

The Irish

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- The Individual and Work: Politicised Psychotherapy
- Let's Talk about the F word!  
A reflection on fees
- Dark and Light – What Our Psychotherapy Heroes  
Reveal About Ourselves and Our Profession
- Shelter From The Pandemic:  
Notes On Nature
- When the closing session is final  
A therapist's journey with her client through  
terminal illness and death

## Reflections with purpose



Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

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## From the Editor:



Dear Colleagues,

We wish you a very warm welcome to the Winter 2021 edition of the Irish Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy. As I write, we have again reached that time of year when the clocks have fallen back, the evenings stretch longer before us and we quiet somewhat and claim some space to restore and reflect. Whilst not yet over the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, and with it all of the upheaval and loss, we also have had enormous opportunity for careful, considered reflection on ourselves, our practice, our clients and our profession. In this context we are delighted to present five articles from professionals in our field who explore very different themes and experiences. The thread which binds them all together lies in each author's ability to weave their reflections on these themes into colourful tapestries of words and images which in turn prompts our own reflections with purpose.

In our first article, Alex Delogu explores the topic of *Politicised Psychotherapy*. As we are social creatures, our wellbeing is tied up with societal forces (including politics) which, in turn, shape our needs, expectations and place enormous demands on us as individuals. We cannot escape the impact of these forces. Therapists play a part in society because we are members of the same society from

which our affected clients emerge. In this piece, Alex skilfully articulates many of these tensions and outright conflicts by illustrating the impact in selected client vignettes offering us an opportunity to explore our part in maintaining potentially problematic social pressures.

Our second article addresses a hot topic at present (as illustrated by the number of motions on the topic of protecting the value of counselling and psychotherapy at the recent IACP AGM). Here, Brendan O'Shaughnessy's *Let's talk about the F word*, explores the area of fee setting from his professional practise perspective. Brendan's approach is to explore the practicalities, ethics and business aspects of this often challenging and overlooked aspect of our work. Overlooked in the sense of the need for careful, purposeful and data-driven decisions necessary to inform us about what our work is worth. Though money alone will likely never really represent the actual value of therapy for clients and for ourselves, it is an important aspect of our financial wellbeing.

Coincidental with the recent news of the passing of Aaron T. Beck (1921-2021), father of cognitive behavioural therapy, Emma Redfern turns her attention to the topic *Dark and light – what our psychotherapy heroes reveal about ourselves and our profession*. She does so in a thoroughly self-reflective, descriptive and open way, illustrating the influences of veritable giants in our field. She notes that though all of us likely have our own therapy heroes (those people whose work has been formative and foundational in our identity as therapists), we need to remain vigilant for objectifying them as idealised others and land with the shadow each necessarily

includes so that we can see them as real people. We thus meet ourselves in our own realness along the way.

Our fourth work offers us some much needed respite from talk of Covid-19, and redirects us to the topic of respite. Here, Siobhan Maher's work, *Shelter from the pandemic: Notes on nature* explores the many ways we can be in nature and the many benefits this has on our physical and psychological wellbeing. Biophilia, fractals and elemental natural forces are described as important resources to offset the way we live today, with our ever increasing reliance on screens and indoor living. Siobhan makes a strong case for a return to nature as solace and shelter.

Our last prose work – *When the closing session is final*, Margaret Plunkett, in a remarkably human, courageous and compassionate mode, reflects on her lived experience of working with a client in the last stage of their life, from diagnosis of terminal illness to their death. This is a piece which is both moving and hopeful. With enormous grace, Margaret charts those final months with her client, V and shows us all what the soul of a therapist looks like when faced with such a terrible situation. I think this piece is a fitting end to our Winter Edition. The editorial committee would like to express our profound gratitude and support to Margaret for sharing such a sacred experience.

And finally, as we continue our formal poetry section of the journal, we hope you enjoy the works from five different poets on a range of topics and the theme of this quarter's issue – *Reflections with Purpose*.

**Mike Hackett, Editor**  
and **Lynne Caffrey, Co-editor**

## Academic Article

# The Individual and Work: Politicised Psychotherapy

By Alex Delogu



*individuals and work* and the impact that these ideas have on physical and mental well-being. Identity and work are intertwined (Gertz, 2019, p. 127). Before looking at these two aspects, let's explore the critique in more detail.

## The Critique

I first encountered this critique through the work of philosopher Mark Fisher who wrote insightfully about the effects that culture and politics have on the psyche of individuals. As a biographical note, Fisher was open about his struggles with depression and sadly took his life in 2017 (Colquhoun, 2020, p.2; Fisher, 2021a). I mention this as sometimes philosophers can have a reputation of operating at a theoretical distance from their subject, but in this instance, we have a person thinking and philosophising through their lived experience.

Fisher's most influential book *Capitalist Realism* (2009) is concerned with how the political system at the time stunted our capacity to even imagine an alternative society beyond that of the doctrines of capitalism, leading us down a bleak imaginative cul-de-sac that makes "it is easier to imagine the end of the world than it is to imagine the end of capitalism" (Fisher, 2009, p. 2). The focus here is that the social environment has a direct impact on our capacity to imagine and on mental health more generally, which will be returned to later.

## Introduction

There exists a rather worrying critique of psychotherapy in that it may exist in service of harmful societal forces. To put it concretely, the risk is that psychotherapy is used to rehabilitate people to return to a societal system that itself harms and breaks them. This is not a criticism of psychotherapy itself, but rather a particular function that psychotherapy risks

adopting. This is not something interior to psychotherapy but rather a demand that is placed on it from the outside. How should psychotherapy respond? The aim of this paper is to show that this is a demand that must be resisted if one is to maintain the ideal of doing no harm seriously. The problem itself appears in the unusual conjunction of our commonly held ideas about

From a mental health perspective, Fisher's main concern was that this connection between our environment and mental health was being undermined by the idea of the "atomistic individual" (Fisher, 2009, p. 37). By over-emphasising the individual, the political and social causes of mental illness are diminished. By extension, the impetus to change things at a social and political level are similarly diminished (Fisher, 2009, p.37). If we become blind to the causes of our distress, how can we possibly change them? It is this disconnect that led psychologist David Smail to state that "psychotherapy does not work" (Smail, 2001, p. viii), where he argued that a psychotherapy that aims to heal people but ignores the societal causes of mental illness will fail from the start. It would simply end up treating a symptom, something many therapists would reject. This adds a nuanced danger to the popular idea that the only thing you can change is yourself.

To counter this trend means that psychotherapy must become socially and politically aware in its functioning (Fisher, 2009, p. 37; Totton, 2003, p. 49). Psychotherapy should not simply be a tool to adjust people to social norms but something that holds these norms into question. It is important to note that this is not an excuse to ignore developmental and family contributors to distress. The political and social are simply inherent dimensions of that very process.

### **Pathological Individualization**

The idea of there being an absolute individual exists only as an abstraction. The reality of our situation is that the social nature of being human precedes any notion of individuality. "There's no such thing as the individual" says Fisher

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*Belief in the common idea that "you can achieve anything" has become more and more a reality today.*

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(2021b, p. 119). I have argued similarly elsewhere (Delogu, 2020).

The detrimental effects of an over-emphasis on individuality can hardly be overstated, especially in a society that glorifies individuality. The pandemic has no doubt had an enormous impact of the focus on individuality. "Loneliness hangs over our culture today like a thick smog" (Hari, 2009, p. 88). Loneliness can occur because of social isolation but exists even in the presence of others. As the adage goes, the loneliest place is amongst a crowd. Hari points to a key factor in reducing loneliness and that is being together with others who hold shared meaning or values (2019, p. 100): just being together with people is insufficient. One might think the internet helps in this regard, and no doubt it does to a degree, but it is a paltry substitute for real togetherness (Hari, 2019, p. 108).

These isolating social conditions have an impact on how we see ourselves in the world. Nolen Gertz puts it well:

"So a system built on life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness can induce nihilism by treating lifelessness, oppression, and unhappiness as *personal feelings*, as feelings that reveal a person's pathological inability to be happy, the result of which is that we respond to our suffering with the nihilistic desire to *change ourselves* rather than with the political demand to *change the system*" (2019, p. 169).

This is not an argument against personal improvement. Rather, the danger is that mental health difficulties come to be viewed as a personal failing where in fact it is often a reasonable and understandable reaction to systemic demands that are detrimental to physical and mental well-being. The difficulty is in identifying these connections. It is much the same as exploring someone's developmental history and connecting past and present difficulties, except in this situation, the net is cast a little wider into the cultural domain.

There is a discourse and language that goes with this individualization, of which I am sure many are quite familiar. Belief in the common idea that "you can achieve anything" has become more and more a reality today. Smail calls this "magical voluntarism" - "the belief that it is within every individual's power to make themselves whatever they want to be" (Fisher, 2021a). This idea is clearly false. Obviously, it is important to have belief in oneself, but that "you can do anything" is an unfulfillable expectation. Should one not achieve these expectations the outcome is regarded as a personal failing. Believing in this also entails its opposite: "It is the flipside of depression – whose underlying conviction is that we are all uniquely responsible for our own misery and therefore deserve it" (Fisher, 2021a). This sort of view is unfortunately all too common in positions which discriminate against people from lower socio-economic backgrounds: "We have begun to think: I will look after myself, and everybody else should look after themselves, as individuals. Nobody can help you but you" (Hari, p. 101).

Byung-Chul Han makes some acute observations about the

direction this type of thinking in his book *The Burnout Society* (2015). Han sees burnout, depression, ADHD, borderline personality disorder as exacerbated by modern living and this illusion of infinite potential. “They are pathological conditions deriving from an excess of positivity” (2015, p. 4). We live in a society more inclined towards individual achievement, driven by the ideals of “freedom, pleasure, and inclination”, where everyone “must be a self-starting entrepreneur” (Han, 2015, p. 38). This is the downside to there being less constraints on how we choose to live; we are confronted by choice paralysis. Echoing Fisher, the implicit contemporary burden - the illusion of absolute freedom is exhausting, collapsing into its depressed opposite, that “Nothing is possible” (Han, p. 11). It becomes an individual failure for people who cannot achieve their potential. There comes a weariness from *too much* freedom, from having to constantly become something better. Leading society towards competitive performance between individuals, “a space where solidarity and empathy are only dangerous distractions weakening the warrior that you are obliged to be” (Berardi, 2019, p.46).

It should be clear how insidious this type of thinking has become. Obviously, people want to achieve their potential, to be free. But to demand it, expect it, and make it the order of the day is a form of violence that becomes internalized. It is oppression that becomes internalized and invisible because who wouldn't want more freedom? A paradoxical control through the promise of infinite possibility.

### Vignette 1

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*The thing that I found challenging was that he would nearly always circle back to the idea that it was down to his lack of will power or motivation for not being able to move past his anxiety and enjoy even basic things in his life.*

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I was working with a client, let's call him Bob, who was quite depressed. Bob had stopped enjoying things pretty much altogether. He did a lot of exercise; a lot more than I do in fact. He was on medication for depression and had noticed no change. He came to therapy because of an upcoming job interview which he aced but could not face starting the job and was subsequently dismissed. He had no traumatic family history, if anything they may have been distant, but it was hard to establish how much. How do you quantify an absence? The thing that I found challenging was that he would nearly always circle back to the idea that it was down to his lack of will power or motivation for not being able to move past his anxiety and enjoy even basic things in his life. “It is ultimately my responsibility to change” he would say, as if everything hinged on him alone. His conviction on this point at times had me struggling to think otherwise. My interventions never really evoked more thought around this core conviction. The short-term therapy came to an end.

### Work

These profound ideas about

our individuality and identity impact how we organise our work lives. Work has a profound effect on self-worth. The first question likely to be asked of a stranger is “What do you do for a living?” (Graeber, 2019, p. 240). In his philosophy of existentialism, Sartre cautioned against rigidly identifying with a distinct archetype, “there is the dance of the grocer, of the tailor, of the auctioneer, by which they endeavour to persuade their clientele that they are nothing but a grocer, and auctioneer, a tailor” (Sartre, 2004, p. 386). We collapse our potential into easily digestible archetypes. This goes for therapists as well. To not simply become a therapist, to keep your being an open question (Bion, 2018, p. 30).

Work leaves not solely an ideological mark. The toll which workplaces upon the body is often visible through strains, injuries, or illnesses. The body is thus the site where work leaves its mark. The “body is political” (Totton, 2003 p. 47). There are marks particular to the “labouring body” and the “consumerist body” (Totton, 2003, p. 49-50) and following Han let us coin the modern “achievement body” (2015, p. 8). As a subtlety, we are called to see the damage from what anthropologist David Graeber calls “spiritual violence” (2019, p. 67). That is, the detrimental impact of meaningless work, lack of values, and an increasingly uncertain future (Hari, 2019; Graeber, 2019; Gertz, 2019, p. 124-138).

The proposed solution to the ills mentioned above is often more work. “Some have done better than others because they've worked harder than others. *If you want to do that well, you should work hard too*” (Fisher, 2021, p.

122). All this even though “[m]ore often than not, individual wealth owes more to luck, laws and regulations, inheritance or fortunate timing than to individual brilliance” (Standing, 2017, p. 32). There are thus many more factors than individual motivation. Though likely preaching to the choir, many who do not work don’t do this by choice. Often, some relational difficulty or trauma gets in the way for those who want to work. I feel like I am defending idleness here. Let it be said that people shouldn’t need an excuse to be idle, there is nothing wrong, lazy or otherwise, about idleness and leisure (Standing, 2017, p. 117).

I think it is very important however, to carefully interrogate any inherited social assumptions we carry about work because they can carry into therapy. As Graeber points out, many think “that those who avoid work entirely should probably drop dead” (2019, p. 242). Work is considered a fundamental human trait. To not work is viewed as pestilent. Even within psychiatry “having a job is considered one of the major characteristics of being a high-functioning person” (Wang, p. 51). Again, this is political standpoint, as “a capitalist society values productivity in its citizens above all else, and those with severe mental illness are much less likely to be productive in ways considered valuable: by adding to the cycle of production and profit” (Wang, p. 51).

There is a connection between how work is also valued in monetary terms. There is a long history of the devaluation of women’s labour (Federici, 2014, p. 92-96) or what today can be called “caring labour” (Graeber, p. 236; Block, Croft, Schmader, 2018). In other words, work that has traditionally been

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*“If we all woke up one morning and discovered that not only nurses, garbage collectors, and mechanics, but for that matter, bus drivers, grocery store workers, firefighters, or short-order chefs had been whisked away into another dimension, the results would be equally catastrophic”.*

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done or assumed to be done by women, e.g., cleaning, raising children, teaching, nursing, etc. Psychotherapy as a line of work can be similarly included. “The more your work helps and benefits others, and the more social value you create, the less you are likely to be paid for it” (Graeber, 2019, p. 207). So, we have this societal devaluation of jobs that are of enormous benefit to the social fabric of our lives.

