

**COUNSELLORS^{UK}
TOGETHER**



Newsletter

October 2020 Issue 11



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Letter from the Editor

Dear members,

I suspect many of us are now feeling extremely fatigued. The world and our work are discombobulated. A feeling which is challenging enough on its own. But now we face the regular, glaring truth that even the most independent of us remain at the mercy of those with a lot more power than we could perhaps ever imagine to possess.

We're counsellors, we're mental health professionals but we are human first and foremost. We're also not any more likely to follow the tools of our trade than our clients are! There is no shame in this. It's more important than ever to remember that our training did not create superhumans. It did not make us infallible to the processes and emotions that the rest of the population experience.

So, what do we do when the world feels that much harsher and that much closer to completely caving in?

We reach out and we push ourselves to remember we are not alone. This issue of our newsletter may add to your sense of helplessness but know that the fight is not over yet. We are still here, as are you, and we can all get each other through this challenging time. And I managed all of that without the use of the word unprecedented ;)

Warmest Wishes,

Tara Shennan

You're still you

Yes, even online



Tara Shennan movingly explains why we are just as important and just as effective now as online/telephone counsellors as we were when we were able to work face-to-face with clients. Some content warning for mention of child abuse.

I am a survivor of abuse. There I said it. It's definitely not the first time that I have typed these words. I have written them thousands of times in message boards and I wrote them in 2 published works. It is unlikely to be the last time I write them.

Lockdown and the months that followed have offered a unique perspective of this fact. I was abused by my parents and for the first time in my life (yes even now as a woman in my 30s) I felt no obligation to go and see them. I finally had a solid reason to stay away. Sure, you can argue the abuse was a solid reason (my therapist certainly has) but I might remind you of that first sentence.

In trauma there is often a 'before' the event and an 'after' the event. It is almost poetic that there is once again a before and after. Before lockdown I was stuck in a toxic response pattern. I would go and see my parents; even the briefest of contacts would trigger my dissociation. I'd survive the meeting but there was a huge cost. At it's most destructive point, a visit would be followed by a suicide attempt. This had lessened but the push-pull of trying to value myself and then being pulled back to them meant that I wasn't functioning well at all.

After lockdown, it was a huge sense of relief. My mental health immediately improved. I couldn't see them but more importantly it meant they couldn't try and guilt me into seeing them. That breathing space is indescribable because for the first time I was able to see me as me and not as an extension of their wants and needs. Whilst the world struggled with that reduced contact, I was trying to figure out how to make this reality my whole reality. Around 4 months later, I did. I cut off contact and blocked them from all access to me.

I have a lot to be thankful for even in the midst of a global pandemic but I'm not really writing to force gratitude upon you. A nod to reflection perhaps. As we move towards another lockdown, I don't feel relief any more. My freedom from my abusers has heightened my sense of pain. I can't help but wonder what would have become of me if this event had occurred when I was still living with them. The answer to which really depends on my age. It's here where we land on the reason behind my sharing.

I was 12 years old when I first wrote into the internet that I had been abused. It was an anonymous message born. Pre-social media and Mark Zuckerberg was yet to graduate high school let alone create Facebook. Unfortunately for me, my first disclosure was heard by an online sexual abuser. Fortunately for me, I didn't blame that disclosure for the abuse that followed. So I kept disclosing until I found a safe place.

That safe place was ChildLine. When other kids my age were reading SHOUT magazines or delving into MySpace, I was juggling online abusers, my parents and the brief time I got to speak someone on the NSPCC webchats. It was these chats that eventually led to my first ChildLine call. My whole body shook with the fear of being caught, I could barely squeak a word out. I went on to have a regular ChildLine counsellor who I would sneak away to chat to each week.

When we look down the barrel of another lockdown, it is easy to think that our work as counsellors is somehow less effective online or via the telephone. We might be thinking that it was okay as a temporary measure but what about now? What about my suicidal clients?

You are the support, not the method of delivery. I was actively suicidal during some of my time with that ChildLine counsellor. She was the reason I kept trying to stay alive because she was the only one who cared about me. We keep forgetting that if that bond is going to happen, it will happen irrespective of setting. Often, actually irrespective of us at all. I wish people could trust that because what I gained from the ability to speak to someone using distance counselling methods was so profound it set me up for a lifetime of asking for help when I need it and believing that people can care even when they know horrible things about me.





