ordinary people themselves would flourish, would come into their own, in housing, welfare, health, work, learning and community: in contributing to the creation of the good society. There was in that project a shaking of the hitherto foundational distinction between manual and professional work. (The best symbolic expression of engagement with

that theme, in my view, was the practice in the early years of the Iona Community of having trainee ministers serve as labourers to the skilled workers rebuilding the Abbey.)

Ron Beasley embodied that process of shaking the foundations in his own life. He never went to University, never got a degree, and didn't accept that those facts excluded him from creative or professional or leading roles. He was quite explicit about this. He told me that he was committed to jumping over walls, and those are the walls he was talking about.

An important implication of this theme is that the notion of equality of opportunity to compete for success, promoted by politicians like Tony Blair and David Cameron, is the complete antithesis of the popular postwar aspiration, which was an aspiration that all would rise, not the few only. Again, Ron's life embodies the popular hope, not the weasel words of the compromise. As he said in his Wester Hailes Community Lecture: "the lifestyle I wish to be advocated is the lifestyle of servanthood, but not subservience". Ron wasn't jumping over walls to get to the top. He was doing it to serve the troubled kids in Cephas House, Polmont Young Offenders Institution and WHEC; and to serve the troubled adults in the Pastoral Foundation and Couple Counselling Scotland.

Not enough is said in these frantically competitive days in praise of the contributions of the Iona Community, the Corrymeela Community, the dialogue between Christ and Marx, the influence of the writings of Paulo Freire, of the persons-in-relation perspective of John Macmurray or the I and Thou stance of Martin Buber. These were Ron's enthusiasms, enacted in the stance he tried to embody in his practice. He was a radical Christian personalist who didn't go round making a great fuss about it. We in the world of counselling in Britain,

in Scotland, in Europe – who are actually the inheritors of these contributions, who carry them forward – have insufficiently acknowledged the contributions of such people, quietly and sometimes not so quietly bubbling up their wellsprings of fresh water. Their lives do so much to irrigate the arid individualism and structuralism of contemporary politics.

I can think of no better way to close this appreciation than to let Ron speak for himself. Here, then, are some extracts from his last lecture:

- like you, I live in this world, our world, this life, our life. It is our habitat and we share responsibility for it being what it is.
- education..will require...to be motivated with a fundamental and focussed commitment to radically changing this world of ours.
- the next five to ten years will be crucial.
- our anxiety and stubborn obsession (with) our own self-preservation (and) our affluent lifestyle inevitably cripples our... sound judgement and deeper thinking.
- our students require to be equipped and enabled to face the dilemma of our present age and possible future society... not only to face it... but hopefully to reshape it.
- fullness of life comes from service, not from the "I'm alright Jack and to hell with you!" attitude.
- with competition there will always be losers... I am proposing that cooperation is a far more facilitating strategy, right across society and in every sector.
- education...is designed to permeate the entire

person – to open eyes, and ears, and to engender new insights of the imagination....To learn is both to speak and to listen. There is nothing more evocative than a listening community.

- spirituality is about the intimacies of the soul.
- working in a violence culture is exhausting.
- for the task of reconciliation we need (what Jefferson called) “the smile of reason”.
- we live today (in) the culture of obsessive and immediate gratification. Sex has become a social pastime...there appears to be little...regard for the experience of tender love, intimacy and the deep glow of affection.
- ingrained self-gratification destroys inter-relationship living...learning to be in relationship is perhaps the most fundamental piece of learning required of all of us...the healing of relationships is the most fulfilling ministry.
- the imagination is one of the most precious prerogatives of humanity...in 1968 (a friend and I) had been involved in gathering some support for the students of Paris...there, across the face of the citadel of the Sorbonne, flew the vivid flag with the slogan *L'IMAGINATION AU POUVOIR*.
- in our age of crisis and opportunity let us join those who proclaim POWER TO THE IMAGINATION.



New Vetting System

will cut red tape for volunteer counsellors

Brian Magee, Chief Executive, COSCA
(Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland)

Volunteer counsellors working with children and vulnerable adults will have fewer forms to fill in, thanks to new vetting and barring legislation currently going through the Scottish Parliament.

As well as strengthening protection for children and vulnerable adults, the *Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Bill* eliminates the need for multiple form filling – one of the criticisms of the current system.

So a care home worker, who also volunteers as a counsellor and runs the local children's football team, need only join the scheme once – not three times. And if he or she moves to a new job, or takes up a further volunteering post, a simple online check is all that's needed to verify they are not barred from working with children or protected adults.

The new system will:

- ensure that those who work or volunteer with children and protected adults do not have a history of violent, abusive or cruel behaviour
- deliver a system of continuous updating which will notify employers if an employee or volunteer becomes unsuitable to work with vulnerable groups
- enable self-employed people, such as private tutors, to prove to parents and carers that they are not disqualified from working with children or protected adults.

The Scottish Executive will continue to meet the costs of checks for volunteers engaged by voluntary organisations.

Mr Hugh Henry, the Scottish Executive Minister for Education and Young People at the time, said:
“We know that the vast majority of people have

the best interests of children and protected adults at heart. But we also know that there are a small number of people who would do them harm and would use the workplace, or the opportunity to volunteer as a means of gaining access to their prey. This legislation is designed to help protect vulnerable people from these individuals.

“But it will also offer significant improvements for those who work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults, eliminating the need for multiple checks.

“This is particularly good news for volunteers who often assist a number of organisations, providing children and vulnerable adults with valuable activities, friendship, support and life experiences.

“This is not another layer of red tape and I don't believe these measures would deter any reasonable person from volunteering. It is an additional safeguard, for employers to use, to ensure that unsuitable people can no longer move to a new job working with children or vulnerable adults.”

A Challenge to our atheism

Dr. V. Clifford

It is ironic that, given our interest in the dynamics of the human mind, practitioners of the talking cure have until very recently failed to notice that our own relationship with religion has remained relatively static. Practitioners have been influenced in a peculiar way by their founders a way which has prevented them from embracing religion and its associated spirituality. Yes, they have entertained the comparisons which others have made of psychotherapy with religion, and even gone so far as to agree, but never with conviction, only with, as Jones noted¹, the certainty that the grain of truth in such a comparison was not really a threat. As so often is the case, with grains of truth, more becomes of them than is supposed, and this has been the case with psychotherapy.