The hypocrisy of this position was highlighted during the pandemic. “Unskilled labourers” magically became “essential workers”. Graeber, writing pre-pandemic, proposed a thought experiment: “If we all woke up one morning and discovered that not only nurses, garbage collectors, and mechanics, but for that matter, bus drivers, grocery store workers, firefighters, or short-order chefs had been whisked away into another dimension, the results would be equally catastrophic” (2019, p.208). Many of these jobs tend to be the ones that generate the most scorn during strike action taken to secure better pay or working conditions.

## Vignette 2

I had a client, let us call him Jeff. When Jeff was a child, he would be beaten for not helping in his father’s business operated from home. He would be paid little or nothing for his long day’s work. This happened intermittently over several years. Jeff now becomes retraumatized by the mere mention of work and all that this word symbolises. He would work in manual labour types of jobs (caring labour) and is extremely sensitive to the disparity in pay between himself and the people he would work for, that is, the managers or coordinators would be making a lot more money than him. In therapy Jeff fluctuates between wanting to work to make a better life for himself and not wanting to work because of the stress it causes him. He receives disability pay to sustain life’s basics. Jeff gets along somewhat better with his father. Work remains traumatising.

## Commentary

It was clear that there was a strong connection between Jeff’s mistreatment by his father and his ongoing difficulties with work. This developmental aspect was explored on many occasions but is not the focus here. I was struck however by the fact that the things that were triggering him revealed an injustice. Specifically, management earning much more money for the same or fewer hours. A classic capitalist arrangement. This seems to be something that others take for granted but because of Jeff’s heightened sensitivity, it could not be ignored.

It seemed to be that rather than his father being the source of his future difficulties that he was a conduit for these social forces of workaholic culture.

is not something outside of the family, but the family is our first encounter with culture. “The family is permeable to environmental forces and exterior influences” (Guattari, 2009, p. 201-202). In Jeff’s case, his father had embodied this work ethic to an authoritarian degree, and he was encountering a variation of this same theme in his adult work life. To say that his difficulties with work are solely to be resolved through exploring his past would be the sort of nihilism inducing interpretation mentioned earlier.

“If the symbolic father is often lurking behind the boss— which is why one speaks of “paternalism” in various kinds of enterprises—there also often is, in a most concrete fashion, a boss or hierarchic superior behind the real father. In the unconscious, paternal functions are inseparable from the socio-professional and cultural involvements which sustain them” (Guattari, 2009, p. 201).

I often felt compelled, especially early in the therapy to intervene with anxiety management to help Jeff to cope and continue to work. However, I resisted this compulsion. On reflection, it would have been a mistake. Further, it was not Jeff’s goal. Had I pursued this intervention, it would have been based on my assumption that helping Jeff to endure work was the correct course of action. Though he wanted to work, I wondered whether this desire was socially conditioned, or was it something he wanted. His father valued work above all else. I tried to proceed in a way that kept the possibilities of these questions open, at least in my mind. To simply treat

*I often felt compelled, especially early in the therapy to intervene with anxiety management to help Jeff to cope and continue to work. However, I resisted this compulsion.*

the therapy as rehabilitation for work would have fallen into the trap mentioned at the outset, facilitating my client’s exploitation and his inner self-exploitation.

### Conclusion

The purpose of this work is to show how society and politics shapes our ideas of individuality and our attitudes to work. We are permeable in our most intimate mental functioning; we are not closed off. These attitudes affect everyone, both therapists and clients. For therapists, we have a responsibility to not simply reiterate and reinforce this social and political structure but to create a space for radical reassessment of all assumptions. What has been in question here are ideas of individuality and how these may become pathological coupled with scrutiny of the many social contradictions and attitudes to work. ☺

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## Practitioner Perspective

# Let's Talk about the F word!

## A reflection on fees

*By Brendan O'Shaughnessy*



### Introduction

In researching and writing this article I have become more aware of the therapeutic, personal, ethical, and business issues involved with fee setting. I hope it will be a source of interest and reflection for you, but first let's look at what prompted me to explore this issue.

Prior to an initial meeting with a prospective experienced supervisee, I sent a draft contract and my fee scale for supervision. Subsequently, we had a phone conversation where she expressed her shock at my concept of a fee scale. We had a very open discussion about this, and I committed to reflect on how I came to this method of fee setting. This

article is part of my reflection and an examination of my reasoning. It is my hope that this will be useful in your fee determination.

Coincidentally, I was reading some comments on the Irish Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (IACP) Facebook page (Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, 2021) about the commoditisation of therapy in Ireland. Therapy and Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) providers are advertising low rates and then paying therapists a portion of this. The comments were highlighting the conflict between making therapy more accessible to more people and a race to the bottom in terms of fees that may follow.

Finally in my work as a supervisor with students I have become aware that their expectations regarding making a living may be too optimistic. I share a financial model with them that may provide a more realistic view of private practice. More on this later.

### My own Background

My attitude to fees is strongly influenced by my life experiences. For most of my 40-year working life, I held senior management positions in several multinational electronic companies. This experience encouraged data analysis as a prerequisite to developing strategies. For 28 of those years, I also worked as a part-time counsellor with a charitable organisation that offered low-cost professional counselling to people who may not otherwise have access to therapy. In 2019, the charity was dissolved and I set up my own private therapy and supervision practice. I also retired early from my position in the electronics industry. I am in the lucky position to be able to work at therapy and supervision for two days a week and not be reliant on it as my main source of income. I realise that this is not the case for everyone and I recognise this influences my attitude to fee setting.

We will explore the topic of fee setting then in four sections; the therapeutic bit; the ethical bit; the research bit and the business bit. I will then conclude with my thoughts and observations on the topic.

### The Therapeutic bit

From a client's perspective fees can be viewed positively and negatively. In writing about fees and the therapeutic relationship McLeod notes:

Freud and other psychoanalysts have argued for the 'sacrificial' nature of the fee. The assumption here is that, as a means of maximising the motivation of the patient for therapy, and signalling the importance of their commitment to therapy, a fee should be set that is the maximum affordable by the patient. This implies that sliding fees should be operated: a fee that represented a major personal commitment for one client might be insignificant for another, more affluent client. (McLeod, 2019, p. 43)

This would seem to support the notion of a fee scale.

On the other hand, payment may also have a negative impact on the therapeutic relationship, as clients may feel the therapist is 'only in it for the money'; "he/she is only pretending to value me because they are being paid" (Wills, 1982, p. 56).

From a therapist's perspective fees can be also have different meanings. On the one hand fees may be a tangible measure of how the client and the therapist values the service provided. However, as McLeod noted "Some therapists experience 'fee guilt' arising from the conflict between being wanted to be perceived as a 'helper' and being involved in a business that involves making a living and a profit" (McLeod, 2019, p. 152). On a more sinister note, "If a therapist's income is contingent on a client remaining in therapy, he or she might subtly find ways to prolong treatment" (Kottler, 1988, p. 154).

From a personal perspective my earliest experience with fees was when the charity I worked with began asking for donations. Most clients were happy to donate between €5 and €10 and I became used to making this clear at the initial meeting with a client/clients. One client whom I remember well was an older woman who suggested a €1 donation. As I came to learn later this was not easy as she was in difficult financial circumstances. At the end of one of our sessions she was searching in her handbag for the €1. I assumed she was not able to afford it that week and I made the terrible mistake of telling her it was OK not to pay for that session. She fished out the €1 and let me know in no uncertain terms that this was her counselling, and she was paying for it. I came to treasure that €1 more than any I have received since for what the experience taught me.

### The Ethical bit

So, what advice as we get from codes of ethics on the topic of fee setting? The IACP Code of Ethics briefly mentioned fees in section 2.3 where it mandates that therapists

- a) Take responsibility for the setting and monitoring of appropriate, boundaries within the practitioner/client relationship, making these explicit to the client.
- b) Take responsibility for making a clear contract with the client to include issues such as availability, fees, and cancelled appointments... (Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, 2018)

The British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP) makes no mention of fees, but does suggest that therapists

communicate "any benefits, costs and commitments that clients may reasonably expect" (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, 2018).

The American Counselling Association (ACA) notes that

In establishing fees for professional counseling services, counselors consider the financial status of clients and locality. If a counselor's usual fees create undue hardship for the client, the counselor may adjust fees, when legally permissible, or assist the client in locating comparable, affordable services (American Counselling Association, 2014).

Due to the scant advice above, I wonder if this reflects a professional sense of "fee guilt" mentioned by McLeod above?

### The Business Bit

When setting up in private practice, a personal challenge involved challenging my own attitude toward fees. Having spent the previous 28 years in a counselling organisation that transitioned from no fees, to asking for donations to setting a minimum negotiable fee, I had little experience with how to ask clients for money. As I tend to be more instinctive in my counselling life, I did not make any detailed analysis of fee setting but did start out with a scale based on an evaluation of client's income levels.

Had I adopted my prior business approach (data analysis), I would have completed several steps before setting up my own practice. So, for the purposes of this reflection, I now present the steps which now guide my fee setting.

1. Budgeting: Prepare a budget for practice running costs and identify my income goals.

2. Competition Comparison:  
Discover what other therapists charge.

3. Market Analysis: Investigate what can clients afford.

**What do in need to charge (Budgeting)**

For illustration, I present a sample budgeting model based on several goals and assumptions. Particularly, with respect to income, the goal of earning the average Industrial wage as measured by the Central Statistics Office (Central Statistics Office, 2021). Note: Microsoft Excel has a function called Goal Seek, where, based on your goal (in this case the average Industrial wage), you can calculate the fee you need to charge. You will see this number highlighted in the yellow cell in Figure 1.

If anyone wants to adapt and use the budgeting model for their own circumstances, please email me and I would be happy to share it.

**Competition Analysis: What do other therapists charge?**

The following analysis (Figures 2 to 4) is based on IACP website “Find a Therapist” Section (Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, 2021) as of July 11th, 2021. Of the 2,762 therapists listed 2,566 mentioned a fee. Many fees are negotiable, but I assume this is interpreted as negotiable downwards rather than upwards by most clients. 490 IACP members did not state a fee, but said fees were negotiable.

**How many IACP Therapists work fulltime?**

Based on the above analysis, it would seem that most IACP therapists do not earn the industrial average. So how do they survive? According to the IACP member survey (conducted during the Covid 19 pandemic) Figure 5, only 9% of members work more

**Budgeting Model:**

	Daily	Weekly	Annual
	5	46	230
Start Time	09:00		
Finish Time	18:00		
	9.00		
Hours per Client	1.50		
	6		
<b>Clients per day</b>			
Plan	6		
Can't Fill/No Show/Cancellation etc %	30%		
Actual	4.2		
Rounded	4	20	920
Average Fee per Client	€69.08		
<b>Income</b>	€276	€1,382	€63,556
<b>Expenditure</b>	Per Session		
Room Rental	€12		€11,040
Professional Fees (IACP Membership)			€410
Training & CPD	Sessions @ 30:1 Ratio	Per Session	€500
Supervision	31	€ 70.00	€2,147
Office Supplies			€500
Website and Advertising			€1,000
Professional Indemnity Insurance			€105
Bank Charges and Payment Processing fees			€1,274
Heat, Light Power			€200
Travel			€600
Phone and Internet			€600
Miscellaneous			€500
Total Expenditure			€18,876
<b>Net Income</b>	Avg Industrial Wage		€44,680
Tax, PRSI, USC etc			€13,404
<b>Net Income</b>	€120	€601	€31,276

**Assumptions in the model**

1. 5 Day working week from 09:00 to 18:00.
2. 6 Weeks allowed for holidays, Christmas, Easter, Training, and self-care.
3. 55 Minute sessions and 35 minutes between each client to allow time for notes and preparation.
4. 30% allowed for not being able to fill each slot each day or cancellations/no shows.
5. Supervision is based on 30:1 ratio and at €70 per session
6. Room Rental is based on paying €12 per hour on sessional basis. Some people may opt to work from a home office saving this cost, but work/life balance and safety issues ought to be considered in this case.
7. So, if I want to earn my desired income, I need to charge €67.58 on average per session.

Figure 1: Budgeting

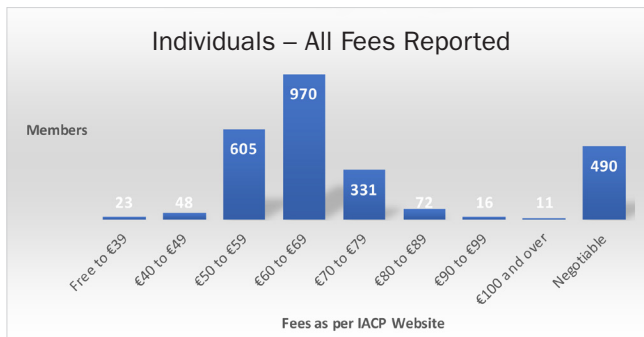


Figure 2: Fees for Individual Therapy

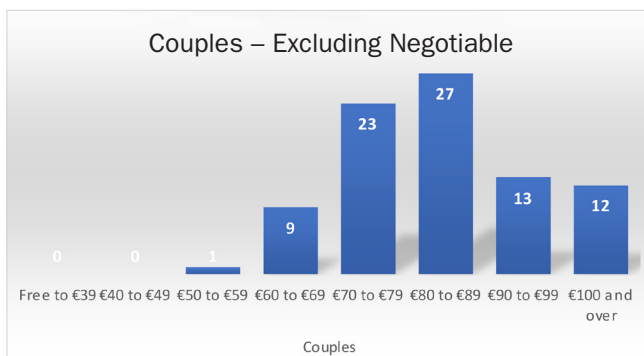


Figure 3: Fees for Couples Therapy

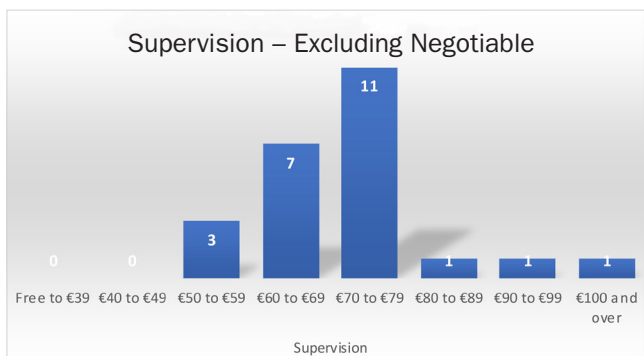


Figure 4: Fees for Supervision where specifically mentioned

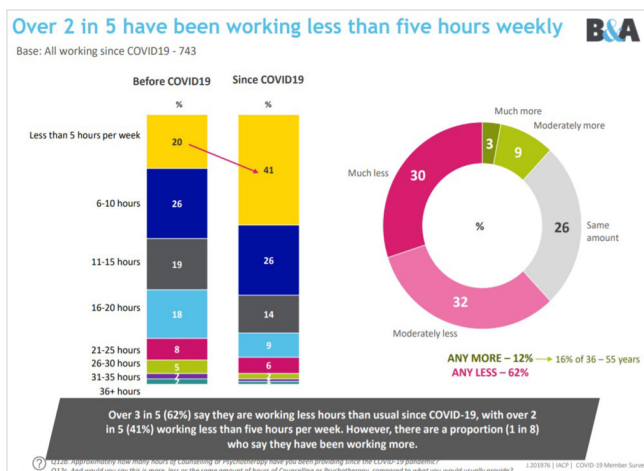


Figure 5: Extract from IACP members survey on Covid 19

than 26 hours per week (no change from a prior survey). The majority of respondents, 63%, worked less than 15 hours per week before the Covid 19 member survey and 67% since (Behaviour & Attitudes Limited, 2020).

