Counselling in Scotland

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Editorial

John Dodds

In the Summer/Autumn 2012 edition of the Journal, we published an article on the Scottish Voluntary Sector Counselling Practice Research Network. In this article it was stated that "it is striking that so little research has been published related to this area of practice". We did not mean to give the impression here that no significant research had been done, but instead that much more needs to be done. We would also like to highlight that the Research Network, a collaborative project funded and supported by the University of Abertay Dundee and COSCA, is currently carrying out a review of the literature and also the research that has already been done in this area, including significant studies in Scotland. This information will be posted on the network's website, which will be launched later this year.

Avigail Abarbanel's article about the gap between practitioners and academics in counselling, with particular reference to research, has me reflecting on the important subject of communication.

Even in talking about the difficulties non-academics can experience in trying to understand the language of research, Avigail uses the word "engaging". That word also means, in plain English "understanding" – at least in one of the contexts she described. The problem with research papers – I've read a lot of them, believe me, mostly in relation to social housing (my previous life) – is that they don't always say what they mean. By saying something in plain English one of the dangers an academic researcher may have to face is actually taking ownership of their words and their claims. In much the same way a politician giving a pre-election speech about taxation might say, for example "the tax issue will be fixed." By whom? And when? And how? Plain English asks us simply to take ownership of our words, to say exactly what we mean. It's important in the counselling room. It's important in daily life. It's even important – though possibly rare – in social networking (Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and the rest.) While I agree that research is important it's equally important that everyone understands the full meaning of the findings.

Communication is a key theme in the article on contracts within relationship counselling. While I admire those who work in relationship counselling, some of reasons I chose to work exclusively one-to-one are clearly spelled out here. On the one hand, a contract may be made by saying that there should be no secrets kept, even when the couple are counselled individually. But what if secrets are revealed accidentally? Or consciously withheld? What does that mean for the couple, and how does it affect the therapeutic alliance? Tricky stuff indeed.

Continuing the theme, communication has a critical role, too, in pre-therapy. Pam Courcha's interesting article looks at the ideas about psychological contact in therapy. If a person's ability to establish meaningful contact with another human being is in any way compromised – for whatever reason – what are the implications for therapy, and can the client be helped into forming contact?

On a lighter note, some of you may know I write fiction. Last year I was thrilled to be contracted for two of my crime novels (*Bone Machines* and *Kali's Kiss*) to be released as commercial audiobooks by a major US audiobook company (Blackstone Audio). The narrator, British actor, Robin Sachs, was one of the few people in Los Angeles who could perform a "British book" – technically, Scottish, the books being set in Glasgow. Robin did a great Glaswegian accent, but I wondered if American audiences caught some of the nuances of the dialect. It turns out they understood perfectly, with a little ear attunement, and by giving themselves time to relax into it. Which only goes to show that communication is always possible, no matter what the perceived barriers.

John Dodds
Editor

The gap between the academic and the practitioner in psychotherapy and counselling:

problems and possible ways forward

Avigail Abarbanel

My interest in this area began a few years ago when I was enrolled in the Masters in Counselling by Research with Honours at the University of New England (UNE) in NSW, Australia. I completed the coursework without much difficulty but my attempt to engage with my study as a researcher confronted me with unexpected problems. (I planned to do a qualitative study on the experience of recovering from childhood trauma.) It was then that I began to think about the differences between research academics and practitioners with a particular focus on private practitioners.

The UNE Masters programme was a way of upgrading the vocational qualifications of practitioners to research qualifications. Already the idea of upgrading implies that research qualifications are of a higher order than vocational ones. It is not clear to me why vocational qualifications should be seen as inferior, but it suggests that thinking about therapy might be seen as a more sophisticated or more important activity than doing therapy.

My difficulties with the research part of my degree emerged when I started to interview my research participants. The relationships I form with my clients in my practice are for the clients' benefit. As a research student I suddenly found myself in a position where I was using similar interviewing skills to those I use in my practice, but for a different purpose entirely. My research participants told me painful personal stories but I was there just to record those stories for research purposes, not to engage or help them in any way. This felt uncomfortable and unnatural. In this instance I encountered what Brown (1994), writing in the field of Occupational Therapy (OT), sees as "the differences between the mission of a university [which] includes the acquisition of new knowledge through scientific inquiry …" and the mission of the health care agency, which is "to provide a service to the health care consumer." (p.23)

I then realised two things. One was that as a Masters research student, I was in fact learning a new profession. I wasn't learning to become a better, more skilled psychotherapist. Rather I was being retrained to become a researcher. The other was that there was an uncomfortable gap between these two domains of our profession. If I wanted to contribute to knowledge in our field I had to cross a line and learn a new profession. I couldn't do it from within my own profession as a practitioner. It was disturbing to find that my years of clinical experience offered little or no added value to the new role of researcher that I was learning.

The gap as a knowledge creation problem

Annette Fisher, my clinical supervisor, often says that as practitioners we are engaged in ongoing research whether we like it or not. Good practitioners are reflective and are always learning, forming new ideas, hypotheses and theories and applying them into their work. They also collect enormous amounts of data in the course of their work that could shed light on many aspects and issues in our profession.

However, if practitioners wish to share the knowledge they generate with the academic side of our field their options are limited. The knowledge practitioners generate would normally be considered anecdotal and not scientifically rigorous. Practitioners are not necessarily familiar with accepted research methods. We do not necessarily follow the accepted protocols, nor are we always familiar with the right vocabulary or required writing style and ways of presenting data. We also do not have the time to engage in research as a priority, as our main occupation is practice. It is where our particular talents and interests are best expressed, and where our livelihood comes from.

Writing this paper highlighted what I have come to think of as a second-class status of practitioners in the knowledge creation domain of our field. Unless a practitioner is enrolled as a student or happens to be a staff member at an academic institution, he or she has no access to scholarly databases. Private access to these resources is prohibitively expensive, causing us to be cut off from the scholarly literature.

I was unable to find any papers about this topic in our own field. I don't know if this is because not much has been written, or because my access was limited. As a result I cannot position my paper properly within a relevant context, which severely compromises its quality.

Even if I did have access to scholarly resources and even if my research methods were accepted, chances are that I would not be able to publish my work in prestigious, well-respected academic journals. This is because I am not affiliated with a university or mainstream research institute. A sole practitioner is a non-entity in the scholarly domain of our field. We cannot feed our knowledge into existing academic research and our type of knowledge has little chance of being taken into account in policy-making.