Whilst practitioners have yet to relinquish themselves to a religious paradigm, many have moved some way from Freud's original criticism of all religion as neurosis. Those who have become forerunners in contemporary psychotherapy and counselling realise that making changes to the canon of their founder has involved risks, not least of which is expulsion from the community. That they have managed to do this and remain forerunners is perhaps indicative of the maturation of their tradition. Practitioners who have deemed such changes necessary have recognised the rise in demand for things spiritual but, more importantly, the absence of this phenomenon in their own work. To respond positively to this demand for the spiritual, without overtly rejecting the doctrine of their founder, has been problematic and has taken some time.

Contemporary psychotherapy and counselling has a problem with religion², in so far as it has censored out any positive significance religion may have, instead choosing to relate to it as something to be treated or ignored. As I have argued elsewhere³, psychotherapy has since its beginnings been

compared to religion, although never as a form of flattery. The resemblance between psychotherapy/counselling and religion is more significant than those merely superficial analogies which have been made since its conception. Jones noted the grain of truth in such analogies but denied, as many others have, that the grain belies something more substantial. There are different levels of religiousness at work in psychotherapy; one level is the structure of these movements, or approaches, which is parallel to those of religious traditions; the second is their function as religious movements; the third is that what they do is religious: they cure souls, and the way in which this is executed is also religious. In addition, those meaning of life questions which they address have long been in the realm of religious traditions.

Freud's relationship to and beliefs about religion were the initial source of these difficulties. Freud and Carl Rogers were inspirational figures whose own negative relationship with religion prevented them from seeing a bigger picture. Although both were in the business of alleviating the "bad faith"⁴ of others, they were unable to see it in the discipline itself. Their intensity of feeling about religion clouded their vision so much as to have left a damaged legacy. This legacy denies their indebtedness to religious traditions, especially to that of the cure of souls: confession. In addition, psychotherapy and counselling deny their parallel function to religion and demonstrate very little response to the spiritual needs of clients or practitioners. Freud and Rogers each claimed to be men of science. However, they each ventured into the domain of the unknowable which proved to be a particular kind of problem. As scientists it was impossible for them not to respond to the unknown as a challenge to be solved. Consequently each denied that the 'it' or X factor was beyond knowing. Neither of them was motivated to experience more of the unknowable, as this would have forced them

¹ Roazen, P. (1971) *Freud and His Followers*. Penguin Allen Lane, (1974) Edition.

² Clifford, V. (2007) *Freud's Converts* (Forthcoming) In the prologue to this publication there are a list of quotations by or about Freud and by Rogers which illustrate why our attitudes to religion have been 'led' by our chosen theory.

³ Clifford, V. (2007) *Freud's Converts...* forthcoming publication.

to relinquish their conviction that “it” was solvable, and in so doing rejecting the scientific paradigm to which they were committed. Each had his own reasons for his conviction to science and each left a legacy which required that their followers continue their scientific quest. Their quests have taken a long time to come to fruition. However, as with the great religions of the world, there are a few mavericks who have believed it to be worth the risk to relinquish their own convictions to psychotherapy/ counselling as science and tentatively venture into the domain of mystery in a way which does not presuppose that they solve it.

Freud’s followers had to overcome their adopted belief that all religion is indicative of illness, and Rogers’ followers knew, until his final years, that religion was a taboo subject⁵. The behaviour of these followers goes beyond that of people of science. The quality of a practitioner’s commitment is not fully illustrated by simply exposing those superficial intra and inter tensions between purist and eclectic and integrative denominations. Even when practitioners display their inter-faith tolerance their underlying motivation relies on the perceived truth of their tradition. The commitment and conformity of practitioners to a specific founder and theory is a significant indication of their being part of a faith community and not to a scientific one. The absence of particular actions, for fear of being accused of blasphemy, is still present today. However, as we have seen, now there are those who have taken the risk to transcend the authority of their tradition and, as such, follow the mystics who, in order to become so called, had also to reject authority.

With the work of Neville Symington we have seen the beginnings of a dialogue in psychoanalysis which includes religion in a meaningful way. His claim of psychoanalysis as a natural religion is a good sign. However, it also remains superficial by denying the importance of those rich sources of the Judaeo

Christian traditions which were the foundations upon which Freud, and others in his time, relied. Psychoanalysis is a revealed tradition which borrowed a good deal from these traditions: not least of which was the cure of souls.

Carl Rogers’ movement was born of his disenchantment with Christianity and the patriarchal standards of psychoanalysis. His movement, although held in opposition to psychodynamic psychotherapy, has none the less followed a similar route to Freud and the Freudians. Rogers, like Freud, left a legacy of anti-religious sentiment beyond indifference: a complete dismissal which led his followers to realise that religion was an area which was not open for discussion. Rogers’ eventual claim that omitting the mystical had been a mistake, has given tacit permission for practitioners to venture beyond theory.

Until Brian Thorne, who has been most committed to doing so, the followers of Rogers have had a similar attitude to religion as to that of their psychodynamic counterparts. Each founder had set his scene by rejecting his own religion and disregarding its significance. The suppression of the importance of religion has been a serious mistake, and in today’s world where spirituality is all around, it is difficult for practitioners, of whatever persuasion, to continue to ignore this area or to reinvent themselves as being pro religion. Post modernity has created a space in which practitioners can question the dogmatism of their own atheism and has exposed it as an unjustifiable way to survive. The exponential rise in things spiritual cannot be ignored by even the most committed psychotherapist. A walk down any high street is enough to demonstrate a market flooded with ‘spiritual’ products which claim to rescue the ailing soul from impending doom, and the talking cure has become only one of many products on which disposable income may be spent.

⁴ Sartre, J.P. (1943) *Being and Nothingness*. In this essay Sartre posits the idea the notion that the “being” in human being is what we are all doing all of the time. In “bad faith” we are hiding the truth of ourselves from ourselves.