This is consistent with the 2013 survey which noted “7 in 10 work in counselling/psychotherapy on a part time basis but fewer than a half (44%) have another occupation” (Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, 2013)

It appears then that the majority of therapists are opting for the average industrial wage area of €60 to €69 per hour and work part time. It would appear that counselling is not therapists’ primary source of income.

**Market Analysis. What Can Clients afford?**

One of the things I have learned is that clients with higher incomes can usually claim a set number of session fees from their health insurance provider (Voluntary Health Insurance (VHI), Laya etc). Further, excess fees may be claimed as tax relief at 20%. It is worth acknowledging though that clients on lower incomes are unlikely to have Health Insurance or pay tax.

Figure 6 illustrates two extreme examples for the net cost to two couples. Example A is of a couple with a joint income of €100,000, good VHI plan and able to claim tax refund. Example B is of a couple with a joint income of €30,000, no health insurance and not paying any tax.

This brings up some interesting questions about social equity and the redistribution of wealth in Ireland.

	Example A	Example B
Annual Income	€ 100,000	€ 30,000
Weekly Income	€ 1,923	€ 577
Cost per Session	€ 105	€ 60
VHI Refund @ 80%	-€ 84	-
Tax refund @ 20%	-€ 4	-
Net Cost	€ 17	€ 60
As % of Income	1%	10%

Figure 6: Affordability for clients

It has also encouraged me to appreciate to the real cost to clients on lower incomes. By using a fee scale based on clients’ incomes, it could be argued that clients on higher incomes are thus subsidising those on lower incomes. That seems fair to me.

Following discussion on this topic with my supervisor, another interesting aspect arose. How do my fees reflect how I value what I offer to clients? By setting too low a fee am I saying my service is only worth x amount? By setting too high a fixed fee am I overestimating my value and excluding people who can’t afford my fees?

Finally, part of the why I do counselling is to assuage my sense of social responsibility. I am lucky to be in a position where fees are not my only source of income. I learned the hard way to value what clients can pay and to be able to structure my fees to make it more affordable for more people.

The table in Figure 7 then, provides an illustration of a scaled fee structure.

## Conclusion

So, what have I learned from this?

Broadly, our profession appears primarily part time one and the range of fees offered vary considerably. My own experience with supervisees would lead me to believe that few are fully aware if starting a private practice that can be financially sustainable, while also expressing a desire to work full time in counselling.

At the same time, it appears there are and will be more companies setting up commercial counselling/psychotherapy services which also impact on the earning potential of therapists.

Fees are a far more complicated topic that I had originally considered. One that cannot be ignored from a therapeutic relationship or private practice perspective. Also found myself considering social justice issues and the concept of fee guilt.

Income Levels	€ Per Session	
	Individuals	Couples
Income over €101k per year	85	105
€51k to €100k per year	70	80
€31k to €50k per year	60	70
Less than €31k or on Social Welfare	50	60
All Negotiable depending on family financial circumstances		

### Some observations on the above structure:

**GDPR:** You are not collecting client income data. e.g., it is possible for someone on €40,000 income per year to have huge mortgage and only pay €50. To ensure you comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regulations you should only keep a record of the agreed amount and not how it was calculated and as with all client data only use it for the purpose of the therapy.

**Practical Billing:** I use payment platform to process payments from clients. Initially, I used a debit/credit card reader for payment at the end of each session, but when I moved to online was able to use a billing feature of my payment platform to create an invoice which is emailed to the client with a link so that they can pay online. On resuming in-person work, I continued this practice as it is easier for me to keep track of payments and saves time at the end of each session. It more secure than dealing with cash and less covid risky. I also believe this is a more professional way of issuing receipts. Summary information can be extracted for accounting and taxation purposes. The cost of this service is currently 1.69% of each transaction.

Figure 7: Illustration of a scaled fee structure

Whether we use fee scales or fixed fees seem less important than how this reflects the cost of the service we offer, both for ourselves and our clients. To provide a sustainable service to clients, whether this be free, low cost or fee based, I think we have a responsibility to consider the costs involved so we can continue to serve our clients.

I hope you have gained some insight from this, and it has provided you with some food for thought. ☺

## Brendan O'Shaughnessy

Brendan is an IACP accredited Counsellor/Therapist/Supervisor in private practice. He worked part time with the Cork Marriage Counselling Centre for 28 years and has a Higher Diploma in Counselling from UCC. Brendan has been on the board of directors of various charities including the National Domestic Violence Agency.

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# FLORESCENCE

## Winter

By Sian Williams

The land laid bare as winter crept in,  
Cleansing away the seasons of hurt and sin.  
Gifted with these lands of beauty and  
wonder,  
But her expansive resources we chose to  
plunder.

Raping her of all she possessed  
Striving to make mankind tower above the  
rest.  
We robbed for the lands, the plants, and  
seas,  
Listen now for the reaper is coming to  
collect his fee.

Consumerism grew as a vague distraction  
Now the separation of real soul connection  
is holding traction.  
Vast unsupported media truths are causing  
desolation,  
Watch the rivers run red as fighting kin fall in  
all great nations.

The wise Lakota spoke of a common  
tongue,  
Where all who walked the land would be  
one.  
Instead, we pushed against the free flow of  
the tide.  
Blinded by ego mankind is drowning in greed  
and pride.

Too late, to late the wise one cried,  
And sadly, the earth she softly sighed.  
Because she trusts that seasons change,  
and the land will grow  
But mankind this wisdom will never know.

## You and I

By John Edward Basil  
Keenaghan

I sit, listen and observe  
To all you say and do  
I take it all in  
To try and understand you

I try not to judge or doubt  
To empathise if I can  
I sit with you in hope  
To try to lend a hand

You talk and tell your story  
To express how you feel  
You cry laugh and gaze  
To see what is revealed

You then may pause awhile  
To let it all sink in  
You reflect, repeat and relive  
To question, lose or win

We then meet together  
Without a word being said  
To wander through this journey  
For a while we are wed

We gently come to realise  
That ease has just begun  
It may take a little longer  
Until your song is sung.  
But you are singing



## The Work of Group

By Eileen M Higgins

Seeing my life laid out on the floor  
Seeing the things  
I had never seen before  
Reaching deep from inside  
Trusting all will coincide  
Transported by time  
Whilst sharing the smiles  
Burdens there too  
Veiled in our eyes  
Taken to pieces  
And reassembled again  
Here to be found  
Sorrow, joy, hope and pain  
There in that space  
In every face  
We're putting the pieces together again  
Wholly rewarding an endeavour  
For now, I know 'me' that little bit better.



## The Word

By Margaret Walsh

Lost in thorns and brambles left with  
deep wounds invisible to all, a moment of  
change the words that captured me, "you  
are strong" thorns shifted in form, resulting  
in soft moss. I could sit stop and think.  
"Strong", strength not weakness. But  
now new thoughts. I felt the cushioning  
of the moss the warmth of its comfort I  
could stand again, not fully steady but I  
could balance, and I knew I knew that took  
strength.

## The Bridge on Glendermackin

By Paul Hewer

Flowers know the way  
Always finding the best path home  
Growing through earth's fractured spaces.

Three brothers came to the village  
Over the mountain with Glendermackin  
Pit gear on a donkey.

This is father's landscape not mine  
He was the bridge to these ancestors  
But that has gone now.

Blencathra was his grandmother  
Only he knew her by another name\*  
And I never really knew him.

He knew every well and wall in the parish  
And every country with a port  
But somehow he was lost.

Always on the outside waiting  
Sitting on the front step  
To come in, to come home.

Standing by the forever stone  
With a lantern's brightness  
I sing you back to your bones.

Come back from where you're lost  
And grow whole again  
Like the sunflower.

\*Saddleback

## Reflective Article

# Dark and Light – What Our Psychotherapy Heroes Reveal About Ourselves and Our Profession

By *Emma Redfern*



Developmental Transformations (DVT); and Robin Shohet founder of the seven-eyed model of supervision.

## Living and working through the pandemic

I count myself fortunate that when the UK went into lockdown in March 2020, I was already working online with both clients and supervisees, and I continued to be able to do so. Add editorial work and the usual CPD and I had plenty to keep me feeling productive, focused, and safe enough. This article is a product of that time.

I imagine I am not alone in having been bombarded since the beginning of Covid-19 with emails offering countless opportunities to learn new therapy skills, gain extra and specialist qualifications, while saving money on discounted deals. Without already having developed a sense of the people whose thoughts, skills and experience I value, I would probably have been 'at sea', feeling the pressure of grasping as many opportunities as possible, or feeling like a failure for letting countless opportunities pass me by. Thankfully, when it came to booking core CPD for 2021, I already knew what I value learning about and from whom, partly because I was already aware of my psychotherapy heroes.

## Introduction

In this article I introduce the concept of the psychotherapy hero. I touch on why we might have psychotherapy heroes and how having them can be helpful. I encourage the reader to reflect on who theirs might be and what those choices say about the chooser. I introduce four of my own current psychotherapy heroes, each of whom is a leading

professional working in the field of psychotherapy. Three of them are American, one British; one is a woman and three are men, all are white. They are: Byron Katie, developer of The Work; Richard Schwartz, founder of Internal Family Systems Therapy (IFS); David Read Johnson, trauma specialist, dramatherapist and founder of an embodied psychotherapy known as

Each of the four psychotherapy heroes I introduce has probably passed the standard UK retirement age. Even without the threat of Covid-19, they are not going to last forever (and neither am I). I want to expose myself to more of their wisdom while I can and while some of them take advantage of online delivery (due to physical challenges, I don't travel as well as I did). Also, through this article, I want to acknowledge to myself and to others my gratitude to, and appreciation for them.

### Who I am influences my choice of psychotherapy hero

I have had different psychotherapy heroes at different points in my journey. My top ten would include Maya Angelou, Brené Brown, and Alice Miller - all of whom have had a huge impact, from a distance, on my personal growth and/or professional development. (Note, my psychotherapy heroes are not all psychotherapists themselves.) However, my current psychotherapy heroes have all had a closer impact, not least in that I have completed in-person training with all but Byron Katie (though I did get to see her do *The Work* at a large event in London once).

Due to my history and personal demographics (white, cisgender female, Western, educated, English speaking and privileged), it makes sense to me that my current psychotherapy heroes are all white, Western professionals. In addition, I position myself as a 'wounded healer', having had a significant trauma history, and in my understanding, each of these people recognise, understand, welcome, and work with suffering, trauma, and the shadow within us. While my choice makes personal sense, it may also

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*Byron Katie is not a trained psychotherapist. Yet, since hitting rock bottom and then experiencing her own 'awakening' in February of 1986, she devised a powerfully therapeutic practice she calls *The Work*.*

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reflect how much society and I need healing.

### What is a psychotherapy hero?

As a psychotherapist, I believe that psychotherapy has great potential to benefit individuals and society. Perhaps every therapist who has kept working throughout the stresses and strains of the global pandemic is worthy of being considered a psychotherapy hero. However, I am thinking on the scale of those worthy of receiving a lifetime achievement award because their professional careers in therapy have conferred great benefit to humanity.

Over decades, these four professionals have made long-term, impactful contributions to mental health through therapeutic work with people; training of therapists; supervisors and ordinary people; writing of articles and books; and direct contact with the public in person, through their websites, recordings, and so on. Imagine, if you will, this article is my nomination, using my own criteria, for each of these people. These are my criteria: a pioneering spirit, outstanding achievements, admirable professional and personal qualities, and being real not

idealised.

### What a psychotherapy hero is not

My gratitude to these individuals is not that of a victim saved by a superhero such as SpiderMan or Wonder Woman in comic books or films. The individuals I introduce are not saints or saviours, each is a regular Joe, or Joanna. White and privileged, yes, yet also knowing shame, trauma, healing, and transformation from the inside and having faced trials and tribulations of their own. Each has feet of clay, and a shadow side just like the rest of us.

### Someone who is pioneering

Richard Schwartz has shown courage in embracing the unwelcome failure of a family therapy trial with young people with eating disorders which was not giving the results he hoped for (Schwartz & Sweezy, 2020). Instead, Dick became curious about his clients' inner worlds which was largely *verboden* in his field at the time and, in response to what he learned, he rigorously and scientifically 'followed the data' to devise Internal Family Systems therapy. IFS is currently one of the most rapidly expanding and countercultural therapy trainings in the world.

David Read Johnson was a pioneer of dramatherapy with adults before the title dramatherapist even existed. Like Schwartz, this meant having the courage to go against prevailing cultural tides in society and the healthcare community. This is demonstrated by an experience earlier in his career as a dramatherapist when he found that the nursing home expected him and his dramatherapy group to share a room with a deceased resident being stored there temporarily

(Read Johnson, 1999). Like Schwartz, Johnson created a form of psychotherapy (DvT) which has transformation at its core. In DvT, the therapist becomes the client's physical and emotional 'play object', and all that arises in the therapeutic encounter is encouraged into the 'playspace' including our survival patterns, intimacy, power, race and trauma.

Byron Katie is not a trained psychotherapist. Yet, since hitting rock bottom and then experiencing her own 'awakening' in February of 1986, she devised a powerfully therapeutic practice she calls *The Work*. This arose out of her realisation that her own suffering was optional, and that her true nature is love and joy. *The Work* is a meditative enquiry consisting of a series of four questions and the 'turnaround'. As well as sharing these in her books, information, guidance, and live videos of Katie leading people through the process are available on her website.

Robin Shohet has been running supervision training courses since 1979 through the Centre for Supervision and Team Development (CSTD). He specialises in the subjects of love and fear in supervision, appreciative enquiry and supervision as spiritual practice. Such is his courage that, like Schwartz, Johnson, and Katie, he remains open to 'what is' no matter how potentially painful or risky, and trusts the process of doing that. (Robin has been deeply influenced by *The Work* of Byron Katie.)

### **Someone who has outstanding achievements**

I leave it up to the reader to research these four figures in terms of the numbers of books

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*As someone who enjoys quality training and CPD, I have completed all three levels of IFS training. I was fortunate to have a session as client with Schwartz as my therapist during two of those trainings.*

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and articles written, any faculties they are linked to and charitable organisations and programmes their work supports. Here, I take a broader view. Schwartz, for example, due to his passion, drive, and sense of fulfilling his mission or personal calling has been a spokesperson for IFS and inner multiplicity for decades and is much sought after as a presenter.