How we understand the nature of this gap will determine the ways in which we try to bridge it. It is important however to consider that if we approach this gap only as a matter of information transfer (from academics to practitioners), we effectively keep the status quo. It means that we continue to believe that knowledge creation is only the preserve of academics, and that the practitioner's role is predominantly to absorb this knowledge and apply it in one's practice. This paradigm is problematic because, as I said before, it implies that practitioners have nothing useful to contribute and that the only valid knowledge comes from academia.

Is this gap bad for our field?

Bartunek (2007), who writes in the field of management, describes the academic and practitioner communities as "not-so-parallel poles…solid, separate and challenging for each other to penetrate." (p. 1323) She goes on to describe the anxiety that practitioners can experience when trying to fully understand the language of research, which limits their ability engage with research data and apply them in their practice.

Hyatt et al. (1997) argue that there is a growing gap between the practitioner and the academic in industrial and organisational psychology. They say that "practitioners still complain that academics don't do relevant research that can inform the needs of organisations, while academics still complain that the research conducted by practitioners is too messy – or 'not scientifically interesting'." According to them, "… academicians and practitioners rarely work together to develop a mutually beneficial outcome."

Writing in the field of professional communication, Cheng et al. (2009) argue that understanding in their discipline can be enhanced by studies "…conducted by the professionals themselves, because they are the insiders in their professions…" But they argue that the "…difficulty lies in the fact that many professional practitioners do not have the appropriate background in analysing discourse, or more precisely, in talking about their research in a way which is recognised [in their field]" (pp. vii-viii). According to this view the discipline is missing out on the valuable, real-life knowledge that practitioners have to offer.

In a study by Hughes et al. (2011) about the collaboration between academics and

practitioners in management "one of the most consistent findings was that practitioners seldom read academic journals and when they do, they are put off by the language, content and style" (p. 47). They express concern that management schools "may lose their legitimacy if their research is seen as irrelevant" (p. 41). I wonder if the same could happen to counselling and psychotherapy schools. Hughes et al. cite Van Aken who argued that "successful scholarship requires a partnership between the explanatory sciences (where the output is a causal model developed in controlled conditions)" and the practical side of the field.

Ways forward?

As I mentioned earlier, how we understand the gap determines the ideas we develop to bridge it.

Enhancing the existing one-directional paradigm

Although the communication between the academic and practitioner is currently mostly one-directional, in the short-term perhaps even this can be improved. When Bartunek (2007) asked scholar-practitioners "what would help management research have an impact on practice, they spontaneously replied that emotion was required" (p. 1326). I wonder if the same applies in our profession. Is it possible that research would be more likely to be read and applied by practitioners if it was conveyed with more emotion? Perhaps as Bartunek comments, practitioners are "likely to respond more positively to language that wins both their hearts and minds" (p. 1327). This suggests that we need to look at the language used in research publications as well as the differences in personality between those who are attracted to practice, and those who are attracted to research as it is currently done.

The geography and politics of knowledge creation

In the longer term we need to find ways to allow practitioners to contribute to knowledge creation in their natural environment, without requiring either that they change their profession or location, or reduce their practice time in favour of separate research activities.

Processes and procedures will be needed to allow for diversity of knowledge to be developed, at the same time as maintaining rigour, relevance and data protection. We might need to validate knowledge obtained in a variety of ways, not only through controlled studies. We might also need to expand even qualitative research paradigms and methods. Processes and models for collaborative research will need to include structures and protocols to enable academics and practitioners to interact regularly and productively. Practitioners need to be given the opportunity to feed research ideas into academia without becoming student researchers. (This paper is an example of this.)

An example of a positive move in the right direction is The Scottish Voluntary Sector Counselling Practice Research Network (2012), a collaborative project funded and supported by the University of Abertay Dundee and COSCA. This initiative however, does not include private practitioners.

Access to research information and resources

Practitioners will need access to the same information resources available to academic researchers if they are to contribute to knowledge creation. This could be done through a scheme that will allow interested practitioners to become unpaid affiliates in relevant university departments.

Research is needed

Based on my experience I hypothesise that there is a gap in our field between academics and practitioners, that a most worrying aspect of this gap is the exclusion of practitioners from knowledge creation and that this gap is bad for our field. Research is needed in order to test these hypotheses.

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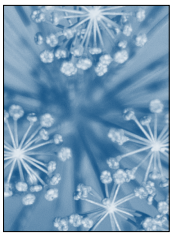

Confidentiality, Couples and Secrets:

a re-evaluation of practice

Anne Chilton

Working with couples is different to working with individuals; it's complex, often messy and presents different challenges. I am not saying that working with individuals isn't, but we work with dilemmas, which don't usually emerge in individual work – dilemmas which challenge not only our practice but also the ethical underpinnings of the work. Situations such as when couple counsellors see couples for individual sessions, as part of the joint work, where information can be disclosed which is unknown to the absent partner. How do couple counsellors work ethically to support couples and not become collusive in holding secrets or private information in such situations?

It's a subject that has scratched around on the edges of my consciousness for years. It rises to the surface every so often but I never seem to find a clear, straightforward answer. As a new counsellor back in the early 1980s I was told pointedly that if couples were seen for individual sessions then you had a very clear "I will hold no secrets" contract with them. We had to make a contract that any information disclosed within an individual session must be available for disclosure in any subsequent joint sessions. However, what I soon discovered was that it didn't matter how tight the contract was, in the privacy of a one to one session the client may well disclose information that the other partner does not know about. It usually isn't a thought out thing, it often just emerges. And yet, once said, it cannot be unsaid, nor can it be unheard or unknown by the counsellor and hereby the dilemma sits in waiting.

The client who discloses they are still having an affair and then says they do not want this information disclosed to their partner; they hadn't intended to say it; it just slipped out in the privacy of the moment. Regardless of the contract agreed at the start, the client can still withdraw their consent for future disclosure. Is the counsellor the bearer of bad news, do they collude and not share and what might the other partner feel about having been told or not told? Does the counsellor end up being the messenger (who could well be metaphorically shot) or subject to a collusive relationship with the discloser? Neither position is particularly comfortable and presents particular ethical dilemmas.