⁵ Brazier, D (1996) (Ed) *Beyond Carl Rogers*. Constable

In the so called post-secular era when almost anything, it seems, may be regarded as spiritual, and if God is without church, and no one has a monopoly on the spiritual, can practitioners continue to deny that which has become so pervasive? The answer is of course, “no”, and as demonstrated above, practitioners themselves are beginning to address what they have termed the “unknowable”, and they are talking about “moments of meeting”, Freud himself even noted that no amount of skill or technique could in itself make his psychoanalysis work. It was the relationship between patient and practitioner that he believed tipped the balance of success. However, he could not identify what it was that would make it so. This “unknowable”, these “moments of meeting”, the “it”, “relational depth”, or the X factor are what people in therapy have repeatedly referred to as “revelatory”, “spiritual”, or “epiphanies”. These changing attitudes are essential developments for the mental health of psychotherapy and counselling themselves. In their continued denial of religion, active denial which suggests that there is something at stake emotionally, practitioners are denying social reality just as obviously as do their clients. Practitioners pride themselves on being the custodians of realities which their clients have yet to access: that they have the “real” and the client suffers delusions. In respect of religion this seems reversed. So their new uncovering of the spiritual, whatever they choose to call it, can only be of benefit to them. Psychotherapy and counselling has been suffering from this lying condition since Freud, and for it to survive must take this omission seriously. Such change can only be made from the inside. Symington and Thorne are beginning to make this happen.

As we have seen, even the most radical insiders have been unable to identify their own delusions by virtue of the mental attitude which had been prescribed for their approach, an attitude which has been beautifully preserved both by Freud’s

followers and by those who claim to have no allegiance to him. Practitioners have been blinded by their commitment to their founder, an attitude which goes well beyond the bounds of the scientific relationship.

Practitioners’ resistance to religion is all the more bizarre in the light of what many of them do, which is to hear any manner of testimonies including those of criminals and will tolerate hearing of mental torture and, it seems, hear lies and assume that all are suffering. They appear not to be unduly disturbed by such testimonies. However, they are disturbed by religion: to be religious is still a self imposed taboo. To use Freud’s own work *Totem and Taboo* as a template for how psychotherapy / counselling may improve its own health seems ironic. If practitioners could, if only metaphorically, devour their founder, they would be able to let go of their scientific pretensions and be what they are. We have made Freud and Rogers our totems and in so doing have subverted the nature of our movement and practice, and as with most things which are subverted (driven underground) they eventually surface with more power than if they had been allowed space all along.

This is an edited excerpt from a forthcoming book, the working title of which is “Freud’s Converts” published by Karnac. London. August 2007

Bibliography

- Blond.P. (1998) Ed. *Post Secular Philosoph: Between Philosophy and Theology*. Routledge. London
- Brazier.D. (1993) Ed. *Beyond Carl Rogers: Toward a Psychotherapy for the Twenty First Century*. Constable. London.
- Freud.S. *Introductory Lectures Volume XIII (1913-14) Totem And Taboo And Other Works; Volume XV (1915-16)*.
- Jones.E. (1955) *Sigmund Freud :Life and Work*. Volume 1 and Volume 2. Hogarth. London.

Roazen, P. (1971) *Freud And His Followers*. Penguin Allen Lane (1974)
 Rogers.C.R. (1980) *A Way Of Being*. Houghton Mifflin Company. Boston. New York.
 Rogers.C.R. (1942) *Counselling And Psychotherapy*. Houghton Mifflin Company. Boston, New York, Chicago, Dallas, Atlanta, San Francisco.
 Symington.N (2004) *The Blind Man Sees: Freud's Awakening and Other Essays*. Karnac Books. London.
 Thorne..B.J. (1990) *Carl Rogers And The Doctrine Of Original Sin*. In *Person Centered Review*,5 (4): 394-405.

Thorne. B. (1991) *Person-Centred Counselling Therapeutic And Spiritual Dimensions* Whurr London (1994) Edition.
 Thorne.B. (1994) *The Counsellor as Prophet*. 1994 Frank Lake Memorial Lecture..Lingdale Paper.21. Clinical Theology Association. Oxford.
 Thorne.B. (2002) *The Mystical Power of Person Centred Therapy: Hope Beyond Despair*. Whurr. London.



Edinburgh Gestalt Institute

Supervision as a cooperative endeavour

Training in Supervision of Counselling and Psychotherapy

Liv Estrup, Gestalt Associates Training Los Angeles · 14-16 September 2007

Rita Resnick, Gestalt Associates Training Los Angeles · 4-6 January 2008

In addition to these six days of training, there is an option to attend a further three three-day blocks. The course, which is for experienced counsellors and psychotherapists, will teach a creative and practical Gestalt-integrative model. It will include skills practice, support for finding practice placements, and preparation for GPTI ASM accreditation.

Course director: Helen Kennedy

mail: 51 Lothian Road · Edinburgh · EH1 2DJ

e-mail: info@edinburgh-gestalt-institute.co.uk

phone: 0131 228 3841

web: www.edinburgh-gestalt-institute.co.uk

Open Up

when you're feeling down



Tony McLaren, National Coordinator of Breathing Space

Breathing Space is a free and confidential phonenumber service mainly, but not exclusively, for young men experiencing low mood or depression, or who are unusually worried and in need of someone to talk to.

Tony McLaren of Breathing Space explains why this mental health service is so vital, and the significant role it plays in so many people's lives.

John, 42, phoned this evening. He said he'd phoned six times before but had been unable to speak. He was living alone having separated from his wife and children. He wanted to talk about his deep sense of shame and guilt over things he had done many years ago. He didn't want to go into detail just yet but wanted to know that it would be okay to speak another time to one of the advisors as he was finding the burden too much to bear. Just to pick up the phone had been hard enough. But he had made the first step.

Breathing Space began in 2002 throughout Argyle and Clyde and the Glasgow area as part of the Scottish Executive's national programme for improving mental health and wellbeing. NHS24 took over the management of the service February 2004, but it was still funded by the Scottish Executive. By November 2004 Breathing Space became a national service available to anyone in Scotland.

Billy (aged 28) has worked for three months as a trainee chef in the North East of Scotland. He lives in "digs" and works long hours. He talks about a work colleague who is bullying him daily. He doesn't have any friends, no social life and feels very isolated and lonely. He appreciates being listened too and values the time given him to be able to talk about his current situation.