David has for decades successfully run a trauma centre, which hangs on its walls artwork by trauma patients as well as displaying a piece of the Twin Towers in the reception area. He explains that for those who are traumatised it makes sense that the building itself makes certain statements obvious: 'We deal with trauma here', and 'When you are ready to go to the pain and do your healing, we'll be here for and with you.'

I echo Ben Fuchs (Shohet & Shohet, 2020) in suggesting that Robin Shohet has been instrumental in the cultural shifts in the UK that have taken place to enable self-aware, self-reflective, relational supervision (including relational feedback) to become more mainstream and to be taken seriously. Another of Robin's achievements is in acknowledging

the presence of fear in human relationships and that supervision offers '... a space where fear can be brought into consciousness and shared together.' (Shohet & Shohet, 2020, p 177).

Of the four, I have had the least direct contact with Byron Katie, having attended only one live, large event of hers some years ago, in addition to reading many of her books and watching the videos on her website. Despite not being a psychotherapist herself, *The Work* has influenced many mental health professionals and helped millions of laypeople to access their inner wholeness, truth, and love. Like Schwartz who followed the data presented by his clients and by his own internal enquiries, Katie's method was rigorously tested in the laboratory of her own experience. She has dedicated decades to her mission, she 'walks the talk' and I have seen her 'sit in the fire' with those who suffer during the course of everyday living and its bittersweetness. Perhaps part of what makes her a hero is that she has created an accessible and equitable way for people to do *The Work* wherever they live; no training fee or qualifications required.

### **Someone who possesses professional and personal qualities I value**

Inspired by my reading of *Principles and Techniques of Trauma-Centered Psychotherapy* (Johnson & Lubin, 2015), I have compiled the following list of some professional qualities, attributes, and skills possessed by each of these four. They are:

- capable of creating a safe relationship with another in distress by way of their honest, open communication about

the potential risk and pain involved in the therapeutic endeavour, while also holding and communicating the hope that said endeavour will be worthwhile;

- intentional and disciplined in therapeutic relationship and in their interventions (knowing why they do what they do and how it will be of service to the relationship and the distressed other);
- aware of and respectful of avoidance as a given of human existence while not letting it dominate;
- curious and welcoming toward fear and the whole gamut of human emotions;
- curious about what is not being said or shared; and
- skilled at differentiation and enabling others to differentiate at multiple levels (across time, between people/events/thoughts/feelings/behaviours).

As someone who enjoys quality training and CPD, I have completed all three levels of IFS training. I was fortunate to have a session as client with Schwartz as my therapist during two of those trainings. In each demonstration he negotiated with protectors for my healing Self-energy to be available so that an exile (in each case a wounded pre-verbal part of me) could be accompanied through the IFS steps of healing to transformation. Schwartz embodied Self-energy which enabled me to do the same. That Self-energy is characterised by the 8 Cs of curiosity, compassion, calm, connectedness, confidence,

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*I experienced a playful, accepting, connected, curious, creative encounter, after which I felt more alive and present to myself and in the world.*

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courage, clarity, creativity, and the 5 Ps of presence, patience, persistence, perspective, and playfulness.

Like Schwartz, Byron Katie embodies these qualities, especially, courageousness, clarity, and presence. There is a phrase I have come across in horse riding and IFS which is 'to hold one's seat', i.e., not be unseated. Another phrase from IFS is that of being 'the 'I' in the storm' (Schwartz & Sweezy, 2021, p. 44). Byron Katie does the former and is the latter in the presence of intense suffering, though she does not use these phrases.

Around the same time as I came across IFS, I attended CSTD's group supervision module taught by Robin Shohet and Joan Wilmot (now Shohet). Since then, I have attended one-day workshops on topics close to Robin's heart, including a recent webinar (Shohet, 2021) in which he seemed to be talking, in his terms, of the IFS concept of Self-leadership. Shohet teaches that where we listen from, and the eye from which we view the other, has an impact. If we are not looking and listening from a place of love, the other with whom we interact may become defensive and hide. In IFS terms, Robin is describing either a Self-led openhearted relationship, or a parts-led protective or "defended"

relationship. What of Robin's playfulness and presence? Interestingly, he has a passion for improvisation and is part of an improv group for fun as well as using improv therapeutically.

David Read Johnson I know as a trauma-centered psychotherapist and DvT trainer. Here I share an excerpt from an individual demonstration session with David as part of a DvT training day in the Southwest of England. The playspace was delineated psychologically and physically (away from the audience, with the rest of the group down one end of the hall) and we joined each other in the centre. Two physical beings, me a 5ft 4in, small-boned female and him over 6ft of solid, confident, American male. Each willing and able to use the other's bodies, and the space to embody whatever emerges to be embodied. I find myself behind him (I recall not wanting him to see me) holding his hands behind his back by holding a thumb in each hand. We walk single file across the stage with me doing a funny walk and getting some laughs (which I loved). We near a wall and suddenly David flings himself against it as if I had thrust him violently into the wall. A laugh of delight erupts from me. "I thought you'd like that," he says, and we do it a few more times. Later, he leaves me, and sits alone in 'the witnessing circle' where the client cannot go. I wander around the space searching, and calling, "I can't find you." In time, I think he improvised a phone and called me from inside the witnessing circle. I experienced a playful, accepting, connected, curious, creative encounter, after which I felt more alive and present to myself and in the world.

### Being real, not idealised

My sense is that none of my four psychotherapy heroes would wish to be idealised, they do not seem to seek positive transference and they are not strangers to failure and messiness. For me, a psychotherapy hero is real and fallible, with little desire to 'play nice'. I do not seek to whitewash their shortcomings nor elevate them as being above the rest of humanity. It is important to me that they share something of their stories, for example, their failed marriages, their poor parenting, professional challenges, and mistakes, but not in the form of a boast or to gain status.

In a chapter entitled: 'The Beast from the East: an account of a challenging supervision training', Shohet shares details of his missteps, fallibility and breaking of boundaries which led to - perhaps enabled - shadow material being forcefully expressed in and by the group, which led to positive transformation for attendees. One of the group members, writes:

*Robin held fast, with much skill, determination, courage and balls. He held us in our unfurling of secrets, shadows, polarities, cruelty, compassion, love, death, and of each other. ... I had expressed things that had made me feel toxic, violent and cruel, and I had expressed wisdom, truths, love and compassion. ...*

*I came away a changed person from completing this supervision training.*

(Shohet & Shohet, 2021, p. 191)

### Why might I need a psychotherapy hero?

My sense is that some of us need

*Something else I recognise is that by thinking of these individuals in this way, I allow myself some small portion of earned secure attachment. I feel I belong, have a place, a therapeutic lineage, if you will.*

role models like us who we can emulate as we train. Others of us can push against or reject such larger-than-life yet approachable figures, and grow and develop by doing so. Also, as my choices say as much about me as they do about those I have chosen, I can reflect on myself, my current style of being a therapist. Perhaps my style is more 'pragmatist' than 'mystical guru'; someone who welcomes the transcendent while having my feet firmly planted; someone who likes to be and to do. I could go on.

Something else I recognise is that by thinking of these individuals in this way, I allow myself some small portion of earned secure attachment. I feel I belong, have a place, a therapeutic lineage, if you will. This is a gift that many without the protection of white skin in the still white-dominated field of psychotherapy might find themselves denied. I wonder who my BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) colleagues around the world perceive to be their psychotherapy heroes? I imagine some might choose James Baldwin, Robin DiAngelo, Resmaa Menakem. But in reality, who might they choose? In time, as I become further acquainted

with BIPOC authors and speakers, trainers, and psychotherapists, and as the many worlds of psychotherapy address the inequity and lack of justice within their structures, memberships, and trainings, perhaps my psychotherapy heroes might not all be white.

I believe psychotherapists need psychotherapy heroes because we need storytellers, truth seekers, transformational leaders, somewhere to belong, reasons to be grateful, and mirrors within which to see ourselves reflected. ☺

Emma Redfern

Emma Redfern is a BACP senior-accredited psychotherapist and supervisor, a certified IFS therapist and approved IFS clinical consultant currently working online from Devon in the Southwest of England. She is editing a multi-author book *Internal Family Systems Therapy: Supervision and Consultation*, due to be published in 2022 by Routledge. Emma can be contacted by email via her website [www.emmaredfern.co.uk](http://www.emmaredfern.co.uk)

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## Reflective Article

# Shelter From The Pandemic: Notes On Nature

By Siobhan Maher



*“Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished”.*

*Lao Tzu*

## Introduction

What paradoxical times we have lived through in these past months of Covid-19; separate yet together, apart yet connected, alone yet united. The pandemic posed severe challenges. It was a testing time, a time of upheaval, of isolation and of digging deep within ourselves. We were distant from Nature and in danger of losing a part of ourselves. This

article looks at our connection as humans with the concept of Biophilia. It acknowledges the appeal of the natural world to us. The fractal patterns in Nature are identified as a source of consolation and connection for us. The cultivation of a garden and the appreciation of its bounty and beauty are extolled as life-affirming. The impact of Nature on us as therapists is discussed. Ultimately Nature is presented as

a source of solace and healing for us all, as a shelter from the Covid storm.

## Use of time

The Covid-19 crisis gave many of us, not directly on the frontline, the gift of time: time to have a look inside. Many of us had been forced to hit the pause button and thus were given time to reflect on our precious lives. Every crisis brings some opportunity. We became especially inventive and resourceful in the confinement days. Many of us turned to create in the kitchen. There was an avalanche of banana bread and sourdough starters! We knitted, held Zoom quizzes, sang in virtual choirs, painted the house and garden furniture, decluttered our homes, and overindulged on movies. At the same time, many were confounded by home-schooling or compelled to work remotely. We had to extend ourselves. Some of us took the opportunity to dig deeper inside ourselves, to have a look at our core values and see where our priorities lay. Technology, often derided for overloading and distracting us, served us well and kept us connected and less isolated than ever. We may have been warned that “algorithms eat empathy” (Haig, 2019, p.107), but in the Covid days of confinement, we ate them avidly and repeatedly. However, on another level, we became more aware of the space beyond us.

Perhaps we already knew that Nature was a healing force. Still, its potency was amplified when the Coronavirus came a calling. With the arrival of the pandemic, we were suddenly constricted, shut-in and deprived of Nature. Some of us were lucky enough to have a garden or even access to a few plants on a balcony, but with Covid-19 we were unable to be in the natural environment as before. Could this disconnect from the natural world impact our wellbeing and mental health? In the months of confinement, many of us had limited access to Nature. The distance we had to endure from wild places, from shorelines, rivers, lakes, mountain walks, forests, gardens and parks during the pandemic days was a source of privation. These places of ease, calm and healing were unfortunately beyond many of us as we were obliged to adhere to the restrictions around movement from home.

### **Nature and us humans**

What is it about Nature's appeal? What is it about the primacy of Nature and its immense importance to us human beings? It has long been hailed as a source of solace, contemplation, nurturing and healing. Nature's elemental forces, its grandeur, beauty, form, complexity, and yet simplicity have long inspired awe and calm in us. In his 1802 sonnet "The World is too much with us", William Wordsworth was critical of the distance we were putting between ourselves and Nature. "Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers; Little we see in Nature that is ours; We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!" (Wordsworth in Turner Palgrave 1964, p.299). In this new pandemic world, it might be prudent for us to ponder

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*These patterns are  
all around us in  
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coastlines.*

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about how frenetic our lives can be, with the emphasis on doing and achieving. However, Nature can teach us that elusive art of just being. It teaches us to be in wonder of its biodiversity. It helps us experience a sense of connectedness. (Thorne 2002, p. 43). In pandemic times, we were seeking connection. That intrinsic need was amplified and yet we were compelled to stay distant. As humans, we are hard-wired for connection. The quality of our connection impacts deeply on our contentment. Our confinement raised barriers in our relatedness with others and with the natural world - a potent source of solace and connection.

Pre-pandemic, we have been increasingly spending more time indoors. The EU Commission (2003) reports that some 90% of Europeans spend less than 10% of their time outdoors. Similarly, a study in the US revealed that more than half of adults reported spending five hours or less in Nature each week and that parents of 8-11 year old children said that their "children spent three times as many hours with computers and television screens each week as they do playing outside" ("U.S. Study Shows Widening Disconnect with Nature, and Potential Solutions", 2017). The same study highlights the social, economic and health benefits of spending time in Nature. In essence our connection to Nature

is indispensable for our wellbeing. There is a serious disconnect with the outdoors. Children are spending less and less time in Nature and discovering its joys. Our lives and those of our children are increasingly sedentary and removed from the elemental experiences of the natural environment. Yet our identification with and attraction to Nature is something embedded deep within our psychology (Kellert & Wilson, 1993).

### **Biophilia**

Biophilia has been described by Eric Fromm, the German American psychoanalyst and social philosopher, as "the passionate love of life and all that is alive" (Fromm 1973, p.438). But it was a biologist, Edward O. Wilson, who turned to studying the positive effects of the natural world on humans. Wilson described Biophilia as "the innately emotional affiliation of human beings to other living organisms. Innate means hereditary and hence part of ultimate human nature", (Kellert & Wilson, 1993, p.31). His work explored Nature's positive effect on our psychological health and wellbeing. Wilson also highlighted the decline in the earth's biodiversity as harmful to the 'spirit' of the human species and to our mental health. (Kellert & Wilson, 1993, p.39).

Studies have found that stress hormones are reduced when we are exposed to the natural world. (Hunter et al, 2019). Being out in Nature positively impacts our nervous system. (Robbins, 2020). The parasympathetic nervous system slows down, affecting heart rate and the dilation of blood vessels. Physical and mental health benefits accrue from time spent out in Nature.

When our sympathetic nervous system is rested, it benefits our ability to emotionally regulate ourselves and this impacts positively on our cardiovascular health (Jones, 2020). Similarly, the Japanese practice of Shinrin-Yoku or Forest-bathing, both a psychological and physiological practice, impacts positively on the immune system. (Robbins, 2020). Our removal from Nature has implications for our physical wellbeing and our mental health. Nature is thus “not only nice to have, but it’s a have-to-have for physical health and cognitive functioning” (Louv cited in Robbins, 2020).

