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Research online 2021

Live: Saturday 15 May 2021
On-demand: Saturday 15 May to Tuesday 17 August 2021

Co-hosted by: University of Salford MANCHESTER

Promoting collaboration in research, policy and practice

Draft programme

9.00 – 9.30am	Welcome to the online event with our webcast hosts **Faisal Mahmood** and **Alistair Ross** with **Clare Symons** (BACP head of Research), **Natalie Bailey** (BACP Chair) and **Margaret Rowe** (University of Salford Dean of the School of Health and Society)			
9.30 – 9.35am	Break			
	Strand 1 No additional booking required, choose which strand to watch on the day	**Strand 2** No additional booking required, choose which strand to watch on the day	**Strand 3** No additional booking required, choose which strand to watch on the day	**Workshops** Reservation required for workshop attendance - booking information will be provided in your joining instructions (2 weeks prior to event)
9.35 – 9.55am	Common practice elements of school-based trauma interventions for children and adolescents exhibiting symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder: a systematic review, **Georgina du Mello Kenyon - BACP New Researcher Award winner 2020** *Trauma, school-based counselling*	Partnerships and pathways between mental health services for students: Opportunities for Higher Education and the NHS, **Emma Broglia** *HE, NHS*	Framing recovery: Using photo elicitation as a means to facilitate service user voice in research, **Penn Smith** *Photo elicitation, recovery, IPA*	
9.55am - 10.00am	Break			
10.00am – 10.20am	Understanding the cultural perspective in BaME clients within the therapeutic setting and the vital role the therapist plays in bridging the cultural gap during assessments, **Uzma Durrani** *Assessments, BaME clients, bridging the cultural gap*	Developing a National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework for Ireland, **Jessica Surdey** *Student mental health, Suicide prevention, National policy*	Developing an evidence based supervision competence framework, **Caroline Jesper** *Supervision, competences, mixed-methods*	**10.00am – 11.00am** Developing a pluralistic framework for counselling & psychotherapy research, **Lynne Gabriel, Kate Smith, Mick Cooper, John McLeod, Julia McLeod, Marie-Clare Murphie** *Pluralistic, methodologies, social and cultural capital*
10.20am – 10.35am	Live Q&A with **Uzma Durrani**	Live Q&A with **Emma Broglia**	People of Faith: An Exploration of How Christian Counsellors Reconcile Belief in God's Influence with the Principle of Personal Autonomy, **Chris Hodgson** *Christian, God's influence, personal autonomy*	
10.35 – 10.45am	Break			
10.45am – 11.05am	The influence of heteronormativity in counselling and psychotherapy training, **Anna Constantine** *Sex, sexuality, heteronormativity, training*	Using situational analysis to research best practice in supervising experienced secondary school counsellors, **Imogen Harries** *Situational analysis, supervision, school-based counselling*	How do non-meditators learn and apply brief mindfulness-based instructions? An online qualitative study, **Betul Tatar** *Food cravings, mindfulness*	
11.05am – 11.20am	Live Q&A with **Anna Constantine**	Live Q&A with **Imogen Harries**	Moral injury: a soul wound **Alison O'Connor** *Moral injury, trauma, military veterans, COVID-19*	
11.20am – 11.25am	Break			
11.25am – 12.10pm	**Keynote:** The results of the PRaCTICED trial and implications for person-centred experiential therapy (aka CfD), delivered by **Michael Barkham**			

12.10pm – 1.00pm	Lunch			
1.00pm – 1.45pm	**Keynote:** The results of the ETHOS trial for young people and implications for person-centred therapy, delivered by **Mick Cooper**			
1.45pm – 2.30pm	Live discussion with **Mick Cooper, Michael Barkham** and **Julie May**			
2.30pm – 2.35pm	Break			
	Strand 1 No additional booking required, choose which strand to watch on the day	**Strand 2** No additional booking required, choose which strand to watch on the day	**Strand 3** No additional booking required, choose which strand to watch on the day	**Workshops** Reservation required for workshop attendance - booking information will be provided in your joining instructions (2 weeks prior to event)
2.35pm – 2.55pm	Impact of COVID-19 restrctions on BACP members and increased use of remote counselling methods, **Jennifer O'Donnell** *COVID-19, online counselling, telephone counselling*	A Therapy for the Worried Well? A Longitudinal Analysis of the Effectiveness of Person-Centred Therapy within a Sample of Suicidal Clients, **Amrita Kaur Sohal** *Effectiveness, Person-Centred Therapy, longitudinal, suicidal clients*	Collaborative Development of a National Standardised Dataset, **Emma Howard** *HE, Student Counselling Services*	
2.55pm – 3.00pm	Break			
3.00pm – 3.20pm	Practitioner understanding, experiences and perceptions of online synchronous therapy, **Jeanette Roddy** *Online counselling, synchronous, video counselling*	Putting the client first - Creating a learning community in a practice, research and training centre in Scotland, **Jo Hilton** *Dialogue, phronesis, learning, person-centred, psychodynamic*	'I too matter' – the role of counsellors, psychotherapists and healthcare practitioners in encouraging self-compassion and self-care in Carers, **Kate Diggory** *Carers, palliative, self-care*	**3.00pm – 4.00pm** Intersubjectively negotiating the space between us: a way of "being" in research with individuals that are often misrepresented/misunderstood, **Raymi Doyle** *Intersubjectivity, inclusivity*
3.20pm – 3.35pm	Live Q&A with **Jeanette Roddy**	Live Q&A with **Jo Hilton**	The relevance and usefulness of Eckstein's 1964 model for organisation based Clinical Supervisors, **Belinda Ford** *Supervision, ethics; organisational supervision* Adolescent males experiences of Authenticity, **Karen Brasher** *Lived experience, authenticity, adolescent males*	
3.35pm – 3.40pm	Break			
3.40pm – 4.00pm	How have older adults accessed therapeutic activities during the covid-19 crisis and has engaging in them positively impacted on their wellbeing?, **Robert Bainham** *COVID-19, Wellbeing, Older Adults, Technology, Resilience*	'In the Same Boat, Helping Each Other': a Grounded Theory of Growth and Emancipation in Peer-Led Hearing Voices Groups, **Elvis Langley** *Hearing voices, peer-support*	Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Queer (LGBQ) Clients: The Experiences of Person-centred Counsellors and Psychotherapists Who Self-describe as Heterosexual, **Rachael Peacock** *Sexuality, Power, Meaning-making, Encounter, Phenomenology*	
4.00pm – 4.05pm	Short break			
4.05pm – 4.30pm	Live discussion with **Natalie Bailey (BACP Chair)** and **Kate Smith**			

About this booklet

You'll find abstracts from all presentations available as part of this year's event package, including presentations from the livestream strands as well as those available via the on-demand service.

Abstracts are listed in alphabetical order, organised by type of paper. Use the purple links (presentation titles) in the livestream programme on pages 1 and 2 for quick access to abstracts from the live sessions.

View abstracts for:

- keynote presentations
- workshops
- research papers
- discussion papers
- rapid papers
- symposia
- posters

Webcast hosts

Faisal Mahmood

Dr Faisal Mahmood is a UKCP registered individual and group gestalt psychotherapist, BACP accredited counsellor and UKCP approved clinical supervisor. Currently, he works as a senior lecturer in counselling and psychotherapy at Newman University (Birmingham) heading up Post graduate programmes (MSc & Advance Diploma) in Counselling & Psychotherapy (UKCP accredited). He has over 20 years of clinical experience working directly with clients in a wide range of settings such GP surgeries, hospitals, voluntary sector and private practice. Faisal runs a private practice based in Solihull where he offers individual, couples and group therapy as well as individual and group supervision. He also facilitates personal development groups and offers a range of CPD training events.

Alistair Ross

Alistair Ross is an Associate Professor in Psychotherapy at the University of Oxford. Here he also is Director of Studies running a Master's Degree in Psychodynamic Counselling, and a Governing Body Fellow at Kellogg College. His latest book is Introducing Contemporary Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy (2019 Open University Press).

Session information

Keynote presentations

The results of the PRaCTICED trial and implications for person-centred experiential therapy (aka CfD)

Michael Barkham

PRaCTICED is a large, non-inferiority randomised trial comparing person-centred experiential therapy (PCET; aka Counselling for Depression) with cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), which started in 2014 and completed in 2020.

The trial was nested within the Sheffield Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme with PCET delivered by counsellors specifically trained in this approach while CBT was delivered by CBT therapists. Both therapies were manualised. A total of 510 participants were recruited to the trial who met diagnostic criteria for either moderate or severe depression. The session limit was 20 and all sessions were digitally recorded. The main analyses have been completed and the presentation will focus on the key results to date at 6-months and end of treatment, as well as at 12-months post randomisation.

Findings will focus on direct comparisons between PCET and CBT as well as on how each therapy modality was delivered within the IAPT programme. Particular attention will be given to findings relating to PCET and implications for its delivery and efficacy within the IAPT programme as well as for training in the approach.

The results of the ETHOS trial for young people and implications for person-centred therapy

Mick Cooper

Session information coming soon

Workshops

Workshop attendance will require an additional booking so we can manage numbers for these sessions.

Check your joining instructions (sent 2 weeks prior to the event) or the booking page from 2 weeks before the event to book onto the sessions. Spaces will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Developing a pluralistic framework for counselling & psychotherapy research

Professor Lynne Gabriel, Dr Kate Smith, Professor Mick Cooper, Professor John McLeod, Dr Julia McLeod, Marie-Clare Murphie

Workshop

Professional Role: Professor of Counselling and Mental Health Director, University Counselling & Mental Health Clinic
Institution/Affiliation: York St John University
Email: l.gabriel2@yorksj.ac.uk

Keywords: Pluralistic, methodologies, social & cultural capital.

A collaborative pluralistic framework is increasingly influencing therapy practice. Grounded in a philosophical position that accepts there is no single true or valid perspective on significant questions of social life, this approach to therapy is associated with a form of practice characterised by key features: client-therapist dialogue; collaboration and shared decision-making around goals, tasks, methods and ways of understanding; activation of the potential therapeutic value of cultural resources and social capital and, an appreciation that models of help are open systems that need to be flexibly responsive to social change. Developing these therapeutic principles involved critical re-evaluation and reconceptualization of the contribution of scientific knowledge, leading to the emergence of a pluralistic approach to research.

The workshop provides creative, reflective and inspirational space where delegates can explore and critique the notion of a pluralistic research framework, consider its potential benefit in relation to their own engagement in research, and its benefits for research in the counselling professions as a whole.

Planned learning outcomes:

This session will help you to:

- locate a pluralistic framework for research within the history of therapy research and recent debates
- explore a framework for knowledge creation that facilitates an inclusive higher-order conceptualisation of methodologies
- critically consider key philosophical and methodological components of a pluralistic research design
- identify ways that pluralistic principles can be applied in research programmes, studies and reviews

Structure and overview of content

- welcome/introductions
- presentation: a pluralistic framework for the development of a knowledge base for counselling and psychotherapy practice and policy
- why we need to go beyond methodological pluralism, bricolage and mixed methods designs
- the relevance of contemporary philosophical perspectives: realism, meta-modernism, new materialism
- a pluralistic approach to knowledge: key principles

Case examples:

- a specific research study
- a research programme
- meta-analysis of research findings

Participant groups reflect on the presentation

Plenary session: comments and feedback from groups; whole group discussion

Next steps/networking: Facilitated through pluralisticpractice.com

Target audience: Researchers and practitioners at all stages of their careers.

Intersubjectively negotiating the space between us: a way of "being" in research with individuals that are often misrepresented/misunderstood

Raymi Doyle

Workshop (originally submitted for the 2020 conference)

Professional Role: Consultant Psychotherapist, at "The Space between us", a therapeutic & educational consultancy service (TECS).
Institution/Affiliation: Metanoia Institute
Email: raymond.doyle@metanoia.ac.uk

Keywords: Intersubjectivity, inclusivity, self, evolution, research methodologies

Planned Learning Outcomes: You'll gain an understanding of the evolutionary psychology behind an intersubjective space and its resonance when engaging in research with misrepresented/misunderstood individuals.

During this session you will:

- be introduced to the concepts of under-selved/over-othered and vice-versa, and how this can impact an inclusive way of being.
- apply some of these specific intersubjective negotiations to a range of coded data.
- be encouraged to consider how to step into an intersubjective space both within their own practice and research

Structure and overview of content: There is a need for research to be carried out with individuals who have been misrepresented/misunderstood, while being sensitive to those needs so they are not further misrepresented. This often requires a researcher to have prior knowledge in the

research area, while managing researcher bias to ensure scientific scrutiny. Balancing these imbalances can compete with the participant/client being kept central to the research in both the interview and analysis stage. Therefore, a co-constructivist grounded theory with an intersubjective analysis was developed to apply the principles of accessing an intersubjective space between us, which attends to the potential and the specific needs of an individual within an inclusive way of being. Intersubjective negotiations will be a valuable construct that will fit many methodological/theoretical lenses while keeping the participant/client central within research.

The first part of this workshop will look at some evolutionary psychological concepts behind individuals being misrepresented/misunderstood. Here the researcher will introduce the concepts of under-selved/over-othered and vice-versa and explore how these concepts impact the dynamic between researcher/participant at both the interview and analysis stage of the research.

The second part will involve participants learning about breaking down some of the different aspects of the intersubjective negotiations contained within co-constructivist grounded theory, and specifically applying these to a section of coded data from research that can be provided/brought by participants.

The final part will encourage participants in small groups to reflect on the application of intersubjective negotiations both in research and practice through different theoretical and methodological lenses.

Target Audience: Counsellors, Psychotherapists and Trainees interested in becoming involved in conducting research in the field. No previous knowledge of conducting research is required.

Research papers

Uptake and outcomes for older people - Analysis of community-based counselling services' data

Jeremy Bacon and Jenny O'Donnell

Research Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

Other Authors: Dr Jo Pybis, Gemma Ryan
Professional Role: Older People Lead
Institution/Affiliation: BACP
Email: jeremy.bacon@bacp.co.uk

Keywords: Older people, counselling, data.

Aims/Purpose: Older people are less likely to recognise, or take action to address, symptoms of common mental health problems. Those who do consult their GP about symptoms of depression are more likely to be prescribed antidepressants and less likely to be offered choice of talking therapies.

Design/Methodology: This study analyses all-adult data submitted by six community-based counselling service providers from across the UK giving a snapshot of the age profile and outcomes of clients by age (including age categories starting at age 50 in line with BACP's older people focus).

Ethical Approval: As this is data that is collected for routine audit and evaluation and therefore does not require formal ethical approval, in line with the BACP ethical guidelines for research ethical approval has been obtained from an independent reviewer who has experience of providing ethical approval for research within a university ethics committee.

Results/Findings: of the study are pending - expected January 2020.

Research Limitations: The study is not a representative sample of all counselling services. Participating service-providers were invited to submit routinely collected data to the project. The numbers of client records submitted varies greatly between agencies, the lowest being 8 records, the largest being 2,085. The data was analysed as submitted; therefore, reliability is dependent upon the accurate recording of service activity within each agency.

Conclusions/Implications: Conclusions will be drawn from the study about the relevance of age to uptake of counselling and comparisons done with previously reported data. There will also be take home messages about relationships between age and outcomes, based on pre and post treatment CORE scores included in the datasets.

Transforming Laughter: An exploration of therapists' responses to client laughter

Kirstin Bicknell

Research Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

Professional Role: Counsellor and Psychotherapist
Institution/Affiliation: Research completed for Minster Centre MA
Email: kirstinbicknell@gmail.com

Keywords: Laughter, IPA, psychotherapeutic relationship, humour.

Aim/Purpose: Laughter is an under-researched area of counselling and psychotherapy and there is a lack of definition of different laughter types. This research aimed to explore therapists' experience of their differing responses to client laughter. This included physical sensations, affects and countertransference responses as well as therapeutic interventions around laughter. This paper aims to elucidate some different laughter types and provides the beginning of an exploration into how laughter relates to the therapeutic relationship.

Design/Methodology: Five qualified, very experienced and practising counsellors of different modalities were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. The interviews explored how participants experienced clients' laughter. The interviews were transcribed and then analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

Ethical Approval: This research was carried out for an MA dissertation with ethical approval granted by the BACP accredited training institution.

Results/Findings: This study identified several defensive laughter types experienced by therapists: 'pushing away'/avoidant, aggressive/controlling/seducing laughter and nervous laughter. Full laughter was experienced as embodied release and relief and as a relational connection, often with moments of insight and recognition. Laughter type could be seen as an indicator of the client's internal world, level of depression, anxiety, anger or need for control. Laughter can be seen as a communication from client to therapist and an indicator of the stage of the therapeutic relationship with early defensive laughter changing to full laughter during the course of successful therapy.

Research Limitations: This is a small-scale qualitative study therefore results cannot be generalised. Interview questions were open and experience focused meaning that some laughter types were not as fully discussed and identified as they weren't specifically asked about.

Conclusions/Implications: Clinical implications of this research include the importance of carefully considering responses to client laughter and use of supervision particularly with laughter that feels incongruent. A model for working with full laughter would involve a level of relational trust and safety being present leading to shared laughter, which is acknowledged and explored by the therapist as opposed to use of a specific technique e.g. type of humour.

Health anxiety and the self-concept: a person-centred/experiential IPA study

David Blowers

Research Paper

Other Authors: Sheila Haugh
Professional Role: Alumnus - MSc Contemporary Person-Centred Therapy and Applications
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Keywords: Health anxiety; self-concept; person-centred therapy; focusing-oriented therapy; emotion-focused therapy.

Aim/Purpose: Person-centred therapy (PCT) conceptualises anxiety as occurring when an individual perceives incongruence within themselves, so better understanding the self-concept of anxious individuals can help us understand this incongruence. This understanding is used to consider theory in PCT, focusing-oriented therapy (FOT) and emotion-focused therapy (EFT).

Design/Methodology: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three health anxious white British women which were then subjected to Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.

Ethical Approval: The research design was approved by the Metanoia Research Ethics Committee.

Results/Findings: Three master themes were found. The first, 'living with health anxiety', explored the experience of being health anxious: on the one hand identifying as a worrier and on the other hand having reason to be afraid. The second, 'questioning health anxiety', demonstrated an aspect of self that wished to transcend the confines of health anxiety by rejecting or interrogating it. The third, 'anxiety among others', drew attention to the interpersonal aspects of life with health anxiety.

Research Limitations: This was a small-scale study and having only three participants allowed for depth of analysis but different conclusions could perhaps be drawn from different samples, particularly of different gender and culture configurations. The participants were all from southern England, which has relatively strong health outcomes.

Conclusions/Implications: The data shows how the experiences of both being health anxious and navigating society while enduring it have caused psychological distress for the participants, who demonstrated signs of incongruence and conditions of worth, and on which person-centred writings on psychopathology and trauma may shed more light. FOT and EFT theory have in turn offered increasingly detailed descriptions of the mechanisms of this difficulty, with particular attention to conflicts within plural aspects of the self – both coming to similar conclusions, which seemed to fit with our data. Additionally, each participant was able and willing to question their own anxiety, seeking to understand it and in the process were perhaps turning their attention towards their incongruences. This gives us a glimpse of how the exploration with an empathic listener that underlies all three modalities could prove therapeutic.

Partnerships and pathways between mental health services for students: Opportunities for Higher Education and the NHS

Emma Broglia

Research Paper

Professional Role: Postdoctoral research associate and policy coordinator
Other Authors: Kirsty Nisbet, Claire Bone, Hannah Chow, Melanie Simmonds-Buckley, Louise Knowles, Laura Gibbon, Gillian Hardy, and Michael Barkham
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Keywords: Counselling, Higher Education, NHS, evaluation, students

Aim/Purpose: The demand and complexity of student mental health is increasing and requires stronger alignment between services embedded into Higher Education (HE) and the NHS. The present study aimed to evaluate service pathways and partnerships between a group of universities working with their local NHS providers.

Design/Methodology: A case study approach was used to evaluate the structure and provision of support services embedded into 8 universities working with local NHS services across 5 cities. Scoping exercises, interviews and focus groups were completed with staff working in university counselling, wellbeing, and disability services. Framework and thematic analyses were performed on the combined interview and focus group data.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval was provided by the University of Sheffield Department of Psychology.

Results/Findings: Framework analysis identified five core areas of partnership working between university and NHS services including: direction and purpose, alignment, commitment, learning and innovation, and team working. Thematic analysis of the team working theme will be presented alongside recommendations for supporting partnership working between HE and the NHS.

Research Limitations: The provision of university and NHS mental health services varies according to region and this created challenges for comparing case studies. Data collection also overrepresents the views of staff working in university support services.

Conclusions/Implications: Challenges remain for developing partnerships between university and NHS mental health services for students. The present study demonstrates that it is possible and beneficial to develop closer alignment between these sectors and the results of which have the potential to improve access to mental health support for students."

Outcomes from university counselling: Lessons from UK services within the SCORE consortium

Emma Broglia and Louise Knowles

Research Paper

Other Authors: Gemma Ryan, Charlotte Williams, Mark Fudge, Afra Turner, Géraldine Dufour, Alan Percy, and Michael Barkham.
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Keywords: Student mental health, counselling, outcome measures, practice research network.

Aim/Purpose: There remain barriers to securing robust and complete datasets from counselling services embedded in Higher Education (HE). This study aimed to provide the first step towards developing a national dataset of student counselling outcomes drawn from differing outcome measures, platforms and reporting on all clients.

Design/Methodology: Data from four HE counselling services using two clinical outcome measures and two computer platforms were pooled and analysed. Services employed outcome measures at every counselling session including either the CORE-OM and CORE-10, or the student-specific CCAPS measures. Service effectiveness was determined by calculating reliable and clinically significant improvement, as well as the effect size difference between the start (pre) and end of counselling (post) for clients with planned and unplanned endings.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval was provided by each participating university counselling service (not listed here for blind peer review).