I came to this job having been the Deputy Manager of the Tom Allan Counselling Centre (TAC) working in Glasgow for five years. I envisaged working with Breathing Space as a continuation of the work I had

been doing as a BACP accredited counsellor and COSCA accredited trainer in the TAC.

My clients at Tom Allan had similar issues to the Breathing Space callers, but I also saw the possibility of working more with men and making services more accessible to men to talk about their feelings and emotions.

Men traditionally find it more difficult to be transparent about their difficulties and are often loathe to speak openly about how they address their problems. A service like Breathing Space seemed to offer male clients an opportunity to begin the process of speaking about their problems before they became overwhelming with perhaps the possibility of seeking further help elsewhere.

How we think and feel is central to the way we live our lives. No matter who we are or what our circumstances, we are all at risk of mental health problems at some point in our lives. Mental health refers to our emotions and ability to cope with hardship and problems. It is also about our confidence, optimism, resilience, hope and ability to develop and sustain relationships.

At Breathing Space we believe that mental health can be defined positively – the state of wellbeing and the ability to cope in the face of adversity. Mental health issues arise when a problem or life event disrupts the way we think and feel, either temporarily, for example after bereavement, or on a more enduring basis. Mental health problems can include suffering stress or anxiety, constant worrying, deep seated or chronic unhappiness, loneliness, lack of self-esteem, depression and low mood. These are some of the reasons why people would contact Breathing Space as well as for other unresolved issues around abuse, relationship problems, sexual identity, bullying and debt. But our most common calls are about relationship difficulty.

A mental health problem is often used to describe conditions seen as less serious and distinct from enduring and severe illness. Mental health problems are more common, are usually less severe and of less duration than mental illness, but may develop into a mental illness. The distinction is not clear cut.

Mental illness refers to a diagnosable illness which significantly interferes with a person's functional, cognitive, emotional or social abilities. It can include clinical depression, postnatal depression, severe anxiety, schizophrenia, bi-polar affective disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, eating disorders, drug and alcohol addiction and dementia. Mental illnesses are usually defined medically by using internationally recognised classifications. However, terminology can still vary across professions and cultures. Some people with these problems may contact us to complement the support they may already be receiving in the community from their doctor or community psychiatric nurse.

Wellbeing is more than just happiness. As well as feeling satisfied and happy, wellbeing means developing as a person, being fulfilled and making a contribution to the community. It refers to a person's sense of positive feeling about their life situation and health whether that is physical, spiritual and mental. You can have a physical illness, injury, a mental health problem or mental illness and still have a sense of wellbeing. This concept is closely linked to the World Health Organisation's definition of health as: "A state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity."

Breathing Space staff are well versed in these ideas. They come from various backgrounds representing, for example, psychiatric nursing, clinical psychology, social work, counselling (various core theoretical models) and addictions. Currently there are 32 paid staff who answer the phones from 6.00pm to

2.00am every day of the year. About a third are full time staff while the others are part time who bring with them the expertise they use in the workplace.

Staff are divided between two NHS24 centres – the Jubilee Hospital in Clydebank and Norseman House in South Queensferry, Edinburgh.

Many of the staff are trained and accredited therapists. And while our service is not a counselling agency and does not offer a formal counselling contract to clients, all our staff are sound practitioners in using their counselling skills over the phone. For many of our staff the COSCA Certificate in Counselling Skills was a foundational course of study in their professional development.

At Breathing Space we are strengthened in our unique ways of working. Staff appreciate these different ways of working in the team and much support is gained through informal peer supervision and feedback after a call ends. The team is more formally supported through line management by the service supervisor. The supervisor will sometimes listen in to calls and offer feedback once a call is over.

When I joined Breathing Space I felt that the staff would benefit from more therapeutic support to allow them an opportunity to unpack issues with an accredited supervisor. This now takes place in a group setting every three weeks at both centres. The staff say supervision is supportive and encouraging in the work they do. For full time staff in particular, dealing with issues over the phone can be draining, and so any therapeutic support which helps staff in their professional and personal life needs to be encouraged. Currently this supervision contract is with the Tom Allan Counselling and Training Centre in Glasgow.

The service currently receives around 3,500 calls a month as well as over 10,000 hits monthly to the website (Oct 06). This may well increase over the next few months with the recent introduction of "Warm Transfer" whereby any mental health related call taken by NHS24 can be put through to Breathing Space. The system will ensure that nurses at NHS24 are more free to handle clinical calls rather than time-consuming mental health related calls. To deal with this increase in calls we recently appointed three more full-time and six part-time staff who will greatly add to the expertise and skills in the service.

Jean is sobbing as she speaks. She lives alone with her husband. Her two children are now married and live in London. She is concerned about her husband who no longer speaks to her. He retired recently through ill health. He is very moody, sits around doing nothing and seems very angry about everything. She doesn't know what to do. She is ashamed of herself as she recently thought about leaving him. It's all "too much!"

In 2004 there were 835 suicides and undetermined deaths in Scotland, 73 per cent of them were men. In 2005 there were 735 suicides and undetermined deaths and 70 per cent of these were men. It is in the light of this that the Executive hopes to see the rate of suicide decrease in Scotland by 20 per cent by the year 2013. Breathing Space is only a small cog working in the field of mental health alongside many other counselling and support agencies attempting to offer hope and support to those who are most vulnerable. Working alongside these other services, we are stronger as we attempt to make it possible that someone who needs to talk and be listened to does indeed have options and choices.

So what does the future hold? Right now, in celebrating our two years as a national service, key to our developmental process is to consolidate of what we have achieved in such a short time. The Scottish Executive has been extremely supportive

and sees the service as an important part of the broader mental health service, allowing potential clients more choice as they attempt to address problems in their lives.

Breathing Space embraces the idea of a coalition of mental health services, and joint working with NHS24. NHS24 acknowledges the expertise Breathing Space provides.

We have plans to enhance the service even more, with SMS and emailing services, but we won't introduce them until we are confident that our phone and website services are operating at the highest level. We recognise of course that the more calls we take and the more signposting we provide then the more pressure we add to existing services who may not be able to handle increased referrals. This may well in turn become another problem for services as they attempt to wrestle with waiting lists. At Breathing Space we appreciate this and are quick to let clients know that in referring to particular agencies then there may be a waiting time before they are seen (for example by a counsellor or support worker).

