

# Counselling in Scotland

SPRING 2006

PROFESSOR DAVE MEARNS MARKS HIS RETIREMENT

SITTING IN CIRCLES

INTEGRATION – IS DIFFERENCE MORE?

YOUNG PEOPLE AND COUNSELLING

COUNSELLING FOR COUPLES

NEW HOME APPEAL FOR DIPLOMA IN COUNSELLING



**COSCA**  
Counselling & Psychotherapy  
in Scotland

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Mary Toner **Vice Convenor**

## **Journal Editorial Group**

Brian Magee [brian@cosca.org.uk](mailto:brian@cosca.org.uk)  
Lorna Hill [coscajournal@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:coscajournal@yahoo.co.uk)  
Jo Hilton [johilton@hotmail.com](mailto:johilton@hotmail.com)

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COSCA acknowledges the financial assistance received from the Scottish Executive.



Lorna Hill

# An Introduction

**W**HEN Brian Magee invited me to edit this journal I have to admit it was an exciting but slightly daunting prospect. My background is in journalism, but two years ago I started COSCA'S Introduction to Counselling Skills course – one of the most challenging but beneficial paths I've ever taken. I completed the last module late last year and am delighted that my involvement with COSCA is to continue albeit in a slightly different way.

As I flicked through several back issues of the journal I was impressed. Marilyn Nicholl and Jonathan Wood have worked hard to create a stylish publication with impressive, stimulating content which any organisation would be proud of.

It strikes me that this journal should be a tool which members can dip in and out of using articles as a point of reference – hopefully they will also spark some lively debate and most importantly provide a forum for members of both the counselling and psychotherapy worlds to communicate and share ideas and experiences. And in this issue hopefully there will be

something for everyone. I'm delighted that Professor Dave Mearns gave the journal an exclusive interview, in this his retirement year, and he's got lots to say which should provide plenty of food for thought. Jo Hilton shares her experiences of being a counselling student; Hilary Campbell explores the links between relationship breakdowns and public health; Johanna Field explores the concept of joint working; Marilyn McGowan looks at youth counselling and the Open College Counselling Training Unit makes an appeal for a new home to run its course.

I always think that team efforts produce the best results and am grateful to each and every one of our contributors. I'd be delighted to hear your feedback to this latest issue. It would be great to establish a regular letters' page or even a question and answer column which could help with particular challenges you might face in your workplace. But without your contributions of articles or opinions then the journal isn't really fulfilling the role it ought to be. This is your publication. So please do use it and let me know what you think.

[coscajournal@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:coscajournal@yahoo.co.uk)



# Professor Dave Mearns

## Marks his Retirement

Lorna Hill

*Professor Dave Mearns talks to Lorna Hill about his recent retirement from the University of Strathclyde and about his plans for the future.*

DAVE MEARNNS is clearly enjoying retirement. He starts each day with a one hour bike ride, enjoying the Stirlingshire countryside around his home and this week is planning a trip to Argentina with three of his friends. But he also manages to fit in a fairly busy work schedule around this. For at the tender age of just 59, he's not quite ready to quit the counselling world for good. It's just that he's juggled his priorities.

"In truth it was an 'early' retirement that gives me time to do other things," he admits. "I got to a stage where I was working day and night seven days a week and thought, 'This has to change'. I was running the Counselling Unit at the university and it wasn't the kind of job I could just cut back on so I did a bit of lateral thinking and decided to give it all up."

Following his retirement as Professor of Counselling, Director of the Counselling Unit and Associate Dean of the Faculty at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow last year, he has hardly been resting on his laurels. The father-of-two has continued to co-edit the international journal, *Person Centered and Experiential Psychotherapies*, has developed his own personal website and has been running a series of 'masterclasses' both nationally and internationally. "I still work a lot but not to the extent that I was. I have been able to restructure my life. Historically I have always been very physically active but that slipped over the years with the academic work. Other things now work around my exercise. That never used to happen," he says.

Dave has also written and co-written a series of best-selling books on counselling, more recently *Working at Relational Depth in Counselling and Psychotherapy*,

with Mick Cooper. Dave is well known for coining the term 'relational depth' but he says he doesn't believe that there is anything new in the term. "Carl Rogers goes on about the importance of relationship in all of his work. I think I'm just emphasising it more and reminding people about the power of the relationship between the counsellor and the client. One of the reasons I came to this was when talking with clients and therapists about their experience of counselling and therapy and about 15 years ago what became apparent was the unspoken relationship between the two. Even in very effective counselling and psychotherapy an awful lot goes unspoken. I would go as far as to say that a lot of what we do under counselling and psychotherapy is incredibly superficial although we like to think that it's not. So it became clear to me that it was the depth of the relationship that was important as this would give the client safety and allow them to explore particularly feared areas – hence the notion of relational depth. I think it's particularly important for clients who are difficult to reach."



When asked how important the therapeutic relationship is for the effectiveness of therapy, Dave immediately responds and says: "Thirty per cent." He laughs and adds: "It's an easy question. Reviews of studies into this – most recently Asay and Lambert (1999) – found the biggest single contributor to effectiveness, contributing 40 per cent of the variance, was the client's readiness and willingness to engage; 30 per cent was the relationship and only 15 per cent was the expertise of the therapist. That the therapist's expertise should only contribute half the power of the relationship is intriguing."

He believes that therapists have a crucial role in facilitate a meeting at relational depth with clients.

“If a therapist hasn’t developed an ability to be with themselves at depth they will find it enormously difficult to establish depth with a client because at a fundamental level they will be a bit scared themselves. But over a period of development the therapist can re-work different parts of themselves and different experiences they’ve had. For example one of the therapists in the 2005 book, Lesley, had a few experiences in her life of being really humiliated. Early on in her development those would be raw areas that she wouldn’t go near as a therapist as they would be in danger of clouding her empathy with her client. But the more she gains power over those experiences, so the feeling of humiliation isn’t a negative for her any more, and those experiences can broaden her as a therapist. Hence, the experience of humiliation can become a ‘touchstone’ for her – helping her to become sensitised to her clients’ similar (but different) experiencing. Early on she couldn’t use such self-experiences in that expansive way, but now she has broadened the ‘self’ that she can employ in the therapy room. In the new book we use the term existential touchstones for this phenomenon.”

In the latest book a new term, ‘holistic listening’, is introduced which he says was brought by co-author Mick. “It’s a really good term and it’s the idea of not just listening to the client but appreciating the whole person and being sensitive to the whole person in front of you. It’s about being with their process and appreciating their process and who they are as a person. Sometimes people get hung up on understanding words. I always say, sometimes controversially to trainees, that understanding the client is not what is important - it’s about being with the client in a way that helps them to better understand themselves. It’s particularly important when working with people who don’t communicate easily – for example if you’re working with a psychotic client in episode then don’t try to understand what they are saying but try to be close

to them in their experiencing of what they are trying to say.”

Dave’s interest in therapy, and in particular person-centred therapy, stems back to his student days when he was studying a combined honours degree in maths and physics at Glasgow University (as well as working as a bus driver and managing a betting shop in his spare time). Disillusioned by the course he paid a visit to his advisor of studies.