Results/Findings: Students presented to counselling with low levels of wellbeing and functioning, and high levels of depression, anxiety, academic distress and trauma. Counselling was particularly effective for improving depression, anxiety, wellbeing, hostility, social anxiety and academic distress. Differences emerged between clients with unplanned endings compared to clients with planned endings. Strengths and limitations of the two clinical outcomes will be discussed as well as recommendations for supporting practitioners using routine outcome measures at every counselling session.

Research Limitations: The present study identified gaps in demographic, intake and referral data collected by institutions. These inconsistencies led to missing data at the aggregate level, which prevented detailed comparisons of outcomes for different student groups. Outcome data also overrepresented students who were undergraduate, female, white, and studying full-time.

Conclusions/Implications: Results provide evidence of the effectiveness of counselling embedded into HE and support the use of clinical outcome measures. Results further demonstrate value in pooling complete data from counselling services and for using measures at every counselling session to enable comparisons between clients with planned and unplanned endings. We argue for developing a national dataset of university counselling data as well as adopting a standardised minimum dataset.

The influence of heteronormativity in counselling and psychotherapy training

Anna Constantine

Research Paper

Professional Role: Counsellor/Psychotherapist
Email: anna@annaconstantine.com

Keywords: Sex sexuality heteronormativity counselling training.

Aim/Purpose: The concept of heteronormativity assumes that heterosexuality is the norm and anything other than heterosexuality is not (Richards & Barker, 2013). This paper aims to highlight the influence of a heteronormative culture within counselling and psychotherapy training environments.

Design/Methodology: A hermeneutic phenomenological methodology was employed. Nine experienced trainers, teaching on a variety of counselling and psychotherapy training programmes, ranging from Diploma to Professional Doctorate and nine qualified therapists who had completed their primary practitioner training within the last five years, were recruited through purposive and snowball sampling.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval was granted by the University of Chester in March 2015.

Results/Findings: This paper focuses on a sub-theme, The impact of heteronormativity, found within the first stage of a PhD research study and an overarching theme, Heteronormativity within training, found within the second stage of the same study. The research explored the experiences of working with sex and sexuality in counselling and psychotherapy and considered the adequacy of training in this sphere. The trainer participants experienced assumptions in the area of heteronormativity; narratives relating to the changing face of heteronormativity were noted; challenges encountered in this domain and the use of trainees' sexual identities as vehicles for learning within the student group were identified. For some of the therapist participants the experience of a heteronormative culture within their training created difficulties.

Research Limitations: The researcher's subjectivity and bias in the interpretation of the data could be deemed a limitation however, this is mitigated by careful consideration of criteria used to judge the quality of phenomenological research. The research is also limited by sample size.

Conclusion/Implications: The findings highlight the importance of recognizing and addressing what could be understood as socially constructed influences around sex and sexuality and the risks of colluding with a heteronormative culture within practitioner training and therapeutic practice.

Dual-Factor Intervention Pilot for Perfectionistic Undergraduates: Combining CBT and Positive Psychology Principles

Lucy Cooper

Research Paper

Professional Role: PhD Student (SHU) and Lecturer in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Marjon)
Institution/Affiliation: Sheffield Hallam University and Plymouth Marjon University
Email: LCooper@marjon.ac.uk

Keywords: Perfectionism, positive-psychology, CBT, student wellbeing.

Aim/Purpose: Rates of multi-dimensional perfectionism are rising in UK university students (Curran & Hill, 2017), an increase that could partly explain the potential rising prevalence of mental ill health amongst students due to the vulnerability of perfectionists to experience anxiety and negative affect (Hewitt & Flett, 1991; Enns et al., 2001).

Design/Methodology: CBT is the dominant intervention for perfectionism, targeting it symptomatically by addressing the maladaptive associated factors of depression or anxiety. However, evidence suggests CBT is not sufficient on its own (Hewitt, Flett & Mikail, 2017). Dual-factor interventions may be better suited to target the multiple dimensions of perfectionism (Klibert et al., 2014), as evidence suggests some adaptive dimensions of perfectionism, such as high levels of organisation and achievement (Stoeber & Otto, 2006).

Therefore, this research aimed to develop, implement and evaluate a unique dual-factor intervention for students that acknowledged the multi-dimensional nature of perfectionism; decreasing maladaptive aspects using CBT, and enhancing the adaptive aspects using evidence-based interventions from positive psychology (Geraghty et al., 2010).

Ethical Approval: Following ethical approval from Sheffield Hallam University Research Ethics Committee, self-selecting perfectionistic students were recruited to take part in a pilot-study intervention for perfectionism. The group-intervention took place during weekly sessions, 2-hours each over four weeks. The intervention combined the Overcoming Perfectionism CBT framework by Shafran et al., (2010) with Positive Psychology interventions; character-strengths assessment, gratitude, self-compassion and positive reframing (Seligman et al., 2005, Shapira & Mongrain, 2010). Levels of perfectionism (Hill et al., 2010), flourishing (Diener et al., 2010) and generalised-anxiety (Spitzer et al., 2006) were compared pre- and post-intervention in (n = 7) students in the intervention group, and compared against (n = 25) students in a control group.

Results/Findings: Whilst there was no significant difference in flourishing or anxiety, perfectionism significantly decreased post-intervention. Qualitative feedback from the intervention group was also thematically analysed.

Conclusions/Implications: The intervention was successful in benefiting participants' reduction in perfectionism, with feedback indicating positive psychology interventions a particular benefit for students. As a pilot study with a unique design acknowledging multi-perfectionism, it shows some promising results for future research to explore further the dual-factor design of perfectionism interventions.

‘I too matter’ – the role of counsellors, psychotherapists and healthcare practitioners in encouraging self-compassion and self-care in Carers

Kate Diggory

Research Paper

Professional Role: Lecturer
Institution/Affiliation: University of Chester
Email: kate@katediggory.com

Keywords: Mindful self-compassion, carers, palliative, permission, self-care.

Aim/Purpose: This two-phase study investigated both a face to face (phase one) and online (phase two) brief self-compassion intervention for informal carers of those with a life limiting or terminal diagnosis (‘Carers’). Carers are under significant pressure, yet interventions aimed at ameliorating their stress and anxiety and improving their self-care are under-researched.

Design/Methodology: 16 participants, recruited from hospices and through the researcher’s social network, completed either a four-part face to face or online programme, called iCare. iCare consists of meditations and practices devised to build resources and develop self-compassion and mindfulness with an emphasis on the needs of Carers. Participants were supported by the facilitator/researcher. Data were collected via interviews, qualitative survey and on-line exchanges between researcher and participant and were analysed using reflexive thematic analyses (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013, 2019) within a critical realist framework (Maxwell, 2012).

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval for this study was granted by the Ethics Committee of the Department of Social & Political Science, University of Chester.

Results/Findings: The themes generated through the reflexive thematic analyses explored the impact engaging with iCare had on their well-being and highlighted how participants developed self-care through gaining permission to recognise their own needs. In line with critical realist methodology, a causal mechanism was proposed explaining the development of self-compassion and conscious self-care among participants based on a cyclical model of Carer self-compassion.

Research Limitations: Due to the use of an opportunity sampling strategy most participants were white females. This study was not longitudinal and thus the ongoing impact of the training could not be assessed. The researcher adopted a dual role of both teacher/facilitator and researcher (but not counsellor) and her personal relationship with each participant may have influenced how participants reported on their experience of the programme.

Conclusions/Implications: The findings suggest that practitioners play a key role in legitimising Carer needs, fostering permission in Carers to practise self-care and challenging barriers Carer-clients may erect in the face of encouragement to practise self-care and self-compassion. Some of the content of iCare may prove useful to those therapists adopting a pluralistic approach when working with clients who are formal or informal carers.

Effectiveness of providing a mindfulness-based intervention to increase resilience to stress in university students: one-year follow-up results from a randomised controlled trial

Géraldine Dufour and Julieta Galante

Research Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Professional Role: Head of Counselling
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Keywords: Mindfulness, Students, University, Counselling, Randomised controlled trial.

Aim/Purpose: Given concerns about students' rising need for mental health services, the University of Cambridge funded a mindfulness programme for students. This was evaluated through a randomised controlled trial assessing the impact of providing preventative mindfulness group teaching (up to 30 students). Results showed that it reduced students' distress during the main examination period. Here, we present the effects of mindfulness training on distress and use of mental health services up to a year after starting the trial, along with cost-effectiveness data.

Design/Methodology: University of Cambridge students without severe mental illness or related crisis were randomly allocated to join an 8-week mindfulness course adapted for university students; or accessing mental health support as usual (SAU). Independent data monitoring, ethics, and advisory committees were set up (trial registration: ACTRN12615001160527). Participants' use of the University Counselling Service was monitored for a year through routine service data collection. Self-reported psychological distress (CORE Outcome Measure), wellbeing (Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) and use of other mental health resources were collected, as well as formal (meditation) and informal mindfulness practice during everyday activities. An economic evaluation compared the costs and benefits of the programme.

Results/Findings: 616 students took part; 309 allocated to mindfulness and 307 to SAU. Of them, 53% completed the one-year follow-up questionnaire (no loss to follow-up in University Counselling Service data). Follow-up results indicate the intervention continued to have an impact. Most mindfulness students practiced informal rather than formal mindfulness meditation after the course. Those who practiced more, got more benefit. Mental health resource usage and cost-effectiveness outcomes will be presented.

Research Limitations: The main limitations are the lack of control for non-specific effects and loss to follow-up in self-reported outcomes.

Conclusions/Implications: These results show the mindfulness intervention assessed can benefit students in the longer term. This has commissioning implications, which will be discussed in light of service use and cost-effectiveness results. More research will be needed about impact on specific student populations and different types of institutions.

Impact of COVID-19 restrictions on the provision of school-based counselling in the UK

Charlie Duncan

Research Paper

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Keywords: School-based counselling; COVID-19; provision of therapy; children and young people.

Aims/Purpose: In March 2020, the COVID-19 restrictions implemented in the UK included the closure of schools (and other educational institutions). As school-based counselling is a principal form of psychological therapy for children and young people in the UK, this study aimed to assess: the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on the provision of school-based counselling; the effect of various factors on school-based counselling; and how potential actions should be prioritised to mitigate negative impacts of the restrictions.

Design/Methodology: Practitioners delivering school-based counselling in the UK before and/or after the implementation of COVID-19 restrictions (N=739) completed an online survey between July and August 2020. The survey assessed: practitioners' demographics and counselling background; the amount and nature of school-based counselling provided before and after COVID-19 restrictions; and the extent to which factors and actions were perceived as affecting school-based counselling and should be prioritised. A subset of the sample completed follow-up surveys at the end of the Winter 2020 and Spring 2021 terms to investigate how the situation developed over time.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional research ethics committee.

Results/Findings: Regarding the initial survey, the majority (82%) of survey respondents felt that school-based counselling had decreased to some extent following the implementation of COVID-19 restrictions. Specifically, on average, practitioners reported that their total caseload of children and young people halved from 14 before to 7 after the implementation of COVID-19 restrictions, which appeared to reflect a large reduction in the provision of face-to-face counselling, and to be due to the closure of schools. Recognising mental health as a critical service and having appropriate spaces to provide school-based counselling were indicated to be the highest priorities.

Research Limitations: The sample comprised practitioners providing school-based counselling and a different sample (e.g., educational staff) might have indicated a different pattern of results.

Conclusions/Implications: The findings from this study highlight the large reduction in children and young people receiving mental health support during the COVID-19 pandemic, which represents a period in which they likely need greater support. The priorities identified in this survey highlight potential solutions that might enable a greater provision of school-based counselling during current and future pandemics.

Understanding the cultural perspective in Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BaME) clients within the therapeutic setting and the vital role the therapist plays in bridging the cultural gap during assessments.

Dr Uzma Durrani

Research Paper

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Aim/Purpose: As therapists in a changing world, we have to take into account not only the multicultural and economic movements around us but incorporate and understand the impact of different cultures in societies and resultant issues.

Design Methodology: Current research indicates that a complex relationship exists between clients, their culture and the values that emerge from their culture. Issues of race, culture and ethnicity should play a central role in any formulation of therapy.

Research Limitations: It is becoming clear that there are theoretical limitations in the discourse of counselling and psychotherapy, in relation to cultural diversity. Existing western models of counselling have been the only resources from which cross-cultural counselling and psychotherapy perspectives have been gained.

It is important to bridge the apparent gap between the therapist and BaME client; understanding not only what culture means, but what it constitutes and its role in psychotherapy. Arguably, the relationship between culture and values is complex, which can perhaps best be understood as 'dialectical' in nature. Furthermore, psychotherapists can learn the background and history of various minority groups. However, it is not realistic to assume that they have more than just a superficial understanding of culture, which amounts to little more than stereotypes and generalizations.

My research looked at what makes one therapist more qualified to work with the BaME population than another? What are the appropriate criteria that facilitate understanding of BaME clients? Do the knowledge, skills and background of the therapist matter? There is a need to differentiate whether anyone can be a BaME therapist, or whether there are some specific criteria that have to be fulfilled. The method used to study this was Co-operative Inquiry, which is a specific approach within the general approach of Action Research. Co-operative inquiry gets around the issue of stereotyping, by building a cohesive and supportive group, whilst keeping lines of communication open. In this way therapists feel empowered rather than being just the subject of the research.

An Interpretative Phenomenological analysis of a pilot resilience programme in educational support for first year mental health degree students

Tara Fox and Valerie Fletcher

Research Paper

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Keywords: Resilience, mental health, University Students, transition, self-care.

Aims/Purpose: The purpose of this research was to explore the experience of University students who have engaged voluntarily in a 12-week resilience training programme during their first year of study.

Design/Methodology: Initially we conducted a scoping literature review guided by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) and (Peters et al. 2015b; Khalil et al. 2016) methodology, this helped us to formulate our research question. The pilot study involved facilitating a focus group with seven students who were all on an undergraduate degree relating to the field of mental health. The participants, drawn from 70 cohort had engaged & completed a minimum of 80% of the resilience programme which had met 12 times weekly. The focus group enabled participants to speak freely enabling the moderator of the group to 'access participants everyday vocabularies' (Silverman 2020: 223). The group interview was transcribed verbatim and analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval was granted through the Leeds Beckett University School of Health and Community Studies Ethics Board.

Results/Findings: The in-depth analysis of the group's account captured participants' journeys through the process of learning resilience skills and implementing them in their everyday lives. The findings suggested that most participants considered resilience skills beneficial in terms of helping them to cope with the emotional and cognitive challenges of not only their educational experience but also life in general.

Research Limitations: The 'clients' were selected from one cohort of students on the same course; therefore the perspective is of the experience of the same programme. There was also a time limitation in that the study results are drawn from a short time of engagement with the programme rather than a longitudinal study.

Conclusions/Implications: Seven themes provided in-depth information about participants' lived experiences of attending and being in the resilience group, implicating exploration of current practice and development in resilience training/programme service provision in higher education/other organisations supporting mental health students. Recommendations from this study offer ways in which students' resilience could be strengthened and ways their multiple needs may be met. The findings can inform students' mental health and wellbeing policies as well as education strategies for teaching first year students many of whom are away from home for the first time.

The Impact of Group Support for Covid-19 Bereavement

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Research Paper

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Keywords: Covid-19, bereavement, grief, group work.

Aim/Purpose: Burke and Neimeyer's review of complicated grief (Burke & Neimeyer, 2013) identified key factors including traumatic, sudden and unexpected deaths, and how a bereaved person is notified of the death. With Covid-19 lockdowns leaving people isolated from family and facing complex, pandemic-impacted grief, this project investigates two online sources of support: a therapeutic support group and a social media peer-support group. Following disasters, social support from those in a similar situation is helpful (Glasgow, Vitak, Tausczik, & Fink, 2016; Kaniasty & Norris, 2004; Weems et al., 2007). Provision of social media groups facilitated by counsellors and therapists could offer vital therapeutic and peer support to those bereaved by Covid-19.

Design/methodology: Key questions:

a) Is Covid-19 grief significantly different from grief experienced in 'normal' non-pandemic circumstances?
b) Is group support, provided through online groupwork or a social media support group, an effective way of ameliorating Covid-19 grief?

A closed Facebook support group and pilot 10-week online therapeutic group were developed and delivered. Pre/post measures were administered (Core, PhQ, GAD). The Assimilation of Grief Experiences Scale (AGES) was issued on a sessional basis. Post-intervention interviews elicited participant perceptions and experiences.

Ethical Approval: York St John Ethics Committee: Approval code RECCOUN00003.

Results/Findings: The study found the following:

1. There are distinguishing features associated with Covid-19 bereavement. The health context can be closed to relatives during lockdown, whilst post-bereavement, Covid-19 limited numbers attending funerals and family gatherings.
2. The two distinct contexts offered psychological and pragmatic support during the immediate bereavement and subsequent months of loss. Participants valued AGES as a meaning-making framework for their grieving process.

Research Limitations: Additional groups need to be run and evaluated to generate further evidence on the impact and efficacy of therapeutic and peer support group models.

Conclusions/Implications: Grief may be resolved, to a degree, once a bereaved person can talk in detail about the death without becoming overwhelmingly upset, make some sense of the death, move comfortably between sadness and get on with life, form a continuing bond which takes their lost loved-one into their future and find new meaning and purpose in moving forward in life.

Insights into the psychological and emotional experiences of prematurely bereaved children and young people

Dr Shelley Gilbert MBE

Research Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Keywords: Loss; grounded theory, bereavement, young people, trauma.

Aim/Purpose: A social constructivist qualitative approach aimed to explore the under-researched area of the lived psychological and emotional experiences of parentally bereaved young people and the challenging and helpful aspects of support, from the young people themselves.

Design/Methodology: Eleven parentally bereaved young people, principally identified by a secondary school in North London, participated in the study. Semi-structured interviews, CORE-YP and a creative activity were used to elicit the responses of the participants. Grounded theory based on Charmaz's social constructivist approach was used to analyse the findings.

Ethical Approval: Middlesex University and Metanoia.

Results/Findings: The five superordinate themes of Losses, Disrupted Identities, Struggling to make sense of grief, Role of others, and Finding a new kind of normal, were captured in all 11 participants, each of whom had experienced their own very unique loss. The research highlighted the traumatic impact of premature death, identifying four underlying core processes of identity challenges, fear and safety issues, isolation and reconnecting, and existential challenges to meaning and beliefs. Parental loss was clearly an adverse childhood experience, causing deep pain and suffering. The emergent themes served to add to the existing research that when young people are prematurely bereaved interrupting normal development, there are heightened risks of long-term distress and dysfunction

Conclusions and Implications: Bridging research and practice, recommendations are made on how best to support this often-overlooked group of vulnerable young people using a multisystem model. This includes improved trauma and counselling support for bereaved family support programmes, a new information guide for bereaved young people and a bereavement training programme for professionals. Recommendations and opportunities are also made for further research and dissemination of information on best practice.

Research Limitations: This is a small-scale individually based study, with no control group, which offers a psychotherapeutic approach to the interpretation of the data. The grounded theory approach stayed close to the data, yet limited in not being a quantitative measure, deeper issues through transference unexplored and confined to language left some issues omitted.

A Narrative Exploration into Counsellors' experiences of the influence of a fundamentalist religious upbringing on mental health and wellbeing in adulthood.

Gill Harvey

Research Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Keywords: Religion, faith, counsellors, mental health and wellbeing.

Aims/Purpose: This research focuses on counsellors' understandings of the influence of a fundamentalist upbringing on mental health. Fundamentalism, distinct from radicalisation or extremism, refers to religious tradition based on literal interpretation of the Torah, Bible or Qur'an, resulting in strict rules for life. Numerous studies suggest that childhood relationships and environment are influential to mental health however, there is sparse UK literature on the research topic. Additionally, findings indicate that counsellors can feel ill equipped to work with religion and would like further training in this area (Christoudoulidi, 2011; Hofmann & Walach, 2011). This research seeks to fill this gap.

Design/Methodology: This is a qualitative Narrative Inquiry combining relational-centred reflexivity (Etherington, 2004) with the collaborative narrative approach (Arvay, 2002). Recruitment was through professional bodies, a training college, psychology today and social media sites. Twenty counsellors underwent online preliminary interviews during Summer 2019. Purposeful sampling was then used to gain diversity of representation across the Abrahamic faiths. Eight co-researchers were invited to proceed, data collection being via face-to-face, unstructured interviews. Following transcription, co-researchers will separately analyse the transcript before a joint interpretative interview produces a blended text and 'pen-portraits' (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000).

Preliminary Results/Findings: To-date all co-researchers recognised some benefits e.g., foundational beliefs and values, knowledge of religious matters and a sense of belonging. All have maintained religious beliefs and practices in a more liberal format. Disadvantages identified include a 'them and us' culture, feeling different and imposed rigid rules. All connected mental health challenges e.g. depression, psychosis and nervous breakdowns to growing up in a rigid, religious context.

Research Limitation: This is a small-scale qualitative study and therefore has limited generalisability. Participants are from the Abrahamic faiths and it is imperative to acknowledge that co-researchers from other religions may have produced other results.

Preliminary Conclusion/Implications: These suggest that mental health difficulties can be rooted in feeling different, a 'them and us' culture and imposed rigid rules. However, benefits have also been acknowledged e.g., foundational beliefs and values, knowledge of religious matters and a sense of belonging which can aid mental health. UK based research in this area is required with psychoeducation for professionals being regarded as crucial.