A young man working in a hotel on the Isle of Harris has been cutting and burning himself as acts of self harm. He feels he must continue to work as he has large debts to the bank and to an ex-girlfriend. He continually feels low and miserable. He would like to go home and stay with his family but they have no time for him given the problems that other family members have at this time. At times he wishes he was dead.

Many people who contact us – like others of a large, hidden population – are not in touch with any other service. Some just need to be listened to and accepted, others just want information and contact details of where they can go as they make the next move on their journey. Breathing Space has been created for just these purposes. It appears at this time to fulfill a specific role. As the awareness

campaign continues through TV, radio, newspaper and internet advertising we will become more widely known as a service which can add an out-of-hours addition to the existing services available to people with low mood and depression.

It is my hope that people in general, but men in particular, will be encouraged by our strap line to pick up the phone and to "Open up when you're feeling down."

References

www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk

www.wellscotland.info

www.chooselife.net

www.seemescotland.org.uk

www.sscottishrecovery.net

www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk

www.headsupscotland.com

www.healthscotland.org.uk/smhfa

www.artfull.org

www.healthyworkinglives.com

www.healthpromotingschools.co.uk

www.vds.org.uk

Tony McLaren was previously the deputy manager at the Tom Allan Counselling Centre in Glasgow.

The Open College Counselling Training Trust

In November 2006 TOCCTT held its final graduation. This event was also a celebration of the course and the collaboration between TOCCTT and the PF Counselling Service in Edinburgh.

The course was started in 1984 as the training for volunteer counsellors in the Pastoral Foundation Counselling Service. It was the first diploma course in Scotland to be validated by COSCA. In 1996 the course was transferred to the Scottish Churches Open College, an affiliate college of Napier University. Students have continued to complete their clinical practice within the PF.

TOCCTT was set up in 2003 to support the twenty eight students still studying when SCOC closed. We are proud to have now completed this task.

The Trustees have accepted a proposal from Simpson House in Edinburgh. They hope to run the counselling diploma course alongside their diploma for counselling young people and children. They will be modifying the course to suit their needs and will be seeking appropriate validation from academic and professional bodies.

The Trustees would like to thank COSCA for their support throughout the Trust's life.

Morag Hight (Training Director)

COSCA 3rd Annual Counselling

research dialogue 2006



Kaye Richards

Speaking outside the counselling room – expressing the spirit of counselling through research

by Kaye Richards
British Association for Counselling and
Psychotherapy

Introduction

The third annual COSCA “research dialogue” conference raised an important theme – how research can communicate the spirit of counselling both to those who enter the counselling room and also those that remain outside of the counselling room.

In the opening address Brian Magee, COSCA Chief Executive, highlighted the need for counsellors and psychotherapists to “speak out, burst out, and tell others how they work”. However, given the fact that the counselling room is private there is a need to face up to difficulties and challenges in describing the processes and benefits of the therapeutic process outside of the immediate setting. Furthermore, because much of what happens can be left unspoken it is often difficult to articulate what actually happens in counselling. However, research is a vehicle that can aid the process of “speaking” and “bursting” out about what is happening during counselling, along with evaluating the value and impact of counselling for the client. So why is “speaking outside the counselling room” particularly timely for the psychological therapies?

With regulation almost upon us it is more important than ever that counselling and psychotherapy speaks out. As the regulation of the profession evolves the ways in which the counselling and psychotherapy profession responds to this challenge, inevitably places research in a changing political arena. So, research matters more than ever for a range of

stakeholders. Whether it is to inform decision making for commissioning or to inform client choice, research into counselling and psychotherapy needs to consider a range of social and political agendas as it looks ahead to its future developments and aspirations. Furthermore, the question of how we bridge the gap between research and practice becomes a political agenda that cannot be ignored and thus our ability to express the spirit of counselling through research is an important dialogue at an important time for the profession. We must speak outside the counselling room in order to obtain and maintain professional recognition and respond appropriately to the regulation of the profession.

In order to express the spirit of counselling through the research, amongst other questions, the conference asked the following questions:

- To what extent can what happens in the counselling room be shared by others?
- In what ways can research be the vehicle for speaking about counselling outside of the counselling room?
- What is the role of research in informing others about the privacy of the counselling process?
- How can research help articulate the struggles and difficulties of what happens in the counselling room?
- The client’s problems are not necessarily their own, so what is the wider context in which the client’s voice is positioned?
- How can we effectively integrate research and practice?
- How do we develop a credible evidence base?
- How can the evidence for counselling support the causes for counselling?
- How do we maintain the spirit of counselling when we take what is happening inside the counselling room outside of the counselling room?
- How do we maintain the spirit of research when responding to a variety of stakeholder needs?

The areas discussed featured a number of key theoretical, research and practice agendas in working towards developing and widening a counselling and psychotherapy research agenda and community.

Setting a research agenda

In his keynote presentation titled “Widening the boundaries of our awareness: creating a different culture of inquiry” **Dr Miller Mair** (Director of Psychological Service and Research, Dumfries and Galloway) opened the conference by asserting that counsellors should not be forced to accept the political evaluative imperative, and that evaluative research needs to be bought closer to counselling and psychotherapy, again reminding us that the research-practice gap still remains a challenge. He highlighted that only a tiny minority of clinical psychologists do research and, even though the valuable component of the psychological therapies is the counselling relationships, most evaluative research doesn’t deal with relationship – instead it deals with entity. This raised one of the challenges for counselling research in how does research embrace the emotional dialogue of the counselling process? He concluded that in order to honour the genus of the spirit of counselling, research needed to develop a wider perspective on the kinds and modes of psychological enquiry and it needed to develop a language of enquiry whereby research stories are not just heard by those doing counselling research, but also by others that may otherwise not hear them.

