

Supporting you at each
step of your journey

bacp

British Association for
Counselling & Psychotherapy

Joining BACP: a guide to membership



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Welcome

Thank you for requesting information regarding becoming a member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

We hope the information in this booklet will give you an insight into how membership of BACP can be of benefit to you during your counselling and psychotherapy practise.

To join us and be part of the largest professional body in Europe for counselling and psychotherapy, simply complete our 'invitation to membership' application pack.

Which membership category should you join?

BACP's Member (MBACP) category is available to you if you have successfully completed and graduated from a counselling/psychotherapy course that was at least one year full time or two years part time which included a supervised placement as an integral part of the course.

Our Associate member category is more appropriate if you are directly involved in counselling and psychotherapy but; your qualifications do not meet the criterion for Member (MBACP), or your course in counselling and psychotherapy is not a minimum of one year full time or two years part time with an integral supervised placement.

Why should I join BACP?

Membership of BACP will provide you with current information, key developments, guidance, and support to aid you in your practice; some of which are detailed over page. Should you have any further questions please contact us on 01455 883300 or email bacp@bacp.co.uk.

Join BACP today and become a member of a like minded community.



While the number of opportunities for paid employment in the counselling and psychotherapy field is increasing, this by no means meets the demand from those who are professionally trained and many of these positions are part time.

To assist you in searching for your next job BACP produces an online recruitment facility called JobsOnline. JobsOnline recruitment pages are abstracted and updated weekly from a variety of sources including paid job adverts.

This is available through the members' section of our website. You can also register here for information to be sent to you directly each week by email at no extra cost.

Other publications which advertise similar vacancies are:

- Guardian (Tuesdays and Wednesdays)
- Nursing Times (weekly)
- The Voice (weekly)
- Times Educational Supplement (weekly)
- Times Higher Supplement (weekly).



BACP's professional magazine will enable you to stay informed on current practice methods and issues within the profession.



Articles cover a broad range of therapy related subjects, up to date thinking in the field, current research development, and topical and national news.

Therapy Today expands the information available to you on: other practice methods; policy and public affairs issues, consultations, and papers that BACP are responding to; book reviews by peers on newly available titles; and much more.

Keep an eye out in the magazine for the latest news regarding regulation.



Ethical Framework

Ethics helpdesk

Being a member of BACP means that you agree to abide by the *Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy*.



Knowing that you have the Ethical Framework to adhere to will give you guidance in your practice.

The BACP *Ethical Framework* is important for the protection of the public, the reputation of the Association and in upholding the standards of good practice within the profession; providing a protective yet flexible core frame of reference for BACP members.

BACP's Ethics helpdesk provides an objective sounding board should you have concerns around ethical practice.

Questions could range from difficulties about confidentiality or disclosure of client issues and sharing of information, to practical issues about appropriate conditions in which to counsel. Although the helpdesk team cannot offer advice, they may be able to offer some useful perspectives or options on the issue you present, for discussion with your supervisor prior to taking any course of action.

They can also signpost you to other helpful and appropriate organisations, publications or information sheets.



Information sheets

As a member of BACP you are able to access for free, further guidance on specific areas of counselling and psychotherapy through our information sheets.

The information sheets cover areas from *'Practical aspects of setting up a counselling service'* to *'Recognising Asperger Syndrome and its implications for therapy'*. Some of the information sheets that may be of interest to you at this stage of your career are detailed below.

Information sheets

Free access to over 50 information sheets is available to BACP members through our dedicated members' website area. Alternatively, a hard copy can be purchased at a cost of £2 each for members or £3 each for non members.

Making therapy accessible to disabled people (G11)

by Natty Triskel, Rowen Jade, Heather Weston, Wendy Patterson & Sue Atkins

This information sheet aims to help therapists improve awareness and understanding of the barriers that can exist for disabled people in accessing therapy, and to assist in compliance with legal and professional requirements. These requirements apply to all counselling and psychotherapy practitioners, whether working alone or in organisations, in private or statutory settings.

The aim is to help therapists think about their work with, for example, people who

have sensory, mobility or other physical impairments, people with learning difficulties, people experiencing emotional distress, people with cognitive or communication impairments or people with a visible difference. Although many of the examples in this information sheet refer to barriers encountered by people with physical impairments, an awareness raising and problem solving approach will help therapists to think more generally about working well with diversity.

It is equally important to address practical barriers as it is to recognise, be prepared to challenge and confront, in ourselves and others, constructs that can lead to stereotyping and to unhelpful traditional assumptions about disabled people.