I presented the results of research I carried out on the issue at the recent COSCA Counselling Research Dialogue. The initial response was that if it's such a complex, tricky situation, why do it, why not just see couples together and never see them individually? It's a valid point, however, to do this would mean that we had to negate and ignore all the long standing research evidence about safe practice with couples, particularly if issues such as domestic abuse might be relevant, (Bograd, M and Mederos, F. 1999). Within Relationships Scotland couples are now routinely seen for individual sessions. If any risk factors present themselves, as in some cases, working with the couple together might be contra-indicated and have the potential to cause more harm than good; offering couples only joint sessions is not an option we would pursue.

> *M has attempted suicide three times in the past year. In an individual session their partner N is able to say that they want to leave the relationship and the suicide attempts occur whenever they say they are leaving. N feels coerced into staying.*

Never seeing couples for individual sessions could result in the issue being backed into a dark corner. Whilst it might have seemed a straightforward solution, it doesn't really step into the heart of the complexity with all its shades of grey. When I started to explore this issue of how we deal with secrets in couple work I naively thought there would be a rich academic well to draw from. However, a literature search revealed very few articles or references on the subject and those

were American sources, (Weeks, Gambescia and Jenkins, 2003; Weeks, Odell and Methven, 2005; Bass and Quimby, 2006; Leavitt, 2010). The message from each of the articles was that the situation is "tricky" and care should be taken in contracting.

Is it a problem for others as well?

While most evidence comes from America, I was curious as to how practitioners in this country worked, particularly in Relationships Scotland, the largest couple counselling agency in Scotland. I sent a questionnaire to all of the agency's currently practicing counsellors (about 120). I wanted to know if this was the difficulty I thought it was and how couple counsellors managed the situation.

I received 42 responses (35%).

- 95% of respondents had been told something in an individual session that the other partner did not know.
- 69% of respondents felt conflicted if given secret information.
- 67% felt the secret information given could be harmful to the absent partner if known.

Asking how counsellors felt if given secret information:

- 69.2% of respondents felt conflicted if given information the absent partner didn't know.
- 34.6% felt protective towards the absent partner.
- 23.1% felt they were excluding the absent partner.
- 11.5% felt angry, upset, disloyal.

Even with a small sample number it was clear that this was a difficulty and that it caused some disquiet for counsellors.

I asked how counsellors contracted with their clients:

- 58% said they had a no secrets contract.
- 15% said they would hold secrets.
- 18% said they didn't re contract when seeing. clients for individual sessions.
- 21% skipped the question – they weren't telling!

Viewing this alongside the findings stated previously that 95% of respondents had been given secret information and that 67% felt that the information disclosed could be seen as potentially harmful to the unknowing partner we have the makings of a conundrum. Some of those with the "no secrets" contracts have in all likelihood been given secret information, so what use is such a contract?

What sort of secrets?

It might be helpful to consider some of the information that might be disclosed and the impacts it might have on the counselling.

> *B and G have been seen for 6 joint sessions; they came due to G's discovery of B's affair. G isn't well so B comes alone and reveals that the affair is still continuing.*

Not all disclosures are secrets. We need to distinguish between what might be considered secret information – or information that could be harmful to the absent partner if known.

> *C arrives alone for a scheduled joint session. C discloses that they have run up debts through on line gambling and their home is at risk they don't know how to tell their partner.*

Private information – which is private and personal to the discloser and which whilst might cause upset to the partner is not considered harmful.

The couple come as L feels H is distant and they are not talking like they used to. In the individual session H says she has recently been contacted by a child she gave up for adoption 30 years ago. Her partner does not know about the child. She doesn't know if she wants to meet the child or not.

And taboo issues – those issues which the couple consciously collude to keep out of the relationship – issues that they cannot discuss.

The couple came for counselling as R feels W has lost interest in sex. In the individual session W discloses that she has never climaxed during sex but has faked it on most occasions. R thinks sex is great for her.

We also have to consider that sometimes the disclosure of information in the individual session might be helpful to the client. It might give them the space to hear their own thoughts and explore options without their partner being there.

S and P come for counselling as S wants to start a family but P isn't sure. In the individual session P discloses that he has been having unprotected sex with men he meets on line. He is unsure of his sexual orientation.

However, this can still place the counsellor in an ethically challenging position. They can be drawn into potentially collusive positions, in effect becoming the holder of a secret which can then create a barrier within the couple counselling. The unknowing partner potentially is excluded, whilst their partner and counsellor become entwined within the secrets tendrils, potentially choking the therapeutic relationship.

The unknowing partner then may have to deal with the effects and impacts of discovering that they have been excluded from information that may well have had relevance on their view of the relationship. They may view it as a betrayal of trust and an ethical breech, between them and the counsellor.

Who is the client?

Again we have a big difference between individual and couple counselling. When one person walks into the counselling room there is a clear focus, one person to contract with. When couples come for counselling, there are two people carrying their relationship into the room with them. It's the part of them that they bring that is broken or hurting, something they maybe want to try to repair, or maybe leave. It's owned and carried by them equally and is a fundamental participant within the counselling process. It's the entity that we work with, monitor and observe; the real focus of the work.

Butler (Butler, M, Rodriguez M, Roper, S and Feinauer, L (2010)), postulates that in couple work the needs of "the relationship" are often ignored. He asks us to consider how we give ethical credence to "the relationship," especially as it is something which while real between the couple, does not exists in itself as a separate entity. The couple own it equally and therefore each partner has an equal right to information that might impact on their half of the relationship and the decisions they might wish to make if they were in full knowledge of all information. Butler maintains that by withholding information we are denying the unknowing partner access to information that it is their right to know.

However, this position could bring us into conflict with any confidentiality agreements we have with our clients and again raises the issue of how couple counsellors contract, with particular reference to how secrets might be managed. The issue isn't so much how we contract now, whether it's I will/ will not hold secrets contract; it's more about how that information will be handled and managed once it has been disclosed and how clients might be included, openly and transparently, in that contracting.

How contracts impact on the counselling

A contract that says "I will hold no secrets" might deter clients from being open; it might place restrictions around how much they bring to the counselling and could limit its usefulness.

On the other hand, saying that you will hold secrets may raise anxiety and fantasy in the excluded partner. They may well suspect their partner of withholding information and that the counsellor may know things that they do not. So, each form of contracting could well have detrimental and limiting effects on the counselling.

Re-evaluating confidentiality

The way forward would seem to be an open acknowledgment that secrets may well be disclosed (rather than hoping it doesn't happen), as well as accepting that seeing couples for individual sessions will be the rule and not the exception, and formulating contracts from this point of view.