People of Faith: An Exploration of How Christian Counsellors Reconcile Belief in God's Influence with the Principle of Personal Autonomy

Chris Hodgson

Research Paper

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Keywords: Christian, God's influence, personal autonomy

Aim/Purpose: Many people attracted to the practice of humanistic counselling are of the Christian faith. This sets up an encounter between the humanistic principle of personal autonomy, and the Christian belief in God's influence. Counsellors need to resolve any tensions and dilemmas in order to practise congruently, ethically and in a manner that is consistent with their faith beliefs. The aim of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore how Christian-faith counsellors reconciled these two principles.

Design/Methodology: Using a subtle realist research stance, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight humanistic Christian-faith counsellors. The interview transcripts were subjected to thematic analysis, and theory was generated to address the question.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval for the study was obtained from Leeds Beckett University.

Results/Findings: The major finding (despite minority tensions) was an experience of harmony between the autonomy principle and the counsellors' belief in God's influence. This harmony was evident at contextual, philosophical and practical levels of the counsellors' practice. Significantly, it included a conception of clients' development in which God was understood to play a role. The findings were supported by and integrated into the literature.

Research Limitations: The participant sample comprised humanistic counsellors, so the study may not be applicable to other traditions, e. g. the psychodynamic paradigm. The small-scale and qualitative nature of the study makes it more suitable for in-depth explorations than broad generalisations of the field.

Conclusions/Implications: A framework (termed the "consensual benefit approach") was proposed to help Christian-faith counsellors select those interventions which are "explicitly" Christian, and which aim to harness God's influence. This framework included two criteria: first, beneficence; and second, alignment with clients' values and choices. Recommendations for developing this theory included the need to enquire more deeply into the theological nature of the harmony, and consideration of how the proposed framework could be defended from criticism.

Collaborative Development of a National Standardised Dataset for Higher Education Student Counselling Services

Emma Howard

Research Paper

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Keywords: Data Collection, Standardisation of Data, Higher Education, Student Counselling Services

Aim/Purpose: The research team is developing (i) a national database for Irish Higher Education (HE) student counselling services and (ii) a Practice-Research Network. This paper examines an essential step in the project; the collaborative development of a standardised dataset (SDS) for HE student counselling services.

Design/Methodology: The development of the SDS was a multi-phase collaborative project; involving research, development, and feedback phases. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with relevant parties from 22 HE Institutions to understand current data practices. Additionally, intake forms, therapy assessment forms etc were collated. To create the draft SDS, the research team analysed (i) interviews; (ii) collected forms; and, (iii) variables from other HE counselling databases, national student mental health surveys, and the Psychological Counsellors in Higher Education in Ireland's (PCHEI) annual data collection. The draft SDS was presented at the 2020 PCHEI annual virtual conference where group feedback was sought from counsellors through breakout rooms (n=74). Individual feedback was sought through an anonymous Qualtrics survey post conference (n=39). Feedback was incorporated into the SDS.

Ethical Approval: Ethical exemption was received from the researchers' HE institution.

Results/Findings: While significant variation in data collection emerged at the interviews, common data were identified (e.g., client demographics, outcome measures, presenting/emerging issues, data on the functions of counselling services). Group discussion in the webinar focused on the reporting of sensitive topics. Survey responses emphasised the need for clarity concerning the inclusion of specific variables in the dataset, such as options for demographics (e.g., gender) that reflect clients' preferences. Overall, the feedback on the SDS concerned striking a balance between the reductive nature of data, the complexity needed to identify priorities in student mental health, and not overloading the client. The SDS was agreed through collaborative communication between stakeholders.

Research Limitations: While a national dataset has been agreed, its usefulness for counsellors cannot be evaluated until at least one round of data collection has been completed.

Conclusions/Implications: Collaborative development (and future use) of the SDS is only possible through stakeholder engagement. The researchers' inclusive approach of investigation, dissemination, and feedback has led to a shared sense of ownership of the SDS and laid the groundwork for the Practice-Research Network.

Common practice elements of school-based trauma interventions for children and adolescents exhibiting symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder: a systematic review

Georgina du Mello Kenyon

Research Paper

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Keywords: Trauma interventions; school; post-traumatic stress disorder; children; adolescents; common elements.

Aim/Purpose: The study first sought to identify what common practice elements existed within effective SBTIs for children and adolescents experiencing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms. And secondly, to identify which of these common practice elements were likely to have a positive influence on reducing PTSD symptoms.

Design/Methodology: A systematic review was carried out using the Distillation and Mapping Model (DMM). Academic databases were searched for relevant studies. Duplicates were removed. Titles and abstracts, then full-texts were screened against the eligibility criteria. Data was then extracted and coding carried out to create a list of practice elements. The measurement of effect size was Cohen's d comparing post-test data between the intervention and waitlist/control groups. Random-effects meta-analysis and frequency calculations were carried out with each practice element in all of the studies. Further frequency calculations were then carried out within each group of studies categorised by their effect size.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval was granted by the Human Research Ethics Committee, the University of Queensland.

Results/Findings: A small to medium effect size (d = 0.41) was identified in the 10 RCTs included in this review. This study found that the most effective SBTIs were not solely CBT-focused. Within these RCTs, 31 common practice elements were identified, with social skills training, coping skills training, relaxation techniques, psychoeducation, mind-body techniques, group work, and creative-expressive techniques correlating with the most effective outcomes.

Research Limitations: Resource constraints meant that resources, such as computerised coding systems, were not available. The review only measured post-test data, reducing the ability to consider the effects of time. The small sample size also limits the ability to generalise from results.

Conclusions/Implications: This review found that SBTIs whose main intervention types differ are similarly effective in reducing PTSD symptomology. Moving away from the widespread use of evidence-based interventions (EBI), that have been found to be unfeasible in a school setting, this study suggests that effective SBTIs contain a set of common practice elements regardless of their main intervention type. It is hoped that with further research, school-based practitioners can be trained in common practice elements more suitable to a school setting, rather than EBIs.

Developing an evidence-based supervision competence framework

Caroline Jesper

Research Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Keywords: Evidence-based, supervision, competences, mixed-methods

Aim/purpose: BACP commissioned this project to produce up-to-date, evidence-based counselling and psychotherapy supervision competences to inform supervision training and practice. The project aims were to produce a competence framework that is broad and inclusive across different modalities and contexts, defining best practice to support continued improvement of practice standards.

Design/methodology: A mixed-methods approach in two phases was used. Phase 1 involved a systematic scoping review of the literature to identify the evidence for what constitutes ethical and effective supervision practice. It used the Roth and Pilling methodology (2007) and was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA guidelines. Phase 2 involved a thematic review of the empirical research and grey literature to identify themes and develop the competences. The findings from the scoping review formed the topic areas in the thematic review. This phase used Braun and Clarke's (2012) approach to thematic analysis. The process was overseen by an External Consultant and an Expert Reference Group; the draft competence framework was peer reviewed.

Ethical approval: For secondary research independent ethical approval is not required. The project was conducted in adherence with the BACP ethical guidelines for research (2019).

Results/findings: The preliminary findings from the literature and thematic reviews will be presented within the supervision competence framework (currently in development), with a specific focus on the evidence-base for what makes effective supervision, and on the styles and characteristics of good supervision that inform competent practice.

Research limitations: Methodological challenges due to the large number of returns in the initial scoping exercise meant that a comprehensive review of the literature was not possible (i.e. 7,362 sources). The inclusion/exclusion criteria were also repeatedly refined by the ERG because of the number of articles from the US, some of which were not transferable to a UK context.

Conclusions/implications: The supervision competence framework is informed by decades of understandings of what constitutes ethical and effective supervision. BACP hopes this will be influential to both the current, and next generation of supervisor educators and practitioners, to support and develop the quality of therapeutic work across the professional landscape.

A Therapy for the Worried Well? A Longitudinal Analysis of the Effectiveness of Person-Centred Therapy within a Sample of Suicidal Clients

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Research Paper

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Keywords: Effectiveness, Person-Centred Therapy, Longitudinal, Suicidal Clients.

Aim/Purpose: A quantitative, longitudinal, non-experimental study was conducted to determine whether person-centred therapy was effective in promoting authenticity, wellbeing and reduced psychological distress within clients experiencing suicidal ideation. The predictive validity of authenticity and wellbeing upon psychological distress was also tested.

Design/Methodology: Data was collected from a clinical sample of 56 clients receiving person-centred therapy at a research and counselling clinic, using: The Authenticity Scale (Wood et al., 2008); The Scale of General Wellbeing (Longo, Coyne & Joseph, 2017); and Personal Questionnaires (Elliott, Mack & Shapiro, 1999). Statistical analyses were carried out within SPSS.

Ethical Approval: This research project was carried out in accordance with the BACP's Ethical Guidelines for Research in the Counselling Professions (BACP, 2018) as well as the Code of Research Conduct and Research Ethics (The University of Nottingham, 2020). Ethical approval was gained from the university's ethics committee before initiation of the project.

Results/Findings: A one-way repeated measures ANOVA and paired samples t-tests validated the notion that clients receiving person-centred therapy experience statistically significant increases in levels of authenticity and wellbeing, whilst statistically significant reductions in psychological distress. Results suggested that a minimum of fifteen sessions are required for such improvements to take place. Furthermore, correlation analyses revealed negative correlations between authenticity/wellbeing and psychological distress, as well as positive correlations between authenticity and wellbeing. Lastly, simple linear regressions revealed predictive effects of authenticity and wellbeing upon later levels of distress.

Research Limitations: The following four limitations were highlighted with the study: attrition, response bias, limited sample size and absence of solid verification that therapy was bona fide (person-centred therapy). A number of recommendations were made for future research endeavours.

Conclusions/Implications: The study proved that person-centred therapy is not merely a therapy for the "worried well". The findings can be argued to provide preliminary justification for why the NHS should extend the offer of person-centred counselling to suicidal individuals. Additionally, some may argue that private practitioners should ensure that they are advising suicidal clients to take at least fifteen sessions. The ethical dilemmas that this raises for person-centred therapists were discussed. Lastly, implications were discussed for trainee therapists.

‘In the Same Boat, Helping Each Other’: A grounded theory of growth and emancipation in peer-led hearing voices groups

Elvis Langley

Research Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Aim/Purpose: Peer-led Hearing Voices Network Groups (HVNGs) aim to provide spaces for people who hear voices to share their experiences and support each other. Often this support is fundamental to the well-being of people who attend them. However, despite calls for research into the outcomes and mechanisms of change in HVNGs (Longden et al., 2011; Corstens et al, 2014) there has been little research in this area. This research advances a theory of the impact of peer-led HVNGs grounded in the reports and experiences of the voice-hearers who attend them, while taking an emancipatory approach that empowers a marginalised and often unheard group (Roe and Lysaker, 2012) to influence theory construction.

Design/Methodology: Qualitative data was collected via 9 intensive interviews with voice-hearers and 8 group observations across three different peer-led HVNGs. This data was systematically analysed using grounded theory methodology (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Charmaz, 2014) to create a theory of the outcomes and processes of change that people experience in peer-led HVNGs, grounded in the knowledge and insight of voice-hearers’ lived experience.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval was granted by the Metanoia Institute Research Ethics Committee.

Results/Findings: Analysis of the data led to a theory that suggested voice-hearers attending HVNGs experienced i) fundamental shifts in how voices and the voice-hearing experience are understood, ii) an increased sense of agency, and iii) an enhanced sense of self-value and valuing others (the experience of ‘being in the same boat, helping each other’). Multiple mechanisms of change leading to these outcomes are also proposed.

Research Limitations: Grounded theory seeks to establish credible theory grounded in data that can provide hypotheses for further research and collaboration (Charmaz, 2014). As such, it is not an end result but a starting point for further research.

Conclusions/Implications: Since hearing voices groups represent an increasingly popular approach both within NHS Trusts and other settings, it is necessary to understand the processes and mechanisms of change in these groups. Without basing theory construction on the actual experiences of people who hear voices, research in this area is susceptible to misinterpretation and misunderstanding. This research seeks to provide a framework for further hypothesis testing grounded in first-person data.

The association between childhood emotional abuse and depression: The role of emotion dysregulation – a systematised review

Peta O'Brien

Research Paper

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Keywords: Childhood emotional abuse, depression, emotion regulation, emotion dysregulation.

Aim/Purpose: To examine the role of emotion dysregulation in the association between childhood emotional abuse and depression. Previous research has examined the mediation effect of emotion dysregulation in this relationship on a piecemeal basis giving no clear picture of the extent of its role.

Design/Methodology: A systematised review was undertaken. The databases CINAHL, Medline, PsycINFO, PubMed, ProQuest and Scopus were extensively searched for published primary research studies that examined the mediation effect of emotion dysregulation (overall or specific aspects) in the association between childhood emotional abuse and depression. After screening eight studies were included in the review.

Ethical Approval: Formal ethical approval was not required by the University as this was a literature review based on work already published in the public domain.

Results/Findings: The eight studies examined a wide range of aspects of emotion dysregulation reflecting the multi-faceted conceptualisation of emotion dysregulation. There was significant diversity in participant demographics and methodology in the studies. Despite the considerable heterogeneity all aspects of emotion dysregulation examined were found to be mediators in the association between childhood emotional abuse and self-reported current depression in adults. Where measured the indirect effect was significant. The studies did not compare the relative mediation effect of different aspects of emotion dysregulation. The results of the studies also suggest that there may be different underlying mechanisms, in terms of emotion regulation strategies, linking childhood emotional abuse and childhood emotional neglect individually to depression.

Research Limitations: The review was limited to published studies in English.

Conclusions/Implications: The findings of the review indicate that emotion dysregulation as a broad concept plays a significant role in the association between childhood emotional abuse and depression. Also, that it is emotion dysregulation "across the board" that is relevant in the association. Further research, with greater uniformity in methodology, is needed to gain a more precise understanding of the role of emotion dysregulation in the association. The findings of the review indicate that emotion dysregulation may represent an important focus for interventions for adults with depression with a history of childhood emotional abuse or preventative interventions for children who have experienced emotional abuse.

Impact of the COVID-19 restrictions on BACP members and increased use of remote counselling methods

Jennifer O'Donnell

Research Paper

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Keywords: COVID-19, online counselling, telephone counselling, counsellor experiences, survey research.

Aim/Purpose: This survey aimed to capture the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown on the working practices of BACP members and the transition to remote working to enable BACP to better support these needs.

Design/Methodology: A survey was completed by 2,497 BACP members between 9th April 2020 and 29th May 2020 including a mixture of Likert scales and open-ended questions.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval was not required because the survey was conducted as an audit of members of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) with the aim of improving member services.

Results/Findings: The survey findings showed 87.7% of respondents continued working during the pandemic, although 74.7% reported a decrease in overall clients and 78.7% reported a decrease in the number of new referrals. Barriers to accessing clients at this time and the perceived mental health impact on current clients was also explored. Members were primarily reliant on remote counselling methods during the restrictions, with the numbers using online video counselling and telephone counselling increasing approximately three-fold compared to before the pandemic. The experience of using these methods, barriers and challenges were also explored in the survey which included both therapist factors and perceived client factors.

Research Limitations: All BACP members were invited to respond to this survey, however the response rate reflects less than 5% of our 52,579 members at this time. The survey was also conducted very early in the pandemic due to the unpredictable nature of the restrictions. It is therefore possible that some of the effects on members found in the survey either improved or became worse later in the pandemic.

Conclusions/implications: Most respondents continued working during the COVID-19 pandemic, although there was a general decrease in work. There was a transition for many members to using remoted online and telephone counselling methods which for some was unfamiliar and involved various challenges.

‘Fat person walks into the therapist’s office’…. Therapist attitudes and client experiences in psychotherapy with people of size.

Michelle Oldale

Research Paper

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Keywords: Fat, weight stigma, psychotherapy, counselling, size-affirmative.

Aim/purpose: This session will present the findings from two separate studies. The first study explored the experience of clients of size in relational therapy. The second examined attitudes of therapists towards their higher weight clients and the notion of weight stigma. For the purpose of the research weight stigma is defined as the ‘social devaluation and denigration of people perceived to carry excess weight.’ (Tomiyama, 2014). Literature addressing the issue of weight stigma in psychotherapy is scarce. What literature does exist shows clinical decision making is influenced negatively by responses to client size. Fat activist and clinical dietetic literature warn of the ways in which larger people face prejudice in contexts such as the workplace, educational and medical settings.

Design/Methodology: Two online questionnaires gathered qualitative data about fat people’s experiences of therapy (n=33) and therapist attitudes toward their fat clients respectively (n=38). Data was analysed thematically. Participant quotes were used to construct a fictional conversation based on Rachel Wiley’s (2017) performance poem ‘The Fat Joke’ which highlights the impact of stigma faced by fat people in medical settings (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFQ7zqn6j18).

Ethical Approval: The studies gained ethical approval from the researchers’ respective universities.

Results/Findings: Findings from the client study showed fat clients experience a series of barriers to constructive conversations about their size in psychotherapy (for example the accessibility of the environment, perceived privilege of the thin therapist). The therapist study (analysis ongoing) show therapist responses to larger clients mirror the rhetoric of the (so called) obesity epidemic and diet culture. Negative responses such as feelings of disgust towards clients are denied outright, or rationalised using theoretical explanations (e.g. ‘this is a reflection of client self-disgust’). A few therapists explore the possibility that their reactions to clients may be rooted in internalised weight stigma.

Research Limitations: The results represent a relatively small sample and do not fully explore how size intersects with other elements of client diversity.

Conclusions/Implications: Findings provide rationale for further, detailed research into the function of weight stigma in psychotherapy and demonstrate a need for size affirmative practice guidelines.

Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Queer (LGBQ) Clients: The Experiences of Person-centred Counsellors and Psychotherapists Who Self-describe as Heterosexual

Rachel Peacock

Research Paper

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Keywords: Sexuality, Power, Meaning-making, Encounter, Phenomenology.

Aim/Purpose: The research aimed to understand how heterosexual person-centred practitioners conceptualise therapy relationships with Lesbian Gay Bisexual Queer (LGBQ) clients, including transgender clients self-describing as LGBQ. Its purpose was to focus upon a configuration of the therapeutic relationship about which previous research has little to say. Thus, it evaluated an under explored area of practice within the person-centred field and beyond.

Design/Methodology: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was the research methodology chosen. Four semi-structured interviews were conducted for data collection. Data was analysed following IPA principles; findings were organised into four themes. Throughout, a research journal was kept to capture reflexive processes.

Ethical Approval: Approval was granted by my training institution's Research Ethics Committee.

Results/Findings: Four themes emerged from the data:

- Shaping and forming: personal development arising from therapy relationships with LGBQ clients and associated meaning generated
- Ways of Seeing: how participants considered their personal identities, lived experiences and accompanying impact upon therapy relationships with LGBQ clients
- Witnessing Clients: the varied meanings that moments of therapeutic encounter with LGBQ clients held for participants
- Relationships with Person-centred Theory: theory held differing meanings for therapy practice with LGBQ clients.

Research Limitations: The research captured a small sample of therapists. This limitation is mitigated by the intentional use of IPA to capture depth, complexity and quality of individual experience. It is therefore beneficial to concentrate on small case numbers.

The research presents three limitations:

- Under Reporting Microaggressions (i.e. covert discrimination): participants did not describe therapist-led microaggressions
- Participant and Client Demographics: all participants were ethnically white and made no mention of client ethnicity.
- A broader participant demographic and ethnicity-related discussions may have opened different socio-cultural possibilities
- Potential for LGBQ Researcher Bias: in developing the research questions, I noticed subtle biases I held about heterosexual counsellors/psychotherapists

Conclusions/implications: The research challenged and evaluated theoretical silence within person-centred discourse regarding LGBQ clients. Consequently, the research proposes socially-embedded and phenomenological approaches for developing person-centred theory and practice

along with clearer discussions on power apropos working with LGBQ clients. Recommendations included: Improving initial trainings regarding LGBQ issues, Emphasising the importance of reflexivity/reflectiveness within continuing professional development, Emphasising the significance of witnessing the lived experiences of LGBQ clients within practitioner development.

Understanding the relationship between stress and sexual functioning among a cohort of British Army personnel: an exploration into early predictors for declining resilience, emotional deregulation and maladaptive behaviours.

Jules Prentice

Research Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Keywords: Army, stress, sex, risk, resilience.

Aim/Purpose: In response to an increasing number of British Army soldiers presenting to private therapy with sexual and relationship concerns, this research project aims to understand the correlation between perceived stress, sexual behaviour and emotional deregulation. Results seek to measure intimate relationship satisfaction and general well-being. The study also aims to understand maladaptive sexual behaviours and highlight at-risk groups.

Design/Methodology: A mixed method study utilising existing validated measures of stress, sexual functioning and cyber sexual activity were employed in an online survey, containing open qualitative statements inviting further commentary. Correlation analysis examined the relationships between the variables with a thematic investigation of the personal comments received. To mitigate against inaccuracy, participants were carefully recruited through targeted military units to ensure participant authenticity and were offered anonymous access to the questionnaire.

Ethical Approval: Ethics approval was granted by the University of Chester (UoC) and the Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee (MODREC).

Results/Findings: In total 408 soldiers completed the online survey. Results showed positive correlations between stress and sexual behaviour. When compared to civilian norms, results reported higher levels of perceived stress and sexual dysfunction with lower levels of compulsive and cyber-sexual behaviour. The qualitative element allowed soldiers to voice the personal impact of stress and intimacy on their well-being and happiness. Findings produced clear at-risk groups for emotional deregulation, maladaptive sexual behaviours and elevated stress.

Research Limitations: This research is a snapshot of soldier experience. On investigation, some sample demographic numbers were small, but did offer evidence to warrant further investigation.

Conclusions/Implications: Within this Military cohort, there is a direct correlation between stress and sexual experience. For clinicians supporting military personnel or clients working in high stress roles, exploring sexual functioning and intimate behaviour may deliver early indicators for wider stress-related mental health and well-being concerns.