Charging for therapy in private practice – pitfalls and ethical issues (P2)

by Heather Dale

This information sheet is written to help therapists who are already in, or who are thinking of going into, private practice or who otherwise directly charge clients money. Whilst it may be particularly useful for those who are currently considering the move or those who have begun private practice, it may also offer some thoughts for those who have well-established practices.

Most therapists are driven by a desire to help, so asking directly for money may feel rather odd. There may well be a conflict between the need to run a profitable business and the desire to help people in as ethical manner as possible.

It is exactly this tension between the desire to help and the need to make a living, which may lead to ethical problems and it is perhaps at its most evident in private practice, where the client pays the therapist directly.

Guidance for ethical decision making: a suggested model for practitioners (P4)

by Lynne Gabriel & Roger Casemore

This practice guideline aims to support practitioners in thinking through challenges they meet in their practice so that actions they take are likely to be ethically justifiable to clients, the profession and society in general.

When faced with challenges or dilemmas, practitioners need to make decisions and take actions based on their professional obligation to provide adequate care and attention to clients. With the introduction of the BACP *Ethical Framework*, the profession has moved from prescriptive codes to a system based on ethical mindfulness which requires practitioners to identify their own contextually appropriate standards and to decide what decisions and actions to take.

Making the contract for counselling and psychotherapy (P11)

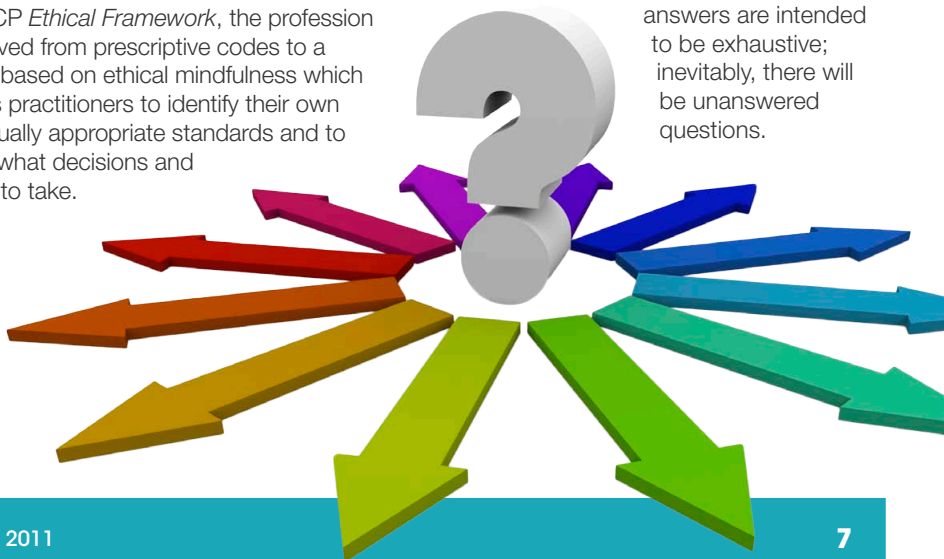
by Heather Dale

This information sheet offers some guidance about the sort of information that should be made clear to clients before, or very early on in, the counselling process. This type of information including any pre-counselling information may constitute all or part of the contract.

Making a contract is a thorny issue for many counsellors. We do not want to put off people by laying down too many rules, yet the client has a right to know what the conditions of counselling are. Poor information often leads to misunderstandings later on and, sometimes, to complaints against the counsellor. Clear contracting may help to alleviate potential sources of grievance.

This information sheet contains some commonly asked questions about making contracts and some possible answers. It is written in the form of an imaginary conversation. Neither the list

of questions nor the answers are intended to be exhaustive; inevitably, there will be unanswered questions.



CPD/Online learning

As a professional you have a responsibility to keep your skills and knowledge up to date. BACP is committed to continued professional development and is aware of a growing demand for online learning.

We are pleased to respond to this need with a series of online learning modules for counsellors, psychotherapists and other psychological practitioners. Each module comprises a single theme and you are able to dip in and out of the learning, saving work as you go along.

Current CPD modules are:

- Confidentiality: managing client confidences
- Guidance on how to bring professional obligations to a close
- Preparing for supervision and getting the most out of it
- Psychopharmacology and counselling and psychotherapy
- The counsellor's personal safety and care in the workplace

The modules are accessible, for a small fee, through the BACP website with members gaining access at a reduced fee.