Weeks (Weeks, G, Gambesicia, N and Jenkins, R (2003)) when looking specifically around issues of infidelity suggests that couple counsellors always need to contract for the possibility of secret information being disclosed and that it is done from the outset, maybe we need to consider applying it to all couple work.

Codes of Practice

As the issue presents an ethical dilemma I asked couple counsellors if they found the professional codes of practice helpful when dealing with the dilemmas with which they were presented. While 58% said they found the codes helpful, 42% felt that they did not specifically address issues that were couples based.

This seems to be a very high percentage of couple counsellors not finding the codes helpful in this particular instance. I wonder if this is because the codes of practice have been developed primarily with the one to one counselling base in mind. It may be that consideration and the implications of the one to three scenario (counsellor, two clients and their relationships) has not been fully explored or integrated into the codes.

When I consider the dilemmas faced in couple work I am often struck that, while there might be conflict around the principles embedded within the codes of practice, just as might be said for one to one counselling, in couple work the conflict is often deep within the one principle rather than as between two different principles. Working in the client's best interest and causing no harm is difficult when facing two people who have different and mutually exclusive agendas (for example, one wants to leave and the other wants to stay).

This re-evaluation of confidentiality, couples and secrets has cast light on an area of work that presents very real and challenging issues for couple counsellors and has highlighted the need for further investigation. The place of couple work within counselling has always felt to be an area of work that has existed on the sidelines, doing work that is complex and messy, yet woefully under supported. Maybe now we need to step forward and show the work we do and the ways we do it that are different to individual work.

I would be interested to hear from others their views and how they manage this tricky situation.

Relationships Scotland runs courses for new counsellors at Diploma level and a post qualifying course for experienced individual counsellors who wish to develop their skills into working with couples. Please contact Relationships Scotland for further information.

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Freirean approaches to citizenship:

Emilio Lucio-Villegas interviews Colin Kirkwood

Colin Kirkwood

How do you explain the Adult Learning Project?

The Adult Learning Project (ALP for short) was founded in 1979 in Gorgie Dalry in Edinburgh. It was an initiative of the South West Edinburgh Area Team of the Community Education Service of Lothian Regional Council, led by Fraser Patrick. ALP was initially funded for three years by an urban aid grant from the Scottish Office. As a result of ALP's success, urban aid funding was extended for a further three years, and funding was later taken over by Lothian Regional Council and later by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Traditionally adult education in Scotland was (and still is) based on the study of separate subjects or skills. The original idea for an adult learning project in Gorgie Dalry was that people should study the subjects and skills they wanted to study, incorporating a notion of local community control. However, before the urban aid application was submitted to the Scottish Office, Fraser Patrick decided instead to base ALP on a translation and adaptation of the ideas and methods of Paulo Freire. This meant that ALP would involve people living in Gorgie Dalry in identifying the significant situations and concerns of their lives, codifying them in visual, auditory or written form, or some combination of these, decoding the codifications in groups and identifying the emerging themes. Programmes of learning would then be constructed based on these emerging themes, involving as many of the people of the area as possible.

Once ALP was established, this process was indeed undertaken. The key methodological sequence of the approach developed was:

- Say your own word
- Presentation by expert
- Dialogue.

Coordinators led the learning programmes, and out of them came various projects including community action programmes such as Play in the Terraces, and workshops like the Photo Workshop and the Writers' Workshop.

This sequence of initial investigation, codification and decoding, identification of themes, creation of learning programmes, leading to implementation, has been repeated throughout the life of ALP, and is one of its principal distinguishing features.

In Spain, adult education is usually connected with schools and government. But ALP is linked with community work and does not appear to depend exclusively on the City of Edinburgh Council. How does ALP work?

In Scotland, adult education is provided by a variety of organisations funded directly or indirectly by local and/or central government. These include the Community Education Service (now called Community Learning and Development) of local councils; the Workers' Educational Association (a nationwide voluntary organisation funded by local and central government); the Open University, and the Adult Continuing/Lifelong Learning departments of other Universities; the Colleges of Further Education (probably the biggest single provider in terms of volume); and also some private sector providers.

So in this sense the organisation and funding of adult education in Scotland is not unlike that in Spain.

ALP itself, contrary to the impression given in your question, was founded by local government (Lothian Regional Council) and now forms a small part of the work of the Children and Families Department of the City of Edinburgh Council.

What makes ALP unique in Scotland as in Britain as a whole is that it is based on the ideas and methods of Paulo Freire. Attempts have been

made to adopt a Freirean approach in other areas but they have not been successful in the longer run, although the work of ALP and the ideas of Freire have continued to be widely influential in many domains.

ALP includes a community work, or perhaps we should say a community action, dimension partly because of ALP's commitment to engaged citizenship and activity arising from learning programmes. And partly because it belongs to a modern tradition in radical adult education in Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland, which links adult education with community work, action and development.

ALP does in fact depend on the City of Edinburgh Council: the salaries of the workers, the office space, the equipment, the rooms and halls used for learning programmes and workshops are all provided by the council. But ALP also enjoys a great deal of autonomy and raises a lot of money through its ceilidhs and other events, which it uses to fund much of its learning and development work. And ALP has a crucial, vibrant dimension of student and teacher democracy: the ALP Association, which runs ALP. Every learning programme, workshop and action group has a representative on the ALP Association, and several times a year the members of all the groups meet, for conference and celebration, in the ALP Gaithrins. In addition, a number of ALP initiatives have led to the creation of independent, self-funding organisations such as the Scots Music Group.

In the ALP book, you devote many pages, including a glossary, to explaining Paulo Freire's thought. What is the influence of Freire's work and his ideas on ALP?

ALP is grounded in the ideas and methods of Paulo Freire: his work is literally fundamental to the life of ALP. The ALP workers recurrently run courses on Freire's ideas and practices, so that new people can continue to learn about his work. When new tutors are invited to lead learning groups in ALP, they are encouraged to read Freire's books and the ALP book, and to work dialogically.

But ALP is not slavishly devoted to a literal reading of Freire. It is constantly trying to adapt his ideas to the evolving context of local, Scottish, British and global society and culture. This involves reinventing his ideas in flexible and imaginative ways, and supporting cultural exchanges with projects in other countries such as South Africa, Ireland, Portugal and Brittany in France.

The best way to understand the influence of Freire on ALP is to read the new Castillian and Valencian translations of the ALP book, including the new chapter seven, written by Vernon Galloway, Stan Reeves and Nancy Somerville, which brings the story of ALP up to date.