“I thought he approached it rather well as he said to me, ‘What kind of stuff do you like to read?’ Normally, if you studied maths and physics, you didn’t read so it was actually a bit of a fluke! I read a lot of theology that fascinated me, especially the stuff produced during the 1960s, so I asked if I could do that instead. But in Scotland you had to do Divinity which ruled me out as I’m an atheist. So I gave up that idea and asked what else was ‘like’ it and he suggested psychology.” So Dave switched courses and completed an undergraduate degree before taking a temporary job lecturing in social psychology at the university. “By the end of my studies I was determined that it was therapy that I wanted to get into but at that time you couldn’t really do it in Britain. So I decided I would go to America and study under this guy called Carl Rogers. When I look back at it now the odds were really against it. I needed to get a Visiting Fellowship to Rogers’ Center in California and a Rotary Scholarship to finance it – the odds against getting both of these were wild – but in those days I had the confidence of the young that it would all come together and it did.” He was appointed as Visiting Fellow to the Center for Studies of the Person (CSP), La Jolla, California in 1972-73. Even though Rogers was one of the top psychotherapists in the world at the time he wasn’t licensed to practice in California which meant he could be Dave’s individual supervisor. He was clearly to have a significant impact on his work.

On his return to Scotland he went back to his job at

Jordanhill College, which he'd started just before he left for the States, where he undertook research into social education. Meanwhile, outside his full-time work there, he and Elke Lambers (who is his wife) and Brian Thorne developed Person Centred Therapy Britain to organise counselling training. "It grew and grew and in 1990 I said to the College, 'Why don't I bring the training company into the college?'" It was a move they supported and the Counselling Unit was developed. The original business plan projected a total income of £250,000 over five years. Now the Unit has an annual turnover of over £1 million per annum.



With hopes of a third professor of counselling joining the team at the University's Unit which, in addition to Professor John McLeod at the University of Abertay, will mean Scotland will be home to half of the UK's counselling professors, Dave is optimistic about the future of counselling in Scotland. "I believe Scotland could become the epicentre for counselling research in Britain."

What is also important, he says, is that counselling in primary care must continue to develop in Scotland where flexibility in healthcare provision and the powerful voice of GPs is allowing counselling to grow. Now, for example, 82 out of 101 health practices in Lanarkshire have a counsellor whereas a survey in 1986 showed that none would have considered having a counsellor at that time. "I think having more female GPs has been the biggest contributing factor to the development of primary care. There isn't so much of the macho culture that did exist – also these are powerful women." Another area of development he has been following closely is having counsellors in schools. "We did a two-year pilot project recently in three big secondary schools in Greater Glasgow Health area and the result of that

is that 24 schools throughout the country now have a counsellor. This is a really interesting and exciting area. - what I have always been into is to expand the provision of counselling, free at the point of service." Dave also admits: "I don't think I was too popular in the early days of COSCA as I was seen as coming from the paid side of counselling whereas most of the COSCA organisations were voluntary. I think it was thought that I didn't like the voluntary sector. But it wasn't that - I couldn't see the voluntary sector meeting the capacity for counselling that I knew was needed. I thought we needed to have a paid sector too to cope with the demand. My vision for counselling, free at the point of service, was bigger than could be met by the voluntary sector alone. For example, in our Lanarkshire primary care counselling service we have worked with a total of 25,000 clients over the years."

This year is a special year for Dave – marking his retirement and contribution to the field of counselling and psychotherapy – and in May he will give the Mary Kilborn lecture. He also plans to start work on a third edition of his best-selling book, 'Person-Centred Counselling in Action' and has a host of 'masterclasses' lined up in Ireland, England and Buenos Aires. "These classes are about showing people how I work and sharing my expertise in a practical way. The interesting thing in South America is that it's the only place in the world that I've found the difference between the terms 'counsellor' and 'psychotherapist' - in Buenos Aires the psychotherapists talk philosophy and the counsellors do the really hard work. I take a down-to-earth approach with person centred therapy and that appeals to the counselling fraternity in Argentina and they want to develop the training." It's this down-to-earth-approach which makes Dave stand out so significantly and makes him a great teacher. One former student explains: "Counselling is such a vast and complex area but Dave always brought it alive and made me really relate to what he was saying."

Lorna Hill is a journalist and has written for publications including *Scotland on Sunday*, *The Scotsman*, *the Sunday Herald* and *Life & Work* magazine. She is also a qualified reflexologist and massage therapist and recently completed COSCA's Counselling Skills Certificate.

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- Professor Dave Mearns will deliver this year's Mary Kilborn lecture, 'The Humanity of the Counsellor', on May 17 at the University of Strathclyde.
  - Visit [www.davemearns.com](http://www.davemearns.com) for more information.



## Courses and groups in 2006

### Foundation course in Gestalt Therapy

This one-year course provides a thorough introduction to the principles and practice of Gestalt Therapy. The course is suitable for those interested in furthering their counselling training and who have a particular interest in Gestalt. It can also constitute the foundation year for those wishing to train as Gestalt psychotherapists. Apply by 15 July.

### Choice, change and creativity

This ongoing group provides a unique opportunity for you to develop your self-confidence and creativity at work and in your relationships. The group will be particularly of use to team members, managers and consultants who want to relate to others in more effective, satisfying and fruitful ways. It would form a suitable part of the 'Investors in People' initiative.

### Being and belonging

This ongoing group provides an opportunity for you to develop a greater understanding of and confidence in yourself and your relationships. We will focus on personal exploration and self-awareness using dialogue, body process, meditation, dreams, and artwork. The group will be useful for anyone interested in joining a personal development group, as a support in their personal lives or as a potential for professional development.

### Gestalt therapy group

This weekly group is an opportunity for you to look at yourself and your relationships with others in a safe and supportive setting.

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mail: 51 Lothian Road Edinburgh EH1 2DJ  
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 email: [egi@btconnect.com](mailto:egi@btconnect.com)  
 web: [www.edinburgh-gestalt-institute.co.uk](http://www.edinburgh-gestalt-institute.co.uk)

# Sitting in Circles



Jo Hilton

*Jo Hilton is based in Edinburgh and recently completed a Post-Graduate Diploma in Counselling in the School of Health and Social Science at Edinburgh University. She describes her experiences as a counselling student.*

IT was nearly a year ago that I first attempted to write about my experiences as a counselling student. At first it seemed easy enough. One of things that I had discovered about myself, over the previous months of a part-time COSCA accredited diploma course at Edinburgh University, was that I really enjoyed the process of letting thoughts and feelings flow onto paper. Writing had become a way of discovering something about myself. It was like unpacking a travel bag after a long time away from home, finding myself slightly in awe of half-forgotten treasures that emerged from their packaging, amidst layers of well-worn clothes. Before long, I had reached an ending point and was able to set my work aside. That night I slept contentedly.

The next day I hesitated before pressing the “send” button to set my words free on their journey into print. The doubts had set in. I just couldn’t do it. I became paralysed with fear. How would I be seen by fellow counsellors? What if I’d written something that gave away too much about myself? What if those reading it could detect something lying below the surface that I had not yet found out for myself? What if my prematurely released, unprocessed meanderings were read by a client, whether now or in the future, leading to the discovery that I wasn’t the person they had thought me to be? Would I become the Gerald Ratner of the counselling world in admitting, for example, that I don’t always relish the thought of yet another day of *sitting in a circle*?