### Fractals in the natural world

Benoit Mandelbrot, a Polish-born, American-based mathematician coined the term fractals in the 1980’s (Mandelbrot, 1983). His theories have since been influential in the Sciences, Arts/ Humanities, Economics and even on Social Media (Lipton, 2020). A fractal can be defined as “a non-regular geometric that has the same degree of irregularity. Fractals can be thought of as never-ending patterns (TechTarget Contributor, 2016). These patterns are all around us in Nature. They are evident in trees, shrubs, plants, mountains and even on coastlines. The human brain responds to these fractals. They engage with the Para hippocampus which is helpful in our emotional regulation (Taylor cited by Williams et al., 2017). Physicist Richard Taylor has studied fractals intensively and has suggested that “our visual system is in some way hardwired to understand fractals, and the stress-reduction [of being in Nature] is triggered by a physiological resonance when the fractal structure of the eye matched that of the fractal

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*What benefits might we bring to our clients when we first nourish ourselves through a ramble in the countryside, a walk in the woods, a forage in the hedgerows, a stroll through the garden, a climb of a mountain or a wild-water swim?*

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image being viewed” (Taylor cited by Williams et al., 2017). Some evidence exists that doctors are increasingly offering ‘nature prescriptions’ to their patients. Scottish NHS doctors may now issue so called ‘green scripts’ which prescribe time outdoors in nature as part of their patients’ health care (Sheikh, 2020). Furthermore, a recent monitor of engagement with the natural environment study in the UK revealed the positive effects of people spending two hours or more a week outdoors. Those hours impacted positively on the health and wellbeing of those who ventured out into nature as opposed to those who did not (White et al., 2019).

So, when we take time to wander in the park, to walk in a forest, to hike in the mountains and be out in Nature, we are taking care not only of our physical, but also of our mental health. In observing Nature our stress levels are lowered. It has been suggested that there is a kind of kinship between our brains and the natural world (Taylor cited by White et al. et al., 2017). Our senses are stimulated while also soothed by Nature. As Eckhart Tolle wrote “Look at

a tree, a flower, a plant. Let your awareness rest upon it. How still they are, how rooted in ‘just being’. Allow Nature to teach you stillness. When you look at a tree and perceive its stillness, you become still yourself” (Tolle, 2018).

What benefits might we bring to our clients when we first nourish ourselves through a ramble in the countryside, a walk in the woods, a forage in the hedgerows, a stroll through the garden, a climb of a mountain or a wild-water swim? The calm we experience there is the very antidote to anxiety and stress. Not alone as therapists but as human beings we need that solace and connection with ourselves and with Nature. The words of the late John O’Donohue emphasise the centrality of this connection; “as humans we need a forceful dialectic of physical, sensuous, elemental interaction with landscape (O’Donohue, cited by Quinn, 2015, p.70).

### The Garden and Psychotherapy

*“Il faut cultiver notre jardin”*  
Voltaire.

Voltaire’s exhortation brings us back to the garden; not only as a physical but also a mental space which offers quietness, connection, time, wonder and work. To work in the garden gives an opportunity to be alone, to enter inwards, to have the senses ignited, to work with the clay and ponder our own mortality. It can become a place of sanctuary and of solace when uncertainty and fear trouble us.. To plant is to place hope centrefold. A gardener is inherently optimistic, always looking ahead to the future crop, the future flowering. Seeds reek of tomorrow. Hope and resilience are inherent in them. Jung believed that every human should have a plot of

land. He grew his own vegetables. He believed that we humans had become alienated by technological life from the “dark, maternal, earthy ground of our being” (Jung cited by Smith, 2020).

Carl Rogers was similarly a lifelong gardener. His concern was always for humans to achieve their potential, to ‘flower’; “My garden supplies the same intriguing question I have been trying to meet in all my professional life. What are the effective conditions for growth?” (Rogers, 1980 cited in Van Hesteren, 1988, p.7). He believed that providing the right conditions for the plants in his garden was analogous to adhering to the core conditions of his person-centred approach to therapy. This was the fostering of the human being’s innate potential to heal themselves and to flourish. More recently, during the Covid-19 crisis, Michael Harding extolled the gifts of a garden in that it “roots you to the ground

*We have an opportunity to care for ourselves and be present to our clients through our interaction with Nature.*

and opens you to the cosmos” (Harding, 2020, 04:18:00) Such is the paradox of Nature’s power to embed and yet to liberate.

### Conclusion

As human beings and as therapists we have an opportunity to care for ourselves and be present to our clients through our interaction with Nature, e.g. digging in the garden, delving, planting, listening to birdsong, walking in a forest, being aware of the landscape and experiencing the enigma and essence of Nature’s healing force. As we rediscover Nature in this “era of virtual worlds and fake facts, the

garden brings us back to reality.” (Smith, 2020, p.13). We can learn from this pandemic. We need to stay connected to Nature. Ultimately, it is possible for us to kindle our awareness of Biophilia, to become more emotionally resilient, and to allow ourselves to be sheltered in Nature’s pervasive fractals. ☺

Siobhan Maher

Siobhan is an IACP accredited counsellor and psychotherapist with a background in bereavement support and in education. She was worked in the area of sexual trauma with KASA Kilkenny for the past ten years. Siobhan has also been involved in delivering training in the areas of bereavement and self-care. Aside from psychotherapy, she enjoys being in the outdoors. Siobhan can be contacted at siobhan@kasa.ie

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## Reflective Article

# When the closing session is final

## A therapist's journey with her client through terminal illness and death

By Margaret Plunkett




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*It was some time before I heard from V, when he got in touch again he informed me that he had undergone tests and was having treatment. At this stage it was “so far, so good”.*

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started counselling I felt he was treating it like a work project but on himself.

Over the years we had a number of sessions and then he would go off and look at implementing some of his new-found discoveries and practices into his life. He came back to me a number of times. The therapy room was a safe place for him to talk, free from judgement, to consider what changes he needed to make. During this time he became a more relaxed man, got married, and started a family

He continued to explore what he would like from life and what further changes he needed to make. Around this time he began to feel unwell and, while his symptoms seemed innocuous, I suggested he go to the doctor which started a series of tests. (I mention this as some of his symptoms could have been seen as being caused by stress.)

It was some time before I

### Introduction

When I first met V some years ago, he came because he was somewhat dissatisfied with his life. He was stressed and anxious. He appeared very frightened and prone to panic attacks.

V came from a large family who all seemed to be quite close. His contact with them was frequent. He came across as quiet but from what I learned was that when it came to parties he liked to sing. He held a very responsible job and when he

heard from V, when he got in touch again he informed me that he had undergone tests and was having treatment. At this stage it was “so far, so good”, albeit he said there was still some way to go.

Some time later we met and the prognosis was not the best but he was told that with treatment this could be managed. However, as is the case with a lot of these situations, his condition changed and he became quite ill. We met again during his treatment when he had no hair and had lost a lot of weight. He spoke of the beautiful love between himself and his partner and the family. He spoke of his plans for the future, quality time with the family, watching the children grow up and focussing on progressing in his career. Our work was about his connection with himself, being more self-compassionate and feeling worthy of the gifts he had received. During the session, I had this rising up of a great admiration for this man. I felt he was really brave in saying how he felt about the situation that was laid out before him.

Due to his illness he texted to keep me up-to-date with his treatment. The next time we met he was still planning for the future. He had at this stage been told that his time was limited. I asked him how he felt about hearing that news. He replied, “shit”. He laughed, I laughed. He asked, “Why me?”.

He questioned me about death. What would it be like? I answered, “that as we had made our way into this world there must be a mechanism to allow us to exit”. Obviously I had no concrete experience of anything else. I quoted from a book I had read called Birth and Death

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*I remembered a quote from The Tibetan Art of Living, that dying people feel love intensely when it is directed towards them. Love creates an immediate connection which reassures the dying person they are protected.*

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(Saraswati, 1993) ‘The fear of death haunts the mind of even the bravest of people. The only way to avoid death is to avoid being born. It is not possible to be born and not to die.’ (Saraswati, 1993, p. 9).

And:

We fear death because, under the influence of delusion, we have forgotten ourselves (Divine Self). And it is this forgetting of the Divine Self which makes for us all the troubles we get. It is not a God who is the maker of our troubles. (Saraswati, 1993, p. 10).

He wondered what he would need to do in preparation. So there were practicalities as well. These we discussed. All the time he was there taking notes. I quoted from the book *The Tibetan Art of Living* about dealing with his affairs: ‘Assisting with unfinished domestic matters. Dying with few attachments to this life and a calm sense of having put things in order.’ (Hansard, 2001, p.261) This would be useful to deal with material matters and thereby bring rest for him.

He wondered about God - where was he now? While not being a very religious person he said he had believed in a god and also believed that there is something after death. At the same time

he had no anger towards God. His acceptance was growing. We made another appointment.

When we next met he told me he was receiving palliative care as there was nothing further that could be done. I asked him did they give him a time limit. He replied, “a matter of weeks”. The deterioration of the physical body was apparent but he was still taking notes and making plans. He wanted to do things. Clearly, these were limited because of his condition. However, knowing V as I did, I asked him would he like to write something? Would he like to write letters to his children letting them know what he found to be valuable in his life and what he would like for them as they grow up and meet the world?

Would he like to write what he has learned from his illness so that it might help others not be fearful if in a similar situation some day? He was busy writing. All this time I was there, holding myself and V in a place that I can only describe as loving and divine. I was hoping for divine inspiration. I stayed completely present to V and the situation. I felt completely in tune with him. Totally connected. I remembered a quote from *The Tibetan Art of Living*, that dying people feel love intensely when it is directed towards them. Love creates an immediate connection which reassures the dying person they are protected. On a personal

note, I feel this is such an important piece, as how else would we like anybody in our care to make their departure from this world.

He described the wonderful care he received from the medical profession and from his partner and family and described the love from his partner as “priceless”. He also said at this stage there was no need to worry saying, “What is the point?”

A lesson we could all do well to remember.

He described how he had felt such empathy from friends since they had received this news. He was surprised because people he had worked with had told him how they had felt about working with him. In fact, he was quite surprised at their kindness. I asked him would he have believed that people could show so much love. He replied, in normal circumstances, no. I said that these people love you, are showing you love in different ways because this is what people do when their family member or friend has been dealt such news. I added that over the years he has “mattered” to me too. I meant this.

I wondered how we were going to end. So I asked, “What about us?” He said, “I think we have come full circle.” I agreed. So how would this therapeutic relationship end? I said, “I am not going to say goodbye.” I asked him to give me a moment to consider what I might say. There was silence. Then he spoke. “Margaret, this work with you has been life-changing for me. You have been more of a friend than a therapist to me over the years.” I was blown away. He said this with such strength in his voice. I was not expecting that and I thanked him.

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*The divine love that was experienced really touched me and his bravery and strength in the teeth of adversity. I feel I learned a lot from this relationship.*

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I again said to V, “I will not say goodbye.”

The reason I did not want to say goodbye is my belief that somehow it is not really a “goodbye”. From my early days in school we were told that death is not the end. The body decays but the Spirit lives on. With death the relationship changes, it does not end. In The Apostles’ Creed it talks of the Resurrection of the body and life everlasting. At some level I take this not just as psychological optimism but rather something that makes real living sense. And the bond lives on.

I joined my hands in prayer and said, “I give you all my blessings. All my blessings.” He said “Goodbye.” I said, “God Bless” I looked at him and he said, “God Bless,” with a big smile on his face.

Shortly after our last meeting I was informed that V had died peacefully in the arms of those who loved him. I offered my sympathies and complimented them on their care of V.

Later, I found myself getting really upset and I wondered what is it about this man? The divine love that was experienced really touched me and his bravery and strength in the teeth of adversity. I feel I learned a lot from this relationship. V had mattered to me from early on as I felt he was

struggling, he always mattered and as he began to find more meaning in his life he ultimately mattered in his own life.

He approached death with courage and fearlessness, accepting finally that this is how it is for him.

It was an open, honest relationship and I cared for him to the end. It was a sacred and a spiritual encounter. This indeed has been a most wonderful privilege for which I am very grateful. Somehow I feel that this special encounter with V will always be a reference point in my life and will not be forgotten. Such is the importance of our work as therapists.

Thank you V. ☺

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Margaret Plunkett

Margaret Plunkett is a fully accredited member of IACP, working in private practice in Churchtown, Dublin, for the past 15 years. She holds a B.Sc in Counselling and Psychotherapy. She has undertaken courses in Integrative Bodywork, Philosophy and Mindfulness and has a keen interest in body / mind / emotion relationship and the effects of trauma.

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*Note: Details have been changed to protect client confidentiality.*

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## IACP Noticeboard

# Cathaoirleach's letter to members Winter 2021



Dear Member,

I hope this message finds you in good spirits. 2022 is almost here and it has been a remarkable year for many reasons. We have much on which to reflect. Over the past eighteen months, we have been tested personally and professionally by the pandemic and the ensuing restrictions. All of

us have suffered the deprivation of direct social contact. Not only this, but many people have also suffered loss and the pain of bereavement of a loved one. This grief has been escalated by the inability to honour the passing of loved ones in the traditional manner.

Our adaptability to adverse circumstances is a testament to the resilience of our members. It is also a testament to the strength of the organisation. It is this quiet strength that has resulted in us reaching our 40th Anniversary this year. For forty years, we have promoted safe and effective practice of Counselling and Psychotherapy in Ireland. We have seen the public attitudes towards Counselling and Psychotherapy positively change and have been instrumental in changing these views. It is remarkable to reflect on how much we've grown since our inaugural meeting in the basement of the CMAC building in Dun Laoghaire in 1981.

The IACP recently commissioned a video

to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the organisation. The video features me and former Cathaoirleach of the IACP, as well as current staff members. It looks at the participants' experience of working with the IACP, and we screened it at this year's Annual Conference. It demonstrates our solidarity as an organisation as well as showing how far we travelled. The video is available to watch on our website.

This development of the profession is the bedrock of the IACP. It is directly attributable to the contribution of our Members and the efforts of our staff. We are continuing to evolve and strive to serve our Members in the best way possible by being both reflective and reflexive. Arising from this comes change. There have been several innovations this year. One such development is the creation of a Pre-Accredited Members' directory. This was recommended by Member Categories Working Group and ratified by the Board of Directors. This register will enable online verification that a member is registered as a Pre-Accredited Member of the IACP.



Bernie speaking at the IACP Annual Conference 2021

We hosted our AGM virtually for the second time on 15th October. We'd like to thank all our members who attended, and who submitted motions for consideration. Full details of the motions that were presented at AGM 2021 can be found in this journal or on [iacp.ie](http://iacp.ie). A special thanks must go to Operations Manager Carol Murray and the rest of the IACP staff for their work in organising and running the event.

I would like to wish a fond farewell to

## Cathaoirleach's Letter to Members



Bernie and IACP Leas-Cathaoirleach Séamus Sheedy at IACP Annual Conference 2021

my colleagues Izabela Morris and Michelle Coyne who decided to not run for election for the Board of Directors (BOD) this year. It has been an honour and a privilege to serve with you, and I look forward to seeing you both at future IACP events. I'd like to congratulate the remainder of the serving BOD for retaining their seats. I'd also like to welcome Edward Boyne and Liam Neville to the BOD. I look forward to working with all my colleagues on the BOD in the coming year.

We also hosted our 40th Anniversary Conference virtually this year and we had a fantastic line up of speakers, Deb Dana, Dr Michael Duffy, and Dr Sabina Brennan. An important part of our Annual Conference is our awards ceremony. I would like to congratulate all our award recipients this year.

