



Counselling in Scotland

SPRING/SUMMER 2022

The Impact of Covid-19 and Lockdown

Communications lessons

A Feast of Learning

A Preferred Relationship

Writing it out

Book Review



COSCA

Counselling & Psychotherapy
in Scotland

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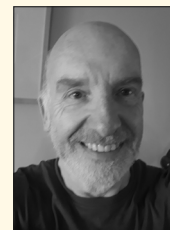
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Editorial



John Dodds

When considering potential content for this Spring/Summer issue of the journal, I found myself reflecting on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on mental health and counselling, as well as other kinds of talk therapy.

I am sure you are all aware of the increase in mental ill health because of lockdown and the pandemic in general, ranging from increased stress and anxiety and stress through to clinical depression and more. Just how counsellors work to support in this context still raises many questions, from wondering how beneficial Zoom, telephone and email counselling is, to concerns about meeting in person when that is feasible. With Zoom and telephone counselling, for instance, there is the question of personal privacy – doing sessions from home when other family members may be in nearby rooms could present difficulties, discomfort, the concern about being overheard and so on. I would be interested to know from any of you if you have encountered such problems when working online with clients.

A year after the pandemic was first announced, there was a landmark mental health study that showed anxiety falling but loneliness rising (mentalhealth.org.uk/news/pandemic-one-year-landmark-mental-health-study-reveals-mixed-picture-scotland-anxiety-falls). While anxiety levels decreased from those surveyed in March 2020 from 64 per cent to 44 per cent in February 2021, loneliness increased from 11 per cent to 29 per cent in the same period. According to the article in the Mental Health Foundation website reporting on the data, the extent of hopelessness among Scottish adults also rose.

Digital exclusion has also been highlighted by research showing that many people in Scotland are excluded at a time when connectivity is more important than ever. You can find the report here: inspiringscotland.org.uk/publication/research-into-digital-exclusion-in-scotland/

Casting around and inviting articles on the topic of counselling and the pandemic, I was pleased to receive a fascinating one from Julia Nimmins, the Director of Teentalkscotland Limited, which discusses the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown on the mental health of our young people. We launch this issue with the article. And on a related topic we have a piece about communication in these challenging times by board member, Lachlan McKinnon, a communications professional.

Next we have a piece from Sue Black, Coordinator for Counselling, University of Aberdeen on the use of metaphor in the training room. She says that this approach can encourage students “to connect with their imagination which can help with discovery of tools and blocks on the periphery of awareness”. I feel her article links well to Morag Chisholm’s article asking if whether therapeutic writing can help with wellbeing.

Regular contributor, Mike Moss offers us an in-depth exploration about client preferences in the counselling room and the work of helping clients understand what they need from the process (A Preferred relationship: a response to client preferences is reprinted from Person Centred Quarterly).

Finally, we have a review of the novel, *If only he’d told her* by Katherine Markland, about a woman of 32 who is going through the grieving process. The review is written by Jo Wood, Bereavement Counsellor at Outlook Bereavement Support.

I would just like to end by hoping you are all keeping safe and healthy, both physically and mentally, and again feel free to suggest ideas for any articles you would be interested in writing for us.

John Dodds, Editor