I launched off into another version. This time entitled, “Ten reasons why I will not be writing about my experience as a counselling student”. That felt better. In writing about my resistance I began to see how I felt about my words being scrutinised by those who had

many more years experience than I, in aspects of counselling where I knew that I had only scratched the surface. I grandiosely imagined John McLeod scanning my narrative and using my unexplored story to link to the theories he planned to share with his students the next day. I wondered if those trained in attachment theory would find any glimmer of “autobiographical competence”? Would a Kleinian wonder about signs of part-object relationships and smile with recognition as they realised that I was projecting all my anxieties on to my reader in a vain attempt to disown that which is truly mine?

## Imaginary Conversations

I gradually came down to earth as I became aware of an imaginary conversation with my person-centred tutor, as she gently prodded me to think about where my locus of evaluation resided in all this. The hot air gave way to quiet reflection. My “internal supervisor” (Casement 1985) reminded me that I didn’t have to do this. I wasn’t being true to my newly emerging vulnerable self, a self that would rather be wrapped in cotton wool, away from prying eyes for just a little longer. It just wasn’t the right time.

## Looking Back

Perhaps now it is the right time? Perhaps, having achieved my two hundredth hour of counselling and with all my assignments completed, I can begin to look back in a calmer frame of mind on the past three years. If I delay, I fear that the memories will coalesce. I might lose the sense of those separate strands, some turbulent, others calming, some icy cold and isolating, others warm enough to melt away my desire to run away. The early days of the course, with work with clients, for me at least, far in the future, represented a time to find my “self”. If I were to be trusted with an “other”, I needed to spend some time with the “me” who’d be doing the relating. That seemed to mean



hours of sitting in circles stretching out in front of me. Is there a counselling course in the land that doesn't involve a period of sitting around waiting for relationships to form, storm and norm, or whatever theory you wish to apply? At times, having spent much of my previous working life as a trainer sitting in groups, this had all the allure of watching paint dry. Yet, slowly, I learnt to tolerate the not knowing, the lack of a leader giving the group a direction and slowly I was won over to the value of this experience. One idea that emerged for me was that there might be times when people might actually like the experience of silence, something I hated, and I might not feel so impelled to entertain them by filling up a few more of the dreaded minutes. As I write, I notice my heart sinking and wonder if MI6 could have devised anything to rival that experience?

Alongside the slow grind of the experiential learning in the group came the theory.

Here I found myself happy and contented. In my mind, there is nothing like a good theory. (I'll leave the reader to complete the sentence with whatever theory, new or old, seems to them to be nothing like a good theory.) The course gave me time to soak up thoughts and ideas and to let them circulate round my system, competing in some internal dialogue to see which would have the staying power to inform my practice. Dialogue (Kirkwood 2002) itself being central the course's theoretical location within an ongoing dialogue between the person-centred approach and psychodynamic perspectives in counselling. There was no shortage of reading matter in these two fields. I enjoyed exploring the historical and philosophical basis of counselling and at times was happy to let my mind wander into daydreams where I imagined what it must have been like to recline on Sigmund Freud's couch or to have a session recorded with Carl Rogers.

Perhaps part of my pleasure in reading and imagining goes back to my childhood.

Then, as an only child of hard-working parents, I was left to my own devices to fill my time as the long summer evenings dimmed into winter nights. As the magical castle that we children had inhabited throughout August reverted to the world of adults to emerge less glamorously as a coal bunker, I found refuge in fiction. There I could imagine myself as a Swallow (or an Amazon) or in Cornwall with the much maligned Famous Five. (By way of an aside... I remember Anne Fine, in her role as Children's Laureate, pointing out that a modern sequel would surely have to be called "The Famous Five get Taken into Care", their adventurous ways, reinterpreted as a cautionary tale for absentee parents.) I'd needed imaginary friends at that stage in my life when my friends had gone back to their homes. It seemed significant to allow myself to re-experience some of that loneliness and the need to be filled up with the words of others.

### Allowing Words to Flow

Gradually I became aware of how my own words had rarely emerged in writing and how blocked I had been about trusting my feelings to the medium of paper. The locked diaries of my teenage years had given way to early attempts at poetry, all brushed aside as a life of "doing" had taken over from a world of "being" as my life had become populated by a growing family and their needs had, quite appropriately, held sway for a while. It seemed important to let myself "be" during those early days of the training. It was as if I was letting myself experiment by trying out different versions of myself through which to track my learning. The act of reconnecting with parts of myself that seemed to have been left behind was an important aspect of the course for me. It seemed that whatever process we would be going through with clients should be built on the firm foundation of an increasing openness to our awareness.

Writing a personal journal, a course requirement,

became a deliciously unforced ritual. I observed the stream of consciousness, by turns joyful and painful, meandering through my own story and was surprised by the emergence of tentative bridges to the theories that I was reading and learning about. Somehow I became ready to face the world beyond the training community that had begun to feel safe enough for me.

### Moving Beyond the Course

Moving beyond the four walls of the training room to the counselling room was a significant step. The work that we had done in groups had always, for me, needed the focus of client work to help make meaning of why we were there. Many of us had worked with clients before, either as counsellors or in other roles and I'd appreciated the opportunity to draw on the experiences of other group members. I was drawn to Dave Mearns' (1997) description of moving from portrayal to something deeper, from unconscious incompetence, to conscious incompetence enroute to conscious competence. I think that I had glimpses of all of those as our clients entrusted us with their safety and vulnerability and we did our utmost to honour that trust.

For some, these relationships were short lived, in organisations offering just six sessions. For others, they stretched out into what seemed at the beginning as if it might go on forever. I enjoyed the opportunity to try out both ways of working in two very different organisations. The weekly Practice and Process group, during term time and the regular meetings with supervisors, both individual and group helped me feel that the clients was being well looked after. Alongside my person-centred learning about the core conditions (Rogers 1957), I gained a sense of what Winnicott (1986) meant by holding and Bion (1970) meant by containment. I was interested to see that in writing about relational depth, Mearns and Cooper (2005) draw on the work of Stern (2004) in his intersubjective

description of moments of meeting. This doesn't seem the right place to elaborate on current theory, other than to say that I felt well supported in finding my own place in the counselling room by current writing about the relationship as central to the experience of counselling. Here, my person-centred supervision offered me the experience of a way of being with myself as well as being with my client.

In one way, an ending has arrived for me, yet in another way, I can focus on another beginning as I carry forward the hope that I experienced on the course. I've begun to think about the future and what lies ahead, sad and happy that I have left the course behind for some other people to fill the circles and learn whatever they need in order to be the best counsellors that they can. I wish them luck and hope and even a few moments of humour, as I experienced, along the way, even when *sitting in circles ...*

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Johanna Field

# Integration is difference more?

*Johanna Field explores the benefits and challenges of joint working and what this means for counselling in general.*

FAMILY Support Services in Scotland are taking partnership working to a new level. Within the context of a Scottish Executive “Change Agenda” and the Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006, there is a move towards more integrated working and a ‘one-stop shop’ approach. Four separate voluntary organisations are working in partnership.

## Public Policy Context

The small group of Family Support Organisations (FSOs) supported by the Scottish Executive Justice Department includes Scottish Marriage Care, Step Family Scotland, Family Mediation Scotland and Couple Counselling Scotland. By making additional resources available jointly to the four organisations, the Executive wishes to promote and support partnerships at all levels. They particularly wish to see accessible services at local level, where the focus is a range of different services rather than a concentration on one specific element. While this is a challenging “Change Agenda” to all, the benefits to service users and to the organisations are already evident.

