



Counselling in Scotland

SPRING/SUMMER 2021

A Philosophy of Care

COSCA COVID-19 Survey 2021

COVID-19: Stress and Resilience

Reflections on My Transition to
Working Remotely due to COVID-19

Gains and Losses of Online Learning

The Unfolding Life

The Process of Writing

Book Review



COSCA

Counselling & Psychotherapy
in Scotland

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John Dodds

Editorial

ASI feel sure you all know there has been a fairly dramatic increase in reported mental health issues during the pandemic, not to mention the incidence of domestic abuse and rise in suicide rates. Although the statistics have been showing some decline here and there, according to the Mental Health Foundation Scotland, there is a divergence:

“Differences in people’s response to the pandemic are not randomly distributed across the Scotland – they arise from people’s social and economic position in society. Groups affected by socioeconomic inequalities have been more likely to experience anxiety, panic, hopelessness, loneliness, and to report not coping well with the stress of the pandemic. Most worryingly, as of the end of June (2020), just over one in ten people in Scotland reported having had suicidal thoughts or feelings in the past two weeks, and in certain disadvantaged groups there are even higher proportions of people with suicidal thoughts and feelings.”

I felt it appropriate, therefore, to invite some pieces for the journal reflecting on the experience of the counselling profession. We have four included, about stress and resilience among psychology practitioners, another around a questionnaire from COSCA with statistics for the responses, one about transitioning to online counselling and a final one about the experience of doing a counselling course online.

A figure that stood out for me in the statistics article is that 98% of the practitioners who responded said they had switched to working online, something that Jan Kerr’s article will provide you with some insights into what that feels like.

The first article this time is by Mary McCallum Sullivan, offering a fascinating insight into the life and work of Jock Sutherland, who was involved in the development of psychodynamic theory and who influenced an interest in Ronald Fairbairn’s “object relations” in the America.

Following the COVID-related articles, we have a new piece from Mike Moss called *The Unfolding Life: An appreciative view of the therapeutic relationship*. In it, he develops his thinking following on his 2018 essay, *A Question of Miracles*, with his aim “to help people become more freely able to find their way in life”.

It is always interesting to get the client perspective of the experience of counselling, and that is exactly what we are offered in Eina McHugh’s well-received book, *To Call Myself Beloved*, which the author discusses in a piece especially for the journal. You will also find an extract as a taster.

Another book I wanted to highlight this issue is *Couch Fiction*, subtitled “A graphic tale of psychotherapy” (as in “graphic novel” rather than “explicit” though there are some explicit elements) by Philippa Perry and Junko Graat. I read it recently and decided to review it for the journal.

I hope you enjoy this issue and as ever I invite ideas for future submissions. Print versions are on hold for now, but it would be useful to get your comments about the .pdf format and comments about whether you would find other formats useful, for ebook readers like Kindle, for example.

Note: in the article about stress and resilience among practitioners (p.12) the authors refer to “service users”, whom we would call “clients”, but I left this as this is their original text and already published in a blog.

John Dodds, Editor