2020 Resolution Results

BACP

Governance & Resolutions

Neither resolution proposed for the 2020 AGM received enough votes to reach the second stage of voting. Once again, highlighting that the 5% threshold that has been arbitrarily placed on resolutions does nothing more than stifle the voice of members.

It is, however, encouraging that overall engagement in the BACP's governance processes is growing. This is thanks, in no small part, to the tireless work of CTUK, our partner organisations and interested individuals making full use of their social media and business connections to drum up interest.

Last year, 5.1% of the membership voted on a resolution or motion. This year it was 8.1%. This may seem like a small rise but this is the highest level of engagement EVER in the history of this process. Back when the 5% threshold was introduced, there had never been 5% total engagement; never mind 5% achieved on a single proposal.

- **Resolution 1:** BACP should take a more proactive role by setting standards challenging institutional racism in the psychotherapeutic/counselling professions, at training, organisational and individual practitioner levels; with appropriate investment in external, independent monitoring of the implementation of these standards.

Resolution 1 received 2142 votes

- **Resolution 2:** Scrap the cost of applying for and maintaining the membership level of individual accreditation.

Resolution 2 received 2543 votes (4.72%)

All motions put forward were successful in reaching the next stage for an AGM vote.

A summative update

2017: A member resolution asking BACP to stop advertising positions for volunteer counsellors in their Therapy Today magazine received overwhelming support by the membership and passed.

July 2018: BACP sent an email to their members informing them that the AGM member resolution process had changed.

The original process: A proposer and seconder needed to collect 25 signatures of support for their resolution and this was then submitted to the board for voting at the AGM.

The new process: A proposer and seconder need to submit a resolution to an initial vote before it can be presented for a second vote at the AGM. This first vote needs the support of 5% of the membership. This is an increase in 2358 more votes than were required the previous year AND an additional step.

The new process also required a much more thorough 'pitch' and asks members to understand financial and professional consequences to a level the BACP fail to outline for their own projects. SCoPEd is an excellent example of this. When Erin Stevens and Tara Shennan put forward a resolution to stop BACP's involvement in the SCoPEd project, they were asked to outline the consequences of a successful resolution when BACP were still making statements on their website which said they did not know what the consequences would be if SCoPEd were implemented!

Breaching democracy: Another change was BACP now telling you how they feel you should vote AND writing on the ballot pages that you can vote no at a later stage. Creating confusion in many members who now didn't know how to place the vote they were there to cast.

2020: Members find their resolution proposals declined for reasons beyond the scope of the board; according to their own rules. Maria's proposed resolution for a democratic vote on SCoPEd was declined because 'the board couldn't guarantee the meeting of the requirements proposed' - these were not immutable and could have been changed. The board can decline a resolution if it is defamatory, is replicated in other resolutions or is at odds with the charitable aims. So not because the board don't like it or don't wish to try and make it attainable, then?

How the SCoPEd team say members feel about the framework:



60%

I am familiar with the SCoPEd Framework

I understand the aims of the framework



66%



46%

I feel supportive of the framework's aims

I can see where I'd fit on the framework



48%



30%

I feel that my voice as a member is being heard in relation to the SCoPEd project

I feel positive about the SCoPEd project being able to deliver on its aims



31%



34%

In its current format I would support this iteration of the SCoPEd framework as a structure for the future of the profession

How members really feel about the SCoPED Framework - Part 1

4%

I feel very confident that I am familiar with the SCoPED Framework

I am very confident that I understand the aims of the framework

7%

8%

I am strongly supportive of the framework's aims

I am able to map myself onto the framework without further clarification

7%

3%

I strongly agree that my voice has been heard

I feel extremely positive that SCoPED will be able to deliver on all of its aims

3%

4%

I strongly support the framework in its current iteration

How members really feel about the SCoPED Framework - Part 2

4%

I am completely unfamiliar with the SCoPED Framework

I do not understand the aims of the framework at all

4%

9%

I am strongly against the aims of the framework

I have no idea where I would fit on the framework

7%

12%

I feel my voice is completely ignored on the matter of the SCoPED framework

I feel it is highly unlikely that the framework will deliver on its aims

12%

15%

I strongly disagree with the framework in its current iteration

COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS

There has been an increase in momentum around counselling in schools. This is encouraging but we also need to pay attention to the fine points of the discussions being had. Yes it is great that MPs are making this a part of their ongoing agenda, but what responses are they actually getting?