Sometimes people involved in adult education and community work are unable to move on and make space for new people to come in. How has ALP managed to change and develop in this way?

ALP has generated an unusual combination of continuity and change. In terms of key personnel, of the four original ALP workers, (Stan Reeves, Fiona McCall, Gerri Kirkwood and Joan Bree), Fiona moved on after four years and is now a trainer and supervisor of counsellors. Gerri moved after ten years to become Assistant Principal of a Community School. Joan moved after twenty years to become an administrator in a larger voluntary organisation.

Stan Reeves has continued to work in ALP from 1979 until today. He has been a constant source of inspiration, reinvention and renewal of ALP, partly because of his charismatic and dialogical personality, partly because he has always sought

and welcomed involvement from new people, partly because he generates imaginative new applications of Freire's basic assumptions, and partly because as well as being an outstanding adult educator he is also a practising musician (he plays the accordion and other instruments) and a leading figure in the current revival of Scottish traditional music.

This combination of continuity, change and renewal has encouraged many other creative figures to come in and make their mark in ALP.

Another factor is ALP's commitment to outward looking social and democratic involvement. This applies not only within the project but has enabled ALP to make generative links with the women's movement, the community land and ecological movements, refugee organisations and contemporary writing, photography, music and political movements.

In this sense, ALP is an open system.

Some of the people living in Edinburgh and involved in ALP are immigrants. What work is ALP doing in collaboration with immigrants? What are the challenges for adult education with immigrants?

ALP workers and learner/activists have always been aware that, as Galloway, Reeves and Somerville have argued, the theme of culture would have to take on a multicultural dimension. Throughout the life of ALP they have collaborated with a variety of immigrant groups including people from Asia, the Middle East, the former Soviet Union, Latin America and eastern and middle Europe. They have worked closely with the Scottish Refugee Council, and it was in the course of this collaboration that ALP evolved an effective and popular model of cross-cultural working called The Welcoming, which is described in the new chapter of the ALP book.

A key challenge of working with immigrants is to achieve practical and dialogical ways of bridging gaps of language and culture. This is done through weekly encounters between local community learner activists and recently arrived immigrants and asylum seekers, including sharing a meal, discussing contemporary situations in Scotland and in the countries of origin of the asylum seekers and immigrants, language classes in English for speakers of other languages, and celebratory cross-cultural performances of music and dancing.

One of the learning programmes in the ALP book is entitled "On Being Scottish." In a globalising world, what is the role of adult education in helping people to recover, maintain and develop their own identity?

The acceleration of technological development, whether in the field of information and communication technologies, or technologies of transport, armaments, and the production, packaging and distribution of food, is one of the principal drivers of the globalising trend. Other factors include the widespread adoption of the assumption that economic growth is a permanent necessity, the development of an increasingly reckless global finance industry, and the deliberate encouragement of inequality and the exploitation of low-paid workers in increasingly under-regulated 'free' markets. Setting these socio-techno-economic features against a broader backcloth of the arrogance of some aspects of science and the disparagement of religion helps us to understand why trends of deracination, individualism, narcissism, hedonism and celebritism are running rampant. The distinction between descriptive and normative discourses (that is, between "is" and "ought" statements) is being eroded, and – in the higher echelons of society – ethics is being reinvented on the basis of a combination of merely statistical norms on the one hand and power manoeuvres by dominant elites on the other. A view of society as a kind of rational

machine driven by wealth creation and the pleasure principle is gaining ground, and the recognition of the significance of the personal, the communal and the traditional is being squeezed out, to be replaced by a combination of George Orwell's 1984 and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*.

In such a context it is tempting to conceptualise the task of adult education in terms of the recovery of personal, social and national identity, but while this is part of the task, it is not the whole of it. Identity is vital to human beings, but identity is meaningful as an integral part of a culture in which notions of the personal, of persons in community, and of the just and good society which supports the well-being and flourishing of all its members, are convincingly embedded as practices and aspirations. This is the process of liberation to which Paulo Freire's ideas and practices summon us, the utopia towards which they point, which we reaffirm and seek to constitute in our practice of adult education.

In short, identity has always been a central component of the work of ALP but not the whole of it. Without the affirmation and search for social justice and the denunciation of exploitation and manipulation, locally, nationally and globally, it becomes separated from its roots.

One of the European Union's fetish words is "citizenship". How does ALP help people to become citizens? How can adult education in general encourage people to exercise citizenship?

These questions are important and invite an extended essay which we are not in a position to undertake at present! Instead we will attempt to outline briefly a Freirean/personalist position on citizenship. Freire postulates that human beings are persons, to be regarded as subjects who know and act, rather than objects which are known and acted upon. His view of education is that our engagement as subjects with the significant situations and concerns of our lives is fundamental, not incidental. We cannot do this on our own, but together as persons in relation. Freire is aware of the danger of what he calls massification: people are not to be manipulated or treated as stage armies. He takes a very specific view of political leadership. He admires strong, principled, visionary leaders who are fighting to create the good society and who engage with oppressed people as persons involved in a struggle for liberation. He includes among such leaders Antonio Gramsci, Fidel Castro, and Amilcar Cabral. He also admired Mao Tse Tung and Julius Nyerere. With the benefit of hindsight, we can question some of his choices, but the principles underlying his position are clear.

Freire also makes a valuable distinction between the popular and the populist. For him, the term "popular" means "of the people" in a genuine sense. He talks about "popular power" and "popular knowledge". The "populist", on the other hand, is a quality of the attitude and behaviour of leaders who, as Freire puts it, shuttle back and forth between the elites and the people, who use popular images, ideas and values to manipulate people, thus objectifying them.

It is against this background of assumptions that we can approach an understanding of a Freirean view of citizenship. Citizenship derives from the Latin words "civis," meaning citizen, and "civitas," meaning the body of citizens in a city or other significant settlement or community. It refers in modern times to the rights and responsibilities of free people in a state. Historically it can be linked to the concept of democracy in the Greek city state, to the experience of citizens of the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire, and more recently those of liberal, social and so-called people's democracies. These considerations encapsulate the potential and also the limitations of the concept of citizenship. Its potential is to

value and entrench the contributions of each and every person in a society. Its limitations derive from the extent to which it is associated with the exercise of political power by politicians in any society. Too often in liberal, social and people's democracies, the deployment of the rhetoric of citizenship has been associated with pressures exerted on citizens by politicians or demagogues in relation to objectives of dubious value imposed from above.