Client information helpdesk

BACP's client information helpdesk provides a service to clients and potential clients to enable them to make a more informed choice with regard to choosing a counsellor/ psychotherapist, and helps them to find a suitable counsellor whom they feel comfortable with, in their particular area.

The information helpdesk team aim to address any questions and concerns that arise when choosing a counsellor, or during the counselling process, and hopefully help your client to have clearer expectations of the therapeutic process.

Seeking a Therapist

If you are looking for new clients, you can reach over 20,000* people every month by advertising your practice in the BACP *Seeking a Therapist* online directory.

Prospective clients can have confidence when choosing a therapist from our online directory as all practitioners listed must have reached a certain level of qualification, and be covered by a code of ethics and practice and a complaints procedure.

The online directory is a 'living' directory as the details are updated on the request of the applicants. To find out details regarding the fee and application process please contact BACP.

**Figure taken from Google analytics, average January–June 2010; 20,918*

Publications

Professional Lobbying

BACP publishes a wide range of books offering you guidance on good practice in a variety of settings and roles, reports on comprehensive research undertaken in a variety of settings, training and resource materials, resource directories and publications on professional conduct and ethical matters.

A current series of books we publish concerns legal resources for counselling and psychotherapy. *Therapists in court*, *Confidentiality and record keeping in counselling and psychotherapy*, and *Essential law for counsellors and psychotherapists* are aids for therapists who become involved in a court case, help provide a deeper understanding of both the legal and ethical implications of providing confidentiality and of keeping client records, and give guidance to the law for all those practising and training in the profession.

You can view details of all our publications on our website and purchase through our secure shop at www.bacp.co.uk/shop.

BACP works to support the interests of the profession, members and service users through raising awareness and understanding of psychological therapies to politicians, civil servants and opinion formers; seeking to influence decision making and legislation across all four UK countries.

BACP provides expert advice to parliamentarians through meetings, briefings, evidence to committees, responses on legislation, and communication with parliamentary groups.

To enhance our influence and bring about national policy change we also respond to a variety of consultations from other organisations and government bodies.

Our work can be seen on the BACP website or in our magazine *Therapy Today*.



Public facing website – www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk

It's good to talk



New in 2010, BACP created a website to educate and inform the public about the benefits of counselling and psychotherapy.

The website is under ongoing development and is designed to provide everything the public need to know about the therapeutic process.

There are sections aimed at answering common questions such as 'what is therapy?' and 'how to find the right therapist?', video clips of why they might consider therapy, as well as key fact sheets describing what happens in the first session and how they can get the best out of their therapist.

Online services

The internet can be an extremely cost effective tool for raising awareness, providing information, advertising, promoting and selling.

Web design/webhosting – imagine the benefits if you had a specially designed website on the internet; you could reach a new audience of potential clients. For a small monthly fee you can have your own therapy website, or we could design a basic site for you, or host your existing site.

Banner advertising – get seen over 52,000* times per month by placing a banner advert on the Seeking a Therapist online search page on our website. Your advert can appear for one, three or six months for a small monthly subscription.

**52,000 times is the number of visits to the online directory homepage however, one individual may view the homepage two or three times.*

For further details on usage, five step guidelines to help you and application forms please visit our website.

Sector specific divisions

BACP has seven divisions that specialise in providing information, literature, journals and events in sector specific areas; children and young people, coaching, healthcare, independent practitioners, pastoral and spiritual care, university and college counselling, and workplace counselling.

Membership of these sector specific divisions is valuable to anyone working within these specialist areas whether you are employed, self employed or a volunteer.



Research

BACP's Research Department aims to raise research awareness within the membership thus developing a research culture while contributing to the evidence base of counselling and psychotherapy.

As a part of our remit to promote and commission research, we are producing a series of systematic reviews of the research evidence on a number of topics.

The Research Department facilitates an online research network directory – open to all BACP members. This enables you to make direct contact with other members with similar research interests.

The network is a benefit of membership and it is searchable using keywords of topic, names or towns. There are over 550 research network members with individual interests numbering over 1,100.

Members of the Research Network also have the use of a bulletin board 'talk group' facility. This is a password-protected group and is available for network members only.

For details and joining forms for the BACP Online Research Network please contact: research@bacp.co.uk

BACP Research Conference

Built on a reputation for excellence, this two-day conference has much to offer those working in the counselling and psychotherapy world, including researchers, students, trainers, providers and practitioners. If you are interested in the development of the profession, including non-researchers, you should consider attending this conference.

For further details regarding the theme of the next Research Conference and how to submit abstracts and symposiums please visit our website at www.bacp.co.uk/research.



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