Framing recovery: A photo elicitation study of the experiences of service users within an in-reach Rehabilitation and Recovery Service.

Penn Smith

Research Paper

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Keywords: Photo Elicitation – Mental Health – Recovery – Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis – Qualitative Research

Aim/Purpose: The aim of this research was to provide an in-depth exploration into service users' experiences of a Rehabilitation and Recovery Service for individuals with severe and enduring mental health needs.

Design/Methodology: Fifteen purposefully sampled service users were recruited across the Service. Photo elicitation was used to enrich data collection through one-to-one semi-structured interviews. Photo elicitation, first named in 1957 by John Collier, is a method in which participants are invited to take photographs in order to express their experiences around the topic of investigation (Harper, 2002). The photographs are then used in research interviews in order to facilitate detailed discussions. In this study, interviews were analysed using the thematic, qualitative method of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012).

Ethical Approval: NHS ethics approval was sought and granted on 12/04/2016 by Yorkshire and The Humber, Leeds East Research Ethics Committee, and Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LYPT) Research and Development office (REC Reference: 16/YH/0120/IRAS, Project ID: 194985).

Results/Findings: The research found that service users value developing supportive, trusting relationships in recovery and fear the challenging effects of isolation and relapse. Service users seek greater awareness in how they can manage as an individual and look to staff to support the development of personal coping strategies. Service users' desire to live an independent life is often hindered by social factors, such as stigma, which makes it difficult for them to gain a sense of belonging within society.

Research Limitations: Participants who found operating the technology overwhelming declined to be involved in the project and, therefore, this created a missed opportunity to hear from individuals who did not wish to engage with photography. Despite the in-depth nature of the sampling process, it could be argued that the research is limited due to recruitment taking part in one Service.

Conclusions/Implications: Photographs have facilitated service users to convey their lived experience in a creative format beyond words which involves both literal and metaphorical visual meanings. Main implications for recovery include the importance of building functioning relationships based on trust, respect, and empowerment, as well as supportive social networks. In addition, developing greater self-awareness of individual recovery was key.

Developing a National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework for Ireland.

Jessica Surdey

Research Paper

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Keywords: Student mental health, Suicide prevention, National policy.

Aim/Purpose: The mental health and wellbeing of students in higher education is of national and international concern and mental health difficulties are the most common problem for young people in higher education (Murphy, 2017; Dooley, et al, 2019; USI 2019). In Ireland, demand for on-campus student counselling services continues to rise annually. The increase in demand for counselling for mental health difficulties calls for a better understanding of Irish student mental health and suicide prevention. The SynthSCS Project centred on a scoping review of practices, initiatives and resources in higher education student counselling services in Ireland and best practice internationally and assisted the Higher Education Authority in developing national guidance to reduce suicide risk in higher education. The National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework was developed in collaboration with students, student counselling service clinicians, mental health and suicide prevention specialists, academics, policy makers, government and community organisations, researchers, administrators and institutional staff.

Design/Methodology: Using an action-based approach: conducted a scoping review of current student mental health and suicide prevention activities and initiatives in Ireland and internationally. The mix of data collection methods included use of interviews, surveys, and focus groups with key stakeholders.

Ethical Approval: The project received ethical approval from Athlone Institute of Technology Research Ethics Committee on 10th October 2019.

Results/Findings: This study identified a lack of national-level policies on mental health and suicide prevention for higher education. The Irish National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework for higher education is the first of its kind in Ireland and was endorsed by key stakeholders and launched on World Mental Health day 10th October 2020 with the aim that it will be translated into practice.

Conclusions/Implications: This framework will help HEIs identify where further improvements for student mental health and suicide prevention are needed, provide good practice guidance and resources, and help standardise the approach at a national level. Implementation of the framework needs to be a whole system approach that builds inclusive collaborative campus communities with the ultimate aim of improving student mental health, success in higher education and further, to positive productive adulthoods.

How do non-meditators learn and apply brief mindfulness-based instructions? An online qualitative study

Betul Tatar

Research Paper

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Keywords: Food cravings, mindfulness, qualitative research, thematic analysis.

Aim/Purpose: While brief mindfulness interventions have been shown to be effective in various domains of health and wellbeing, these findings are mainly based on quantitative experimental research. Here, in a qualitative study, we explored how non-meditators learn and apply brief mindfulness-based instructions in the domain of food cravings. We aimed to develop a deeper understanding of how mindfulness instructions might be integrated into daily life and the context of psychotherapy.

Design/Methodology: We recruited 10 non-meditators from the general population of Glasgow (8 female, ages 22-35). Participants viewed a video of attractive food images, to bring their food-related experiences into conscious awareness. We conducted a semi-structured online interview. Participants then listened to a five-minute recording of mindfulness, which guided them to observe their experiences as transient mental events that come up and go away. They viewed a second food video, while applying mindfulness. We conducted another interview. Interview data were analysed using thematic analysis.

Ethical Approval: This study was approved by the University of Glasgow Ethics Committee.

Results/Findings: When participants applied brief mindfulness, they started perceiving their experiences of food as transient. Factors such as the use of visual metaphors facilitated this change. The ease of applying the instructions fluctuated with perceived strength of cravings. Participants believed that they would successfully apply the instructions in daily life if they identified a need, including in other domains. However, they anticipated challenges such as finding time.

Research Limitations: We ensured credibility of our research through extensive discussions within the research team and use of researcher. Limitations were that the study was conducted in a research setting, using food images, with a small sample. Therefore, we may not have fully captured themes that relate to the use of mindfulness in clinical settings or with individuals with eating disorders – further research is needed to address such issues.

Conclusions/Implications: Understanding how individuals apply mindfulness strategies on the basis of brief instruction has the potential to inform the development of simple and empowering techniques that regulate unwanted experiences. Such techniques may be suitable for integration into counselling practice.

Self and cancer: a developmental outlook on the varied ways in which cancer survivors see their self in relation to cancer

Kathleen Vandenberghe

Research Paper

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Keywords: Bowel cancer, survivorship, process, embodied cognition, embodied empathy.

Aim/Purpose: In this qualitative study I explored how adult bowel cancer survivors, who were up to twenty years post-treatment, metaphorically comprehend their self in relation to cancer. Theoretically informed by perspectives on embodied cognition as well as hermeneutic phenomenology, the purpose of the study was to analyse survivors' use of metaphor and thereby distinguish variations in the experience of self throughout the process of cancer survivorship. The results of this study aim to provide health care workers and therapists with a deeper understanding of this process.

Design/Methodology: The experience of twelve participants was explored using semi-structured interviews and creative materials. The participants' metaphorical 'comprehending' of self were analysed and explored in relation to their narratives of self and their experiences with medical staff. Their use of metaphors was ordered based on the metaphor's body schematic structure and according to a body developmental logic.

Ethical Approval: In addition to adhering to the BACP ethical guidelines for research in the counselling professions, ethical approval was obtained from the NHS, hospice and university ethics boards.

Results/Findings: Nine clusters of 'self and cancer comprehending' emerged and are presented as steps on a body schematic path, i.e. presenting and positioning, handling and rising, moving in space, expressing a viewpoint on the future, moving forward, surpassing and assessing, ending, registering and holding.

Research Limitations: The understanding in this study of the process of survivorship was based on individual momentary experiences. Longitudinal research would be needed to explore the pace and movement through time of individual survivors on the body schematic path suggested by this research. The findings may be useful for the understanding of the experience of survivors with tumours other than bowel cancer, or with personal characteristics different from the participants in this study but should not be generalised.

Conclusions/Implications: Learning to distinguish and 'hear' the different experiential clusters in cancer survivors' narratives is expected to generate embodied empathy and contribute to more effective support for cancer survivors.

Discussion papers

How have older adults accessed therapeutic activities during the covid-19 crisis and has engaging in them positively impacted on their wellbeing?

Robert Bainham

Discussion Paper

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Keywords: Covid-19, Wellbeing, Older Adults, Technology, Resilience

Background and Context: Our discussion paper investigates how older adults accessed therapeutic activities during the covid-19 crisis and identifies the ways in which engaging in them impacted their wellbeing.

Current research indicates that Older Adults are at higher risk to not only the physiological risks of Covid-19 but the psychosocial effects of shielding and isolation (D'cruz & Banerjee, 2020). This discovery led us to explore current research that highlighted Older Adults experienced reductions in wellbeing as they were unable to access support or services during the Covid-19 pandemic, this resulted in higher anxiety levels (Giebel, et al., 2020).

Current research suggests that fear, stress, and social isolation of older adults during the Covid-19 pandemic may have undermined their resilience and jeopardised their wellbeing (Liang-King Chen, 2020). However, the American Psychological Association (2020) assert that resilience can be described as a process of adapting positively in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, and danger. High Resilience has been significantly associated with positive outcomes such as successful ageing, lower depression, and longevity (McLeod, 2016).

Many older adults have experienced a double burden of exclusion during the pandemic; first from physical contact and second from the digital world (Beaunoyer, Dupere & Guitton, 2020, Seifert, Cotton & Xie, 2020). In 2017, more than twice as many people over 75 used the internet as did in 2011 (Richardson, 2017). 75% of 50-to-70-year olds reported making video calls more often during lockdown (Ipsos MORI & The Centre for Ageing Better, 2020). There was a threefold increase of 70-year-olds registered for online banking during lockdown compared to the same time last year (Lloyds Bank, 2020).

Questions and issues to consider: Does Isolation negatively impact wellbeing? Can technology positively contribute to wellbeing? Is resilience developed over a lifetime of experiences? Can resilience help respond and adapt to adversity? Does digital exclusion increase Older Adults' vulnerability to social exclusion?

Audience: We hope our discussion based on an extensive review of the literature and our own exploratory research with older adults will increase awareness of the strengths and resources of older adults and improve counsellors' perceptions regarding the efficacy and value of working therapeutically with this client group.

Approaching dissociation in the therapy setting through the lens of counselling psychology.

Angelina Baslari

Discussion Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Keywords: Dissociation, counselling psychology, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, trauma.

Background and Content: This paper approaches dissociation through the lens of counselling psychology, by exploring how Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) might fit to the philosophy of counselling psychology and what this suggests for delivering therapy to patients with dissociation. The actual identification of the three main areas; assessment/formulation; therapeutic interventions/containment; looking forward (working towards uncomfortable feelings) as a particular challenge was the main aim and the contribution of the current paper.

Research has established the link between dissociation and trauma. Studies in the area of dissociation are limited mainly due to ethical and funding challenges researchers face, and due to the fact that dissociation comorbid with other mental health disorders. CBT is considered a gold standard which has gained political and cultural dominance as a treatment for mental health disorders in the UK because it is supported by numerous randomised controlled trials (RCTs). Research indicates that individuals with high levels of dissociative symptoms may drop out of current CBT therapies and are generally less responsive to treatment; thus, CBT therapies may not be effective for these patients. The ISSTD proposed that initially the main focus for therapists should be placed on establishing a therapeutic alliance, educating patients about diagnosis and symptoms and explaining the process of treatment.

Questions and issues to consider: This paper considers some of the potential implications for future practice and concludes that by acknowledging the complexity of the dissociative symptomatology including comorbidity with other mental disorders should make trainees feel less overwhelmed and disempowered.

Audience: The ones who will benefit from attending the session are the trainees who do not know how to deal with dissociation in the therapeutic context, and the mental health professionals who are interested to get a better understanding of how dissociation is linked to trauma and how it can be therapeutically approached.

A Literature Review Exploring the Efficacy of Person-Centred Counselling for Autistic People

Lisa Cromar

Discussion Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Keywords: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Person-Centred Counselling, Counsellor Training, Counselling Adaptations.

Background and Context: The author of this paper was prompted to review the literature for the efficacy of person-centred counselling (PCC) for autistic people, due to the high prevalence rate of poor mental health in the autistic population. The author also has both personal and professional experience of counselling autistic clients. The review highlights that although the research in this area is minimal, what is available, demonstrates that PCC, with adaptations could be a highly effective modality for the autistic client group. The review agrees with research by authors such as Buck and Buck (2006) and Harris et al (2010), that Rogers' (1967) core conditions; empathy, unconditional positive regards, congruence and the relationship are vital for positive therapeutic outcomes when working with autistic clients. It also supports research by Rutten (2014), which found that autistic clients experience extreme levels of conditions of worth, in large part due to failing to comfortably 'fit in' to societal expectations. PCC is known to be highly effective for addressing conditions of worth. Although PCC was seen as promising for being effective for autistic clients, it was found to need adaptations to make it accessible to the autistic client group, especially for helping to build psychological contact to enable the relationship to form, and for allowing for deficits in communication.

Questions and Issues to Consider in the Session:

1. What adaptations according to the research are important to enable autistic clients to access counselling?
2. What adaptations have you made/are going to make to help autistic clients?
3. What does the law say about providing services to autistic clients?
4. Should autism training be compulsory for counsellors?

Audience: The author believes that all counsellors would benefit from attending this discussion, not just those with a special interest in working with autistic clients. The prevalence rate worldwide of autism is between 1-2%, all counsellors at some point will have clients with autism and it would be helpful to understand what the research says about what makes counselling accessible for autistic clients.

The Impact of Career Stress on Client Suicide Risk: Implications for Practitioners, Faculty, and Students

Heather Dahl PhD and Wendy Hoskins PhD

Discussion Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Keywords: Suicide risk, career development, career stress, education.

Background/Context: In 2017, suicide was a leading cause of death in the United Kingdom, with rates of 10.2 per 100,000 deaths (ONS, 2018). In counsellor education programs, career development courses and practitioner training may be lacking important information on career stress and the connection with suicide risk. Career stress can have an impact on a multitude of factors in a client's life (Fowler et al., 2018; Peterson, et al., 2018). In a report by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), connections between career stress and suicide risk factors were examined (Fowler et al., 2018). Specifically, relationship problems, problematic substance use, financial problems, physical health issues, crisis within a two-week period, loss of housing, or legal issues, were identified connections.

Suicide risk factors are varied and complex, and although professional standards and guidelines regarding counselor competency exist, training is not occurring throughout a trainee's program, or is occurring inconsistently (Bongar, & Harmatz, 1989; House, 2003). A recommendation by Bongar and Hartmaz (1989) was that training in suicide assessment and intervention of suicide should occur early in a counselor's training program, and more importantly, at multiple points throughout their training. The CDC findings on career stress and the implications for suicide risk factors indicate an urgent need for training curriculum including specific knowledge and skills training in the career development course (Fowler et al., 2018).

This presentation will provide attendees with specific information on current information on career stress and suicide risk and provide training recommendations for current students and practitioners.

Questions/Issues to consider in the session: In this session, it would be helpful to structure the discussion around suicide risk factors and career stress. For example, "How have you conceptualized career stress influencing suicide risk in working populations?" "What training in suicide risk factors and career stress were present in the training program that you attended or that you teach in?"

Audience: It is vital that faculty and students in counsellor education programs and current practitioners are informed of these common factors and other career stress related suicide risk factors as well as provided with specific recommendations for addressing these gaps

Narrative Research: An underutilized qualitative methodology for the counselling practitioner

Heather Dahl PhD and Wendy Hoskins PhD

Discussion Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Keywords: Narratology, Narrative Inquiry, Qualitative Research, Research Tradition

Planned Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand the qualitative methodological tradition of narrative research.
2. Distinguish narrative research from other qualitative traditions.
3. Understand the data collection/procedure/analysis/rigor methods unique to this methodology.
4. Distinguish the unique position that narrative research has in counselling research.

Structure: The structure of the proposed presentation is as follows: 1) Didactic presentation of narrative research, 2) Presentation and group activity of case vignette 3) Introduction and practicing of skills that are specific to narrative research 4) Discussion/Questions

Overview of Content: Qualitative research is a vital data analysis tool in counselling research today. Narrative research, a qualitative research tradition, is an especially valuable tool for researchers in the counselling field. While many components of narrative research are symbiotic with counselling, it is not often utilized in current counselling research. The presentation will provide an overview of narrative research in qualitative research. Before discussing the research methodology, the presenters will give an overview of the seminal narrative researchers and current research using this tradition. Methodology will then be discussed in depth. Specifically, the following will be expanded on data collection methods, procedures, data analysis, trustworthiness strategies, multicultural issues, ethical issues, and limitations. Delegates will be presented with a case vignette to work through with each other, as well as provided skills that are specific to this qualitative tradition.

Target Audience: The target audience of this presentation is faculty, students, and practitioners. It would be helpful for delegates to understand basic qualitative research tenants, but the presenters will give a brief overview of qualitative research before discussing the specifics of narrative research.

Assessing the role of psycho-education in empowering survivors of complex PTSD and trauma coerced attachment – emerging insights and potentialities

Rod Dubrow-Marshall and Linda Dubrow-Marshall

Discussion Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Keywords: Psychoeducation, complex PTSD, empowerment, coercion, abuse.

Background and context: A systematised review of literature regarding the efficacy of counselling approaches with survivors of a prolonged pattern of coercive control and abuse (Stark, 2007) has been undertaken and the role of psychoeducation in working with clients with complex PTSD (Herman, 2015) has been identified as an under researched but useful area to explore in research. Drawing on the principles involved in the BPS Power, Threat, Meaning Framework (Johnstone and Boyle, 2018) and person-centred approaches to counselling, an empowering process whereby clients learn about the nature of the abuse and coercion they have suffered as a core part of their recovery emerges as a potentially important component of the counselling approach. A heightened appreciation of trauma coerced attachment in coercion and abuse (Doychak & Raghavan, 2018) is also identified, as is the benefit of focussing on cognitive existential needs relating to the person's identity and overall sense of self and self-efficacy (Dubrow-Marshall, 2010).

Questions and issues to consider in the session: To what extent should a psycho-educational component be incorporated into counselling approaches with survivors of coercion, abuse and trauma and who present with symptoms of complex PTSD?

How easily can aspects of psycho-education – about the nature of the abuse and coercion suffered – be built into an existing counselling approach?

What are the challenges involved in combining psychoeducation with person centred approaches and how might the principles of the Power, Threat, Meaning framework be used to ensure that the empowerment of the client remains at the core of the work?

Audience: Counsellors and psychotherapists who work with survivors of abuse, coercion and trauma and with clients who present with symptoms of complex PTSD, will potentially benefit from considering and discussing the appropriate psycho-educational aspect of their counselling practice and the potential use of the Power, Threat, Meaning framework to aid the empowerment and personal growth of their clients. Conference delegates who are less experienced in working with survivors of abuse and trauma will learn about the complexity of the psychological distress and how learning about power, threat and meanings can be potentially empowering as a core part of recovery.

Is evidence-base enough to save us?

Géraldine Dufour and Afra Turner

Discussion Paper

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Keywords: Students, university, counselling, evidence-base, closures.

Background and Context: As shown in Barkham et al (2019) (1) there are rising concerns about students' increasing need and use of mental health services and counselling. Lack of clarity between wellbeing and mental health needs can lead to the commissioning of initiatives, some less suitable than others. In spite of initiatives to enhance student support, such as the Student Mind Charter (2), there is an appetite for doing more with less in universities and a risk that provision of counselling becomes so limited as to become meaningless. Some services are engaging in research to demonstrate their value and effectiveness. However, counsellors have tried backing their work with evidence for over 20 years, and some ask whether evidence-based results are enough to save services under-threat. Responses to the COVID 19 crisis show how difficult it has been to listen to science. There are fear that institutions will not be rational in their responses in meeting demand for mental health support, especially at a time of crisis. Some of the challenges and lessons learned through contribution to the SCORE consortium will be shared.

Questions and issues to consider in the session: The presenters would like to open up the discussion with researcher and practitioner colleagues – is evidence-based research enough to help save counselling services? How can we strengthen what we learn through research to make the message more impactful and influence strategy and commissioning? Given the current crises: raising levels of demand in service, response to the COVID-19 pandemic, is there enough time to establish an evidence-base and research orientated culture in student counselling services, particularly as institutions are in rapid response mode?

Can practitioners, whose morale can be depleted by feeling as though they are constantly having to prove their worth rather than feeling supported and resourced to get on with their work with confidence, engage in research?

Audience:

- Practitioners. Heads of Services, Clinical lead, Commissioners.
- Delegates will learn the lessons learned through implementing the SCORE project.
- How research findings can be used to can help to demonstrate effectiveness and value.

(1) Barkham M, Broglia E, Dufour G, et al; on behalf of the SCORE Consortium. Towards an evidencebase for student wellbeing and mental health: Definitions, developmental transitions and data sets. Couns. Psychother. Res. 2019;00:1–7. https ://doi.org/10.1002/capr.12227 (2) https://www.studentminds.org.uk/charter.html.

Establishment of a Practice Research Network (PRN) for Student Counselling Services (SCSs) in Ireland: A collaborative effort.

Zahra Tayer Farahani

Discussion Paper

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Keywords: Student mental health, student counselling service, practice research network, database, collaboration.

Background and context: In 2018, the Higher Education Authority (Ireland) funded the 3SET project on student support services. One of the aims of the project was to establish a PRN while developing a national database for SCSs in Higher Education Institutes (HEIs). Upon consultation with members of the Psychological Counsellors in Higher Education in Ireland (PCHEI) and informed by international best practice, a standardised dataset (SDS) was agreed upon for collection in SCSs. To facilitate the contribution of SCSs' data to the database, the next steps were to; 1) Embed the SDS variables into the routine practice of the SCSs; 2) Secure the privacy and rights of the clients; 3) Establish a secure database for storage of the data. These steps required collaboration not only between researchers and practitioners, but also GDPR officers, ethics committees, and IT services. The research team developed strategies to enhance these collaborations. For example:

- Discussing each step in the process of contributing to the database with staff in each SCS and finding bespoke solutions for their SCS.
- Providing documents for HEI partners to contribute to the database e.g., an outline of the project for Data Protection Officers and managers and ethics master sheet to help with completion of HEIs ethics forms.
- Providing regular updates on the progress made through the PCHEI executive; and,
- Liaising with data protection officers, ethics, and IT departments in HEIs.