It was in response to such considerations that the early Christians tried to formulate ways of combining citizenship with Christianity. The idea of being simultaneously a citizen of Rome and a Christian was intended to enable Christians to withstand political manipulation without becoming merely oppositional. Freire's work can be seen as a modern extension of this tradition. Citizenship is important for Freire, but he sees the citizen as a person, and the "civitas" as a body of persons in relation or persons in community. This view of citizenship places the role of the person-as-citizen at the heart of Freirean pedagogy, seeking to insulate it (ethically but not experientially) from the impact of manipulation and demagoguery, without devaluing genuine leadership.

The emerging themes, the meaningful thematics, of any Freirean learning programme derive not from the current priorities of national governments or the European Union, although these may be powerfully influential. But it is open to all such bodies to align themselves with and resource programmes of education based on a Freirean perspective. It is not a matter of being "in and against the state" but of being simultaneously inside and beyond the state. It is in this sense that adult education can encourage and support citizenship. ALP programmes of learning encourage citizenship unlimited by, in the sense of going beyond, narrowly political considerations.

For me, one of the most important and interesting aspects of the ALP book is the connection between adult education and community work. What is the key to this connection?

When Scottish readers began to engage with Freire's writings (particularly *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and *Cultural Action for Freedom*) in the 1970s, we were particularly impressed by Freire's notion that learning programmes were not ends in themselves, for the sake of study alone, but parts of a process of engaging persons as citizens in reflective action in the communities in which they lived and worked. This was what so impressed us about his early work in Recife and Pernambuco in north east Brazil. The educational work had outcomes in terms of cultural action both to celebrate the way of life of the people and to address specific existential problems and injustices in their circumstances through reflective popular action.

In Britain as a whole, and specifically in Scotland, we were familiar with the theory of community development applied in the British Empire as many of its constituent peoples struggled to achieve political independence. Some of us had been employed as community workers on community development projects in so-called areas of deprivation, funded by central and local government or by voluntary agencies. And others had been involved in autonomous community action in inner cities and peripheral housing schemes throughout the UK. One of the major criticisms of community development and community action was that such phenomena confined their concerns to geographically circumscribed areas as if the problems originated and could be solved there. Contrary to this view, it was argued that while community and community action were important values, questions of poverty, deprivation and alienation were not caused by factors originating within circumscribed localities, but were the effects of social and economic relationships and

values across society as a whole: local, regional, national and global. Nevertheless there was an acknowledgement that people live and form relationships in communities of place as well as communities of work and interest, and that all of these were appropriate starting points for learning, analysis and action.

In Freire's writing we found explicit confirmation of our view that poverty and exploitation could not be understood with reference to circumscribed localities but in terms of larger totalities; but equally that this did not invalidate starting from where people live and work.

For ALP, community action was a natural outcome of adult learning, and sometimes also, depending on the nature of the problem, an appropriate starting point for adult learning. Throughout the life of ALP, this has been the case, whether the learning and action takes place in a locality, at national level, or in a community of interest.

Some people say that Freire's theory and methodology is only valid in the third world. How do you justify the translation and adaptation of Freire's work in a first world setting by ALP?

Paulo Freire in his writings always respects the particularity and uniqueness of every community, every language, every culture. Simply to carry over a practice from one society or culture into another and implement it there is likely to involve processes of imposition, which he describes as cultural invasion. But that does not mean that he believes in cultural apartheid! Ideas and practices generated in specific socio-cultural contexts have a kind of freedom: they can take off, fly away and land in many other – very different – socio-cultural contexts where they may unexpectedly put down roots and flourish in new forms. What is important in such processes of geographical and cultural translocation is the dimension of translation into other languages, entailing processes of encounter, engagement, dialogue and connection-making. This can happen at both conscious and unconscious levels. In a fascinating interview with Sister Margaret Costigan published by the WEA in Scotland in 1982, Paulo Freire said: "You have the third world inside you." In such complex relationships, insights, ideas and practices from one setting undergo adaptation and reinvention in the new setting.

Such were the processes that occurred in the course of the arrival of Freirean ideas in Scotland in the 1970s. We read Freire's books. We struggled with the translation of certain concepts from Romance languages, and specifically from Brazilian Portuguese, into English. We grappled with the application of Freire's ideas and practices in our specific first world setting. In the course of these processes of engagement we realised that the Freirean synthesis was not purely Brazilian. He had drawn together ideas from a whole spectrum of traditions and just about every corner of the globe, integrating and applying them in his own lived reality, his region of origin in the north east of Brazil. We realised also that no socio-cultural context is entirely *sui generis* or self-contained. Ideas and practices travel, translate, adapt, take root, co-habit, marry. The challenge for us in Scotland was to engage with, understand and adapt Freire in a Scottish situation. We found that it was possible, immensely refreshing, and generated enormous energy. Paradoxically, it highlighted the underdeveloped nature of democracy in Scotland! The ALP book, and its update in chapter seven, tells the story of what happened from there.

The main problem we faced was not popular resistance, but intellectual resistance in certain quarters, a kind of combination of first-world cultural arrogance and unconscious racism. Indeed, one of us was asked in an interview for a job in a Scottish University by a British professor of

education: why should we be interested in the ideas of a Brazilian adult educator?

What in your opinion is the significance of adult education and literacy work in so-called developed and developing countries today?

In one sense the power of education and the fundamental importance of literacy, that is, the development of the ability to master and make critical use of a range of languages to name, know and act on the world will continue to be as significant as ever.

What is changing rapidly is the technology of information and communication and other technologies, and their relationships to the exercise of power in the world. Alongside these changes and dynamically interacting with them are changes in the dominant values of society.

To begin with information technology: within the last fifty years we have witnessed the development and spread of such media as television, computers, mobile phones and the internet. These are being used to generate new means of manipulation, control and wealth by power elites everywhere across the globe. To give one important example, they have enabled those wielding political, economic and financial power to know with much greater accuracy what public opinion is and to follow its changes day by day, week by week, month by month. The power elites have learned how to follow the flows and eddies of opinion, and how to channel it, so that they can keep in tune with it and adapt their presentation, policies and practices in order to maximise their power, wealth and control.