Practice-based research

In tackling the question of how research speaks outside the counselling room **Professor Robert Elliott** (University of Strathclyde) examined the research-practice divide, offering the merging of possibilities for a more effective integration between

research and practice through practice-based research. He noted that the research practice gap is an old problem in counselling and psychotherapy, whereby research and practice constitute different worlds. A general problem that fuels this gap is knowledge dissemination, whereby therapists learn from supervisors, clients, experience and not research. Other problems he noted were that research can be boring, difficult to access, topics are often irrelevant to practice and unrepresentative of client populations; manualised treatments are used in research and most therapies are under represented. He then pointed out that what was needed were strategies that transform this situation from a problem to a resource – research-practice integration as a two-way, dialectic process. Amongst other examples, he then discussed practice-based therapy research in training sites as one way of research-practice integration could work. By doing research during basic therapy training, practitioners engage in a primary socialisation process that creates habits that carry over into later practice – this is the best way to learn therapy research methods. He also discussed promising new therapy research methods that help to bridge research and practice – including systematic qualitative research methods and the new case study movement within which he discussed emerging standards of good systematic case studies. The clear message from this presentation was we don’t need to treat the research-practice gap situation as a deficiency, but instead as a creative tension and a constructive dialectic.

The Tayside Centre for Counselling

Following ideas about how to tackle a research agenda **Alison Shoemark** (Aberdeen University), **Professor Mick Cooper** (University of Strathclyde), **Professor John McLeod** (University of Abertay Dundee), **Lorna Carrick** (University of Strathclyde), and **Julia McLeod** (University of Abertay Dundee) gave an example

of how collaborative research can be developed within a clinical setting. As part of their workshop they described in detail The Tayside Centre for Counselling collaborative research study. The research clinic based in Dundee is operated by staff and students from Universities across Scotland. The collaborative study has been in operation for a year, using a training, clinical and research centre in a university to promote research. In-depth research is being undertaken with clients using resources with a group of staff. The “big” research question - that of effectiveness – is being addressed in the study by examining other ways of finding out clients views of what is effective. The study is asking how do clients evaluate the effectiveness of counselling and what is the relationship between counselling, and the social niche and cultural resources of the client?

In presenting an overview of the research protocol the presenters also questioned whether there is really only one way in which clients change? They argued that there isn't a single way of client change and that, therefore, we should be open to viewing client change in a multiple of ways – different clients change in different ways at different times. Thus therapy is not one thing – it is a site in which multiple processes may take place – so an inclusive framework is required that can incorporate an infinite range of change processes. A framework that also links change mechanisms to specific psychological difficulties and specific forms of practice is required. They described how this stance represents a pluralistic framework and then went onto to discuss the implications of a pluralistic framework for counselling and research. Overall, the workshop communicated clearly how a research clinic can be developed and implemented – it demonstrated that the research-practice gap is being effectively addressed and this study offers a good example for both researchers and practitioners on ways forward in developing a research community that is integrated and responsive to the needs of practice.

Children and Young People

Clients' voices were represented in a range of ways and counselling children and young people was a strong theme. **Professor Liz Bondi** (The University of Edinburgh) provided an overview of a case study in a youth counselling service. This paper provided qualitative evidence of the preventative impacts of a newly established youth counselling service, drawing on feedback by stakeholders as part of an evaluation. The in-depth interviews with the young people provided powerful evidence of the counselling service which helps young people who present with problems similar to those that lead to referrals to statutory services. Within these accounts there was strong support for the claim that counselling prevents the further escalation of problems and recourse to other services. **Seamus Prior** (University of Edinburgh) expanded upon these findings by exploring what the young people said about the counselling relationship and process, this included themes on internal and interpersonal change processes and the value of counselling. **Professor Mick Cooper** (University of Strathclyde) provided an overview of the Glasgow Counselling in Schools Project phase II: key findings. A range of findings were discussed including: counselling was associated with significant improvement in mental health, and counselling had a positive impact on many pupils' capacities to study and learn. This study effectively demonstrated how research can speak for the counselling process and offer information for those outside the counselling room. **Margaret Wadsley** (Private Practitioner) also examined how practitioners, working therapeutically with children under eleven years old, respond to and work with client-centred metaphor.

Other topics and issues

A range of other research topics were presented, the names of all presenters being too many to mention here. Other client focused topics included homeless

person's perspectives of counselling, counselling following miscarriage, counselling with bereaved clients, and counselling and the diagnosis of early dementia. Other research presented included an evaluation of an Employee Assistance Programme telephone counselling service, outcomes in counselling organisations, and an evaluation of the COSCA certificate in Counselling Skills.

Addressing the research-practice gap of practitioners in training is a key developmental process. It was encouraging, therefore, to see many MA students presenting their dissertation research. Students having dialogue about research is essential groundwork for the future; this not only helps to address the research-practice gap, but these researchers represent the spirit of future research.

Conclusions

It is clearly evident that many researchers are expressing counselling processes and practices outside of the counselling room. The breadth and depth of debate at the event reflects both ongoing problems and new possibilities for research in the psychological therapies. Even though research is helping to communicate what happens inside the counselling room there is still a need to carefully examine the ways in which research informs and impacts on future research, policy and practice.

At the start of this "dialogue" the need for widening the ways we approach and engage in research was raised, during the 'dialogue' a range of research agendas that will secure the future of counselling and psychotherapy were debated and by the end of the "dialogue" the spirit of counselling research in Scotland was certainly alive. It is thanks to events like COSCA's annual counselling research dialogue that the research spirit of those doing research is both maintained and ignited.

Contact Details

Kaye Richards
Research Facilitator
British Association for Counselling and
Psychotherapy
15 St John's Business Park, Lutterworth,
Leicestershire. LE17 4HB.
Email: kaye.richards@bacp.co.uk

UK Government announces regulation plans



Brian Magee, Chief Executive, COSCA
(Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland)

Introduction

Ernest Hemingway once said his best work was a story he wrote in just six words: 'For sale: baby shoes, never worn.'

The White Paper, **Trust Assurance and Safety – The Regulation of Health Professionals in the 21st Century** (February 2007) announced the UK Government's proposals on the future regulation of health professionals, including counsellors and psychotherapists. Unlike Hemingway's short story, it is substantially longer than six words, and represents what will hopefully become a positive, rather than a sad, landmark in the history of counselling and psychotherapy.

This article makes no attempt to reproduce the contents of the White Paper, but instead raises a number of relevant discussion points and unresolved issues for counsellors, psychotherapists and clients.