We are in the process of finalising the database build intending to start the pilot phase of data upload early 2021. The PRN will guide the future development of the database and engage with dissemination through collaboration between academics and practitioners.

Questions and issues to consider in the session:

- Are there other strategies we can use to facilitate collaboration between stakeholders in this project?
- How can we handle the inconsistencies between different HEIs in their approach to GDPR and ethics?
- How can a balance be achieved between the autonomy of SCSs and the standardised nature of the project?
- How can we encourage practitioners and academics to join the PRN?

Audience: Researchers interested in student mental health, Practitioners working in HEIs, anyone interested in collaborative research.

Understanding and undertaking evidence reviews

Professor Lynne Gabriel

Discussion Paper

Other Authors: Dr Jeannette Roddy, Dr Kate Smith, Dr Naomi Moller, Professor Mick Cooper, Rob Sheehy, and Jordan Hall.
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Keywords: Evidence, meta-syntheses, review methodologies.

Background context: Human and health sciences has seen increased use of rapid reviews of evidence to generate information on health or mental health matters and to inform commissioning of services. Curiously, use of evidence review methodologies (including rapid reviews, systematic reviews, meta-syntheses) is not common in the contemporary UK counselling and psychotherapy field. Whilst there are instances of professional bodies such as BACP commissioning or promoting evidence reviews, few studies are published by counselling and psychotherapy professionals. Following the first Covid-19 lockdown in 2020 and a move to online and telephone counselling service provision, the Research and Training Clinic Consortium (RTCC; university- based counselling clinics at York St John, Salford, Abertay, Newman and Roehampton Universities), undertook a rapid review of evidence for online, synchronous video counselling for adults experiencing mental distress or ill-health (Prospero review registration CRD42020204705).

Although experienced academics, the RTCC team were not expert in review methodologies and sought support from a health librarian, published texts including the Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions (2019, Wiley Blackwell) and methodology papers.

Questions/issues to consider in the session: The RTCC team aim to address key areas during the session including:

What is the purpose/point of evidence reviews for the counselling and psychotherapy field?

i. How can we build our knowledge of and competence in review methodologies?
ii. Highlights, challenges, and personal experiences of undertaking a systematic review
iii. Guidance principles for those new to review methodologies.

Audience: The session will benefit and be of value for a range of conference delegates, including:

i. Practitioners as consumers of research evidence
ii. Practitioner-researchers interested in extending their research methodologies knowledge
iii. Research methodologies trainers
iv. Service leads and providers who need to gather swift evidence to inform commissioning bids
v. Commissioners of counselling and mental health services.

Using situational analysis to research best practice in supervising experienced secondary school counsellors.

Imogen Harries

Discussion Paper

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Keywords: situational analysis, grounded theory, supervision, school-based counselling

Background and context: Situational analysis seeks to understand the dense complexities of particular situations. It has been chosen to support and analyse my current doctoral research which explores the supervisory needs of experienced counsellors working in secondary schools in the UK and what therapists / counsellors perceive as necessary in supervision to enable them to be effective practitioners. The question posed is, 'What do experienced secondary school-based counsellors require from supervision?'

There is lack of empirical research into the supervisory experiences and needs of experienced counsellors, particularly in school-based settings in the U.K. In order to achieve a theoretical foundation for an understanding of best practice in supervision, the grounded theory method of analysis (Charmaz, 2014) is being used and informed by situational analysis (Clarke, 2005), where not only is the situation understood but also the broader context in which the dilemma is situated.

Questions and issues to consider in the session: Grounded theory is a whole family of approaches of which situational analysis is one. Using examples of my analysis to instigate discussion, this presentation will explore the use of situational analysis as a tool in counselling research.

The use of mapping will be discussed. I will look at how maps can allow for multiple positions and contradictions within individuals and collectives. This will show how complexities in a situation and the full range of discursive positions on key issues can be present. I will share my understanding of situational analysis and will encourage feedback from delegates about their perspectives.

Target audience: This will be a useful presentation for those who are interested in grounded theory and the use of situational analysis, particularly in relation to researching an area that is familiar with the researcher. It will also be of use to those who are interested in the topic of supervision and / or secondary school-based counselling.

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Dialogical research and social worlds: Considering the application of duoethnography in counselling and psychotherapy research

Dr John Hills

Discussion Paper

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Keywords: Duoethnography, ethnography, social determinants.

Background and context: Duoethnography is an emerging research method in which two or more researchers enter into dialogue on a social phenomenon through which they reflexively critique their own positions and arrive at new understanding (Sawyer and Norris, 2013). One of the strengths of duoethnography as a method is that knowledge can be arrived at through difference rather than through consensus, and research findings may be presented as a multiplicity of perspectives. The present discussion is concerned with the potential of duoethnography in counselling and psychotherapy research to articulate key contemporary issues within our profession and offer rich descriptions of therapists' immersion within these issues. The particular inquiry proposed is responsive to emergent theory on the social determinants of mental health. There is compelling evidence that vulnerability to a range of mental health conditions, including depression and anxiety, is heavily influenced by our position within perceived social hierarchies (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2011; Marmot, 2015) including wealth inequality, social status and experiences of marginalisation. Delegates will recognise the therapeutic reality that when our clients walk through the door they come from many different social circumstances, to which they return following the session. The research question therefore proposed is: How do we therapists encounter and work within the social worlds our clients inhabit?

Questions and issues to consider in the session: A duoethnography is proposed, involving therapists drawing from their own socially embedded experience, both interior and exterior to therapeutic work, and reflexively critiquing existing theories and literature. Methodological issues include: number of participants, familiarity vs difference between participants, limiting tendencies: including parallel talk and theory confirmation (Breault, 2016), capturing chronological development of complex thoughts, management of multiple perspectives, and triangulation with other forms of evidence. Clinical issues may include transference and counter-transference, identity activation (e.g. Oyserman et al., 2014) and working therapeutically with multi-vocality (e.g. Rowan, 2010).

Audience: As a research approach not currently taken up within counselling and psychotherapy this discussion will be of interest to those interested in emerging methodologies that capture the diversity and richness of the therapist experience, as well as offering bridges between research and practice. Dynamics discussed here may be transferrable to delegates' own research projects and proposals.

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Oyserman, D., Smith G.C. and Elmore, K. (2014). Identity-Based Motivation: Implications for Health and Health Disparities. Journal of Social Issues, Vol. 70, No. 2, 2014, pp. 206—225. Rowan, J. (2010). Personification: Using the dialogical self in psychotherapy and counselling. Hove, East Sussex : Routledge. Sawyer, R.D. and Norris, J. (2013). Duoethnography. Oxford University Press

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Putting the client first - Creating a learning community in a practice, research and training centre in Scotland.

Jo Hilton

Discussion Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

Professional Role: Co-Director, Hope Park Counselling Centre
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Keywords: Dialogue, phronesis, learning, person-centred, psychodynamic.

Background and context: Hope Park Counselling Centre in Edinburgh, Scotland was established in 2011 as a client-focused, practice development and research centre linked to a full-time training programme in counselling and psychotherapy. The core model of the programme is an inter-personal dialogue, and the centre is designed in a way that facilitates the development of person-centred and psychodynamic practitioners and researchers. From the outset, the centre was conceived as fulfilling a role, similar to other community-based counselling services in the city, putting the client-work at the heart of the counselling process. Since then, a way of working has evolved where students to take on key roles within the centre, as counsellors, receptionists and team leaders, supported by a small team of professionals. This presentation offers some thoughts about how this very particular way of working has evolved and suggests this as a possible format for other centres with an interest in supporting experience-near research that allows student researchers opportunities to engage with their learning from client work. In summer 2018, Hope Park Counselling Centre welcomed its 2,000 clients so this review is timely in noting the contribution made to clients and students.

Questions and issues to consider in the session:

- Structuring the centre: In what ways is the Centre is arranged to offer a learning environment for students at all levels. Working in a way that respects the core-models: How are students encouraged to develop their person-centred and psychodynamic practice at the centre?
- Client focus: How is a consistent experience of the centre offered to clients, when accommodating up to 44 students and 120 client slots each week?
- Research approach: How do we support students within the counselling training programme to develop their interest in research from the outset of the programme?
- Who might benefit in attending: Anyone interested in developing a counselling research centre or expanding their own centre to be more research friendly.
- Indicative content, including research published within the department: Georgiadou, L. (2014). 'My language thing is like a big shadow always behind me': International counselling trainees' challenges in beginning clinical practice. Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 14(1), 10-18. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733145.2013.770896

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Therapists Facing Masks: A Qualitative Study of the Nature of Relationships between Masks and Relational Depth

Andrew Kidd

Discussion Paper

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Keywords: Relational Depth, Masks, Affectivity, Mutuality, Collective Consciousness.

Background and context: Since COVID-19, masks are not isolated phenomena. Masks have become associated with our relationships to the world and others. Impacts of mask wearing within therapy sessions is an unexplored area.

The Royal Society (2020) highlighted a 'blind spot' on behavioural implications of mask wearing due to COVID-19. Socio-behavioural factors influenced while wearing a mask included increased risk perception, varying trust, altruism, and individual personality traits. Importantly, masks have potential to impact vulnerable members of society. The National Deal Children's Society (2020) highlighted deaf children's education has suffered due to being unable to lip read. Raising awareness of potential fore-conception around masks, allows us to take actions to minimise intrusions on therapeutic relationships. And within society. This study aims to research therapists' experiences relating to clients while wearing masks during sessions. Specifically, if masks influence clients state of readiness to meet at relational depth. Cooper (1999) suggested mask wearing contributes to a Psychological transformation towards the direction the mask represents. The collective consciousness for masks (safety) is expected to contribute to quality relational encounters. Also, if mutuality is experienced (client and therapist), wearing masks will assist alliance formation.

Questions and issues to consider in the session: Proprioceptive feedback from facial expressions, particularly emotive/non-emotive help connection to others (Ekman, 1987). Impacts of partial obstruction of facial features within therapy sessions is unclear. This research offers opportunity to gather insights into the perspectival directedness of masks within therapeutic settings. E.g., impacts on self-disclosure or emotive expression. Therapist's experience and interpretations will likely provide data on intersubjectivity, experiences and perception, objects and relationships, language and culture. This research will use a Phenomenological based design: semi-structured interviews with 4 Therapists. Data will be secondary sources. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis, results risk being influenced by personal interpretation. It will be difficult to provide an objective 'God's eye account' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Supervision and being aware of ethics will look to minimise the impacts of any bias.

Audience: Masks have perspectival significance for society due to COVID-19, data could benefit allied health professions supporting others using masks. This session will provide data on factors which contribute to effective alliance formation, and characteristics associated with meetings at depth.

What happens when we feedback research to participants?

Tom Matthews

Discussion Paper

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Keywords: Participation; photo-eliciation; looked-after young people.

Background/context: Much research, including participatory methods, fails to complete the process by feeding back to participants about the outcomes of the research. This is despite it being established that the experience of participation requires such for it to have positive impact, particularly with young people (e.g. McLeod, 2007; Sinclair, 2004). As part of a photo-elicitation, participant-led methodology exploring 'What is important to looked-after young people during adolescence?', the research returned to participants following analysis. This was to explore their experience of the research process and to inform the literature about what happens when a researcher returns to participants to present their analysis. More than this, the feedback phase connected with the human experience of participating in research and the experience of giving your story in the form of data, and what is like to have feedback or response to this. And the converse, what it might have been like not to have had this.

Questions/issues to consider in the session: What is the experience and impact of returning to participants to share the analysis of the research they participated in? What is the potential impact if we do not do this?

- Does the importance of this relate to who the participants were, and what was asked of them?
- How does returning to feedback research analysis connect with issues of power in the researcher-participant relationship?
- Is it possible for research to be participatory in its methodology if we do not feedback results?
- When we conduct research as practitioners, does this connect with our clinical practice? If so, are there ethical considerations we can deliberate and respond to through our research design?

Audience: Whilst the data, and associated questions, come from care experienced young people, the applicability stretches beyond. It will be applicable to those who plan to conduct or critique research with any people or groups who could be seen as 'unheard', 'oppressed', 'marginalised', 'vulnerable' or 'hard to reach'. The session will also benefit researchers who are considering the application of participatory or creative methodologies in research generally, as it included feedback on participant's experiences of these methods.

Where have all the men gone?

Benjamin Nuss

Discussion Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

Professional Role: Counsellor with young people in Educational setting
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Keywords: Male, narrative, mental health.

Background and context: Recently we have seen increased national attention given to issues related to male mental health, particularly male suicide rates. We know that death by suicide remains the biggest killer in men between the ages of 15 and 35 in the UK. In 2017, 4382 men took their own lives, an average of 12 per day1 and we also know that men make up only one third of referrals to IAPT2. These figures highlight the notable mismatch between service need and service usage among men. This begs the question – why are men not accessing help at the same rate at which they are presenting with mental health difficulties? This study is seeking to understand that question by creating a male-focused narrative of mental health so as to inform policy and provision of psychological help for males. This project's aim and focus is well situated within the conference theme of 'Keeping clients at the centre of research and policy'.

Questions and issues to consider in the session:

- Explore the rationale for using narrative inquiry as a methodology with its focus on eliciting the voice of participants.
- Discuss initial findings and themes from three focus groups.
- Discuss possible implications of these findings for the counselling and psychotherapy professions.

Audience: By attending this session and participating in discussion based on recently acquired data from 3 focus groups delegates will gain insight into what men and boys are saying about mental health, how they define and experience it, how men and boys perceive the counselling and psychotherapy professions, and what factors prevent them from seeking help. The session will conclude by asking delegates to contribute their own thoughts on what this data might mean for future policy and provision of psychological help for males.

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2.Stein C. Mind your language: How men talk about mental health. [Online.] Men's Health Forum January 2018 https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/mind-your-language-how-men-talk-about-mental-health (accessed 5 September 2018).

Moral Injury; a soul wound

Alison O'Connor

Discussion Paper

Professional Role: Lecturer in Counselling and Therapeutic Practice, Therapist and Supervisor
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Keywords: Moral injury, trauma, military veterans, Covid-19.

Background and Context: In 2016 I received a Churchill Travel Fellowship to travel across America researching innovative practice with military veterans and families affected by trauma. The core discovery of my Fellowship was the concept of moral injury. This gave me a new lens through to which to view the struggles of the military veterans I have been privileged to work with over the last 10 years. Moral injury is a state of profound emotional and psychological distress resulting from the violation of a person's core moral values. Shay (2002) describes moral injury as the undoing of character, caused by a betrayal of what is right by someone in authority. Litz (2009) extends the definition, suggesting that moral injury stems from "perpetrating, failing to prevent, bearing witness to, or learning about acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations." While it bears similarities to post-traumatic stress, it is a deeper, spiritual condition, a soul wound. (Tick, 2014)

Experts are beginning to voice that frontline workers in the current Covid-19 pandemic may be at risk of moral injury. While the possibility of carrying out acts or failing to prevent acts which transgress one's deeply held moral beliefs are, in ordinary times, more likely to occur on a battlefield than in a health or social care setting, the scale and intensity of this crisis has meant that many of the norms and capabilities of our health system have been stretched beyond measure, impacting deeply and personally on individuals "on the frontline".

Drawing on my Fellowship findings, extensive review of the literature and my own therapeutic practice in this field, I will present an argument for moral injury to become part of the discourse on trauma and recovery after life-changing experiences.

Questions for discussion: How might developing therapists' awareness of moral injury improve outcomes for military veterans and others affected by life-changing experiences?

As a profession, how do we feel about inviting the ethical, moral and spiritual dimensions of trauma into the room?

How might this knowledge be helpful in understanding and processing the impact of Covid-19?

On the spectrum and in the room: Exploring experiences of traumatic stress in Autistic women and implications for the counselling process.

Cloie Parfitt

Discussion Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Keywords: Women, autism, trauma, counselling, psychotherapy.

Background & Context: Being female undoubtedly comes with its own sets of challenges; for autistic women, however, these challenges are often compounded by difficulties surrounding social interactions, sensory sensitivities, trouble regulating emotions, barriers to receiving an autism diagnosis and, consequently, to accessing appropriate support. Clinicians suspect that autism increases an individual's risk for specific types of trauma, such as bullying and various forms of abuse. It has also been suggested that female-centric experiences such as puberty and menarche, sexual relationships, and childbirth can be particularly complex and, in some circumstances, even traumatic for women on the autism spectrum. Moreover, autistic women face a double discrimination: being both autistic in a predominantly neurotypical world and female in a habitually patriarchal society. The intersection of these two marginalised identities increases the risk of a range of psychological traumas, including domestic violence and sexual assault. Little is known, however, about the impact of psychological trauma on autistic individuals, with the literature primarily addressing how to differentiate symptoms of early environmental stress and trauma from autism, with little emphasis on the potential coexistence of the two. With differences in sensory and emotional processing, it is reasonable to postulate that autistic individuals may experience trauma differently than neurotypical persons and that the process of recovering from psychological trauma would, subsequently, differ as well. Likewise, what constitutes trauma for a neurotypical individual might differ significantly from that of an autistic individual. With autistic women largely underrepresented in the research and literature surrounding autism and psychological trauma, my research will aim to examine the intersection between these characteristics through a participatory action research project working directly with autistic women with self-reported histories of psychological trauma.

Questions & Issues to Consider:

- Lack of understanding surrounding female presentations of autism
- Lack of knowledge surrounding presentations of trauma in autistic individuals
- Possible need to adapt psychological therapies to better suit autistic individuals

Audience: This presentation is suitable for those interested in counselling and neurodiversity who would like to learn more about the specific challenges facing autistic women and potential implications for the counselling process, particularly as it pertains to the processing of psychological trauma.

Critical perspectives on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Psychosis (CBTp)

Ishba Rehman

Discussion Paper

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Keywords: Psychosis, CBTp, counselling, psychotherapy, counselling psychology, difference, diversity.

Background/Context: For a long time, psychological therapies have been over looked as plausible options in the treatment of psychosis. CBT has emerged as an evidence based therapeutic approach, recommended by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) for the treatment of wide-ranging mental health difficulties and disorders including Psychosis (NICE, 2013). This paper aims to analyse CBT for psychosis (CBTp), from a critical lens. A rationale for selecting this topic and a review of relevant literature on psychosis (including its aetiology and symptomology) are presented. Subsequently, critical and reflexive perspectives on CBTp (including cultural/religious) coherent with my own positioning as a minority ethnic trainee-counselling psychologist, are discussed.

Questions/issues to consider: Working within a medically oriented team of mental health professionals, poses challenges especially with regards to the 'non-pathologising' paradigm, practitioners of counselling and psychotherapy wish to uphold. Based on the arguments made in this paper, it is concluded that humanistic values are crucial in the treatment of psychosis. Drawing upon the humanistic principle of 'Holism', the paper also questions cognitive behavioural approaches for their simplistic explanation of individual difficulties, which may appear to inadvertently disregard the cultural/religious and environmental contexts of the individuals seeking therapy for psychosis. Additionally, working in settings closely aligned with the medical model is highlighted as a significant factor in how trainees and practitioners in the fields of counselling and psychotherapy experience and develop their professional identities. It is further emphasised that the fields of counselling and psychotherapy, underpinned by the scientific and reflexive modes of inquiry have much to contribute to the understanding and treatment of psychosis.

Audience: I believe that critically examining literature (relevant to the topic) will allow attendees the opportunity to reflect on the ways in which they construct their personal and professional identities. Additionally, it aims to highlight the importance of humanistic and relational aspects of therapeutic engagement in the treatment for Psychosis. Furthermore, it considers cultural/religious aspects on the topic, to enhance attendees' knowledge and awareness of working therapeutically with difference and diversity.

Practitioner understanding, experiences and perceptions of online synchronous therapy

Dr Jeannette Roddy

Discussion Paper

Other Authors: Professor Lynne Gabriel; Dr Naomi Moller; Dr Kate Smith; Professor Mick Cooper; Rob Sheehy; Jordan Hall; Dr Alison Rolfe
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Keywords: Online, synchronous, video counselling.

Background/Context: Online counselling and psychotherapy sessions have been taking place within the UK for over 20 years although this has, until fairly recently, been a small percentage of the face-to-face counselling work undertaken overall. The first Covid-19 lockdown in 2020 prompted many services to move to online or telephone delivery for therapeutic services and a surge in the interest in, and need for, additional training in remote working for mental health professionals.

The Research and Training Clinic Consortium (RTCC; university- based counselling clinics at York St John, Salford, Abertay, Newman and Roehampton Universities), undertook a rapid review of evidence for online, synchronous video counselling for adults experiencing mental distress or ill-health (Prospero review registration CRD42020204705).

Part of the resulting dataset identified evidence from both qualitative and quantitative research papers relating to the attitudes and perspectives of practitioners to online working pre- and post-the first Covid-19 lockdown. Whilst there was reasonable agreement surrounding the challenges relating to this form of working, the move to online working during the pandemic began to show the emergence of some of the benefits of such a move. In turn, this raises the possibility of a more permanent move to synchronous counselling work for some counselling services.

Questions/issues to consider in the session: The RTCC team aim to address key areas during the session including:

I. How much of the reluctance to move online is therapist rather than client driven?
II. What helps the delivery of good counselling online?
III. What are the substantive differences between online and in-person delivery?
IV. How might this shift in practice delivery affect our profession in the future?