Nickie Aiken, Con MP, asked the Secretary of State for Education, if he will (a) *provide access to counselling for all children in secondary schools and (b) extend access to counselling in further education colleges.*

In response, Vicky Ford, Con MP, stated: *It is important for schools and colleges to have the freedom to decide what support to offer pupils based on their particular needs and drawing on an evidence base of effective practice. Our survey of mental health provision in schools and colleges in 2016 and 2017 found that 61% of schools and colleges (56% of primary schools, 84% of secondary schools and 93% of colleges) reported offering a counselling service for their pupils. The department have published guidance on how to put in place effective school-based counselling, which schools can use to identify where further counselling support is appropriate for their pupils.*

You can read the full response here: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-22/93684> but the key takeaway is the conversation is still excluding the provision of paid counsellors. It could be said that the government is investing millions of pounds to simply avoid this provision.

We need to keep firm focus on our campaigning for the materialisation of actual paid work for all qualified counsellors. Both Vicky and Nickie fail to address that the bulk of the counselling provision is still being propped up by trainee counsellors who volunteer in placements.



A RATHER UN-KOOTH ARRANGEMENT



This month BACP announced yet another service that appears to provide roles for counsellors but actually provides roles to accredited counsellors.

Kooth will be the organisation behind a new counselling service for farmers. Kooth are a regular advertiser on Indeed - are they continually expanding or do they have trouble retaining their staff? Whatever the reason for the high volume of their adverts, their volume does mean that many of you will be familiar with their role requirements. Of which, right there front and centre is the requirement to be BACP accredited.

Only a few months ago BACP were celebrating another contract gained for a mental health telephone service; manned by BACP accredited counsellors.

This is good news for the 20% of members who actually have accreditation status but what are BACP and their workforce lead actually doing to improve the employment prospects for the other 80% of their membership, without whom, they would lose millions of pounds of revenue?





Big congratulations to Counselling Tutor!!!

Their certificate in Online and Telephone counselling has now been approved by ACTO, making them an ACTO approved training provider. This 80-hour CPD course has been awarded quality checked training recognition from the National Counselling Society and is also mapped onto the BACP core competencies for working safely and ethically online.



Association for counselling and therapy online are:

A membership organisation which help to set training standards in the field of online therapy. They are currently undergoing a large restructure of their membership processes but there is still clear information available on their website: acto-org.uk

National Counsellors' Day Conference 2021



**What's
New ?**

We are really excited to let you know that next year's conference will be held in Edinburgh AND Online.

The event is scheduled for Saturday 19th June 2021 and the theme of the day is 'Intersectionality, discrimination and social justice: a call for true equality in counselling and psychotherapy'.

As long as no further restrictions are enforced then we are hoping that it will take place at the Edinburgh Conference Centre, which is a lovely building, and both lunch and refreshments provided. We are still confirming ticket prices, which we predict will cost between £67 - 97 per person depending on venue costs which we are still confirming.

What we do know is that places will be limited to 22 at the moment, which will hopefully rise by June 2021, and if so then there will be a maximum of 100 people allowed. We might need to hold a list of those who are interested in attending and offer on a first come first served basis. The event will also be live streamed and tickets available to purchase on a donation basis to ensure the event is accessible for all. We have some fantastic presenters confirmed. We are just waiting to confirm our final two presenters and once we do so we'll release all the details. What we can say is that they're amazing and we are so lucky to have them on board. If you want to find out more about National Counsellors' Day then you can do so here: www.nationalcounsellorsday.co.uk

If you'd like to secure your online ticket then you can do so here now:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/national-counsellors-day-conference-2021-tickets-110239328800>

Step Online

INTRODUCING OUR NEW TRAINING PROGRAM



We are really excited to let you know that we have just launched our new online training program, Step Online.

Step Online is a 6 month course which will tell you everything you need to know to grow your counselling, therapy or coaching business online.