Beginning with Una Coakley, the recipient of the prestigious IACP Carl Berkeley Memorial Award. This is sixth year that the IACP has presented Regional Awards. These awards were established to recognise the work and dedication of volunteers at a regional level. This year there are six recipients of Regional Awards. I want to extend a warm congratulations to Ravind Jaewon, Brian Walsh, Seamus Barry, Caroline Flahive, Patrician Hannon, and Annie Sampson.

Additional awards include the Cathaoirleach Recognition Award 2017 - 2020 which was awarded to my predecessor and current BOD Colleague Ray Henry for his work over his tenure. Mr Donagh Ward was awarded the Research Bursary Award. Donagh's research examines impact of exercise on

## Cathaoirleach's Letter to Members

moderate anxiety and depression. We also launched the Research Excellence Award to recognise significant contributions to the body of literature in the field of Counselling and Psychotherapy in Ireland, and the recipient of the inaugural IACP Research Excellence Award is Melanie McGovern from Galway.

I was very pleased that One in Four was nominated by the Dublin Regional Committee as the IACP Charity Partner for 2021. One in Four is a non-profit organisation that works with adults who have been impacted by childhood sexual abuse. One in Four is providing an invaluable service, and we are very pleased to support them.

Another key event held this year was our annual event connecting Ireland and US-based Counsellors and Psychotherapists to explore Counselling Practices in the US and in Ireland. This event was held again virtually by Zoom on August 20th and 21st and was a joint initiative of the IACP, the University of Holy Cross, New Orleans and DePaul University, Chicago. Presentations touched on the themes of counselling, recovery, professional growth, and personal self-care, which were very relevant topics this year.

During the final days of the year – which are fast approaching. It can be beneficial to create time to reflect and process all that has happened over the previous year, on an individual and on a collective level. At the heart of reflexivity is self-awareness, which is something that we strive to cultivate in



Bernie with Ray Henry at the Annual Conference 2021

our practice as therapists. However, reflection and reflexivity are also, I believe, two hallmarks of the IACP, as the organisation continues to listen to our membership and to adapt accordingly.

This year – like the year that preceded it - has been challenging to say the least, but as Bette Davis once said “The key to life is accepting challenges. Once someone stops doing this, he’s dead”. Challenge strengthens us on a personal and professional level as well as keeping life interesting. As Christmas draws closer, I sincerely hope it will be a peaceful one, and I wish you all the best for the New Year.

Mise le meas,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bernie Hackett'.

**Bernie Hackett**  
Cathaoirleach, IACP

A message from the Chief Executive

# A Message from the Chief Executive Winter 2021



Dear Member,

Soon a new year will be upon us, and we will emerge into 2022 after a challenging 2021. The theme of this edition is the reflective and reflexive practitioner. I find that winter is a good time for reflecting on the year, and 2021 has been a fruitful and productive year

for IACP. It is the 40th year of the organisation, and despite restrictions we managed to celebrate this milestone year with several events and initiatives.

In May, we ran our Find a Therapist Campaign and hosted our first public online event, Essential Conversations with IACP. The campaign and event were very successful, and I want to thank all our members, staff, and guest speakers who contributed

to their success. This year also saw the launch of our Strategic Plan for 2021 – 2025, as well as a digital Pre-Budget Submission Campaign (PBS).

Each year the IACP publishes a Pre-Budget Submission that we circulate to members of the Oireachtas outlining our asks for the upcoming Budget. In April, we surveyed our members to seek their perspectives on our lobbying; we wanted to see members’ opinions and this input from members was reflected in our PBS requests. These requests were simple yet essential, tax relief to be fully extended to Counselling and Psychotherapy, as a qualifying health expense, and the application of the exemption of VAT, now rated at 13.5% on earnings over €37,500 for Counsellors and Psychotherapists from 2022. This year, we took a different approach. We asked our members to contact their elected officials via a platform that allowed them to reach their local representatives in a matter of clicks. The campaign



Lisa presenting Maeve Lewis CEO of One in Four with the cheque for IACP Charity Partner of the Year 2021

## A message from the Chief Executive



Lisa with IACP Cathaoirleach Bernie Hackett and Dr Sabina Brennan, a presenter at IACP Annual Conference 2021

has resulted in numerous parliamentary questions to the Minister of Finance on our requests. I want to thank all our members who took the time and energy to contribute to our Pre-Budget Submission campaign. You can read our complete response to Budget 2022 in the news section of [iacp.ie](http://iacp.ie).

This year, like last year, we hosted our Annual Conference online to ensure safety and compliance with COVID-19 restrictions. This year's conference featured Deb Dana, Dr Michael Duffy, and Sabina Brennan. These presentations resonated hugely with our attendees and there was great engagement with the speakers on the day. A particularly important part of our annual conference is our Awards Ceremony. I want to take a moment to congratulate all the recipients of IACP awards. This year also marked the first year of our Public Inspiration Award, which we awarded to Blindboy Boatclub. Blindboy hosted our Essential Conversations conference in May and has been an avid champion of counselling and psychotherapy in his podcast and media appearances. I would like to thank our Communications Supervisor Hugh O'Donoghue and Executive Administrator Emma Gribben for coming up with the idea for this award, their work on the proposal to the board of directors and the management of the award process. I want to thank all the team and Board Members involved in organising the conference. We remain hopeful that next year we will be able to host a physical event. I can be safe in saying that I am not alone in hoping for a future in-person conference. On a personal level, I certainly miss having the opportunity to meet with IACP members.

As I mentioned in my previous letter, we continued in our tradition of co-hosting a transatlantic conference this year. "Counselling, Recovery, Professional Growth, and Personal Self Care: A Joint Conference for Counsellors and Psychotherapists in Ireland and the United States" was co-hosted with the University of Holy Cross, New Orleans and DePaul University, Chicago online on 20th August. The conference featured presenters from Ireland and the United States speaking on Art Therapy, Mindfulness, Careers,

COVID-19, and many more topics. You may have also read in a recent e-news that IACP was a signatory on a Mental Health Reform drafted letter to the Taoiseach Michael Martin. The IACP joined more than fifty leaders in the community and voluntary in signing this open letter that called on the Taoiseach to task the Government to prioritise funding for mental health services in Budget 2022. You can read the full letter in the news section of [iacp.ie](http://iacp.ie).

I'm also saddened to report the departure of Hugh O'Donoghue as Communications Supervisor. By the time you will read this, Hugh will have left IACP. Hugh has been a wonderful colleague and a great addition to the IACP team since he joined us in December 2018. We will sorely miss Hugh, and I know you will all join me in wishing Hugh the very best in the next chapter of his career.

In conclusion, I would like to wish you all a joyful and restful break over the festive season. It has been a monumental year not only for the IACP but for everyone. I would like to wish you, all our staff, Board of Directors, Committee Members, and Volunteers a happy 40th Anniversary.

Kind regards,

*Lisa Molloy*  
**Lisa Molloy**  
 Chief Executive, IACP

## A Message from Uachtarán na hÉireann Michael D. Higgins



UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN  
PRESIDENT OF IRELAND

13 September, 2021

Ms. Lisa Molloy  
Chief Executive Officer  
Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy  
First Floor, Marina House  
11-13 Clarence Street,  
Dún Laoghaire  
Co. Dublin  
A96 WC94

Dear Ms. Molloy,

May I, through you, send my best wishes to all members of the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy as you mark your 40th anniversary.

I am, indeed, very grateful to have this opportunity to thank you for your important and generous work. By ensuring that professional standards are upheld in this most vital of services you also make a strong statement about the collective responsibility we, as members of a shared society, hold for the mental health of all our citizens.

You mark this milestone anniversary at a time when our citizens are emerging from a most difficult chapter in our nation's history. The Coronavirus Pandemic has brought much anxiety, stress and sadness into the lives of many people across the country. As we begin to slowly emerge from this crisis we remain mindful of the considerable toll it has taken on many people's mental health, of how fragile it has left so many whose lives have been disrupted or damaged during our shared battle against Covid 19.

It has been a salutary reminder of how important it is that we continue to improve our understanding of mental health issues and remove the barriers and stigmas that can block access to readily available and crucial help and assistance. It is also a reminder of the great importance of promoting and maintaining the highest standards of training and professional conduct amongst those who work in this vital profession.

As you mark this milestone anniversary, you have much to look back on with pride. Your generous and dedicated work has impacted positively on the lives of many individuals and their families. I wish you every success as you continue to improve the landscape for those suffering with mental health issues. I also wish you a most fruitful conference this October.

Yours sincerely,

Michael D. Higgins  
Uachtarán na hÉireann  
President of Ireland

## IACP Noticeboard

## IACP AGM 2021

On 15th October, IACP hosted its second online AGM. The current Board of Directors consists of:



**Bernie Hackett**  
Cathaoirleach



**Séamus Sheedy**  
Leas Cathaoirleach



**Jade Lawless**  
Treasurer



**Ray Henry**  
Company Secretary



**Damian Davy**  
Board Member



**Eamon Fortune**  
Board Member



**Edward Boyne**  
Board Member



**Elizabeth O'Driscoll**  
Board Member



**Geraldine Looney**  
Board Member



**Liam Neville**  
Board Member



**Peter Ledden**  
Board Member

## AGM Motions and Results 2021:

**Motion 1 - This motion was not carried**

To change the name of the membership category “Pre-Accredited member” to “Graduate member” of IACP.

**Motion 2 – This motion was not carried**

To create a new membership category called Academic Member.

**Motion 3 – This motion was carried**

We ask that the IACP change the terms and conditions of its membership to encompass the following: Pre-accredited and accredited members are encouraged to protect the value of counselling by working only where payment is offered if at all possible.

**Motion 4 – This motion was carried**

That the IACP will give an undertaking not to advertise free counselling on its website going forward.

**Motion 5 – This motion was withdrawn**

That the IACP takes a challenge case on behalf of its members to the HSE regarding their eligibility criteria for the position of Psychotherapist/ Counsellor.

**Motion 6 – This motion was withdrawn**

That the IACP declares an alignment of a set minimum wage for their members in line with current HSE rates for Psychotherapists.

**Motion 7 – This motion was carried**

That the IACP adopt a policy where they expect charitable organisations providing counselling and who are funded by the HSE are encouraged to pay their psychotherapists and counsellors the same rates of pay being offered to sessional and full time employed psychotherapists and counsellors in the HSE.

**Motion 8 – This motion was carried**

The National Supervisors Forum to establish

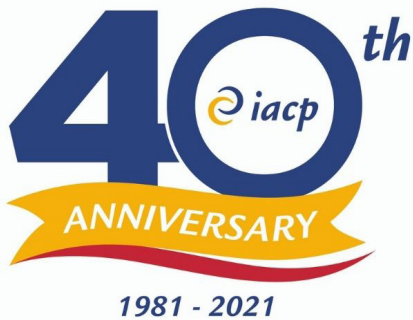
1. A standardised policy in each region.
2. A training budget in each region to enhance & enrich the skills of Supervisors.
3. A structure in each region to discuss and support clinical supervisors' issues.

**Motion 9 – This motion was carried**

That IACP accredited training providers are required to have

- (a) Secured student placements
- (b) Allocated placements for all students offered a place in their programmes.

## IACP Annual Conference 2021



# IACP ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2021

16TH OCTOBER  
2021

40 YEARS OF IACP

IACP's Annual Conference, took place virtually on Saturday 16th October 2021. The theme of the Conference this year was "40 Years of IACP". The event was very well attended by members and representatives from National and International Associations.

The event was opened by Cathaoirleach Bernie Hackett who read a letter from an Uachtarán in na hÉireann Michael D. Higgins.

### Speakers



Our first speaker was Deb Dana, LCSW. Deb Dana is a clinician and consultant specializing in using the lens of Polyvagal Theory to understand and resolve the impact of trauma and create ways of

working that honor the role of the autonomic nervous system. She is a founding member of the Polyvagal Institute and developer of the Rhythm of Regulation Clinical Training Series. Deb is the author of *The Polyvagal Theory in Therapy: Engaging the Rhythm of Regulation* (Norton, 2018); *Polyvagal Exercises for Safety and Connection: 50 Client-Centered Practices* (Norton, 2020); and *Anchored: How to Befriend Your Nervous System Using Polyvagal Theory* (forthcoming from Sounds True in 2021).



Deb Dana's presentation was followed by a presentation from Dr Michael Duffy. Dr Michael Duffy is a Consultant Cognitive Psychotherapist specialising in PTSD and complex grief and Senior Lecturer and

Director of the Specialist MSc (Trauma) in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy at Queen's University Belfast. He leads the QUB Trauma Research Network; is a Fellow of the Centre for Evidence and Social Innovation; Assoc. Fellow of the George J Mitchell Institute for Global Peace Security & Justice and Fellow of the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy. He is research advisor to the Northern Ireland Regional Trauma Network and a member of the UK Trauma Council. Michael led the work of the Trauma team after the Omagh bombing in 1998 and published several studies into the psychological effects of this event on adults, children and adolescents. He later was Team Leader at the Northern Ireland Centre for Trauma (NICTT) and led 2 clinical trials on the application of TF-CT for conflict related PTSD. He has provided many workshops on PTSD after large scale traumas including: 2004, New York the 9/11 Twin Towers attack; 2005, 7/11 London bombings; 2012 Oslo bombing and Utoya Island shootings; 2017, the Manchester Concert bomb. His main research area is on PTSD and evidence-based psychological interventions. His current research is on PTSD with children who have been maltreated or abused and cognitive therapy for complex grief.



The conference culminated in a presentation by Dr Sabina Brennan. Dr Sabina Brennan is a chartered psychologist, neuroscientist, award-winning science communicator, author of the international bestseller *100 Days to a Younger Brain*, and host of the critically acclaimed *Super Brain* podcast. Sabina is on a mission to help millions of people enjoy the benefits of

IACP Annual Conference 2021 – Highlights

having a Super Brain. Internationally recognised brain health expert and thought leader Dr Sabina Brennan’s lifechanging techniques transform everyday brains into super-brains. The most advanced artificial intelligence endeavours to simulate but cannot replicate the glorious magnificence of the human brain. Dr Brennan’s talks harness cutting edge neuroscience to reveal the secrets of the most underused resource on the planet – the human brain. Give your workforce the edge, invest in brain health. Sabina will show you how to harness your brain power to reach your true potential. Specialising in translating neuroscience into practical tips Sabina’s talks will show you how to think faster, sharper, better. Sabina will help you to unleash your superpower transforming your everyday brain into a Super Brain. Sabina’s talks, animations and online resources have helped hundreds of thousands of people boost their brain health, build resilience, love life, and find happiness. Sabina has a regular wellness spot on national afternoon TV (The Today Show – RTE) and is a regular TV and radio panellist and contributor nationally and internationally. She has also contributed to and written features for multiple newspapers including the Times, the Guardian and Market watch. Sabina’s new book, *Beating Brain Fog* is an Irish Times No.1 bestseller. Sabina has been engaged as an advisor to governments and global businesses influencing policy and practice in the areas of brain health, ageing, dementia, migraine, and multiple sclerosis. She also volunteers on scientific advisory boards and advocacy panels supporting charities, non-profits, and NGOs.