The Family Law (Scotland) Act received Royal Assent in January 2006. The FSOs were understandably interested in contributing to the process and offering their professional expertise. During the early stages of the debate we identified a considerable gap in knowledge that required to be addressed. By Stage 3 of the debate, it emerged that we had been successful in assisting MSPs in understanding the differences and the value of the early intervention services provided, including Counselling and Mediation and how cost-effective and powerful these are.

“I want to emphasise that relationship services are an important part of the Executive’s overall effort to

support stable families and to give children the best possible start in life. I believe that the best way is early intervention, through counselling to help couples to save their marriages or other committed relationships, where those marriages or relationships can be saved. I accept, however, that where separation is inevitable, mediation can help to ensure that parents work together sensibly to look after the best interests of their children...” (Official Report; 15 December 2005; c. 21778).

Moreover clarification emerged during Stage 3 that the four FSOs offer four distinct services, we are not in direct competition with one another, there is a level of demand, which we cannot easily meet, and clearly one size does not fit all in the family support field:

“The Justice 1 Committee now understands the differences between the services that are provided, but I am not sure that everybody else understands them ... one service that we discussed (is) pre-marriage advice. The other services are reconciliation services (counselling), mediation and family contact services, which all work differently, but which all have a contribution to make when relationships break down. As we approached the end of stage 2, more and more information came before the committee. I thank Scottish Marriage Care for the information that it provided ...” (Official Report; 15 December 2005; C. 21900 & 21901).

## Working together

A significant development was achieved last November when the FSOs began sharing a Research and Public Policy resource. Previously Scottish Marriage Care was the only FSO to have a dedicated Researcher and it was agreed that this post would now be shared.

Access to a joint research facility enables the four

FSOs to more easily source research evidence to support their work and also keep up to date with the public policy process. The shared resource facilitates greater potential, for example, in producing joint responses to Government Consultations, which will arguably carry more weight in the political arena.

The Change Agenda has also enabled the FSOs to participate in shared training initiatives. Twenty-five volunteers selected from across the organisations will soon have the opportunity to achieve the Post-Qualifying Foundation Course in Systemic Practice and Family Therapy.

In terms of partnerships at local level, the Scottish Executive together with the Chief Officers of the FSOs have invited local services to plan partnership projects and bid for Change Agenda funding to support these. Meetings have taken place between Family Mediation, Couple Counselling, and Scottish Marriage Care in Highland, Grampian, Lothian, Tayside, Fife, Dumfries and Galloway, and West of Scotland. In addition, FSOs in Orkney/Shetland, Argyll and the Isles, and North Lanarkshire plan to begin joint meetings.

### **The benefits and challenges of a joined up approach**

Possibly the most important benefits of a joined up or 'one stop shop' approach to Family Support Services is easier access for clients and improved service delivery.

Duplication of services is not an issue. We are all over-subscribed with long waiting lists and demand that we cannot easily satisfy. Nevertheless, one of the key concepts of integrated service delivery is a shift in focus from the four organisations themselves to the distinct types of services that are available to the public, a kind of bottom up approach. As satisfying demand is an issue for us all, an approach that leads

to concentration on services for those who need them most, rather than which organisation is offering which service, will arguably add value where clients are concerned.

Furthermore, a one-stop shop approach means it should be much easier to determine at an early stage which service is most suitable for a particular client. Service users are therefore more likely to be directed to the most appropriate service first time.

Additional advantages of partnership working include the increased ease with which we will be able to identify gaps in services. For example in rural areas, or in large cities where several service outlets would be required. One opportunity facilitated by the partnership in rural areas could be the setting up of joint premises and offering a range of family services.

According to Wigfall & Moss (2001) a one-stop shop approach does not have to result in a loss of identity. They found family services in a co-located one-stop shop in London were able to draw a balance between preserving their autonomy and creating a common identity.

The enormity of our task should not be underestimated however. This is not a one stop in one location in London, but a national partnership across four organisations, at all levels. To begin to offer integrated services, each level of each organisation requires understanding of each other. This is a slow process that requires dedicated financial, managerial and time resources. Indeed Wigfall & Moss (2001) found, at all levels, it is difficult to find time or space to work collaboratively.

Moreover, although shared resources such as training are likely to be more cost-effective, what are the consequences for the different organisational cultures that are present? Some of the FSOs are led entirely by volunteers, whilst others employ a mixture of

volunteers and paid staff to deliver services. This has an impact on resources and when each organisation has a different ethos and is coming from a different perspective, this adds a challenging dynamic to the process of collaboration.

What then are the implications for clients if counselling and mediation professionals are being trained to deliver a range of services; would this weaken the services that are available? If one counsellor is able to offer four different services, would that undermine his or her professionalism? And would this in turn weaken the professional standing of the FSOs? Indeed, one of the key concepts of Change Agenda is to shift focus away from the FSOs themselves. But would this have the consequence of producing a weaker service, the kind of service that offers a bit of everything, rather than four distinct professional services?

A recent report from Audit Scotland (2004), 'Following the Public Pound' notes the increasing trend towards local government funding external organisations to provide important services to the public. The rationale behind this is that external bodies can provide a better range or quality of service, or can provide services that would not otherwise be provided. Voluntary organisations have access to different funding sources such as charitable trusts and can engage with socially excluded groups who may be reluctant to contact statutory bodies for help. Does this trend result in a tendency for voluntary sector organisations to become so absorbed in delivering government services that there is a threat to their boundaries as independent bodies? Could the Change Agenda be conceived as representing a move towards this, or is there sufficient celebration of our identities and differences?

### **Difference is More**

Whilst the benefits to clients of joint working and a

one-stop shop approach are obvious, the message is also apparent that there are challenges to be overcome.

The waiting lists of the FSOs show an overwhelming demand for each separate service, a demand that we cannot currently meet. It is expected that the public information campaign to be launched in late Spring to accompany the Family Law Scotland Act, as well as raising awareness of the different services available, will consequently increase demand. Might service integration result in less being available? It seems logical that four distinct services would mean more available to clients.

It is nevertheless true that a commitment to partnership working will allow us to identify service gaps, in particular in rural areas. And increased learning and understanding regarding each service will undoubtedly result in easier and more accurate access for clients and improved service delivery, which is of course the key objective.

Surely the message is that, as well as embracing partnership working, we should also be celebrating our differences in providing a diverse range of services to meet the needs of clients.

