

FROM THE EDITOR

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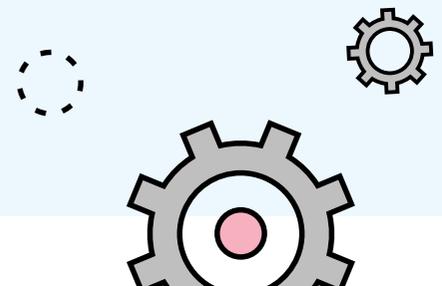
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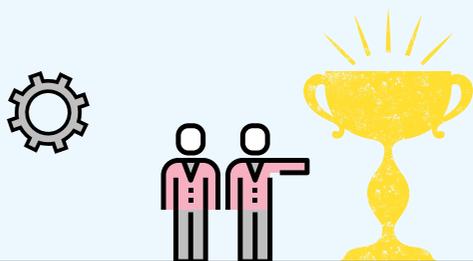
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As we move into 2017, we find ourselves in a very different world to the one we were faced with a year ago. In many ways it is a more insecure world. We are unclear what Brexit will signify for Britain, as well as what a Trump presidency means for the US and the rest of the world. In many countries, we are seeing the rise of populist politicians who represent the people's anger with the status quo and their sense of economic and political disenfranchisement. Such an environment might tempt us to draw parallels with similar periods in history and, indeed, we would be foolish to neglect the memories of those who have lived through times of political and economic turbulence in the past. But to what extent can we rely on our memories? In our lead article this issue, Neville Tomlinson considers the fallibility of memory, exploring how memories are formed and stored, as well as the topics of suppression, repression and false memories. I wonder how each of us will remember this period of history in years to come?

These times of economic and political uncertainty cannot help but have reverberations in our clinics and consulting rooms. As people feel more insecure and vulnerable, they are more likely to seek help. If we ourselves are feeling uncertain about the future, how do we ensure that we support ourselves and have proper self-care in place? As well as looking outwards to the local community, NHS mental wellbeing services need to find a way of supporting the people within their own organisations. In this issue, Teresa Jennings, Elaine Whipday, Kath Egdell, Simon Pestell and Paul Flaxman share their experience of using acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) to improve psychological health and resilience among NHS staff. ACT cultivates mindfulness and acceptance skills in order to help people become more effective at pursuing patterns of action that are consistent with their personal values. This feels to me to be particularly important in a world in which the place of values seems increasingly unclear.

The topic of values is also at the heart of Duncan Craig's article about the challenges and opportunities of achieving IAPT compliance for Survivors Manchester, a voluntary sector organisation providing counselling services for men who have been raped or sexually abused. Duncan highlights the importance of staying fixed on your goals, rather than becoming a generic organisation delivering mental health services. Survivors Manchester seems to me to be an excellent example of an organisation staying true to its identity but growing through working with the NHS.





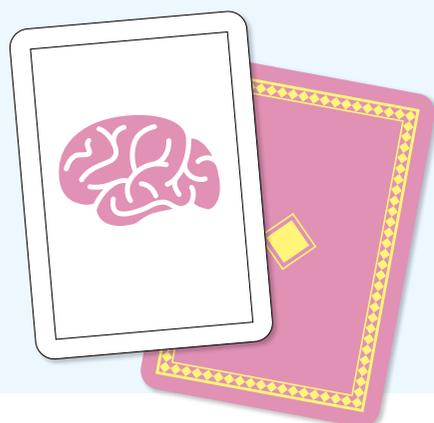
Another organisation which has grown exponentially through its work with the NHS is The Awareness Centre (TAC) in London. Karen Dempsey explains how TAC overcomes the challenges of working with more than 70 trainee therapists to deliver a successful counselling service which meets the needs of a multi-ethnic local community, providing counselling in 25 languages. The trainees provide NHS counselling in GPs' surgeries, as well as providing a low-cost counselling service at The Awareness Centre itself. The trainees come from a diverse range of backgrounds, reaching out to the multi-ethnic community that they serve. Karen writes about the challenges and opportunities of working with such a large group of trainee counsellors and psychotherapists.

In such uncertain times, it is important that we continue to support and inspire each other, sharing our successes and helping each other to address the inevitable challenges. My hope is that this journal can play a small role in creating a sense of community and connection among those of us working as counsellors and psychotherapists in and around the NHS.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to contribute an article to the journal or if you are interested in writing book reviews. Do also let me know if there are specific topics that you would like to see covered over the coming year. I look forward very much to hearing from you.



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