**IACP Charity Partner of the Year**

IACP’s Charity Partner of the Year 2020 is One in Four. One in Four’s vision is an Irish society where children are safe from the threat of sexual harm. One in Four are doing invaluable work in Irish society, and the IACP is extremely pleased to support them.



**Regional Awards**

2021 is the sixth year of The IACP Annual Regional Awards 2021. The Regional Awards were established to recognise members who are doing exceptional work in their region. The recipients of the awards are selected by the IACP Regional Committees. IACP would like to congratulate all the 2021 recipients.



*IACP Regional Award Recipients 2021: (Clockwise from top left) MRC Award - Brian Walsh - Midland Region, Seamus Barry - South East Region, Ravind Jeawon - Dublin Region, Caroline Flahive - Southern Region, Patricia Hannon - West North West Region, and Annie Sampson - Western Region*

**Carl Berkeley Memorial Award**

The Carl Berkeley Memorial Award (CBMA) was conceived to honour IACP members that have made a lasting and demonstrable impact to the furthering of the practices of counselling and psychotherapy on national and local levels. This year’s CMBA was awarded to Una Coakley MIACP.



*Una Coakley CMBA Award Recipient 2021*

## IACP Annual Conference 2021 – Highlights

Una has been an educator, trainer, and supervisor for over 25 years in the Counselling and Psychotherapy Courses at Cork Institute of Technology, now Munster Technological University. She has been to the forefront of stretching the boundaries of theory and practice within the Psychotherapy Department. Always with the aim of broadening and refining the curriculum she assiduously researched the emerging psychotherapy literature and has been persistent in pursuing evidence-based research. Una retired in September 2020 and her legacy continues in the high quality of counsellor training provided at the University

Una was nominated for the CBMA by Geraldine Sheedy, on behalf of the Counselling and Psychotherapy Team and by Eileen Fitzgibbon on behalf of the Counselling and Psychotherapy Graduates' Association, CIT.

### Research Bursary Award 2021

The purpose of this award is to support and encourage members in their research and to promote evidence-based practice and research within the counselling and psychotherapy profession. This year's recipient is Donagh Ward MIACP.



Research Bursary Award 2021 recipient Donagh Ward

Donagh's research looks at the impact of exercise on anxiety and depression. Donagh is a Faculty lecturer and core tutor for PCI College where he lectures on the Level 8 Degree Programme. He is an experienced and fully accredited therapist offering

counselling and psychotherapy services to individuals and groups in private practice in Waterford.

### Research Excellence Award 2021

This newly established award recognises significant contributions to the body of literature in the field of

counselling & psychotherapy in Ireland.

The inaugural recipient of the award is Melanie McGovern MIACP – a previous recipient of the Research Bursary Award. Melanie is Integrative psychotherapist in private practice, Galway.

Melanie's article Spontaneous clarity-a new reality dawns: Psychotherapists' lived experience of epiphany moments was recently published in the European Journal for Qualitative Research in Psychotherapy and can be found on [ejqrp.org](http://ejqrp.org).



Research Excellence Award 2021 recipient Melanie McGovern

### Public Inspiration Award – Blindboy Boatclub



This newly established award was developed to recognise a member of the public – who is not a mental health professional – who is promoting the fields of Counselling and Psychotherapy to the Irish Public. The inaugural recipient of this award is Author, Podcaster, and musician Blindboy Boatclub. Blindboy has been very vocal about his own experiences with mental health, and often promotes Counselling and Psychotherapy on his top-rated podcast. Blindboy also trained as a psychotherapist, and previously hosted IACP's Essential Conversations Conference.

### IACP Annual Conference 2021 – Highlights



IACP Cathaoirleach Bernie Hackett presenting her predecessor and current BOD colleague Ray Henry with the Cathaoirleach Recognition Award 2017 - 2020



Dr Michael Duffy speaking with Ray Henry



Dr Sabina Brennan speaking with IACP Regional Director Eamon Fortune



Dr Michael Duffy



IACP Board of Directors and Staff outside the Royal Marine Hotel, Dún Laoghaire

# IACP Annual Conference 2021 – Highlights



Eamon Fortune



Lisa Molloy with Dr Michael Duffy



L-R Board of Directors' Member Dr Damian Davy, Lisa Molloy, Dr Sabina Brennan, and Communications Supervisor Hugh O'Donoghue



Lisa Molloy

## IACP Annual Conference 2021 – Highlights



L - R Former Board of Directors' Member Izabela Morris with current Board of Directors' Member Liz O'Driscoll



L - R IACP Board of Directors' Members Peter Ledden, Liz O'Driscoll, and Dr Damian Davy



Clockwise from Bottom Left: Lisa Molloy, Executive Administrator Emma Gribben, Hugh O'Donoghue, Operations Manager Carol Murray, Communications Officer Aoife Darmody, and Innovation and Development Manager Iwona Blasi outside the Royal Marine Hotel

## IACP Noticeboard

## IACP Pre-Budget Submission Campaign

On 3rd September the IACP launched its Pre-Budget Submission 2022. In this year's submission, we asked that tax relief be fully extended to Counselling and Psychotherapy, as a qualifying health expense, in Budget 2022 and for the application of exemption of VAT, now rated at 13.5% on earnings over €37,500 for Counsellors and Psychotherapists from 2022. As part of our campaign, we asked that you support these asks by contacting your Oireachtas representatives. Full details of the campaign can be found on the website. Thus far we have had substantial exchanges with 26 members of the Oireachtas thanks to our submission. In addition, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People Mary Butler TD, Jim O'Callaghan TD, Richard Boyd Barret TD, Violet Wynne TD, Cormac Devlin TD, Paul Donnelly TD, Robert Troy TD and James Lawless TD all wrote questions to Minister of Finance Pascal Donohoe TD about our Pre-Budget Submission 2022 asks.

## Mental Health Reform Pre-Budget Submission Campaign



Mental Health Reform CEO Fiona Coyle, Séamus Sheedy, and Hugh O'Donoghue at the photocall for the launch of MHR's Pre-Budget Submission 2022

IACP Cathaoirleach Séamus Sheedy and Communications Supervisor Hugh O'Donoghue attended a photocall on the 31st July at Leinster House for the launch of MHR's Pre-Budget Submission 2022. Together with their 77 member organisations, Mental Health Reform called on the Government to invest €85million in our mental health services for Budget 2022. This included:

- €20M to maintain existing levels of services; and
- €65M to be used exclusively for developing our services to drive change in the system, and deal with the new challenges faced

IACP is an Associate Member of MHR and we were honoured to be in attendance and demonstrate our support.

## IACP Professional Will Guidelines



In the event of the practitioner's ill-health, retirement and termination of practice, a professional will is there to designate a trusted colleague or other to be a professional executor. Professional Will provides the information required to manage relevant practice-related issues effectively whether that is to suspend or cease practice.

The recently ratified guidelines are now available to all members on the IACP website in downloads.

## Regulation Update

The IACP attended a consultation webinar, in May 2021, with CORU and counselling and psychotherapy professional bodies/associations. Following this webinar, a Counsellors and Psychotherapists FAQ page has been set up on the CORU website. The questions included in the FAQ list are based on the questions asked and responded to at the webinar event on 10th May. In addition, the IACP has been invited to support CORU in scoping the qualifications of existing counsellors and psychotherapists. CORU has advised us that the aim of this scoping exercise is to identify the historical/legacy or current qualifications deemed appropriate for entry to practice, at the time of award. We will keep you updated on progress as we continue to engage with CORU and the Registration Board.

## IACP Noticeboard

## Letter from Communications Supervisor to IACP Members



Dear Member,

I am sad to say that this will be my last IJCP. By the time you will read this I will have left my post as Communications Supervisor. It wasn't an easy decision to leave, but I was offered an opportunity I couldn't refuse.

I'd like to thank all the Board of Directors (past and present), our Members, and my colleagues for making IACP like a second home to me. I'd also like to thank the Management Team at IACP for their support during my time here, they make IACP a wonderful place to work. A special mention must go to the members of the Editorial Committee and Media Panel (too many to mention in this short message) who I have had the pleasure to work so closely with over the last three years.

It has been so enlightening for me to see the inner workings of the organisation, and all the hard work that our members do to strengthen the core and public perception of IACP. It has given me a heightened appreciation of Counselling and Psychotherapy as a profession.

I have experienced many important professional and personal milestones while employed here, and although I am sad to leave, I know that I will take with me many treasured memories. I will always be a believer and advocate for the organisation and I'm deeply proud of the work I have done here. I will continue to closely watch IACP – from afar – and know that the organisation will go from strength to strength in the future.

Warmest regards,

**Hugh O'Donoghue**  
Communications Supervisor

## Pre-Accredited Members List on IACP.ie

As recommended by Member Categories Working Group and ratified by the BOD, we have created an area on the IACP Website that lists Pre-Accredited Members details, comprising of Membership number and Member name. This register will enable online verification that a member is registered as a Pre-Accredited Member of the IACP.

The list is available under below link:

<https://iacp.ie/preaccredited-members-list>

If you are a Pre-accredited Member and wish to opt in to be listed on the Online Pre-accredited Member Register, please email [membercare@iacp.ie](mailto:membercare@iacp.ie).

## IACP 40th Anniversary Video

The IACP recently commissioned the production of a video to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the organisation. The video features the present and former Cathaoirleach of the IACP, as well as current staff members. The video examines the participants' experience of working with the IACP and featured at the Annual Conference on 16th October. The video can be found on [iacp.ie](http://iacp.ie) as well as our YouTube Channel.



**40 YEARS OF  
IACP**

A Recollection



## IACP Noticeboard

## In Memoriam



## Mairead Kavanagh MIACP

Mairead Kavanagh departed this life on Thursday 21st October 2021 at the age of 65. She was taken from us way too soon.

As her older cousin, I first knew Mairead as a young girl growing up in a family of boys on Dodder Park Road. She developed into an extraordinarily caring, kind and compassionate woman. Her compassion was the active kind – caring for her family through all the ups and downs visited on them by life, nursing the sick for 20 years and then being a very special therapist, teacher and supervisor for 22 years.

She was the quintessential extravert, always ready for a chat, full of fun (a ‘real yapper’ was how one of her colleagues in YAP affectionately described her). At her funeral Mass her daughter Niamh gave us an inspired insight into the Mairead that her family knew:

*“She only saw the good in people. She believed that beauty was to be found in everyone and everything. The words ‘hate’ and ‘ugly’ were banned in the Kavanagh household. She welcomed everyone to her home – no appointments necessary. She loved a good debate, and never lost one!”*

Her brothers described her as having a literal and emotional intelligence, a great wit and a stubbornness that stood to her in facing life’s vicissitudes.

It was not possible to meet Mairead and not warm to her. She was infectious, direct, irreverent and as kind a person as you could ever meet. The last time I met her was before Covid, when she had already lost her independence to Parkinson’s disease, and her ability to communicate was diminishing. This was a very cruel blow to someone who was so articulate and relational. Then the Covid restrictions on visitors when she was in Lisheen nursing home meant that she was deprived of the joy of being surrounded by her beloved family.

May she rest now in peace in the company of Matt, the love of her life.

**Gearoid Manning**

Mairead Kavanagh was my friend, my mentor, and my supervisor for many years. I met Mairead on the first day of my psychotherapy training in the Creative Counselling Centre Dublin in 1990. Looking at the 15 other students on that day, who all seemed so knowledgeable and experienced as they practiced their “breath work” I was overwhelmed and out of my comfort zone. Mairead picked up on my anxiousness and whispered “we all still only breathe in and out”. We both laughed. She offered me a sweet and every week from then on she brought me sweets. We were buddies from then on.

To say that Mairead was the best therapist and supervisor I have ever worked with, is no exaggeration on my part. She challenged me firmly but kindly. She propped me up when I needed propping and pulled back when I needed to “figure it out” (her words).

By nature she was the essence of kindness and groundedness, was always non-judgemental and had a quirky sense of humour.

She was indeed an expert in her trade. She loved working in Ballymun YAP and first hand (when I facilitated workshops) I witnessed the respect and love her staff had for her. It was her “home away from home.”

*“Everyone deserves a second and a third and a..... chance.”*

And “there is no skill more important than kindness.”

These were her two mottos. .

Mairead was an impressive trainer. We both undertook to offer sand therapy training courses in Limerick and each participant hugely benefited from her knowledge, teaching skills and encouragement.

As her friend I was lucky to see Mairead in her other roles. She was so proud of her children, Aengus, Frances, Niamh and Caitriona and adored her grandchildren. She had a lifelong love affair with Matt until his death. There was so much joy and life in the Kavanagh house. We drank tea, wine, had fashion parades, and shellac nails painted over the years until illness took hold.

To sum up Mairead as a therapist and a woman is difficult. But I will choose one word... Inspirational.

Slan Mairead mo chara dilis.

Mile mile buiochas duit as ucht a thug tu dom.

**Margaret Collins Smyth**

## IACP Noticeboard

## In Memoriam



## Aideen Biggins MIACP

Aideen held her practice, A2B Counselling, for over 10 years in Swords and also at the Fingal Medical Centre. Aideen returned to education later in life,

graduating with a psychology degree from Maynooth University. She continued to become an integrative and counselling psychotherapist. Aideen's approach was Reality Therapy and CBT which she integrated

with Person-Centred Therapy. She worked with adults, adolescents, and couples. Aideen was a very caring therapist and would often provide additional care, especially throughout the pandemic, including significantly reduced rates in order to support her clients in difficulty. Outside of her work, Aideen loved Formula 1 racing and sun holidays. Aideen will be dearly missed by family, friends, colleagues, clients, and Max Verstappen.

The IACP would like to express its deepest condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of Aideen.

If you would like to memorialise or share the obituary of an IACP Member, please contact [aoife@iacp.ie](mailto:aoife@iacp.ie).

## Membership Renewal Rates and Online Payment Facility

Please find the 2022 membership rates below. Do also note the various means by which you can make pay your annual fee. The online payment link, sent to your email address, is very convenient and you can also check the balance owed before you start your payment.

**Online Payment facility** – A secure payment link will be sent to all members where we have an email address on record. This will record your payment on our system and automatically send you an IACP Pdf receipt. If you have an email address that we haven't got on record, then please let us know by emailing [iacp@iacp.ie](mailto:iacp@iacp.ie).

**Direct Debits** – Those members already availing of the direct debit facility are advised that payment will be debited on Friday 28th January 2022. No forms need to be returned to head office.

Members wishing to commence using the direct debit facility should complete and sign the direct debit mandate form which can be downloaded from our website at [www.iacp.ie](http://www.iacp.ie). This should be returned to IACP no later than 31st December 2021. You can also stagger your fee payment over 3 months (Jan – March) by writing STAGED on the DD form.

If you currently have a DD set up with IACP you do not need to do anything further.