*Johanna Field began her career in the commercial sector. After deciding to further her education, she qualified with an MA in 2001 and an MPhil in 2003. Her career in the voluntary sector began as Research & Communication Officer for Scottish Marriage Care in early 2003. Since November 2005 Jo's post has been shared between four Family Support Organisations as part of an integrated working agenda which is the focus of this article. Her new role is to provide a Research and Public Policy information facility relevant to four Family Support Organisations. The post is responsible to the Chief Officers of Scottish Marriage Care, Couple Counselling Scotland, Family Mediation Scotland and StepFamily Scotland, with line management by the Chief Executive of Scottish Marriage Care.*

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**COSCA**  
Counselling & Psychotherapy  
in Scotland

## COSCA Recognition Scheme Workshops for Organisations Spring 2006

COSCA is running three workshops for Organisations, in two locations:

Tuesday 28th March 2006 - Aberlour Parenting Project, Edinburgh

Thursday 30th March 2006 - Tom Allan Centre, Glasgow

### Workshop 1

'Introduction to the Recognition Scheme' - launching the new, more user-friendly system and materials - 10.30am-12.30pm (12.30pm-1.00pm lunch)

### Workshop 2

'A detailed look at the criteria' - 12.30pm-2.30pm (12.30pm-1.00pm lunch)

### Workshop 3

'Preparation for assessment' - 3.00pm-4.30pm

For further information and booking see the web site [www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk) or contact Kathy McMillan, Recognition Scheme Development Officer, COSCA  
18 Viewfield Street, Stirling FK8 1UA 01786 475140 [kathy@cosca.org.uk](mailto:kathy@cosca.org.uk)



Marilyn McGowan

# Young People and Counselling

## Exploring Professional Boundaries

*Marilyn McGowan reports on the joint conference, held by COSCA and the Association for Professionals in Services for Adolescents (APSA), on the role of counselling in supporting young people across a range of contexts and professional boundaries.*

I was delighted to work on this particular conference, held in November in Perth, because as a counsellor this is a topic dear to my heart and because I often feel it is under represented and under valued in the field of adolescent working. APSA, like youth counselling, is a long established (it started in Edinburgh in 1970), but in many ways a little known service, which supports a diverse workforce in services for adolescents through dissemination of best practitioner practice in our magazine Rapport, website and conference programme. We own and edit the international research *Journal of Adolescence* and further support research grants through annual awards of up to £10,000. We are a membership organisation and offer members free and subsidised places at conferences as well as individual training grants. This year's conference programme offered training to up to 800 practitioners plus 1000 young people in a special youth conference on crime and punishment. APSA is arguably the only multi disciplinary service for practitioners working with adolescents in the UK and the conference reflected our commitment to working in partnership with a variety of agencies.

Youth counselling is one of the minority services which APSA supports because we believe it has a significant contribution to make to young people. Yet in supporting youth counselling, it is important that we see how it fits into the multi disciplinary aims of APSA. And in doing this, many issues are raised about what is youth counselling and indeed how does it differ from counselling adults. I offer these reflections as a challenge to people, including myself, to find increasing clarity in what we mean and what we are doing, when we talk of youth

counselling. Without it, I think we will fail to convince policy makers and other colleagues in the adolescent workforce of the professionalism of youth counselling.

The history of youth counselling predates the establishment of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (1978) and COSCA. School counselling was first mentioned in England in 1963 in the Newsom Report and Youth Access, the organisation for Counselling, Advice and Guidance was in some ways a breakaway service from BACP. Many of the great counselling theorists - Rogers, Bowlby and Adler - worked directly with young people, yet youth counselling has not thrived in the same way as adult counselling in this country. In contrast, youth counselling has thrived in other countries-notably Australia, New Zealand, America and some of the African countries where there is even a Ministry for Counselling, Advice and Guidance. So, why has youth counselling not been developed into a recognised profession in this country and what can we do to ensure we do not struggle for another 40 years to have counselling accepted as a worthwhile and invaluable approach to helping young people?

One of the essential differences - which we often forget - is that the highly self contained and often independent adult counselling services is very different from the context based services of youth counselling. Different contexts will deal with different problems and different client groups and this requires a more complex approach and level of understanding. Youth counselling is often placed in non-counselling organisations alongside other activities-advice and guidance being the more obvious ones, but even specialist counsellors will find areas like peer support, emotional literacy, anger management, alternative curricula and other group work will quickly become part of their remit. Much of APSA's funding for counselling training

goes to workers in the statutory sector for whom counselling is an add-on activity. People, such as nurses, teachers and social workers. Indeed, even Dudley Counselling Service, the only local education authority funded school counselling service in this country until a few years ago only employed counsellors with teaching qualifications. Counselling was also an add-on training to other professional work with young people.

The more specialist counsellors offering only one to one work are often found in the voluntary sector where their contributions can be devalued by adult based counselling organisations. Childline is one of the most important sources for counselling young people in this country but I can remember when the telephone context, so vital for access for young people, made it difficult for counsellors to achieve accreditation. Even now, how many counsellors receive accreditation based solely on their young people based training and work with young people? How many complain that the process is fraught with difficulty?

Youth counselling needs to have a wide knowledge base of systems, not only of work bases but also of legal frameworks. Yet even more important in relation to systems, is that youth counselling, lives or dies in the strength of the system which has to support and understand the counselling activity. What we persistently forget is that youth counselling is fundamentally a set of person centred values rather than a proforma of counselling interventions. We kid ourselves if we think otherwise. In a recent project developing mental health in education across different schools and colleges, I was taken aback to find that where education employed a counsellor, this deflected the responsibility for mental health from the organisation and placed unenviable responsibility, and even perhaps over burdening, on the counsellor. Moreover, without a supportive system where

counselling values are integral to the service, counselling is placed at the mercy of insecure funding and individual managers who often make counsellors redundant or replace them with trainees on placement, or education welfare officers, or psychologists, or youth workers...to name but a few.

Finally, the client group does not fit easily into adult counselling models. Apart from anything else this is a generation which will use technology in a way foreign to many adult clients. The recently published BACP Scoping Research into Counselling Children and Young People-can we believe the first in 40 years- raises some issues which I think challenges current counselling models being used with young people.

It is relationships, not models, which are crucial. There is a high drop out rate and little evidence of long term benefits. Some of the marks of a professional are missing with counsellors having little training or funding for research. How can we expect to be taken seriously when we cannot access and put in place the same rigorous practices and checks as other professions? Even more worrying is the absence of equal representation from different groups of young people and the too few youth voices which permeate the existing evaluations. Why are we worrying more about confidentiality and consent than how to ensure young people's voices are heard in the setting up of services and their delivery and evaluation? As counselling remains firmly enmeshed in adult counselling, there is a dearth of training courses for youth counsellors. Much of the little youth counselling training in this country is being carried out by the independent sector. APSA does support individuals through its grant system but they often have to travel to London. We have also been running study days for counselling services wishing to extend their remit to working with young people. And we are also



supporting Napier University in a pilot course on youth counselling skills being delivered to specialist counsellors and other professionals who will use counselling as an add-on skill. But they are only drops in the ocean.

There are few employment opportunities let alone career paths for youth counsellors. Unlike the NHS counsellors who have just celebrated, under the Agenda for Change, sliding pay scales for counsellors on a par with other health professionals, there is little parity for youth counsellors wherever they may find themselves. The NHS counsellors talk of success after 25 years of campaigning. And we've been going for 40.

In a recent issue of BACP's magazine, I found three job advertisements for NHS counsellors ranging from £19-£35k and four advertisements for youth counsellors. The latter talked of opportunities, career paths and experience but they were in fact requests for unpaid, volunteer counsellors. When volunteer, placement and qualified counsellors are all lumped together, where is the incentive for creating the more established services we see in University and College Counselling?

How do these issues affect public and political awareness around youth counselling? In England, the NICE Guidelines have at last mentioned school counsellors but there is no indication of where funding can be found to pay them. Where else could counselling organisations be proactive in the cause of counselling young people? I especially welcome the more generic term "therapy" and codes of ethics which no longer separate skill users and counsellors. But I deplore the public debates around counselling and psychotherapy—they do nothing for the image of youth counselling and lead us to sound ineffectual and confused. It's the old joke, "How many counsellors and psychotherapists does it take to change a light bulb? We don't know... they're still reflecting on the best approach". Meanwhile,

according to research by 'Bondi, et al (2003),' only six per cent of young people in Scotland have access to counsellors.