Audience: The session will benefit and be of value for a range of conference delegates, including:

I. Practitioners as consumers of research evidence and deliverers of therapeutic services
II. Counselling and psychotherapy training providers
III. Service leads and providers who prepare commissioning bids
IV. Commissioners of counselling and mental health services

Rapid Papers

Adolescent males' experiences of Authenticity

Karen Brasher

Rapid Paper (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

Professional Role: Deputy Subject Lead
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Keywords: Lived experience, authenticity, adolescent males.

Aim/Purpose: The purpose of this research is to explore male adolescents' lived experiences and perceptions of authenticity. Research in the UK has shown that in the past few years males are far more likely to commit suicide than females (The Office of National Statistics, 2014) and that suicide is more prevalent among 16-24 year olds (Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey, 2014). Although the reasons for these statistics are complex, it has been suggested that being authentic is linked to well-being (Ryan, Laguardia and Rawthorne, 2005) (Deci and Ryan, 2000). In the light of this research it would seem logical to conclude that if male adolescents were more authentic they would experience greater well-being.

One of the key problems with this proposal is that authenticity has many conceptualisations (Jongman-Sereno and Leary, 2009) and some researchers suggest that we can never truly know ourselves and so the study of authenticity is redundant (Vess, 2019). Furthermore, it has been found that males' experiences of mental illness have not been addressed in the past due to a lack of understanding of the language males use when talking about mental illness for example showing depression through anger (Adams and Berzonsky, 2005). This suggests then that it is important to discover if authenticity is a concept that is seen as important to adolescent males and if so, how they experience it, rather than impose a meaning.

Design Methodology: The researcher used 'Being true to you' as a suggested starting definition for participants.

Ethical Approval: This was obtained from Northampton University Ethics Board to carry out semi-structured interviews and photo elicitation methods with male adolescents between the ages of 16-18 years of age. Participants were recruited through snowball sampling and interviews were conducted.

Planned Analysis of Results: Interviews have started to be analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.

Research Limitations: What has been surprising has been the relief expressed by participants at being able to talk about the subject, though finding the vocabulary to express ideas has been difficult. The researcher would welcome discussion of practitioner's experiences of working with adolescent males and to discuss further development of research.

In counsellors' and clients' experiences what impact does sex-addiction have on sex-addicts' concepts of self and their ability to form intimate relationships, and how might this inform psychotherapeutic practice?

Christine Brown, Jerry Gordon, Szilvia Kaczko Kerffert and Raquel Perez Lozano

Rapid Paper

Other Authors: Barbara Brzeziecka, Samantha Cooperwaite, Chanel Gorman, Mahayla Marriott, Szilivia Kaczko Keffert, Shari A Jessie, Sile Stuttard, Cesar Azevedo, Raquel Perez Lozano, Booker Woodford, Paul Linton, James Costigan, Syreeta Jermmott, Stefania Panzeri
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Keywords: Sex-Addiction, Shame, Judgement, Intimacy, Trauma, Abuse.

Aim /Purpose: Wheeler & McLeod (BACP Research Conference, 2019) called for greater collaborative psychotherapeutic research. Therefore, we aimed to draw together the findings of four Poster Presentations (Woodford et al, 2019/ Jessie et.al, 2021/ Gorman et al, 2021/ Gordon et al, 2021) to answer our overarching research question (as above). Our purpose is to inform psychotherapeutic practice in relation to this client-group.

Design/Methodology: Respondents (clients and counsellors) from four Poster Presentations (2019-2021), were audio-recorded during semi-structured interviews; resulting data was thematically analysed informed by phenomenological principals (McLeod, 2003). Further thematic analysis of the combined data ensued to determine the key themes inherent in the findings from the four projects. We followed BACP guidelines for ethical research in counselling/psychotherapy (Mitchels, 2018).

Ethical Approval: Our College Ethics Board approved the further collaborative analysis of the four Poster Presentations (mentioned above).

Planned Analysis of Results: Analysis of the combined data thus far, indicates childhood trauma/abuse (often sexual) and toxic-shame commonly underpinned respondents' compulsion for multiple sexual-encounter; often pursued with disregard for health/personal safety. This seemed to amplify respondents' poor self-esteem, sense of degradation and fear of judgement. Sexual encounter/orgasm and/or using pornography as a masturbatory aid were employed to avoid unwanted emotions. Commonly respondents experienced co-morbidity in substance misuse/other addictions and yearned for love/acceptance but were devastatingly unable to form/sustain intimate/loving relationships during the active phase of their sex-addiction.

Respondents identified pivotal moments when they self-identified as sexually addicted.

Successful treatment appears to depend on a multidiscipline-approach encompassing 12 Step work (life-long), trauma-based therapy and psychotherapy in groups/one-to-one. It seems a cross-practice definition of sex-addiction does not exist, and treatment is offered according to singular practitioners' classification of the disorder. Whilst highly aware of the shame such clients carry, practitioners appear unaware of how profoundly clients can feel judged within the psychotherapeutic alliance. Current data analysis also indicates that practitioners may increase their effectiveness by being mindful of how intensely self-identified sex-addicted clients can feel judged within the psychotherapeutic alliance and an empathic practitioner-attitude appears vital to successful treatment.

Challenges The relatively small respondent group may limit the generalisability of current and subsequent findings (McLeod, 2003). Feedback/guidance on further/alternate analysis of data would be helpful.

The relevance and usefulness of Eckstein's 1964 model for organisation based Clinical Supervisors

Belinda Ford

Rapid Paper

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Keywords: Supervision; ethics; organisational supervision

Aim/Purpose: Eckstein's 1964 seminal triangular model described the role tension experienced by clinical supervisors working in counselling organisations. He suggested that such supervisors must balance the needs of the supervisee, the client and the organisation, without being pulled into any of these three corners. Maintaining a central position in the triangle and keeping equidistant from each point, they wear a 'three cornered hat'. As a Clinical Supervisor and Counsellor at Relate I am acutely aware of this tension and of the possible inherent ethical dilemmas. I aim to explore this further by examining the felt experience of other supervisors at Relate. This research will fill a gap in the professional and academic literature. By encouraging conversations within the sector between supervisors, organisational managers and professional bodies it will focus on collaborative improvements to policy and practice. These will enhance both the supervisory experience and the experience for clients, whilst helping to ensure the delivery of ethical services.

Design/Methodology: I propose a two-stage approach to understand the felt experience of supervisors: in depth semi structured interviews with approximately 10 Relate supervisors from a range of centres; and a number of focus groups with Relate supervisors.

Ethical Approval: I will obtain ethical approval from my university's ethical body. I propose applying for this in good time as I am conscious of the ethical implications of my research proposal. I will also work within the BACP's Ethical Guidelines for Research.

Results/Findings: I will use grounded theory to interpret the meaning from the interviews and focus groups to identify themes and findings. This will provide an opportunity for comparison, and, through collaborative working across the sector, the identification of recommendations for change to policy and practice.

Research Limitations: In researching this topic in this way I will be in the role of an insider researcher. I am very aware of the difficulties this might present in obtaining honest and open feedback from my interviewees and would like to discuss ideas for managing these issues and reducing their impact on my research.

Symposia

School-based Counselling in the UK: Findings from the ETHOS Trial

Mick Cooper, Helen Raynham, David Saxon and Charlie Duncan

Symposium Overview

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Keywords: Young people, school counselling, humanistic therapy, randomised controlled trial, outcomes, economic outcomes, helpful factors, unhelpful factors, process-outcome, therapeutic relationship, goals

Aims of the Symposium: To supplement Mick Cooper's keynote presentation of the key findings from the first adequately powered effectiveness and cost-effectiveness trial of school-based humanistic counselling (SBHC) for psychological distress in adolescents. The trial allocated 329 adolescents to either SBHC plus pastoral care, or pastoral care alone (PCAU). As well as examining the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the intervention, the trial examined the adolescents' experiences of SBHC, predictors of change, and the adolescents' goals for therapy. The ETHOS trial was supported by the Economic and Social Research Council [grant reference ES/M011933/1] with additional funding to support the team from the University of Roehampton, the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, and the Metanoia Institute. Contribution of each symposium paper to the overall theme.

Paper 1 looks at the qualitative aspects of both SBHC, and pastoral care, that the adolescents felt was good and that needed improving. The paper compares these factors across conditions to identify distinctive helpful and unhelpful elements of SBHC.

Paper 2 is a process-outcome analysis. It examines the association between change and relational factors on the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory (level of regard, empathy, unconditionality, congruence) and on the Working Alliance Inventory (task agreement, bond, goal consensus).

Paper 3 analyses the participants' goals, and looks at whether change in SBHC, as compared with PCAU, was greater on some goals than others. Implications of the symposium theme for counselling and psychotherapy theory, research and practice. ETHOS provides definitive evidence that SBHC has a significant impact in reducing psychological distress in young people. However, it suggests that that impact is small, and that the intervention may not be cost effective. Analyses of predictors of change provides insights into the mechanisms through which SBHC may be effective and means of enhancing the effectiveness of the intervention.

Symposium Paper 1 - Helpful and Unhelpful Aspects of School-Based Humanistic Counselling (SBHC) Compared to Pastoral Care as Usual (PCAU): Thematic Analysis Using Data from the Experience of Service Questionnaire

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Keywords: Young people, school counselling, humanistic therapy, randomised controlled trial, helpful factors, unhelpful factors, pastoral care.

Aim/Purpose: Previous research suggest that young people find school-based counselling helpful primarily because it provides them with an opportunity to talk and be listened to. Other helpful factors cited by young people include getting things off their chest, problem-solving, counsellor guidance, gaining insight, confidentiality, the independence of the counsellor, feeling understood, and being accepted. Unhelpful factors have found to be practical issues (such as dislike of missing lessons), not enough counsellor input (such as activities, direction, questions and advice), and negative qualities in the counsellor (such as appearing tense). There is a need, however, for further rigorous research in this area to help ensure that young people's needs are at the forefront of counselling service development and delivery.

Design/Methodology: The study consisted of a thematic analysis of open-ended, qualitative responses provided by ETHOS participants to the Experience of Service Questionnaire (ESQ). Young people in both the SBHC and PCAU arms of the ETHOS trials completed this questionnaire at 12 weeks post-baseline, either in relation to their counsellor (SBHC) or to their primary pastoral care figure (PCAU). Qualitative answers to the questions 'What was really good about your care?' and 'Was there anything you didn't like or anything that needs improving?' were thematically analysed, with coders blind to the respondents' conditions. The frequencies with which the responses of participants in both conditions were coded into the helpful and unhelpful themes were then compared using inferential statistics.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval for the trial was obtained under procedures agreed by the University Ethics Committee of the University of Roehampton, Reference PSYC 16/227, 31st August 2016.

Results/Findings: Helpful and unhelpful themes, across both conditions, will be presented; along with inter-rater reliability for the coding process. We will then discuss the differences in what participants found helpful in SBHC and in PCAU.

Research Limitations: Data is derived from a survey rather than from in-depth interviews. Hence, there was no possibility to clarify, or deepen an understanding of, the factors that participants found helpful and not helpful. Participants' self-report data may not accurately reflect the process that were, indeed, helpful and unhelpful.

Conclusions/Implications: Qualitative reports of what was experienced as helpful and unhelpful can be an important addition to outcome data. By comparing helpful and unhelpful factors against those experienced in pastoral care, the study identifies unique elements of the counselling relationship that clients' value and would like to see differently.

Symposium Paper 2 - Relational Predictors of Change in School-Based Humanistic Counselling for Psychological Distress

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Keywords: Young people, school counselling, process-outcome, empathy, congruence, unconditional positive regard, therapeutic alliance.

Aim/Purpose: One of the best established facts in the counselling and psychotherapy research field is that the quality of the therapeutic relationship is a strong predictor of therapeutic outcomes. This has been established with adults, and there is also a strong body of evidence suggesting that the therapeutic alliance is a significant predictor of outcomes for children and young people. However, other relational factors have been less well explored in this population. Despite, for instance, the prevalence of person-centred/humanistic counselling with young people, there are only a small number of studies that show an association between levels of the Rogerian 'core conditions'—

empathy, acceptance, and unconditional positive regard—and outcomes. The aim of this study, therefore, is to test whether these relational factors are associated with outcomes, and to compare this association against the alliance–outcome association.

Design/Methodology: This study was a process–outcome analysis, using data from ETHOS: the first adequately powered trial of school-based humanistic counselling for young people experiencing emotional symptoms. Participants in both the intervention and control condition were asked to complete the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory (BLRI) at six weeks post-baseline assessment (subscales: level of regard, empathy, unconditionality, congruence). In addition, those in the SBHC arm were asked to complete the Working Alliance Inventory. We then used regression modelling to examine the relationship between these relational predictors and 12 week outcomes.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval for the trial was obtained under procedures agreed by the University Ethics Committee of the University of Roehampton, Reference PSYC 16/227, 31st August 2016.

Results/Findings: We will present the findings from our outcome analysis: detailing the relational predictors that were associated with change, and whether these associations were consistent across the SBHC and PCAU groups, or for SBHC only.

Research Limitations: Quantitative process–outcome analyses can identify factors associated with change, but they cannot identify why these factors are associated with change, or the participants' lived experiences of these associations. We only examined associations in humanistic therapy and these associations may be different for other therapeutic approaches.

Conclusions/Implications: Understanding the factors associated with change in school counselling can help identify means of developing training—and, ultimately, improving outcomes—in this practice.

Symposium Paper 2 - Client Goals and Goal Attainment in School-Based Counselling

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Keywords: Young people, school counselling, goals, goal attainment, randomised controlled trial.

Aim/Purpose: Pilot research has indicated that school-based humanistic counselling (SBHC) supports young people to meet their personal goals, although this is yet to be determined in the context of a fully powered randomised controlled trial (RCT). Furthermore, whilst pilot research suggests that there is no relationship between goal type and rate of attainment, to date this has only been explored in under-powered studies. The present study aims to address these limitations in the literature.

Design/Methodology: In total, 329 young people were randomised into either a SBHC (n=167) or pastoral care as usual (PCAU) group (n=162), from across 18 secondary schools in London. All participants set up to three personal goals for counselling at baseline, prior to randomisation, using the Goal Based Outcomes Record Sheet (GBORS). They rated their progress on each goal on a scale of 0 (not met at all) to 10 (fully met) at baseline, 6, 12 and 24 weeks post-randomisation. A framework method was used to categorise the types of goals young people set and inferential statistics, such as ANCOVA, were used to explore differences between goal type and outcome scores on GBORS at each timepoint.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval for the trial was obtained under procedures agreed by the University Ethics Committee of the University of Roehampton, Reference PSYC 16/227, 31st August 2016.

Results/Findings: Data analysis is currently underway. Preliminary analysis of the types of goals set suggest that young people set a wide variety of personal goals for SBHC, including increasing self-confidence and self-acceptance, reducing anxiety/increasing calmness, and talking more about feelings and experiences.

Research Limitations: Idiographic outcome measures, such as GBORS, have been criticised for not being able to operate as population-level indicators of outcomes due to the individualised nature of the indicators that clients set. This makes it difficult to compare outcomes across clients, interventions, and clinical settings.

Conclusions/Implications: This study will enable firm conclusions to be drawn about the effect that SBHC has on goal progress, as well as provide indications about which types of goals (if any) are best achieved in this setting.

Short-term psychotherapies for depressed adolescents: looking at different perspectives on treatment process and outcomes

Guilherme Fiorini, Yushi Bai, Antonella Cirasola and Elizabeth Li

Symposium Overview

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Keywords: Adolescent Psychotherapy; Short-term Psychotherapies; Psychotherapy outcomes; Psychotherapy process.

Paper 1: Trajectories of change in general psychopathology levels among depressed adolescents in short-term psychotherapy - Guilherme Fiorini, Rob Saunders, Peter Fonagy, IMPACT Consortium, Nick Midgley.

Paper 2: The Impact of Pre-treatment Self-criticism and Dependency on the Treatment Outcome of Psychotherapy for Adolescent Depression - Yushi Bai, Patrick Luyten, Nick Midgley, IMPACT Consortium.

Paper 3: The Alliance–Outcome Association in the Treatment of Adolescent Depression -Antonella Cirasola, Nick Midgley, Peter Fonagy, IMPACT consortium, Peter Martin.

Paper 4: Therapeutic Settings and Beyond: A Task Analysis of Re-establishing Epistemic Trust in Psychotherapy. Elizabeth Li, Nick Midgley, Patrick Luyten, Chloe Campbell.

Aim/Purpose: The present symposium aims to provide further insight into process and outcome research in youth psychotherapy. It includes four research projects examining different aspects of research in psychotherapy for adolescent depression. All studies are based on secondary data analysis of a larger investigation, a randomised controlled trial named Improving Mood with Psychoanalytic and Cognitive Therapies (IMPACT) investigating cost-effectiveness, safety and relapse rates of three treatment regimens known to reduce depressive symptoms. Contribution of each paper:

The first paper uses the concept of general psychopathology – or p factor – to examine how 465 depressed adolescents responded to the different types of psychotherapy offered in the IMPACT study. It describes different observable patterns of change in this sample.

The second study looks into how different personality traits (in this case, self-criticism and dependency) are associated with long term psychotherapy outcomes.

The third study presents an investigation on the relationship between early therapeutic alliance and outcomes in youth psychotherapy for adolescent depression.

The last study introduces the concept of Epistemic Trust and discusses how it may impact the onset of psychopathology and the psychotherapy process itself by the examination of psychotherapy session recordings. Implications for counselling and psychotherapy theory, research and practice: This set of studies offers insights for understanding who are the patients that are more likely to benefit from psychotherapy, as well as what psychotherapy process features are associated to more successful and unsuccessful outcomes. Possible clinical implications and future directions for research are also discussed.

Symposium Paper 1 - Trajectories of change in general psychopathology levels among depressed adolescents in short-term psychotherapy

Guilherme Fiorini

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Keywords: Depression; Psychotherapy; Adolescent; Psychopathology; Latent Class Growth Analysis.

Aim/Purpose: To investigate different trajectories of change in general psychopathology (p) and specific symptom domains among depressed adolescents who received short-term psychotherapy.

Design/Methodology: 465 adolescents with major depressive disorder (MDD) who participated in the IMPACT trial, a randomised controlled trial (RCT) of two specialist (Cognitive-Behavioural – CBT, and Short-Term Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy - STPP) and a non-specialised (Brief Psychosocial Intervention - BPI) psychological therapy for depression, were included in this study. Measures of depression, anxiety, obsessions-compulsions and conduct problems were assessed at six-time points, and bifactor analysis was performed from individual items scores to extract the p factor and lower-domain loadings. The factor loadings were submitted to Latent Class Growth Analyses (LCGA) in order to identify patterns of change in the symptom domains over time.

Ethical Approval: This study is part of a larger investigation, which was approved Cambridgeshire 2Research Ethics Committee, Addenbrookes Hospital Cambridge, UK. Results: The best fitting model described three different trajectories of change in p. Two trajectories displayed reductions in p across time-points, one of which had a rapid decrease ('GO', 12.7%) and the other slower and steady improvement ('SLOW', 66.4%). The third trajectory presented decreases in p up until the 12th week after baseline but ceasing improvement on subsequent time-points ('NO', 20.9%). Trajectories of specific symptom domains showed little change in levels over time.

Conclusions/Implications: The patterns of change in p found in this study were similar to trajectories described for the change of depressive symptoms in previous studies, while specific symptom domains reflected trait-like characteristics. The findings offer new insights for understanding general psychopathology in relation to patients' responses to psychotherapy.

Research limitations: This study only included measures focusing on symptoms, maybe investigating other domains, such as global functioning could provide different results.

Conclusions: Although different short-term psychotherapies are effective on the treatment of adolescent depression, there is still a group of patients who do not respond to the present interventions. Although the latter group presented higher symptom levels at baseline, future investigations on why those patients do not benefit from treatment and how to promote better interventions for them are advised.

Symposium Paper 2 - The Impact of Pre-treatment Self-criticism and Dependency on the Treatment Outcome of Psychotherapy for Adolescent Depression.

Yushi Bai

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Keywords: Personality vulnerability, self-criticism, treatment outcome, youth psychotherapy

Aims/Purpose: Research in psychotherapy for adolescent depression implied the need to identify predictors of treatment response. While studies suggested that self-criticism, and to a lesser extent dependency, are negatively associated with treatment outcomes for adult depression, little is known for the adolescent population. This study explored whether depressed adolescents' pre-treatment personality vulnerabilities of self-criticism and dependency influence treatment outcomes across gender in short-term psychotherapies.

Design/Methodology: This study provided further analyses of the IMPACT trial that investigated the three short-term psychotherapies for adolescent depression, i.e., Short-term Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, Cognitive-behavioural Therapy and Brief Psychosocial Intervention. The total sample included 465 depressed adolescents who were assessed at baseline, 6-, 12-, 36- (treatment termination), 52- and 86-weeks post-randomisation. Participants' treatment outcome was measured by the Mood and Feelings Questionnaire (MFQ), while self-criticism and dependency were evaluated by the short-version Depressive Experiences Questionnaire – Adolescent version (DEQ-A). The Growth Curve Modelling (GCM), known as a form of Multilevel Modelling, was adopted based on intention-to-treat principles.

Ethical Approval: The study protocol was approved by a UK National Health Service ethics committee.

Results/Findings: The final GCM model of MFQ were shown to be a random intercept, and random slope model with a quadratic component for time. Both self-criticism and dependency were negatively related to treatment outcome as assessed with the MFQ across three psychotherapies after controlling a set of pre-specified prognostic variables. Only the self-criticism showed to have a significant effect. The negative impacts of two personality vulnerabilities tended to be stable across time and did not interfere with gender.

Research Limitations: The short-version DEQ-A may omit variance in personality expressions that can be assessed by its full-length version. Moreover, the sole use of symptom measure (MFQ) as an index of treatment outcome has its limitations. Further studies need to expand the research into general outcome measures.