Today we have launched Module 1 - Websites. In this module you will find out how you can build your own WordPress website in less than 3 hours and you'll have access to training videos, workbooks, resources and recommendations. Please watch the video above which gives you a behind the scenes look at the module and what you can expect. It's pretty impressive!

The following modules and release dates are:

Module 2 - Your brand and you - Monday 30th November 2020

Module 3 - Getting to grips with graphics - Thursday 31st December 2020

Module 4 - Everything marketing - Sunday 31st January 2021

Module 5 - Content and communication - Sunday 28th February 2021

Module 6 - SEO, Google and analytics - Wednesday 31st March 2021

Module 1 - Websites is available in the members area now. If you are already a member then just log in, scroll down to Step Online and click to access. If you are not yet a member and would like to join us then you can find out more here: www.members-ukcounsellors.co.uk.

We hope you do watch the video and that this course will bring you masses of learning and really help.

Monthly Therapists Planner

The Therapist's Planner brings all your organisational needs into one handy place.

Included each month are:

- Weekly Personal diary pages
- Weekly time-sheet to log client sessions
- Weekly social media planner
- To do Lists
- and more...

You can get your copy, for free, if you are a member of the CTUK membership club.

to find out more about our membership club and how to join, turn to page 19.



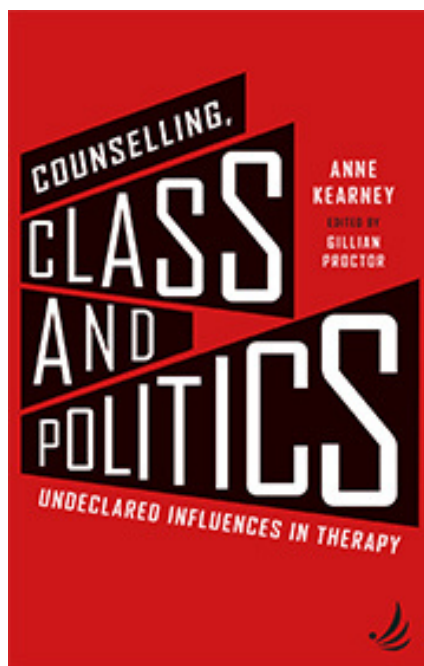


Monthly Prize Draw



Each month on our public Facebook page we hold a prize draw where you could win a book or book voucher just by commenting on our post.

This Month's book:



BOOK OVERVIEW

First published in 1996, Anne Kearney's ground-breaking book on class in counselling and its invisibility within the training curriculum and the counselling relationship is reissued here with new commentaries from practitioners, clients and educationalists writing today.

Anne died before she could start work on a planned revision of her text. But how much has really changed?

Her motivation, back in 1996, 'to persuade readers to the view that politics and political ideas matter in counselling' is just as powerful today. So too is her driving belief that counselling training, regulation and awareness in general too often fails to acknowledge the political environment that practitioners and their clients inhabit and its influence on the counselling relationship. Anne's book, accessible, unashamedly unapologetic and searching in the questions it asks of readers, is still a vibrant, challenging text for any student, practitioner or trainer today.

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psychotherapists
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hours of CPD.**

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**High-quality face to face training in
your local area for only £20-40 per
day, delivered by JHD Counselling
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CTUK Online CPD Hub.



**A listing on our counselling
directly on our main website
(www.ukcounsellors.co.uk).**



7 Day Blog Challenge Course



**A monthly Therapists
Diary to download and
keep you on track.**

Plus all of this...

Websites for Therapists. (Discount - just £49 for the build and one years hosting).

10% off National Counsellors' Day Conference tickets.

Reduced cost Diploma in Working with Children and Young People - age 11- 18 years by Sue Pattison.

Entry to our monthly prize draw to win a £15 Amazon Voucher!


Access to our private supportive Facebook group.

And more coming soon!

Sign-up here →

www.members-ukcounsellors.co.uk

**Join us for
ONLY
£6 per
month**

A collection of approximately 12 blue brushstrokes of varying lengths and orientations are scattered around the central text, creating a dynamic, hand-drawn feel.

Thank you
for
Reading!

Issue 12 comes out on the 1st December 2020

If you have any comments or suggestions for our newsletter please contact the editor at tara@ukcounsellors.co.uk. If you would like to write an article, a book review or write about your research in our newsletter, please also contact Tara.