A multi-disciplinary approach to counselling young people would be more welcoming of some of the more obvious voices of dissent and challenge the counselling status quo.

Do we as therapists place too much emphasis on exploration of the self and its development within the family at the expense of attending to the impact of society on the individual and vice versa? (BACP Challenge July 2005) My answer to this in relation to counselling young people would be yes. In a recent Mori Poll, the top two icons of the new millennium were voted to be not people but events like 9/11 and the Boxing Day Tsunami of 2004. What does this say about perceptions of the world our young people inhabit?

Anna Freud talked of suicidal ideation in adolescents and Winnicott of the adolescent predisposition towards a metaphoric suicide, but we're not talking metaphors anymore. We need this knowledge and insight but we need it to reach outside of the introspective world of the counselling room. Benedikte Uttenhal, in an article published in this magazine, berates "denominations in counselling which lead to some tragically sectarian behaviour from those who are meant to be emotionally literate". The writer's words should be an anthem for models of youth counselling: "When will we be mature enough to integrate what is best from all our theory in the service of our clients?" These are the voices we need to take youth counselling forward.

Look at the Community Counselling Model, popular in the countries which have not struggled to develop youth counselling for 40 years. Direct counselling services will only thrive when people value different approaches, where there is good education to prevent problems such as emotional

literacy and parenting groups. Without consultation and advocacy the voices of young people will not be heard and services will not develop in line with their needs. Ultimately we need a proactive youth counselling model which makes systemic changes...otherwise we will remain adolescent catchers of adolescents in the rye.

A few months ago, I was in the supermarket and saw a young child, aged about five, walking with a very old lady. The old lady said to the wee girl, "I need your help to get soap and talcum for my friend who's ill and can't get out." The wee girl replied, "Can't her mummy get them for her?" The old lady stopped and the child waited but nothing was said. They continued in silence but something passed between them, some shared understanding which I was very privileged to witness. Something lost. Something gained. Like a multi-disciplinary approach to counselling young people.

*\* Marilyn McGowan is an accredited youth counsellor and strategy development officer for APSA. She is currently involved in a pilot project addressing supervision for inclusion workers in Career Scotland.*

# Counselling for Couples



Hilary Campbell

*Hilary Campbell, of Couple Counselling Scotland, explains why she believes relationship breakdown is an issue of public health and why counselling can offer a practical remedy.*

HUGE sums of money are spent by governments on dealing with the consequences of problems but just pennies are spent on preventing them from arising in the first place. Where else does this disparity stare us in the face? The NHS of course.

I don't have the figures on the relative spending on public health and preventative medicine compared to the rest of NHS budgets, but I think I would be among friends on this one. In few areas is this truer than in the case of relationship breakdown. The details in the recently published Kerr report suggest it's moving things in the right direction. The Family Matters Institute put the cost to the Exchequer of handling the consequences of relationship breakdown at £15 billion a year, round that down to about £1.5 billion for Scotland. In comparison the amount spent on supporting relationships is very small. I presented a paper to a Public Health Conference on this very issue for two reasons. Firstly as an awareness raising exercise, I am sure all GPs and other doctors are aware of the impact of divorce on their patients, but they many not be aware of the wider statistics.

When you look at the evidence (see fact-box) it presents a very bleak picture on the impact of divorce and separation on adults and the negative impact of parental conflict on children and may be a bit near the mark for some readers. However it doesn't have to be like this and these are very broad general statistics. There is both conclusive evidence to show that marriage is a 'healthy environment' associated with lower morbidity and strong evidence that the process of divorce leaves men, women and children vulnerable to ill-health. Any initiative which aims to prevent ill-health must take account of this reality. The same is true of any stable couple

relationship, but it is more difficult to obtain relevant statistical information for cohabiters.

Prisoners are up to six times less likely to re-offend if their family ties remain intact. Furthermore a recent study by the Institute for Marriage and Public Policy in Washington found that communities with high rates of family fragmentation suffer higher crime rates.

Children of divorced and separated parents exhibit more health, emotional and behavioural problems; they are more frequently involved in drug abuse and crime and have higher rates of suicide. Half of young offenders have divorced or separated parents. They also perform badly at school, are less likely to go on to further education and more likely to get low paid jobs. They are twice as likely to suffer divorce or relationship breakdown in adult life than children from intact families.

There are key long-term impacts to this work that always need to be considered. There is robust evidence that the experience of parental break-up can have adverse effects not only on the children when they are young, but can have continued adverse effects in terms of health, behaviour and economic status, thirty years later. Women from a divorced background tend to marry younger and are themselves more likely to have a relationship breakdown. Girls whose parents divorced have an increased risk of teenage pregnancy.

A new book with the rather serious title *Why Love Matters* combines neuroscience, psychology, psychoanalysis and biochemistry to show how early interactions between babies and their parents have lasting and serious consequences. Governments are putting considerable investment into Parenting Programmes. The bond between children and their parents is the most critical influence on a child's life. Yes? Well no actually. There is now compelling

evidence that “how parent’s get on”, or “don’t get on” – has the most influence on children’s lives. Recognition of the link between the parental relationship and the quality of parenting is missing in many recent policy initiatives in Scotland and at UK level. A third of calls to Childline are from youngsters worried about their parents’ relationship.

Researchers suggest the need to see parental separation not as an event but as a process which begins long before a parent departs and continues throughout childhood. They stress the importance both of making sure that children are told clearly what is happening and of listening sensitively to what children have to say about decisions which affect them.

Most kids cope well, they are very resilient, if they are loved and cared for and if they are consulted and informed. A quarter of children are not spoken to by their parents about what is happening at the time of separation. Only 5% are given a full explanation and invited to ask questions.

### **Relationship counselling works!**

Two out of three clients stay together and for the ones that don’t it’s not necessarily a bad outcome. With divorce counselling they part with greater understanding of what happened and increased self-awareness to take into new relationships. High divorce rates and relationship breakdown are not inevitable. For many, splitting up appears the only solution to unsatisfactory relationships, but we can increase the options available for couples with relationship difficulties. Early intervention is crucial. The majority of couples that divorce say the problems that led to their separation began early in their marriage.

### **Who are we?**

Couples Counselling was founded in 1948 by a group

of concerned individuals worried about the high level of relationship breakdown after the Second World War. Founded as the Scottish Marriage Guidance Council, we became Marriage Counselling Scotland in 1990 and then Couple Counselling Scotland in 1998. We are a national charity with 14 local service members across Scotland offering counselling in around 50 locations. We are also the largest provider of psychosexual therapy in Scotland and the only non-medical training provider. We work in partnership with our sister organisation, Relate, and are working with them on a trademark licence agreement and plan to change our name to Relate Scotland next year.

### **Where Next?**

We need to provide more training and awareness raising for health professionals, signposting, understanding and above all, relationship education in schools. We should be involved in more partnership projects and properly funded family support services must be available in all local authorities. Plus: don’t worry, Scot’s still believe in marriage, and still seem willing to try again. Around 28% of people marrying in 2004 were divorcees and we are a romantic lot and a romantic place, over 17% of marriages in Scotland take place in Gretna!