Conclusions/Implications: The findings suggested that depressed adolescents' pre-treatment personality dimensions—particularly self-criticism—significantly impeded treatment response in short-term psychotherapies. Such findings indicate the value of considering adolescents' personality features in both research and clinical practice. Further research is required to explore how these personality variables interact with the therapeutic process.

Symposium Paper 3 - The Alliance–Outcome Association in the Treatment of Adolescent Depression.

Antonella Cirasola

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Keywords: Alliance, prior symptom change, p factor, depression, youth psychotherapy

Aim/Purpose: A growing body of research has consistently demonstrated a relationship between therapeutic alliance and treatment outcomes in youth psychotherapy. However, past research often suffered methodological issues that prevented detailed investigation of temporal relationships between alliance and outcome. The current study explored the directions of effect between alliance and outcome by examining the associations between early alliance and subsequent

outcome while controlling for patients' baseline severity and prior symptom change. It also examined potential moderators of this association.

Design/Methodology: Data were drawn from the IMPACT study, a randomized controlled trial comparing cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) and short-term psychoanalytic-psychotherapy (STPP) versus a brief psychosocial intervention (BPI) in the treatment of adolescent depression. Adolescents (N=224) and therapist (n=139) rated the alliance 6 weeks after randomization and outcomes were assessed at baseline, 6, 12, 36, 52 and 86 weeks after randomization. Patients' age, gender, baseline depression severity, conduct disorder symptoms and treatment type were examined as potential moderators of the alliance-outcome association. Data were analysed using multilevel models.

Ethical Approval: The study protocol was approved by a UK National Health Service ethics committee.

Results/Findings: Findings suggested that higher early alliance ratings were significantly associated with subsequent symptom reduction, even after controlling for prior symptom change and baseline severity. There was evidence that the strength of the alliance-outcome association was strongest in CBT patients, weaker in STPP, and not significant in BPI. Research limitations: Since we are unable to experimentally manipulate alliance levels, causality cannot be inferred based on the current findings. Conversely, our method of controlling for early symptom change might have inadvertently resulted in a downward bias in our estimate of the alliance-outcome association.

Conclusions/Implications: These findings suggest that early therapeutic alliance with adolescents may influence subsequent outcome independent of prior symptom change and initial severity, and that the effect of the alliance on outcome might vary across treatment types. This provides some support to the assumption that the alliance plays a role in determining subsequent treatment outcomes, which suggests the importance to foster a good alliance with young people for the success of treatment.

Symposium Paper 4 - Therapeutic Settings and Beyond: A Task Analysis of Re-establishing Epistemic Trust in Psychotherapy

Elizabeth Li

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Keywords: Epistemic trust, psychotherapy process, adolescent psychotherapy, general psychopathology

Aims/Purpose: Epistemic trust is defined as one's willingness to receive new information as trustworthy and relevant, underpinning one's learning and adapting capacity to internalize and generalize new knowledge selectively and appropriately in a wider context. A lack of epistemic trust may link to the emergence and persistence of general psychopathology. The aim is threefold: 1) to explore how epistemic mistrust (e.g., hypervigilance, petrification) comes about in one's development and leads to mental disturbance 2) whether epistemic trust can be (re-)established through psychotherapy, and 3) which therapy approaches can be most effective in responding to epistemic mistrust to help establish epistemic trust.

Design/Methodology: Task analysis, an inductive approach where patterns of change can be identified within a psychotherapy context, will be conducted in randomly selected audio-recordings of psychotherapy sessions from the Improving Mood with Psychoanalytic and Cognitive Behaviour

Therapy (IMPACT) study, a randomized controlled trial comparing three interventions in the treatment of depression in adolescents.

Ethical Approval: The IMPACT study protocol was approved by the Cambridgeshire 2 Research Ethics Committee, Addenbrookes Hospital Cambridge, UK (Reference 09/H0308/137).

Expected Results: A model of (re-)establishing epistemic trust in psychotherapy for depressed adolescents will be formulated by analysing cases with both good and poor outcomes, with an awareness of the potentially different productive processes used across three treatment arms. This model for (re-)establishing epistemic trust in hard-to-reach (due to epistemic mistrust) adolescents will help guide how therapists and clinicians can repair or foster epistemic trust through their psychotherapy practice.

Research Limitations: The results rely entirely on the IMPACT study data, which only examines epistemic trust in psychopathology and psychotherapy through the lens of the treatment of depression in adolescents.

Conclusions/Implications: The ultimate aim is to help guide therapists and clinicians to move beyond specific mental disorder and psychotherapy orientation, and instead see how a lack of epistemic trust is common in general psychopathology and that a restoration of it is appropriate in many kinds of treatments.

The benefits of using mixed research methods to develop a counselling competences framework

Dr Maria Luca, Jessie Emilion and Traci Postings

Symposium Overview

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Keywords: Mixed methods research, counselling competences framework

Aims of the symposium: To present the process of research using a systematic review to develop counselling competences for BACP and its' limitations, how the decision to apply the grounded theory method to analyse data added value and quality to the production of a counselling competence framework and how the involvement of a non-researcher in the project added a layer of reflexivity that enhanced the development of a counselling competences framework. The symposium aims to highlight the importance of weaving together professionalism, skills, knowledge and experience in creating a collaborative, representative and applicable counselling competences framework.

Contribution of each symposium paper to the overall theme: The paper on the systematic review highlights the process of doing systematic reviews and discusses the complexity of the process and its limitations. The paper on grounded theory discusses the analytic steps applied on the systematic review used as the data and argues that the method added rigour and quality to the systematic review of the literature on counselling skills and the competences framework. The paper by the novice researcher on her involvement and facilitation of the project highlights how it enhanced reflexivity through the lenses of practicality and applicability of the findings to the counselling field.

Implications of the symposium theme for counselling and psychotherapy theory, research and practice: The symposium presents an original mixed methods approach to developing a counselling skills framework, shares the lessons learned in conducting systematic reviews of the literature and how the decision to step outside the habitual use of methods of developing a counselling skills framework by applying grounded theory can lead to a creative, rigorous analysis of data that the counselling and psychotherapy theory, research and practice can benefit from.

Symposium Paper 1 - A Systematic Review of the Counselling Skills

Jessie Emilion

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Keywords: Systematic review, counselling skills competences framework, low intensity.

Aim/Purpose: The author conducted a systematic review as commissioned by BACP to identify the effective use of counselling skills in the existing literature in the field of counselling and psychotherapy.

Design Methodology: This paper describes in detail the process and structure as to how this review was carried out in order to identify the skills necessary to develop the competency framework for counselling skills.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval had been given by BACP.

Results/Findings: The challenges posed by the lack of a clear definition of the term 'counselling skills' when conducting the search, followed by the data analysis and how the over whelming data that was generated provided limited outcomes are clearly described and discussed.

Research Limitations: The author suggests that the lack of evidence in the subject area, with most studies failing to meet the methodological standards or the time frame is an indication that this area has been neglected for some time (at least in the UK) and that it requires to be revived and redefined within the backdrop of the recent developments within the NHS and The Third sectors which emphasises the use of skills based supportive low intensity interventions.

Conclusions/Implications: The paper will discuss the benefits and challenges of undertaking a systematic review with limited time and resources and provide some pointers to other clinicians and researchers undertaking similar projects in the field of counselling and psychotherapy in the future. The subjective experience of the researcher, along with usefulness of the specialist reference group and supervision when undertaking such a project is outlined.

Symposium Paper 2 - The use of Grounded Theory to develop a framework for counselling competences

Dr Maria Luca

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Keywords: Grounded theory, rigour, counselling competences framework

Aim/Purpose: This paper aims to present how the application of Grounded Theory added rigour and quality to a systematic review of the literature on counselling skills. It provided the necessary analytic steps, to enhance the quality of the framework for counselling competences.

Design/Methodology: We show how the application of the constant comparative analysis procedure in various stages assured in-depth analysis of the data that emerged from the systematic review and enabled the production of an advanced concept matrix of counselling skills organised under key categories.

Ethical Approval: This had been given by a professional body.

Results/Findings: A core group engaged in open coding and axial coding holding in mind the goal of the review. A stage of critical assessment and scrutiny through dialogue and reflection reached saturation and agreement of the final framework. This meticulous process was inclusive of the voices and view of experts in the field of counselling and led to a more integrated theory emergence (framework). The steps of researcher immersion in the data produced by the systematic review and data reduction through the GT constant comparative analysis are discussed.

Research Limitations: The findings are constructed through qualitative methods, therefore cannot be replicated. The reliability and validity of the research study rest on the principles of trustworthiness, rigour and reflexivity in qualitative research. Data used to develop the counselling competences framework was from a systematic review of the literature available and selected. Limitations are intrinsic to the literature and the extent to which it captured the field of counselling skills. As the external experts indicated, there were competences missing from the literature itself. This limited the final framework.

Conclusions/Implications: The mixed methods approach added rigour and clarity to the developing framework. A systematic review of the literature in itself is a huge undertaking, it requires a clear criteria for selecting what is relevant and it has the potential to be descriptive. By adding grounded theory and its' constant comparative analysis approach, the data became more manageable, coding

helped develop user friendly categories, which were then organised as core competences to produce a clear framework accessible to the target groups in the caring professions field.

Symposium Paper 3 - A reflective account of a novice researcher's experience of contributing to the development of a counselling competences framework

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Keywords: Novice researcher, learning, counselling competences framework

Aim/Purpose: To offer a reflective account of a counsellor's experience of her involvement in developing a competence framework for counselling skills alongside the lessons learnt as a novice researcher.

Design/Methodology: A mixed methods approach consisting of a Systematic Literature Review and Grounded Theory analysis was used. The novice researcher's involvement and facilitation of the project, enhanced reflexivity through her looking at the data with the lenses of practicality and applicability

Ethical Approval: Approved by a professional body.

Results/Findings: The paper identified the personal and professional tensions and challenges encountered by the novice researcher. It shows the tensions and challenges present between the academic and non-academic aspects of the counselling professions, including how value is assigned and competence measured.

By exploring the personal steps that led to an emerging researcher alongside the analytic steps that led to an emerging counselling skills competence framework this paper offers the hypothesis that both could be seen as journeys from inferiority to recognition. By sharing the personal steps that led to an emerging researcher, the novice researcher journey highlights a transformation in attitude and perspective on research, demystifying the anxieties and trepidations and moving from a place of anxiety to recognising the value of research.

Research Limitations: The research base is huge. Counselling skills and values are scattered amongst a plethora of professional roles and setting using different languages for the same thing. It is this limitation that led to the inclusion of Grounded Theory. Despite this additional layer of rigour and authority, the sheer size of the targeted populations is a limitation to the findings of this study.

Conclusions/Implications: Employing a mixed methods approach, allowed the emerging data to be contained and used to develop a competence framework that met the project's original aim; to produce a framework that was relevant for a wide range of roles and settings, using a language that was inclusive and meaningful to all its potential user groups.

Arts for the Blues symposium - a new creative evidence-based therapy for depression

Dr Joanna Omylinska-Thurston, Professor Vicky Karkou, Dr Scott Thurston, Dr Linda Dubrow-Marshall, Ailsa Parsons, Jo Leather, Rachel Calleja and Emma Perris

Symposium Overview

Other Authors/Presenters: Jen Lewis
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Aims of the symposium: Depression affects a large number of adults in the UK, often resulting in referral to mental health services with the NHS. This is particularly relevant at this moment due to Covid-19 pandemic which has led to increasing rates of depression and anxiety (Grover at al., 2020; Gualano et al., 2020; Guessoum et al., 2020; Knopf, 2020; Ozamiz-Etxebarria et al., 2020) highlighting the importance of developing effective interventions for a potentially greater number and variety of clients.

According to NICE guidelines (2009) CBT is the main modality for depression with other approaches such as counselling for depression offered in a limited capacity. Arts psychotherapies are rarely provided despite their attractiveness to clients (Dudley, 2006). Therefore, in order to expand clients' choice we developed a new creative psychological therapy (Arts for the Blues) integrating evidence-based approaches with arts psychotherapies.

The aim of this symposium is to present the development of Arts for the Blues and also to showcase current research developments that contribute towards building its evidence base.

Contribution of each symposium paper to the overall theme: Professor Vicky Karkou and Dr Joanna Omylinska-Thurston will open the symposium with a paper discussing findings of Arts for the Blues workshop within an IAPT setting which became a foundation of the model. The second paper will be presented by Dr Joanna Omylinska-Thurston and Dr Scott Thurston. It will give background to Arts for the Blues including its roots in Cochrane Review and thematic synthesis of clients' perceived helpful factors in treatments of depression. The paper will highlight the development of key ingredients of this intervention. MSc students Jo Leather and Rachel Calleja as well as PhD candidate Emma Perris will discuss their research taking Arts for the Blues in new directions.

Following on from this, Dr Linda Dubrow-Marshall will present the findings from the Ars for the Blues workshop and focus group with survivors of coercive control in cultic groups. The final presentation will be by Ailsa Parsons who will focus on the experience of psychological flow which she investigated following the Arts for the Blues workshop.

Implications of the symposium theme for counselling and psychotherapy theory, research and practice: The model has emerged from work in IAPT and is undergoing development within and outside NHS while building an evidence base. We are currently working on potential adaptations for cancer patients, trauma and eating disorders. The model is further being modified to serve the needs of frontline clinical healthcare staff involved in the Covid-19 pandemic and to tackle loneliness and isolation for the general public. The Arts for the Blues model, with its unique mobilisation of sensitive and specific arts-based psychotherapy practices has potential to be responsive to specific cultural and social needs of minority and marginalised groups given the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on BAME communities.

Further research is needed before the model is proposed as an effective treatment option that can be added to national guidelines. However, its grounding on evidence, its structured but flexible

character and its commitment to the generation of further evidence appears to be a promising new development.

Symposium paper 1 – A new creative evidence-based intervention for depression (Arts for the Blues) – pilot workshops in IAPT with clients with depression and therapists

Professor Vicki Karkou, Dr Joanna Omylinska-Thurston

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Keywords: Depression, Arts for the Blues, creative, psychotherapy, IAPT.

Aim/Purpose: IAPT is the main provider of psychological services for adults' mental health in the UK but the 64% drop out rates (NHS Digital, 2019) suggest the interventions offered may not be meeting clients' needs. Therefore, Omylinska-Thurston et al (in press) developed a new creative evidence-based intervention drawing on CBT, counselling for depression, short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy as well as arts psychotherapy to widen clients' choice. Results from pilot workshops of this intervention, titled Arts for the Blues, that took place in IAPT are presented here.

Design/Methodology: The study involved two 90-min workshops followed by 60-min focus groups with: (i) clients with depression (n=7); (ii) therapists (n=6). The focus groups included questions about helpful and unhelpful aspects of the workshops. PHQ9, GAD7, WHO-5 Well-being Index and PANAS were collected pre- and post- the workshop. Participants also worked with goals which were measured on a 1-10 Goal Ladder. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used for data from the focus groups, while descriptive statistics were performed on the quantitative data.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval was obtained from NHS Ethics and Edge Hill University.

Results/Findings: Following the workshop clients with depression reported positive changes in wellbeing and therapists reported decrease in negative feelings. Both groups felt decreased levels of anxiety and that they were closer to their goals. Both clients and therapists reported the helpfulness of the following factors: encouraging active engagement, developing relationships, learning skills and expressing emotions. Omylinska-Thurston etc al (in press) identified that these ingredients are essential when working with depression and they form a foundation of the Arts for the Blues intervention.

Research Limitations: Results are limited to responses from only two pilot workshops.

Conclusions/Implications: The evidence-based foundation, creative content, and pluralistic nature of this new approach aligned with client-identified key ingredients for positive therapy outcomes, make it a promising therapy option within IAPT. An evaluation of a full 12-sessions intervention is needed as a next step towards considering it as an additional therapeutic approach for depression.

Symposium Paper 2 - Arts for the Blues: the development of a new creative group psychotherapy for depression

Dr Joanna Omylinska-Thurston, Dr Scott Thurston, Jo Leather, Rachel Calleja and Emma Perris

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Keywords: Arts for the Blues, creative methods, psychotherapy, depression, group, pluralistic

Aim/Purpose: Depression affects a large number of adults in the UK, often resulting in referral to mental health services within the NHS. According to NICE (2009), CBT is the main modality for depression with other approaches such as counselling for depression offered in a limited capacity. Arts psychotherapies are rarely provided despite their attractiveness to clients (Dudley, 2006). Therefore, in order to expand clients' choice we developed a new creative psychological therapy integrating evidence-based approaches with arts psychotherapies.

Design/Methodology: A three-level approach was used:

a. thematic synthesis (Thomas & Harden, 2008) of client-identified helpful factors in evidence-based approaches for depression and in arts psychotherapies (Parsons et al, 2019);
b. studio practice exploring Cochrane Review of arts psychotherapies for depression (Thurston et al, in preparation);
c. pilot workshops and focus groups for clients with depression and therapists within IAPT (Karkou et al, in preparation).

Ethical Approval: NHS and Edge Hill University approvals for pilot workshops and focus groups were obtained.

Findings and Discussion: Eight key ingredients for positive therapy outcomes were identified: encouraging active engagement, learning skills, developing relationships, expressing emotions, processing at a deeper level, gaining understanding, experimenting with different ways of being, and integrating useful material. These ingredients were brought together as Arts for the Blues for clients with depression: a 12-session evidence-based pluralistic group psychotherapy integrating creative methods as well as talking therapy.

Research Limitations: Further research is needed before the model is proposed as an effective treatment option that can be added to national guidelines.

Conclusion/Implications: The model has emerged from work in the NHS and is undergoing further development building an evidence base. Preliminary results suggest that this is a promising intervention for depression. We are currently working on potential adaptations of this work to people recovering from cancer, eating disorders as well as other client groups. The model is further being modified to serve the needs of frontline clinical healthcare staff involved in the Covid-19 pandemic as well as to tackle loneliness and isolation for the general public.

Symposium Paper 3 - Creative Psychotherapeutic Flow: Flow in a Creative Arts Psychological Intervention

Ailsa Parsons

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Keywords: Psychotherapeutic Flow, Arts for the Blues, group intervention, creative

Aims/Purpose: Psychological Flow describes the sense of being enjoyably immersed in a challenging yet enjoyable activity, sometimes referred to as being 'in the zone' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). This study evaluates the importance of Flow in a psychological evidence-based and multimodal creative psychotherapy workshop (Arts for the Blues), and the effects of the workshop on mood change and personal goal attainment.

Design/Methodology: Positive and Negative Affect and self-reported progress towards a personal goal were measured before and after the 90-minute workshop. A retrospective measure of acute Flow state, and participants' (N=18) ratings of the importance of each Flow dimension, were collected afterwards. Finally, a 1hr focus group was conducted to evaluate perceptions of the workshop and the relevance of Flow.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval was granted by the University of Salford.

Results/Findings: Positive affect and personal goal attainment increased and negative affect decreased over the course of the workshop ($p < .05$), as expected. Mean Flow scores indicated a highly Flow-like experience during the workshop. The three dimensions of Flow ranked by participants as the most important for the intervention's psychotherapeutic aims were Automaticity, Concentration on the Task at Hand and Autotelic experience. Pre-post affect change, total Flow and the nine individual dimensions of the Flow scale, were tested for association. There was a significant moderate positive correlation between Unambiguous feedback and change in Positive affect, $r(16) = .459$, $p = .028$, (one-tailed), and a significant moderate negative correlation between Sense of control and change in Negative affect, $r(16) = -.433$, $p = .036$, (one-tailed). Thematic Analysis of the focus group (n = 13) revealed a central theme of Creative Therapeutic Flow, comprised of seven subthemes aligning with Flow dimensions. Two additional themes - Group creativity energising Flow and Lightbulb moments leaving a trace were found, connecting to the central theme.

Research Limitations: The single-session design, small sample size, and use of individual Flow scale items limits validity and reliability. Further research is required to ascertain findings.

Conclusions/Implications: Arts for the Blues enables Flow states, which may contribute to the creative psychotherapeutic process and thus outcomes. Creative therapists should consider how to support all nine Flow dimensions within client interventions.

Symposium Paper 4 - Arts for the Blues for Survivors of Coercive Control in Cultic Groups

Dr Linda Dubrow-Marshall

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Keywords: expressive therapies, cult survivors, psychological flow, goal ladder

Aim/Purpose: Arts for the Blues is a creative intervention within a pluralistic framework designed to help people to improve their mood, but it had not been offered to people who have experienced coercive control in the context of a cultic or extremist group. The researchers sought to evaluate progress toward attainment of personal goals, psychological flow, and acceptability and feasibility of the intervention. Another aim was to reflect on the experience of the facilitators in offering this workshop.

Design or methodology: The intervention was offered as a 90-minute workshop during a conference organised by the International Cultic Studies Association. Participants set a personal goal and used a Goal Ladder pre and post intervention to indicate their self-perceptions of goal attainment. Participants were guided through a mindfulness body scan and then given the opportunity to experience a variety of creative approaches including movement, image making, and writing, followed by group discussion. The Short Flow States Scale was administered at the end. Participants were interviewed via telephone about their experience within a few weeks. The researchers reflected on their experience of the workshop through personal writing followed by group discussion, leading to the compilation of a collective biography.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval was granted by the University of Salford.

Results/Findings: Participants perceived that they made progress toward achieving personal goals which continued after the workshop. They experienced a positive state of psychological flow. Only 3 out of 8 participants were willing to participate in the research project, and this led to reflection amongst the facilitators about difficulties in establishing trust with people whose trust has been betrayed. A first-person collective biography revealed countertransference issues and observations about group process.

Research Limitations: The small sample size was a key limitation and further research is needed before generalising any results.