This connects with current changes in dominant values. In the past several thousand years, which we might call the period of organised religion, certain values came to predominance. These included the ideas of love, compassion, forgiveness, cooperation, service, reverence for the whole of creation, the valuing of all forms of life, and respect for others as persons. They were accompanied by specific values associated with thought, language and action. The dominance of the idea of truth and truthfulness had as a universally accepted implication that, so far as practically possible, there should be a correspondence, a consistency, between what people thought, what they said or communicated, and what they did. This assumption has been significantly undermined.

There had, of course, also been other powerful values associated with coercion, deceit, dissimulation, cruelty and violence, but these were held in check to some extent by the countervailing power of the values associated with religion. The obvious example is the dialectical (and dialogical) relationship between Imperial Rome and the Christian religion.

In the 20th century, alongside the gradual decline of religion and the disastrous failure of Soviet and Chinese communism, we have seen the rise in the power of science and the development of the technologies it has generated. The old values promoted by religion have declined as religion itself has declined. Countervailing values have emerged including the notion of society as a rational machine and the dominance of the pleasure principle; the influence of relativism (the notion that, since knowledge and values are determined by circumstances and preferences, with changed circumstances and preferences come changed values); and the influence of nihilism (the notion that since there are no fundamental or foundational values, all values and processes of arriving at values can be undermined: anything goes). The notion of a distinction between "is" and "ought" statements is also undermined by the same processes. The specific discourses associated with upholding and following good ways of life, and creating good societies are also undermined and replaced by

scientific and technological advances, which are held by many to be value-free.

In the face of all this, there is no need to despair, but a need to hope, speak out and act in accordance with one's conscience. We need to reaffirm and also reinvent the values previously associated with religion, and engage in dialogue with science and technology to re-stimulate the recognition of positive and negative values.

It is to this project that Paulo Freire's ideas and practices make an immense contribution. Freire and the other personalist thinkers (John Macmurray, Martin Buber, Emanuel Mounier) are 20th century prophets for the 21st and succeeding centuries. We are entering a new era of encounter between the power of empire and the power of compassion. Freirean adult education and literacy work, conceived as cultural action for freedom, have a vital role to play in the reaffirmation of the good way of life and the struggle to create the good society.

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Pre-Therapy Contact Reflections

and helping relationships

Pam Courcha

I first discovered contact reflections in 1994 as a student on a Person Centred Diploma course. A workshop about pre-therapy resonated with me. The basic concept that people who normally have difficulty in making psychological contact with others but can be helped to do so instinctively fitted with my values and passion about people being heard. Pre-therapy seemed to me to be about inclusivity in helping relationships and therapy and spoke to the part of me that deeply values every person no matter what their personal challenges may be. More importantly it was about trying to help people to communicate and thus feel valued so that they could engage in a relationship with a carer or therapist. So what is pre-therapy and what are contact reflections?

Pre-therapy

Pre-therapy evolved from the concept of psychological contact between two people, as expressed by Carl Rogers (1959) when stating the conditions he thought necessary for therapeutic change. He said that psychological contact needs to be a "minimal relationship" and suggested that it is a pre-condition for therapy. This would suggest that people with cognitive impairment, experiencing psychosis, dementia, learning disability, brain injury and so on, would not be able to engage in a therapeutic encounter because of the difficulty in making psychological contact with another person.

Garry Prouty, an American psychologist, developed pre-therapy as a pre-condition for person-centred therapy with people who are contact impaired (Prouty, 2008). Much of his early work was with people living in large psychiatric institutions and who were experiencing extreme psychotic withdrawal. The theoretical approach involves three elements: contact functions, contact reflections, and contact behaviours (Prouty, Van Werde, & Portner 2002). A person may lose some or all contact functions for a variety of reasons, such as those stated above.

Contact functions are ways of being a fully functioning person in contact with reality, aware of ourselves and able to communicate with others. Specifically, reality contact is being aware of people, places, things and events; affective contact is someone being aware of their own feelings and emotions; and communicative contact is the meaningful expression of the person's world to others, usually through words and sentences. We can recognise these functions if we think about all the ways in which we experience our own life.

Contact reflections are used to help restore or develop psychological contact. Using reflections is common across different counselling approaches and is also taught to those training in counselling skills who may be working in other roles such as nurses, teachers and carers. However, contact reflections are very specific and "point to the concrete" in the client's behaviour or surroundings (Prouty, 2008). There are five types of contact reflection: situational, facial, body, word-for-word and reiterative. Contact reflections will usually be verbal responses but can include physical responses such as nodding when the client nods.

The aim is to offer empathic, respectful reflection of what the client is "communicating" and through this approach to facilitate communicative contact.

Contact behaviours indicate the extent to which the client is in psychological contact. Prouty (2008) referred to pre-expressive functioning when someone is out of contact and expressive functioning when they are fully in contact. This was further developed by Van Werde (2002) who described "grey zone" functioning as when someone moves in and out of pre-expressive and expressive states. For example, someone with dementia may appear to be in contact but soon they are not able to engage with another person in any meaningful way, yet later on they may be able to express their emotions.

The development of pre-therapy has been largely through the work of The Pre-Therapy International Network. Much of the evidence for the effectiveness of pre-therapy has come from reports of clinical practice and the experience of using contact reflections in non clinical settings, though the amount of research is comparatively small. However, Dekeyser, Prouty and Elliott (2008) reviewed research instruments and findings on pre-therapy, including contact reflections. They report that research findings generally support the view that contact reflections help facilitate client communicative contact which in turn helps the client to form relationships with others.

Contact Reflections

Contact reflections are sensitive to the client's behaviour and "repeatedly re-present the commonplace reality of the environment" (Sanders, 2007). They are nondirective and person centred and do not aim to be intrusive. Dodds (2008) talks of "the gentleness that flows from attempting to establish contact prior to performing care tasks" (p. 70) when working with care givers in a residential setting.

Sanders (2007) suggests likely benefits of contact work for the client include building trust, being able to make informed choices, being more able to participate in daily activities, and reducing distress. He goes on to say that using contact reflections can benefit staff in helping them to be better able to engage with their clients and be more satisfied with their job.

As stated already there are five types of contact reflections which are illustrated below with examples.

Situational reflections reflect the environment in which the interaction takes place. These reflections could include, for instance, commenting on the sun outside if the client looks out of the window. Other examples are comment on other people who are present, things which happen ("the door just opened"), items in the room, or even if the room feels hot or cold.

Facial reflections reflect back to the client their facial expressions verbally or by doing the same (smiling, frowning or saying "you look worried").