Public Protection

In the White Paper, it states the UK Government's firmly held view that extending statutory regulation to include counsellors and psychotherapists will protect the public in their use of the psychological therapies. However, no evidence is cited for its view that public protection will be enhanced through the means described in the Paper. Nevertheless, the Government is convinced that the best way to secure professional regulation is through "a consultative spirit of social partnership guided by patient interests rather than vested interests",

So in any discussions with Government on statutory regulation the vested interests of counsellors and psychotherapists are to give way to those of clients. This may represent an attitudinal shift for some counsellors, psychotherapists and professional bodies whose focus of representation so far has been

mainly on their own professional interests. But this shift is what Government is now asking for.

Health Professions Council

The White Paper also announced that the Health Professions Council, an existing regulatory body that works across the UK, will manage the regulation of counsellors and psychotherapists. This announcement came as a major disappointment to a significant number of professional bodies in counselling, psychotherapy and psychology who had previously proposed to Government that a new regulatory body be established: the Psychological Professions Council (PPC).

This PPC proposal represented a substantial amount of work and consultation, but it seems to have been ignored rather than rejected in the White Paper. That no new regulatory bodies should be established was in line with the views previously expressed in the Department of Health reports: *Good doctors, safer patients* (Donaldson Report) and *The regulation of the non-medical healthcare professions* (Foster report). However, the principle of no new regulatory bodies being created was not realised in its totality in this White Paper: it announced the Government's plans to establish a General Pharmaceutical Council (GPC) for the regulation of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

In its response to the Foster Report, after conducting its own consultation, COSCA chose not to support the above PPC proposal. Instead, we urged whoever might be appointed as the regulatory body of counsellors and psychotherapists to take account of a wide range of issues. As it turns out, some of these issues are also contained in the PPC proposal. However, a number of very important considerations were included in the COSCA response that were omitted from the PPC proposal. For example, we urged the Government to take

account of the differences in Scotland that pertain to the history and current delivery of counselling and psychotherapy, and, in particular, the integral and vital role of the estimated 2,100 counsellors working in the voluntary sector in Scotland.

Devolution and the Scottish Parliament

The White Paper was clear that in Scotland, the regulation of counsellors and psychotherapists is a matter devolved to the Scottish Parliament. In practice, this means that time will be allocated within the Scottish Parliament's legislative timetable for the necessary legislation to be put in place for the regulation of counsellors and psychotherapists.

It is likely that psychologists, who will also be regulated by the Health Professions Council, will be ahead of counsellors and psychotherapists in this timetable both in Scotland and at Westminster. Currently senior civil servants in London say this could happen for psychologists as early as November 2007. And, depending on how much agreement or disagreement occurs, the necessary legislation could be in place by early 2008.

With separate legislation in Scotland being enacted, there will be Scotland-wide consultation on the draft legislation. This will provide another opportunity for counsellors, psychotherapists and clients to make their views known and influence the democratic process.

The Scottish Executive, at its recent stakeholder events organised to share the contents of the White Paper, appears committed to the view that the significant differences in the NHS between Scotland and the rest of the UK need to be reflected in the final statutory framework for health professionals. However, it also has expressed its view on other occasions, including at COSCA's AGM in October 2006, that it would prefer to see the statutory

regulation of counsellors and psychotherapists apply to the whole of the UK.

The White Paper signs up the UK Government, to work with devolved administrations, and to consider professional practice that could be harmonised across different professions. The Government believes that all professionals undertaking the same activity should be subject to the same standards of training and practice so that those who use their services can be assured that there is no difference in quality. We will have to wait to see what this means for counsellors and psychotherapists.

Competencies and regulation

Since the publication of the White Paper, questions have been asked about the use in statutory regulation of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Psychological Therapies currently being developed by *Skills for Health*.

The *Skills for Health* consultation document (December 2006) stated that the competencies developed "may usefully inform later discussion about the threshold standards that could be used for the regulation of specific roles". The White Paper, however, does not lend the same clarity about how these NOS will be used in the future regulatory framework. Neither does the *Skills for Health* report (March 2007) on the consultation responses it received.

The regulating body, the Health Professions Council (HPC), will have a pivotal role in deciding how the names of counsellors and psychotherapists are placed on the statutory register. Currently, HPC seems to prefer the qualifications rather than the competence route to be used as the means of deciding whether an individual has met the minimum threshold for entry onto the register. From a COSCA perspective, we have concerns

about a qualifications-only route being implemented as this may exclude from the register the names of counsellors and psychotherapists who do not have formal qualifications, but who could demonstrate in other ways that they are competent to practise and could meet a set of competencies designed to measure this.

The future

Shortly, the Government will publish draft legislation and an implementation plan that will detail the process by which the names of counsellors and psychotherapists can be placed on the statutory register that will be established as part of regulation. It will also give information on how decisions will be made on the protected titles that will be used, the Standards of Proficiency, and the Standards of Education and Training.

With the publication of the White Paper it looks increasingly likely that further joint action will be taken by professional bodies and other stakeholders to re-present a range of points from the Foster and Donaldson consultation papers not addressed in the White Paper.

In the interests of public protection, COSCA will continue to look for ways to represent the needs of counsellors, psychotherapists and clients in Scotland and to work in partnership with other professional bodies where possible.

Throughout this process, COSCA is committed to working collaboratively with the Government in Scotland and in the UK, the Health Professions Council, COSCA's members and other stakeholders, in order to turn the Government's plans on regulation into opportunities for counsellors and psychotherapists and enhanced protection for the public.