Conclusions/Implications: The research project has significance because it represented a new application of a previously established expressive therapy intervention with participants who have been harmed through a pattern of coercive control which they experienced in the context of a cultic or extremist group. Therapist reflections may be helpful to others who would like to work sensitively with people who have been harmed within relationships.

Posters

Expecting Greatness: Supporting the transitions of High School Seniors. The socio-emotional wellness and career knowledge of underrepresented seniors in transition

Neffisatu Dambo

Poster (originally submitted for 2020 conference)

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Keywords: School Counseling, Career, Wellness, Senior, Multicultural Competence

Aim/Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine high school seniors' socio-emotional wellness, career knowledge, and their career exposure leading up to their transition from high school to adulthood. The authors will address the following questions: (a) how are high school seniors being guided (counseled) toward transitions (i.e., college, work, gap year, military, vocational trade schools), (b) do counselors use equitable (multicultural competent) counseling practices when counseling high school seniors in transition, (c) to what extent does counseling practices and curriculum impact the transitions of high school seniors, (d) what is the emotional health of high school seniors, and (e) to what degree are high school seniors knowledgeable about career options?

Design/Methodology: Do school counseling variables (i.e., career development, relationship) influence high school seniors' socioemotional wellness, as well as their academic and career transitions?

A mixed method concurrent triangulation design will be conducted with high school seniors *N*=250. Researchers will use purposive sampling. Data collection will involve surveys, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. The analysis of results will be analyzed using a logistic regression model, Nvivo, charts, chunking, coding, development of themes, openness to disconfirming evidence, critical rereading of data, concept maps, peer debriefing, extensive review of the literature, and critical race theory.

Ethical Approval: The preliminary results informing this study were conducted using my IRB approved dissertation research. To gain ethical approval for this particular study, I will complete the required documents and submit this research study to the Internal Review Board (IRB) by March 15, 2020.

Results/Findings: Forthcoming

Research Limitations: Potential limitations may include sampling bias and researcher bias.

Conclusions/Implications: The importance of comprehensive school counseling programs that include specified 12th grade curriculum (heightened socio-emotional and career counseling components, multicultural relevant pedagogy). The importance of multicultural competence and alternative counseling approaches (i.e. play therapy, bibliotherapy, music, dance) for the supervision and training of counselors.

Exploring Integrating Chinese Calligraphy Handwriting as a Potential Complementary Psychological Therapy for the Chinese Community in the UK. A dual case study design of brief intervention of Chinese Calligraphy Enhanced Therapy (CCET)

Juan Du

Poster

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Keywords: Chinese Mental Health, Chinese clients, cultural sensitive psychotherapy, race equality.

Aim/Purpose: According to the National Institute for Mental Health in England (2003), Chinese clients tend not to request support from available psychological services and have been described as an "invisible population"(1). However, this does not mean that Chinese people in the UK do not experience mental health struggles or need psychological therapy support(2).
There are obvious obstacles for Chinese clients to access psychological therapy, including therapists offering services that do not meet the clients' social, cultural and linguistic needs (3,4); clients' language barriers and a lack of awareness of mental health services within the minority community(5); perceived discrimination from professionals (6). Therefore, the need for psychological therapies to be culturally appropriate and responsive to Chinese clients has been recognised(7).

Design/Methodology: Chinese Calligraphy Handwriting (CCH) as a mindfulness-based brush meditation intervention has been practised for thousand years in China, CCH traditionally uses a natural ink stone with water added to generate ink, which is then applied on rice paper in strokes, using a soft-tipped brush, in the form of the structure of Chinese characters (8). To Chinese people, calligraphy practice is not just a national art and cultural-historical heritage (9), it is, in fact, a well-known and familiar way of achieving relaxation and harmony of the body and the mind, which are also essential for physical and psychological functioning (10).

Chinese Calligraphy Enhanced Therapy (CCET) is a complementary therapy designed as a culturally sensitive and non-threatening approach to bridging Chinese clients' access to psychological therapy. The 4 sessions of CCET are an innovative integrative approach which also draws on cognitive theory, mindfulness theory and psychoanalytic theory. The design is inspired by my clinical work with Chinese clients in the UK and is also based on personal experience of psychotherapy practice and my role as a mindfulness teacher for community services.

Results/Findings: The data collection and analysis are in progress, but it will be using a qualitative theory-building case study method, it will not directly aim to address the effectiveness of the CCET approach itself, but instead will hope to build an explanation for western psychotherapy field of how the approach works.

Conclusions/Implications: I hope this study will provide benefit for culturally sensitive psychological therapy access for the Chinese Community in the UK, improve the awareness of a cultural-sensitive psychological approach in the psychotherapy community and promote race equality in mental healthcare services in the UK.

Author: Juan Du is a bilingual Mandarin and English-speaking psychotherapist, Mindfulness teacher, currently studying a doctorate in Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy at Metanoia Institute. This research is part of her doctorate thesis.

Shared Visibilities – An exploration of the client's use of imagery on the road to unconditional positive self-regard (UPSR)

Tania Goldsmith

Poster

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Keywords: Person-centred, interpretative phenomenological analysis, unconditional positive self-regard, imagery, metaphor

Aim/Purpose: To explore the role of client language in the developing sense of self and UPSR. To investigate how clients use the language of imagery and metaphor within the therapeutic relationship to explore themselves and ability to offer UPSR.

Design Methodology: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, 4 semi-structured interviews. Process of conceptual and qualitative textual analysis carried out of the transcripts and initial interpretations of the same to arrive at themes for analysis.

Ethical Approval: Research undertaken for MSc. Ethical approval was given by an ethic committee of tutors and peers following a presentation of the project and a discussion of potential ethical issues. Informed consent given by participants, including for withdrawal and publication.

Results/Findings: The phenomenon, imagery use by clients, impacted on the development of unconditional positive self-regard (UPSR). UPSR, the indication of the client's acceptance of the self, is a marker of therapeutic progress. Imagery is a powerful way for clients to relate to themselves, provides the ultimate personal language for the therapeutic relationship, and is used by the client in and beyond therapy. Arising from the client, their relationship to their own imagery and ownership of it positively influences the development of UPSR, and provides the means by which to see and describe that development. Therapists can use the language of clients to offer empathy and unconditional positive regard at source, and by sharing the client's language can deepen the therapeutic relationship.

Research limitations: As a small-scale IPA study, this research doesn't state conclusions about practice but seeks to be part of an ongoing conversation regarding the phenomenon. The findings were given validity by the rigorous nature of the data analysis process, preceded by conceptual analysis to ensure the stability of key terms, and in-depth personal reflection to account for researcher bias.

Conclusions/Implications: Imagery use, for those clients and therapists who share this phenomenon, is a powerful way to access, encourage and make visible the development of UPSR. Careful ethical consideration needs to be taken concerning the use of therapist imagery or the interpretation of client imagery by therapists.

What was/is the impact of being a self-identified sex addict on our respondents' self-concept and their inter and intrapersonal well-being, and can this inform psychotherapeutic practice?

Jerry Gordon, Barbara Brzeziecka, Samantha Cowperthwaite

Poster

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Keywords: Sex-Addiction, Judgement, Therapeutic-Relationship, Self-concept

Aim/Purpose: The research aimed to explore the experience of self-identified sex-addicts, and how sex-addiction affects individuals' well-being and self-concept. Our research purpose is to better inform counsellors working with this client-group.

Design/Methodology: Following the BACP guidelines for research in counselling and psychotherapy (Mitchels, 2018), three respondents self-identifying as recovering addicts, were audio-recorded during semi-structured interviews. The data was thematically analysed informed by phenomenological principles (Smith et al, 2009).

Ethical Approval: Our research was approved by our college Ethics Board before respondent recruitment began. Respondents were offered six no-fee counselling sessions if issues arose due to their research participation.

Results/Findings: According to our respondents' experiences, findings indicate that sex- addiction manifests in conjunction with a pre-existing profoundly negative self-concept and other co-morbid addictions such as substance misuse. Prior to recovery respondents were unable to achieve relational-intimacy and our findings suggest that recovery is an ongoing life-long process. All three respondents disclosed a definitive moment that led to their self-classification as sex-addicts and subsequently into recovery, which in turn has resulted in a more positive self-concept and greater relational-intimacy. Our respondents expressed sensitivity to external judgement, as well as self-judgement and shame and our findings further indicate that this client-group can be highly critical/judgemental of their psychotherapeutic relationships. However, conversely respondents were also positive in relation to how psychotherapy had aided their recovery process. It appears the extension of empathy and non-judgement, regardless of the psychotherapeutic modality offered, are critical to positive therapeutic experiences/outcomes for this client group.

Research Limitations: The small sample size may restrict generalisation of our findings (McLeod, 2003). As the research analysis was based on phenomenological principals, the findings may be considered to be subjective.

Conclusions/Implications: Sex-addiction has a negative impact on sufferers inter/intrapersonal relationships, exacerbates their existing negative self-concept and induces self-judgement and shame. The careful extension of empathy and non-judgement from counsellor to client appears critical in the psychotherapeutic relationship and greatly enhances the possibility of recovery for this client group. It seems important for counsellors to note that recovery from sexual-addiction appears to be an on-going life-long process which needs other on-going support long after the psychotherapeutic relationship has ended.

How Has Counselling and a 12 Step Programme Impacted on the Ability of Clients who are Self-Identified Sex-Addicts in Healing their Shame-Based Personalities and their Inability to Form Intimate Relationships?

Chanel Gorman, Szilvia Kaczkó Keffert, Mahayla Marriott, Alexandra Tarr

Poster

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Keywords: Sex-addiction, judgment, trauma, intimacy, shame.

Aim/Purpose: We aimed to explore how counselling, combined with a 12 Step Programme, impacted on healing the shame carried by clients who are self-identified sex-addicts, and if this improved clients' ability to form intimate relationships. Our purpose is to highlight the issues arising and the remedial process experienced by those in this client-group.

Design/Methodology: Initial research inquiry/our literature searches indicated that shame is a characteristic common to most sex-addicts and that addiction itself inhibits relational-intimacy. Two independent research groups have collaborated on their findings after interviewing seven respondents. Guided by BACP ethical principles for research in counselling/psychotherapy (Mitchels, 2018), respondents were audio-recorded during semi-structured interviews. The resulting data was thematically analysed informed by phenomenological principles (McLeod, 2003).

Ethical Approval: Our College Ethics Board granted approval and all respondents were offered six no-fee counselling sessions subsequent to their research participation, if required.

Results/Findings: Respondents disclosed childhood trauma/abuse (commonly sexual) apparently carried into adulthood in the form of toxic-shame and compulsively 'acted-out' sexually. This deepened respondents' existing sense of humiliation, fear of rejection/judgment, powerlessness and worthlessness. This low self-esteem also fuelled a search for external-validation though multiple sexual encounters with frequent disregard for sexual/personal health/safety. Respondents reported an inability to form/sustain intimate relationships/experience love during their active sex-addiction and co-morbidity, addiction to food/eating-disorders alcohol/drug-misuse, was always also present. Respondents felt both counselling and the 12 Step Programme were vital to their recovery. Counselling appeared to help respondents process trauma, toxic-shame, deep-rooted emotions and link early life experiences to the development of their sex-addiction/substance-misuse; whilst the 12 Step Programme was relied upon for daily living-support, developing intimacy/relationships and sustaining abstinence from addictive sexual behaviour.

Research Limitations: The small scale of the research may inhibit generalisation of our findings, which may also be subjective to the experiences of our respondents.

Conclusions/Implications: Given our findings it seems reasonable to suggest that practitioners might be advised to encourage sex-addicted clients' participation in a 12 Step Programme; in order to support their on-going recovery, development of relational-intimacy and different self-defined appropriate sexual behaviour. However, it also appears evident that psychotherapy/counselling is invaluable in helping clients to process their toxic-shame and build self-esteem.

Research methodological choice for an exploration of Counsellors' experiences regarding the influence of a fundamentalist religious childhood on mental health and wellbeing

Gill Harvey

Poster

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Keywords: Methodology, co-researchers, collaboration, stories.

Aims/Purpose: The aims are to enable co-researchers to tell theirs and/or their clients' stories, to psycho-educate professionals to recognise and understand this presenting issue and to add to the extant sparse literature on this largely hidden topic.

Design/Methodology: Based on an anti-positivist, constructionist-interpretivist and social constructionist perspective combined with a relativist ontological position, various qualitative methodologies were initially considered. Choosing a methodology that emphasised meaning rather than verbal communication (Langdridge & Hagger-Johnson, 2009) and preserving the integrity of story was regarded as crucial, so a combination of relational-centred, reflexive (Finlay & Evans, 2009) together with the collaborative narrative approach (Arvay, 2002) was chosen. The priority was to gather and represent people's unique stories (Etherington, 2004). Participants became co-researchers', with a collaborative process ensuing throughout the seven-stage research process. Recruitment was through professional bodies, a training college, psychology today and social media sites. Twenty counsellors underwent online preliminary interviews during Summer 2019. Purposeful sampling was then used to gain diversity of representation across the Abrahamic faiths. Eight co-researchers were invited to proceed (one later withdrew), data collection being mainly via face-to-face, unstructured interviews. Following transcription, co-researchers separately analysed the transcript before a joint interpretative interview took place. This was then transcribed into blended texts and 'pen-portraits' (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). This was a reflective, relational and collaborative process throughout.

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval for this project has been secured from Metanoia Institute/Middlesex University.

Results/Findings: Co-researchers contributed their time generously although not all had fully comprehended the extent of involvement (one person withdrew at analysis stage). However, in reflective feedback, most co-researchers' expressed gratitude for being involved and for the opportunity to tell their stories (their own rather than clients', became the major focus).

Research Limitations: This is a small-scale qualitative study and therefore has limited generalisability. Participants are from the Abrahamic faiths and it is imperative to acknowledge that co-researchers from other religions may have produced other results.

Conclusions/Implications: Co-researchers were at different stages of processing the effects of their upbringing and while most expressed appreciation for the opportunity to share stories and to work collaboratively, beneficial as well as detrimental effects of such an upbringing emerged.

Sandplay Therapy: The Lived Experiences of Therapists and Clients

Holly Huffinley

Poster

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Keywords: Sandplay Therapy (SPT), lived experience, client experience

Aim/Purpose: To explore the lived experience of Sandplay Therapy (SPT), from the perspective of both the client and therapist.

Design/Methodology: A qualitative systematic review of existing research on the lived experience of SPT, as reported by clients and therapists.

Ethical Approval: Not applicable to secondary research.

Results/Findings: The data was separated into two datasets. Dataset one included five studies on client experiences and dataset two included three studies on therapist/counsellor experiences. Each dataset generated four themes. Themes found in client experiences were a) general positive experiences of SPT; b) SPT as facilitative to emotional expression, c) SPT as helpful for considering the future and d) negative experiences of SPT. Themes in therapist experiences included a) positive experiences of delivering SPT, b) therapist techniques, c) therapist's perception of the client's experience and d) negative experiences of SPT.

Research Limitations: The quality of the review depended on the inclusion of trustworthy primary research, which employed self-report measures. These could have been influenced by social desirability or the felt obligation to report positive experiences. The studies on therapists' experiences may have been biased due to their existing investment in SPT. The study selection process was a potential source for researcher bias, although steps were taken to mitigate this, such as the development of set inclusion criteria and rigorous sifting. Thematic Analysis (TA) was used to analyse the experiences of clients and therapists separately. However, the review included studies on mostly on adults, with only one study including child participants. The SPT interventions were conducted in varying settings. These factors could limit the transferability of the review findings across practice with adults and children in various settings.

Conclusions/Implications: The lived experience of SPT is seemingly coherent with existing research and theory on the process of SPT and its mechanism for therapeutic change. Further research into the experience of SPT is needed, especially on child and adult clients separately. The findings provide an insight into how the application of SPT in practice could be improved. For example, by being more aware of clients' initial anxiety and improving practitioner training to combat this.

Counsellors' Experience of Working with Clients who Self-identify as Sex-Addicts and How This Might Inform Psychotherapeutic Practice

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Poster

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Keywords: Sex-addiction, counsellors' experience, shame-based, trauma-based.

Aim/Purpose: We aimed to explore counsellors' experiences of working with clients self-identifying as sex-addicts. Our purpose is to highlight respondents' experiences of working with this client-group to better inform general psychotherapeutic practice.

Design/Methodology: Three respondent counsellors field-working with clients self-identifying as sex-addicts, were audio-recorded during semi-structured interviews. The resulting data was thematically analysed informed by phenomenological principles (Braun and Clarke, 2012).

Ethical Approval: Our College Ethics Board approved our research, and respondents were offered six no-fee counselling sessions, if required, subsequent to their research participation. Our research followed BACP guidelines for ethical research in counselling and psychotherapy (Mitchels, 2018).

Results/Findings: A Literature Review suggested there is no collective definition of sex-addiction; also visible in our findings was that the variations in therapeutic approaches/treatments offered to clients were derived from counsellors' singular characterization of sex-addiction. However, successful outcome of the psychotherapeutic process/treatment was mutually measured by clients' ability to achieve management of her/his sexually-compulsive behaviour. There also appeared to be considerable commonality in the multi-disciplinary treatment offered to clients which included 1:1 and group psychotherapy and involvement in a 12 Step Recovery Programme (clients life-long commitment to self-help recovery) It appears, according to our respondents' experiences, that such clients also require trauma-based treatment/psychotherapy as their sexually-compulsive behaviours are worked through. Our respondent's experienced excessive shame within this client group, a state of being which was particularly prevalent with this population, as the primary barrier to a successful psychotherapy/treatment outcome. Within the treatment of sex-addiction and sexually-compulsive behaviour, it appears respondents are experiencing the increasing phenomenon of young peoples' addiction to pornography, developing solely from easy internet accessibility from a young age.

Research Limitations: Due to the limited number of respondents it might prove difficult to generalise our research findings (McLeod, 2003) which maybe subjective to our respondents.

Conclusions/Implications: Treatment for this client-group seems successful when it encompasses a multi-disciplinary approach, whilst neither a common definition of sex-addiction nor agreement on psychotherapeutic-approach appears to be of any relevance. However, counsellors may need to be mindful that clients in this client-group commonly appear to have entrenched shame-based personalities and trauma-based experiences, which require vital psychotherapeutic exploration within the psychotherapeutic alliance.

“Poor child!” How do school counsellors working with current boarders experience personal change?

Virginia Sherborne and Stephen Joseph

Poster

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Keywords: Boarding school; counsellor; secondary traumatic stress; vicarious posttraumatic growth; interpretative phenomenological analysis.

Aim/Purpose: Evidence increasingly describes how counsellors working with trauma may experience vicarious effects. The potential for school boarders to be traumatised is an issue of considerable public interest. Aim: use Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore experiences of UK counsellors working with independent-school boarders.

Design Methodology: Six counsellors (female, aged 40-65, one BAME) had semi-structured audio-recorded interviews. Interviews were transcribed. IPA was used for data analysis.

Ethical Approval: University’s ethics board approved.

Results/Findings:

Outside/inside

> “I thought I wasn’t good enough. That’s been really good, to change my beliefs about myself.” Anne
> “They’re in a little bubble. It took me a long time to feel included.” Lucy
> Culture and expectations
> “I do feel more open-minded, more interested, more educated.” Jane
> “They might have lots and lots of money, but a lack of love. So, I will come home and hug my children a bit more.” Holly
> Parent + child
> “Incredibly difficult. You become almost like a foster-parent. You become that secure attachment.” Rebecca
> “How draining it is. A bottomless pit.” Jane
> “You always know there’s one or two who will be suicidal. I’ve almost learned to detach myself, because you have to.” Rebecca

Research Limitations: • small sample size; • state/special/non-UK schools not covered

Conclusions/Implications: All experienced professional identity growth. Four showed positive change in relationships with their own children. These changes suggest Vicarious Posttraumatic Growth. The two working full-time with boarders showed signs of Secondary Traumatic Stress. Counsellors should form specialist peer-support/discussion groups. Awareness is needed of vicarious effects on those working with boarders.

Trauma TV: media-induced secondary traumatization in a sample of Turkish adults

Deniz Uyanik and Vasiliki Varela

Poster

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Keywords: Post traumatic stress, trauma, news, social media, secondary trauma.

Aim/Purpose: Media coverage of mass traumatic events (e.g. natural disasters, terrorist attacks etc.) is today frequent in both traditional and new-age media. Media exposure is however left out of the diagnostic criteria of secondary trauma in the DSM V. This study examined secondary traumatization in a sample of Turkish adults, with the aim of showing how traumatic events witnessed via the media can equally lead to significant post-traumatic stress to those directly witnessed.

Design/Methodology: Turkish participants (N=122) were asked to complete a demographic questionnaire containing their trauma histories, the PTSD Checklist-5 (PCL-5), and the Impact of Events Scale Revised (IES-R) for each of the traumatic events they were directly and indirectly exposed to. Participants were provided with Information Sheet and Consent Form; Study followed BPS Code of Conduct provided by University of Bolton's Ethical committee approval.

Results/Findings: Overall, post-traumatic stress levels were higher than the PTSD symptom threshold, as expected with this sample. Participants rated traumatic events they were exposed to through the media as significantly higher in symptom severity than those they were directly exposed to, on all three PTSD subscales (re-experiencing, avoidance, and hyperarousal). The only variable acting as a significant predictor for PCL-5 scores was perceived intrusions symptom severity in media trauma. Multiple media exposure (more than one separate event), employment status, gender, socio-economic level, or education did not yield any predictive relationship with post-traumatic stress symptom severity.

Conclusion/Implications: This study contributes to emerging literature supporting the inclusion of media exposure as a diagnostic criterion for future versions of the DSM by offering further evidence that traumatic events witnessed via the media induce post-traumatic stress symptoms.