### **Facts**

- Health in Scotland 2002: The Chief Medical Officer gave examples of health issues linked to relationship breakdown. Homelessness and Problem Drinking.
- According to Crisis, 54% of homeless people cite relationship breakdown as the reason for their homelessness.
- About 24% of married/cohabiting men drink over 22 units of alcohol per week but 39% of divorced and separated men are also in this high-risk category.
- Divorced and separated people are 35 % more likely to visit their GP. A recent study supported by the Medical Research Council found marital stress was related to psychobiological stress indicators.

- Admissions rates to mental hospitals are 257 per 100,000 of the population for married men and 1,959 for divorced men. 433 for married women and 1,596 for divorced women.
- Marital breakdown, divorce and single person household are identified in the national strategy and action plan to prevent suicide in Scotland as some of the key risk factors.
- Smokers amount to 27% of married/cohabiting men and 36% of divorced and separated men, the figures for women are 26% of those married / cohabiting and 30% for those divorced / separated.
- A significant proportion of children with clinically diagnosed conduct and attention deficit disorders live in troubled homes.
- Among children of separated families, rates of aggressive behaviour, problems with general conduct, juvenile delinquency, and adult criminal behaviour are approximately double those found among children in intact families.
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*Hilary Campbell has been Chief Executive of Couple Counselling Scotland for almost 4 years. She was Depute Director of SCVO. An economist by profession, she has worked in the public, private and voluntary sectors.*

# New Home Appeal for Diploma in Counselling

Morag Hightet

*THE Open College Counselling Training Trust was set up in October 2003 to allow the students on the counselling diploma course run by Scottish Churches Open College to complete their diplomas, following the closure of the college. But as our students are nearing completion, the Trust is due to wind down in November 2006.*

**We are now looking for an educational establishment or counselling agency to run the course.**

## Diploma History

This course was originally developed in the 1980s by the Pastoral Foundation in Edinburgh to train their volunteer counsellors. As validation became critical, the course was developed to meet COSCA requirements and became the first Counselling Diploma course to be validated by COSCA. In 1996 the course was moved to Scottish Churches Open College, an affiliate college of Napier University. At that time the course had academic status from Napier University as a Napier University Advanced Diploma.

## Diploma Content and Structure

The course is an Integrative Course that uses Transaction Analysis as its core model. It builds on the skills, knowledge and self-awareness taught in the COSCA Certificate in Counselling Skills.

Students have around 460 contact hours of teaching structured around topic based Units. To date, the course has been delivered on a part time basis, run over three years on evenings and weekends.

## Diploma Participants

Although delivered in Edinburgh, we have had students from all over Scotland and Northern England. They tend to be professional people from all

walks of life who are seeking to either change career direction or add counselling to their professional portfolio. A number of our participants are sponsored by their employers, eg the NHS, Standard Life, various voluntary organisations. The course is designed to accommodate non-graduate and graduate students.

## Case Study

Elizabeth Colwell, a former student, has kindly agreed to share her experience of going through the diploma course.

### *From novice to counsellor*

Learning any new skill is exciting yet unnerving; we are at the edge of our knowledge, on the brink of something different. Embarking on the inner adventure that is counselling training is riskier than non-practitioners might imagine. Before we can facilitate a client's search for hope and meaning we must turn inwards, seeking greater awareness of ourselves and of others. We also need knowledge of a more academic or intellectual nature in order to unravel the complexities of each individual psyche. In seeking this knowledge we need mentors who can guide, instruct and support us, sharing their skills in this mysterious and enigmatic field. Ideally, this is what each counselling course offers the trainees who seek to enter this challenging arena. Fortunately for me, it was what I found in my Diploma studies with the former Scottish Churches Open College, now known as The Open College Counselling Training Trust, in association with the Pastoral Foundation Counselling Service.

## Beginnings

I chose my course because of its excellent reputation; it mattered to me that I could learn to a high professional standard. From the initial interview to my final assessment, I was inspired by the calibre of

tutors, by their knowledge and the questions they opened up. It was an amazing and refreshing experience to sense my preconceptions and assumptions and old ways of being and doing just dissolving. I devoured what was offered to me, I relished it; I seemed to be coming alive. We were taught imaginatively and creatively. Having sat through years of dry undergraduate lectures this way of learning was a revelation, rooted in example, experience and understanding. We absorbed what we needed and we learned at our own pace. The reading lists for the wide ranging syllabus were a fertile starting place for ideas and reflections expressed in our assignments.

### Supportive learning

Though we learned much from our books and our tutors, I would expect that many fellow students would agree that we learned most from each other. Working as individuals in small or large groups was powerfully challenging; at times it was almost intolerably so and yet we all held on in there and made amazing discoveries. We persisted in the messy, precarious struggle of engaging with ourselves and each other and what emerged was something precious. This level of openness is only possible with good boundaries, in a well held space and it is to the great credit of the college tutors that such depth of support was made available to us in our stumbling ventures in the unknown. Students wisely took the opportunity to work through emerging issues with their own counsellors as their training progressed. We were encouraged to keep journals throughout our training and this was key to developing the capacity for self awareness and reflection which is crucial when practising as a counsellor.

### Learning in the field

A core strength of this Diploma course was having a counselling placement with the PF Counselling

Service, with appropriate group and individual supervision from excellent practitioners and ongoing professional training. Without the solid foundation built through the college I would not have been able to make the most of the tremendous learning resource presented in the PF. Sitting face to face with a client, hour after hour, week after week, is a fascinating yet demanding vocation and the hard fact is that there is no substitute for personal experience; you really learn by doing, by being, by experiencing. What you learn most about is yourself and it is not comfortable. The group work facilitated at college prepared me for some of the exhilaration and acute discomfort of the encounter with the client in the counselling room. Reflecting openly and honestly on my practice with peers and supervisors continues to be essential as I develop.

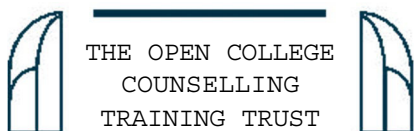
### Why am I doing this?

Writing this article has triggered a question for me – why go through this process? Why train as a counsellor? Why open yourself up to the parts of yourself that are puzzling, perplexing, even frightening, in order to sit face to face with someone you do not yet know? Perhaps it is about knowing yourself. Perhaps it is about the privilege of encountering another person at a difficult stage in their journey and somehow helping them move on. Perhaps it is simply curiosity. All I know is that it is not a road to travel alone; we need a companion, preferably one with experience! As with most beautiful landscapes, there are extremes. Much of our life may seem to be spent on the broad path, but counselling meets us in our extremes of experience, the heights and the depths. Something calls us to explore these extremes and, without quite knowing what we are doing, we respond. We respond for ourselves and for others. Fortunately there are others who have responded before us and they are willing to help us find our way. I was fortunate to find such people.

### Seeds sown

So much of what we were offered in our Diploma training was like the sowing of disparate seeds, to use a familiar analogy. Some of the seeds germinated rapidly, some more gradually. Some bloomed into wonderful flowers and some established slow growing, deep rooted trees which would last for generations. The soils were different, the growing conditions varied. This would cast our tutors as wise gardeners offering each plant whatever it needs to flourish and trusting that it will grow into its own form at its own pace. Perhaps that is quite near the truth of it."