References

COSCA (Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland). *COSCA's Response to The Regulation of the Non-Medical Healthcare Professions – A Review by the Department of Health*. November 2006

COSCA (Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland). *COSCA's Response to Skills for Health Consultation on the Development of National Occupational Standards for Psychological Therapies*. February 2007

Skills for Health. *Consultation on the Developments of National Occupational Standards for Psychological Therapies*. December 2006

Skills for Health. *Consultation on the Development of National Occupational Standards for Psychological Therapies, Report*. March 2007

UK Government Department of Health, *Good Doctors, Safer Patients – a Report by the Chief Medical Officer (Donaldson)*. 2006

UK Department of Health. *The Regulation of the Non-Medical Healthcare Professions – A Review by the Department of Health (Foster)*. 2006

UK Government Department of Health. *Trust, Assurance and Safety – the Regulation of Health Professionals in the 21st Century*. White Paper, London: the Stationery Office, February 2007

Book Review

Fiona McColl

25

Book review

Integrative Therapy (a practitioners guide) 2nd Edition 2007

Editors Maja O'Brien & Gaie Houston

ISBN: 1-4129-1211-2(pbk)
Publishers: Sage publications
Cost: £18.99

When offered the opportunity to review this book I grasped it with both hands. Mainly as a trainer offering an integrative diploma in counselling, I wanted to see if what I had put into practice as a trainer, based on my counselling training and experience, was in line with the thinking "out there" in relation to working in an integrative theoretical framework.

The more I have worked my way through the book the more excited and enthusiastic I have become. Not just because it satisfied my questions but also because it clarified so many thoughts and ideas I had had on the similarities and overlaps between the main theoretical approaches (psychodynamic, cognitive – behaviourist and humanist-existential), in relation to the why and what of the work they claim to do, but also because the book clearly and methodically traces these similarities and overlaps.

The layout of the book is eventually logical and clear. The introduction lays out the format and purpose of the structure and this is realised in a very systematic and practical workthrough of the key concepts and ideas within the main approaches and what they share and how they differ in realising this. Alongside this the authors lay out the case for an integrative approach and a definition of what this approach can be and how it is realised in practice.

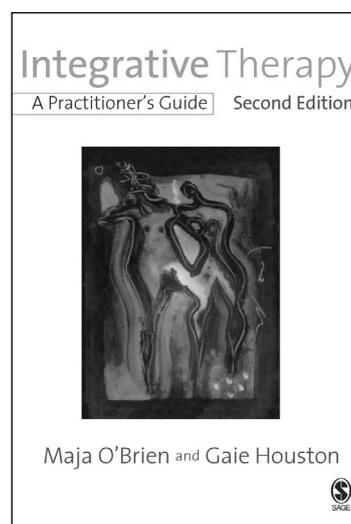
My heart did sink a bit at the second chapter which is focussed on research. It is, however, a crucial chapter as it lays down the basis for why integrative counselling can and does work.

It looks at how research is pulling together many strands of thinking that impinge on counselling, the counselling relationship and its impact on change. It also demonstrates how neurosciences, psychiatry, psychology, sociology and biology impact on counselling and affirm much of what has been sensed by therapists for many years. It also is at the core of an argument for an integrative approach, acknowledging and working with findings and thinking from these fields.

While I have presented a review which looks at the book holistically, it is also a book which can be dipped in and out of. I have already done so a few times, when seeking clarity on key ideas within any modality, for practical exercises, which the appendices are full of and for comparative approaches through case studies.

An exciting, practical and useful book I would recommend any counsellor and student to have on their booklist.

Fiona McColl





Edinburgh Gestalt Institute

Courses and groups in 2007

Diploma in Gestalt Therapy

Our four-year Diploma in Gestalt Psychotherapy begins this September. The foundation year provides a thorough introduction to the principles and practice of Gestalt Therapy. It can also be taken as a stand-alone one-year training, if you are interested in furthering your counselling training and would like to pursue your interest in Gestalt.

Fundamentals of Gestalt

An introduction to the theory and practice of Gestalt therapy. This short course over two weekends will cover the basic principles of Gestalt. It is for anyone interested in finding out about the Gestalt approach to psychotherapy.

Therapy group for men

This ongoing gestalt therapy group consists of a series of weekends in which we can explore subjects which are key to your experience of being men in the world today. These will include themes such as identity, sexuality and relationships, as well as others which we identify as we proceed.

Being and belonging

In this ongoing group we will focus on personal exploration and self-awareness using various approaches. The group will be useful for anyone interested in joining a group as a support in their personal lives or as a potential for professional development.

More details of these and other courses, groups and events can be found on our website or in our programme. Contact us for more information.

p: 0131 228 3841

e: info@edinburgh-gestalt-institute.co.uk

w: www.edinburgh-gestalt-institute.co.uk



KINHARVIE
institute of facilitation

COSCA Certificate in Counselling Supervision

Starts 5 September 2007, Wednesdays 10am-5pm

Thinking about CPD?

If you are seeking to become a supervisor or are a practising counselling supervisor wishing to take time out to reflect on and develop your supervision knowledge and practice, this quality course held in Glasgow is ideal.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

36 HOURS OVER 6 WEEKS

PROFESSIONAL AWARD

Enhance your knowledge and career.

Course fee: £695 per person.

To book or for further information please contact
Angela Ferrier on **0141 337 1070** or
email **Angela@Kinharvie.org.uk**

www.Kinharvie.org.uk

SC000565

Gazette

Details of all events are on the COSCA website: www.cosca.org.uk
Please contact Marilyn Cunningham, COSCA Administrator, for further details on any of the events below:
marilyn@cosca.org.uk
Telephone: **01786 475 140**.

2007

28 June

COSCA Annual Trainers Event:
Stirling

19 May

COSCA Accreditation Workshops

6 September

COSCA Course Validation Panel Meeting
All papers require to be with COSCA
3 weeks prior to this date

30 September

Deadline for receipt of COSCA
Accreditation applications

3 October

COSCA AGM 2007:
Stirling

16 October

COSCA Mock Complaints Panel Event:
Edinburgh

26/27 November

COSCA Research Dialogue/COSCA
Counselling Conference 2007
Dunblane Hydro, Perthshire

6 December

COSCA Course Validation Panel Meeting
All papers require to be with COSCA
3 weeks prior to this date

Vision and Purpose

As the professional body for counselling and psychotherapy in Scotland, COSCA seeks to advance all forms of counselling and psychotherapy and use of counselling skills by promoting best practice and through the delivery of a range of sustainable services.

Contact us

18 Viewfield Street
Stirling
FK8 1AU

Tel 01786 475140

Fax 01786 446207

E-mail info@cosca.org.uk

www.cosca.co.uk

Company limited by guarantee No. SC 142360
Registered in Scotland
Scottish Charity No. SCO 18887