Body reflections include verbal and sometimes physical reflections of the client's posture ("you're sitting very straight") or their gestures and movement ("you get up and go to the window").

Word for word reflections repeat back what the client says ("you said 'Where's my tea?'," or it could be "Where's my…?" because the last part was unintelligible).

Re-iterative reflections involve repeating a reflection which seemed earlier to have facilitated communicative contact (repeating, for example, "You're sitting very straight," if the client had responded to that by saying yes or, after a pause, sitting up even more).

Using contact reflections in helping relationships

Contact reflections have been used in different settings and by practitioners who are not therapists, for example nurses and care assistants in residential settings. They are integrated into the caregiver's everyday communication with their client. Portner (2002) says: "nowhere are there so many opportunities to facilitate contact than in daily life" (p. 167). She refers to work with people with special needs and considers that using contact reflections will enable carers to better respond to the demands of day to day caring. Used in these settings contact reflections are not aimed at bringing a person, such as someone with psychosis,

into contact as a pre-condition to therapy. But they can facilitate contact for the cared for person which helps in communication with caregivers and others and therefore can enhance the quality of daily life and care, especially personal care.

Contact reflections can also be used by family carers. Catherine Clarke (Clarke, 2007) describes using contact reflections with her son who experienced mental illness. Carrick and McKenzie (2011) trained non counselling specialists who were students on a Diploma in Autism Studies to use counselling skills and contact reflections with the children they worked with. However, most examples used contact reflections within a residential setting, for example Dodds (2008), who researched what happened when nursing staff who worked with people with dementia in residential care were taught to use contact reflections. She commented that some staff were "surprised" at how using contact reflections helped people with dementia express themselves and relate to staff in different ways "beyond the seemingly possible."

However, the balance of care is now offered in the community. Government policy is to continue to support more people at home. In Scotland in March 2012 nearly 63,000 people received care in their homes (Statistics Release Home Care Services, Scotland 2012). Of these 4% had diagnosed mental health problems, 5% dementia, 7% learning disabilities. 81% were aged over 65. Home carers are working on their own in people's homes and many of the clients will be in psychological contact. But there will also be clients who move in and out of contact and are in the grey zone described by Van Werde (2002) and perhaps some who are out of contact much of the time.

I was interested to find out what happens if home care staff are trained in using contact reflections. Possibilities might be that carers could facilitate the home care client's movement toward expressive functioning and thereby enhance the relationship with the home carer. In addition, there could be benefits for clients in being able to exercise more choice over decisions regarding their care. Clients could feel better understood, more able to participate in their daily lives, to express their concerns and to feel supported. Home carers see some of their clients nearly every day and so there is an opportunity to build a helping relationship with their clients.

My research has been concerned with clients who receive home care and who have dementia, learning disability or other conditions which mean that they may not be in communicative contact with their carers and others. Home carers were given an introduction to using a person centred approach and were then trained in using contact reflections. Throughout their work with their clients they were focussed on achieving the required care tasks but sometimes found that this became easier when using contact reflections. For example, a carer was asked to go at short notice to a client she didn't know. The agency advised her that she should try to give him a shower but that he usually refused and wouldn't engage with carers. By using a simple situation contact reflection, saying only that "the shower is running" but not adding lots more chatter, she was able to shower him without any difficulty.

I will close with an example from a home carer who had used a body reflection with a lady who was at an advanced stage of dementia and it would seem that the client was brought into affective contact. The client had been repeatedly saying "Am I alright? Am I alright?" and holding her hands in her lap. The carer sat down beside the client without speaking and reflected how she was sitting including how she held her hands. The client then reached out and "caught" the carer's hands and together they sat holding hands for a long time.

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Note Keeping: COSCA's Guidance

points for organisations to consider

For counselling and counselling skills organisations, there are a number of important considerations in regard to note taking. These include the purposes and implications of taking notes, or not taking notes, the information that the notes may contain, and the possible issues arising from keeping notes.

"There is no legal requirement that all therapists keep records of all their client work" (Bond, T. & Mitchels, B. 2008). However the following guidance may be helpful when considering, and reviewing, an organisation's guidelines and procedures for note taking and keeping notes:

- In the context of a counselling and counselling skills organisation, what are notes? They can include, for example, client notes, notes for assessing and managing risk, supervision notes, report writing, a means to measure well-being as well as monitoring client care and protection. This may be information on a database and/or paper file.
- If notes are kept, does your organisation have written guidance and/or training for those involved in the delivery of counselling/ counselling skills and for how notes should be written and formatted?
- What happens when requests are received to access, or receive a copy of notes?
- How secure are the notes and records and who has access to them?
- How, and when, are the notes and records destroyed?

The following resources provide information and guidance on note taking and keeping records.

Bond. T. (2009) *Standards and Ethics for Counselling in Action.* Third edition. London: Sage.

Bond. T., and Mitchels, B. (2008) *Confidentiality and Record Keeping in Counselling and Psychotherapy.* London: BACP and Sage.

COSCA *Guide to Record Keeping* (www.cosca.org.uk).

COSCA *Statement of Ethics and Code of Practice.*

Data Protection Act, 1998.

Jenkins. P. (2007) *Counselling, Psychotherapy And the Law.* Second edition. London: Sage.

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'Power and the Training Relationship'

Tuesday 4 June 2013 9.15am – 3.45pm

OPEN SPACE at COLLEGES SCOTLAND
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Generally, in social contexts some people have more power than others. This general principle applies to the training relationships that trainers have with their participants.

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- ❏ the power relationships that are already there, created by the training relationships
- ❏ ways of increasing our awareness of both these sorts of power issues

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This workshop will address the issues of being a Supervisee and a Supervisor within a counselling agency setting.

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- ❏ Should it be compulsory?
- ❏ How does supervising in an organisation differ from supervising in other settings?
- ❏ How does being a supervisee differ in organisations?
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Forthcoming Events

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.**

2013

7 March
5th Annual Ethical Seminar
Stirling

18 March
Recognition Scheme Surgeries

4 June
COSCA 15th Annual Trainers Event
Stirling

9 July
COSCA Recognition Scheme Workshop:
Counselling Supervision in Organisations
Stirling

25 September
COSCA Annual General Meeting
Stirling

22 November
COSCA 10th Counselling Research Dialogue
Stirling

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COSCA

Counselling & Psychotherapy in Scotland

VISION

A listening, caring society that values people's well being.

PURPOSE

As Scotland's professional body for counselling and psychotherapy, 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

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