If your institution would like to know more about our course, please do not hesitate to contact Morag Hightet, the course's training director, on **0131 556 9397** or at [tocctt@btconnect.com](mailto:tocctt@btconnect.com)



18 York Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3EP  
Tel: 0131 556 9397  
E-mail: [tocctt@btconnect.com](mailto:tocctt@btconnect.com)



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# A Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to your recent article "Thinking Aloud" published in *Counselling in Scotland*, Autumn 2005.

I found the article to be both informative and thought provoking however, as a trainee counsellor, I personally have felt that I have benefited greatly by having in-depth training in one approach.

I have found that by having a framework of theory to inform my counselling practice it has helped me, as a novice, to feel more confident. It has also provided me with a working model on which to assess and monitor my client's progress.

Nevertheless, I am grateful that the centre in which I have my counselling placement incorporates counsellors from various different disciplines. This has not only allowed me to experience a richness in terms of knowledge and skill, but it has also encouraged me to be aware of the similarities as well as the differences within each approach.

I also believe that once the training period is over there will be ample opportunity to be aware of, and open to, other viewpoints. I also think that the counsellor can truly appreciate others from different backgrounds whilst still retaining the ethos of the approach in which one has been trained. After all, there is evidence to suggest that it is the relationship between the counsellor and the client which is the cornerstone of the therapeutic process and as such I think we should respect each others practice and beliefs since we are all working towards the same broad aim.

Kate Loughran  
Counsellor  
Tom Allan Counselling Centre  
Glasgow



**COSCA**  
Counselling & Psychotherapy  
in Scotland

18 Viewfield Street, Stirling FK8 1UA  
Tel: 01786 475 140 Fax: 01786 446 207  
Email: [gillian@cosca.org.uk](mailto:gillian@cosca.org.uk)  
Website: [www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk)

**COSCA**

**8th ANNUAL TRAINERS EVENT  
2006**

Provides an opportunity to discuss and explore the issues involved in delivering COSCA validated training material.

COSCA validated providers should note that it is a requirement of continued COSCA validation that a trainer from their organisation attends this event and that this is a CPD event for COSCA Accredited Trainers.

Specific suggestions and/or requests for workshops or presentations are valued and welcome. Please contact Gillian Lester with your ideas by 28th February 2006.

THURSDAY 15 JUNE 2006  
FORTHBANK LEISURE STADIUM, SPRINGERSE,  
STIRLING FK7 7UJ  
10 am - 4 pm

9.30 am Registration & Refreshments

COST  
£50 COSCA members  
£60 non-COSCA members



## FIERCE GENTLEMEN

*An exploration of leadership and power*

with

**Theo Dijkman**

at

*The Salisbury Centre*

*Edinburgh*

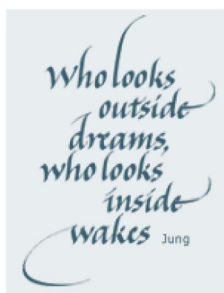
*Saturday 25th March 10 - 4pm*

*£50*

The theme of this one-day workshop for men will be to explore what we have learned about leadership and power. It is an opportunity to share what inspires us and what gives us a sense of purpose.

This workshop is for any man who is interested in redefining his relationship with power and authority, any man willing to face the challenge of creating a more just, calm and creative world. Inspired by the writings of Biddulph, Meade, Keen and others we will have this day to start “to discover a peaceful virility, to become fierce gentlemen”.

Theo is a UKCP registered psychotherapist in private practice, with a background in management within the fields of mental health and addictions. He has been facilitating men’s groups and training and development workshops



The Institute of  
*Psychosynthesis*

## ***Psychosynthesis SoulMaking at Work***

How can we cultivate the art of successful living? Nowadays, we often feel as though we are working harder for less reward, and, despite our successes, we find ourselves wondering 'what's the point?' or 'what now?'

The Institute of Psychosynthesis has recognised the resonance of these questions, and its work is centred on providing the opportunity to address them. Based on the theories of psychiatrist and founder of Psychosynthesis Roberto Assagioli, the Institute offers professional training courses in counselling, applied psychology and psychotherapy to enhance your sense of purpose, understanding and fulfilment. In addition to professional training, the Institute has created self-development courses for those looking to gain a deeper understanding of themselves. SoulMaking at Work launches in February 2006, and aims to provide participants with the opportunity to reflect on their personal and professional lives. A spiritual psychology in action, the course allows individuals to use Psychosynthesis maps and models, and learn how to embrace their own experiences.

### **Want to know more?**

The introductory Fundamentals of Psychosynthesis course takes place over a long weekend. The next step, SoulMaking at Work, takes you on a year-long process of discovery. To find out more, visit the open evenings and self-development workshops in London and Edinburgh.

**For details, call the Institute on 020 8202 4525 or visit [www.psychosynthesis.org](http://www.psychosynthesis.org).**

**Or in Scotland phone Theo Dijkman on 01578 750729.**

### **The Institute of Psychosynthesis is**

- ◆ a member of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP)
- ◆ a member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)
- ◆ a member of the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP)
- ◆ a founder of the Association of Accredited Psychospiritual Psychotherapists (AAPP)
- ◆ a founder member of the European Federation of Psychosynthesis (EFP)

in every human being

*The Institute of*

there is a special heaven

*Psychosynthesis*

whole and unbroken

**The Institute of Psychosynthesis**

**9 Breasy Place  
Burroughs Gardens  
London NW4 4AU  
020 8202 4525**

# Gazette

## 2006

**3 March**

Deadline for receipt of Applications for COSCA Course Validation.  
Panel meets on 17 March

**28 March**

Recognition Scheme Workshop  
Venue: Edinburgh

**30 March**

Recognition Scheme Workshop  
Venue: Glasgow

**30 March**

Deadline for receipt of Applications for: COSCA Counsellor/Psychotherapist Accreditation  
COSCA Trainer Accreditation

**30 March – 2 April**

XI Annual Conference of the European Association for Counselling  
Venue: Athens, Greece

**11 April**

COSCA Recognition Scheme Assessors Training Workshop  
Venue: Stirling

**Summer** *(date to be confirmed)*

COSCA Accreditation Workshops for those considering/ applying for: Counsellor / Psychotherapist Accreditation  
Trainer Accreditation

**15 June**

COSCA Annual Trainers Event 2006  
Venue: Stirling  
Timing: 10 am to 4 pm

**16 June**

Deadline for receipt of Applications for COSCA Course Validation.  
Panel meets on 30 June

**25 August**

Deadline for receipt of Applications for COSCA Course Validation.  
Panel meets on 8 September

**30 September**

Deadline for receipt of Applications for: COSCA Counsellor / Psychotherapist Accreditation  
COSCA Trainer Accreditation

**4 October**

COSCA AGM  
Venue: Stirling  
Timing: 10 am to 1 pm

**9 November**

COSCA Counselling Research Dialogue 2006  
Venue: Stirling  
Timing: 10 am to 4 pm

**17 November**

Deadline for receipt of Applications for COSCA Course Validation.  
Panel meets on 2 December

Details of all events are on the COSCA website: [www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk)  
Please contact Marilyn Cunningham, COSCA Administrator, for further details: [marilyn@cosca.org.uk](mailto:marilyn@cosca.org.uk) t. 01786 475140

## 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 [cosca@cosca.org.uk](mailto:cosca@cosca.org.uk)**

**[www.cosca.co.uk](http://www.cosca.co.uk)**

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