**Cheques** – Of course you can still send a cheque, PO, or bank draft to the IACP office to renew your membership.

**Discount for over 65s** – A special discount of 5% on annual membership fees is available to all those over 65. Once we have your date of birth on file then you will receive this discount, and your renewal fee will already reflect this discount if you applied for it this year, or if you have received the discount in previous years.

### Membership Rates 2021:

Category:	€
Accredited Member	€289.00
+ Accredited Supervisor	€126.00
Retired Accredited Member	€84.00
Pre-Accredited Member	€194.00
Student Member	€84.00
Inactive Accredited Member	€105.00
+ Inactive Accredited Supervisor Member	€42.00
Late Admin Fee	€25.00
Accredited Course Membership	€2,720.00
Accredited Supervision Course Membership	€1,870.00

## IACP Noticeboard

## IACP in the Media

The IACP was mentioned in Bel Mooney's column in the Daily Mail on the 1st July.

The IACP was mentioned in Mary O'Connor's column in the Irish Independent on 15th August.

Brendan O'Shaughnessy MIACP was interviewed by Dylan O'Neill for his Love Island article in the Irish Daily Star on the 21st August.

Irene Lowry MIACP was interviewed by Rachel Cunningham in the Dublin Gazette for her column about motherhood.

IACP CEO Lisa Molloy was interviewed by Michael Reade on LMFM on 6th September about our Pre-Budget Submission 2022.

The Northern Standard reported on the IACP Covid-19 survey on the 9th of September.

The Dublin Gazette reported on the same survey on the 10th of September.

Joe Heffernan MIACP was on C103 on the 14th of September.

Rachel Cooke MIACP gave advice on 2FM's Jennifer Zamperelli Show 22nd September.

Cathy Kerwin MIACP was on Midlands 103FM on 24th of September to discuss techniques for stress relief.

A study conducted by the IACP is mentioned in the Sunday Business Post on the 26th of September.

IACP's Find a Therapist function mentioned on 2FM October 2nd during the Louise McSharry Show.

The Irish Sun's Dear Deirdre column mentions the IACP's website as a way of finding an accredited practitioner on the 3rd of October.

The Member's Survey was mentioned in the Daily Mirror on the 8th of October, as well as the Irish Daily Star, and Her.ie.

The Member's Survey is mentioned in Waterford News as their editorial piece on the 10th.

The IACP is mentioned as a resource in the Daily Mail agony aunt column on the 9th and 16th of October.

A press release on the budget got picked up on Donegallive.ie on the 14th of October as well as the Longford Leader, Kilkenny People, Tipperary Live, Leinster Express, Carlow Live, Kildare Now, Waterford Live, Offaly Express, Limerick Leader, Leinster Leader, Dundalk Democrat, Leitrim Observer on that same date as well as the Donegal Post on the 20th of October.

Padraig O'Morain MIACP's weekly column features in the Irish Times.

Joe Heffernan MIACP features on a weekly slot on C103FM.

Irish Independent 



Dublin Gazette



Business Post

THE IRISH TIMES



The Northern Standard

## IACP Accreditations

### First Time Accreditation

Agnes Molloy	Dublin 15	Ita Bridget Kennedy	Co. Limerick
Alan Dignam	Co. Louth	Jacqueline Ryan	Dublin 18
Alex Delogu	Dublin 14	James Byrne	Co. Dublin
Alex Gason	Co. Cork	Janet O'Donnell	Co. Galway
Alvina Cassidy	Co. Cork	Jennifer Sinnott	Dublin 16
Amy Hill	Co. Tipperary	Jennifer Costello	Dublin 13
Amy Hickey	Co. Cork	Jerry Dineen	Co. Cork
Amy Sweetman	Co. Dublin	Karen Macken	Co. Cork
Anca Filip	Dublin 6	Kathleen O'Connor	Co. Kildare
Andrew Maher	Co. Wexford	Kay O'Shaughnessy	Co. Cork
Andrew Harbourne-Thomas	Dublin 18	Kay Donnelly	Co. Kildare
Ann Kelly	Co. Galway	Kieran Hurley	Dublin 14
Anne Brady	Co. Galway	Lena Cummins	Co. Galway
Annette Coffey	Co. Wexford	Lisa Cooke	Co. Limerick
Aoife Doyle	Co. Dublin	Lubov O'Neill	Co. Kildare
Aveen Sharpe	Dublin 24	Máire Kelly	Co. Leitrim
Avril Ivory	Co. Dublin	Maria King	Co. Kildare
Avril Hinch	Co. Dublin	Maria Parker	Co. Meath
Bernadette McCormack	Dublin 6	Marian Rafferty	Co. Antrim
Bob O'Brien	Co. Kilkenny	Marion Mensing	Co. Cork
Bonita Cooper Dennison	Co. Dublin	Mary McGettrick	Co. Cork
Brona Russell	Co. Meath	Mary Gavin	Co. Westmeath
Cara Byrne	Dublin	Maureen McGee Garvey	Co. Mayo
Carol Byrne	Dublin 14	Michele Twyford	Co. Kildare
Caroline Connolly	Co. Kildare	Michelle Heery	Dublin 13
Carthagena Minnock	Co. Offaly	Mikela Shields	Co. Wicklow
Catriona Connelly	Co. Roscommon	Miriam Casey	Co. Longford
Ciaran Marcus Whyte	Co. Westmeath	Monika Hubczuk	Co. Cork
Claire Kelleher	Co. Cork	Niall Munnely	Co. Dublin
Claire McCarthy	Co. Wicklow	Noel Dowling	Co. Meath
Cynthia Cope	Co. Carlow	Oisín Dunne	Dublin 7
Daiva Kaminskaite	Co. Cork	Patricia O'Neill	Co. Clare
Daniel O'Mahony	Dublin 22	Peter Mahony	Co. Dublin
Darka Kovic	Dublin 13	Peter Kearns	Dublin 12
David Maher	Co. Kilkenny	Rebecca Connor	Co. Galway
Debra Johnston	Co. Louth	Rita Mooney	Co. Dublin
Declan Peeló	Co. Kildare	Roisin McGuinness	Co. Mayo
Deirdre Kelliher	Co. Kerry	Ross Askins	Dublin 14
Deirdre Wynne	Co. Offaly	Samantha O'Sullivan	Co. Cork
Diane Wellings	Dublin 3	Sarah Harty	Co. Dublin
Dympna Summerville	Co. Offaly	Sharon Marshall	Co. Cork
Edel O'Connor	Co. Galway	Sharon Sheridan	Co. Kildare
Elaine O'Callaghan	Co. Wicklow	Sharon McCormack	Co. Clare
Ellen Groble	Kildare	Sheila Giles	Dublin 16
Eoghan Dunphy	Co. Waterford	Sinead Kennedy	Dublin 24
Eugene O'Callaghan	Co. Cork	Siobhán Casey	Dublin 14
Eva Murphy	Co. Wexford	Sonya Delaney Murphy	Dublin 16
Eva Garcia Valls	Dublin 2	Susan Devoy	Co. Kildare
Evelyn Doyle	Co. Galway	Susan Kelly	Co. Cork
Fiona Crowe	Co. Cork	Tanja Tomic	Dublin 7
Gosia Lawnicki	Co. Cork	Tom Griffin	Co. Kerry
Helen Ward	Dublin 5	Trish Banks	Co. Dublin
Helen Byrne	Dublin 24	Verona Farrell	Co. Offaly
Hilary Kitson	Co. Wicklow	Violeta Dobrea	Dublin 18
Hildegard Crimmins	Dublin 14	Xiaochun Wang	Dublin 8
Imelda Bane	Co. Limerick		

IACP Accreditations

Newly Accredited Supervisors

Aisling Reidy  
 Anita Furlong  
 Anne Ryan  
 Annette Duggan  
 Antoinette White  
 Christine Keegan

Co. Galway  
 Co. Waterford  
 Co. Waterford  
 Co. Kildare  
 Co. Cork  
 Co. Wicklow

Joseph Donohue  
 Margaret Bowen  
 Margaret Glacken  
 Micheal Kelly  
 Thomas O'Loughlin  
 Tracey Kelly

Dublin 22  
 Co. Kilkenny  
 Co. Longford  
 Co. Kilkenny  
 Co. Galway  
 Dublin 22



Tis the season to be jolly

**IACP Christmas period opening/closing times 2021/2022**

**Friday 24th December '21 to Monday 3rd January '22 CLOSED**

**Re-opening on Tuesday 4th January '22**

**SEASON'S GREETINGS**

from the IACP

**THANKS SO MUCH FOR BEING A MEMBER!  
 WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU IN 2022**

## IACP Noticeboard

# Season's Greetings From The Regional Committees

## Midlands Regional Committee

The Midlands Regional Committee, would like to thank all members of the midland's region for your continued support during the year 2021. We wish you all peace, good health and happiness for the coming year. Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New year to you all!

*The Midlands  
Regional Committee Members*

\*\*\*\*\*

## North East Regional Committee

We wish all IACP members and staff, along with your loved ones, a happy, healthy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

*North East Regional Committee*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Dublin Regional Committee

Wishing all our members a safe and happy Christmas and a fruitful new year. Thank you all for your support in the challenging year gone by and we look forward to sharing events with you in 2022. We are delighted to work and network on your behalf. To the IACP staff, thanks for your help and support and to our presenters, thanks for your input.

May Peace and love reign

*Dublin Regional Committee*

## South East Regional Committee

Season's Greetings from the South East Regional Committee. Wishing all our members and their loved ones the joys and good cheer of Christmas and may you have peace and prosper in the new year ahead.

*South East Regional Committee*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Western Regional Committee

Dear Western Regional Members, on behalf of the Western Regional Committee, I would like to wish you all a very good Christmas and hope to find you well and meet you in the New Year at our Network Evenings and Workshops. We would like to thank you for all your kind words, well wishes and feedback throughout the year that keep the Committee going strong.

Kind Regards,

*Western Regional Committee*



## Northern Ireland Regional Committee

Wishing all our members in the Northern Ireland Region a joyous, healthy and peace filled Christmas. May the New Year bring fresh hope for you and your loved ones. Our sincere thanks for your support and we look forward to meeting you at our upcoming network evenings and events. A happy Christmas and thank you to our IACP staff and Board for your gracious help to our committee throughout the year.

*Northern Ireland Regional Committee*

\*\*\*\*\*

## West/North West Regional Committee

Wishing all warmest seasonal greetings from the West/North West Regional Committee and we hope that it's a time of mind, soul, and body balancing, while honouring ancient sacred customs and embracing new ones.

*West/North West Regional Committee*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Southern Regional Committee

A very happy holiday to all and a big thank you to the fab committee for all the hard work in 2021.

Olive O'Riordan - Chairperson

*Southern Regional Committee*

# Moving Forward from the trauma of sexual violence



KRTS POWER TO RECOVER

## What is Moving Forward from Sexual Violence?

- Blended online, coach-supported programme
- Assessment and 5 modules over 6 weeks
- Users work independently, supported by weekly telephone calls from a trauma coach
- Designed to aid recovery for victims/ survivors of sexual violence or childhood sexual abuse
- Developed by Dublin Rape Crisis Centre & KRTS International

DRCC is now expanding the programme & seeking new participants. Feedback on **Moving Forward** has been overwhelmingly positive. If you think it might be of interest, please get in touch!

### Learn more:

Call **Dublin Rape Crisis Centre** on 01-6614911, ext 160 or e-mail to [movingforward@rcc.ie](mailto:movingforward@rcc.ie)

National Helpline 1800 778888 | [drcc.ie](http://drcc.ie)

# KEEP MOVING FORWARD

with PCI College



Continuing Professional Development Courses  
December 2021

Family Systems 11th Dec  
Writing Therapy 12th Dec  
CBT for Addiction 19th Dec  
and more...

Upcoming Postgraduate Courses  
October 2022

MSc Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy  
MSc Addiction Counselling & Psychotherapy  
MSC in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (NEW)  
Advanced Diploma Clinical Supervision



PCI College

1991 - 2021

For more info contact [enquiries@pcicollge.ie](mailto:enquiries@pcicollge.ie)  
01 4642268  
[www.pcicollge.ie](http://www.pcicollge.ie)



PCI College is happy to be celebrating its 30th anniversary. We continue to be Ireland's leading provider of third-level education in the fields of Counselling & Psychotherapy.

PCI College was awarded the 'Best Counselling & Psychotherapy Training Provider 2021' by EU Business News - Irish Enterprise Awards 2021.



## IFS Training Group

Internal Family Systems Therapy is a paradigm-shifting, highly effective psychotherapy. This small, online training group will be an intensive and experiential introduction to the approach, offering a grounding in the model for those who would like to begin using IFS in their client work and also get to know their own parts. **Max participants: 6**

**Dates:** Six consecutive Fridays 4.30pm to 6.30pm starting on February 11, 2022. New groups will run at regular intervals.  
**Course fee:** €300

**Facilitator:** Gayle Williamson (MIACP) has written widely on mental health and in recent years has devoted herself entirely to the IFS model after experiencing its transformative effects on her practice.

Bookings, further info and to go on an email list for future trainings/workshops: [enq.ferneytherapy@hotmail.com](mailto:enq.ferneytherapy@hotmail.com) Website: [www.ferneytherapy.ie](http://www.ferneytherapy.ie)



66 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2, Ireland  
Tel: 01 6619231  
[www.gestalt.ie](http://www.gestalt.ie)  
email: [info@gestalt.ie](mailto:info@gestalt.ie)

### DIPLOMA IN SUPERVISION: A Gestalt Relational Model Part 1 – Feb-May '22 Part 2 - starting Jan '23

This Relational Gestalt Model of Supervision has been used in the training of Supervisors since 2005. It is designed to meet IAHIP and IACP requirements and is accredited by IACP.

- This experiential course runs over 2 years:
- February '22 to May '22 (4 x 2-day blocks)
  - January '23 to May '23 (5 x 2-day blocks)

The course is suitable for Counsellors and Psychotherapists, Psychologists and Social Workers with an interest in adding a relational Process model of Supervision to their way of working. A prior knowledge of Gestalt is not a requirement

**Facilitators:** Anne Burke, Eileen Noonan. **Max number of participants 12**

For all details of courses including costs and dates:

[www.gestalt.ie](http://www.gestalt.ie) / 01-6619231

(Director: Claire Counihan)



## Weekend Introductions to Jungian Sandplay Therapy

**Venue:** Edgeworth Court, Longwood, Co Meath

**Dates:** Sat 22nd & Sun 23rd January 2022

Sat 12th & Sun 13th February 2022

**Time:** 10.00 – 5.00

**Cost:** € 250 - CPD 12 Hours

(Strictly limited to four participants)

- The workshops offer an opportunity to explore Key psychological theories of Carl Jung and Dora Kalf
- An introduction to the Sandplay Collection, Symbol and Image and the experience of working with the sand.
- For those interested, pathways to certification in Jungian Sandplay Therapy with the British and Irish Sandplay Society (BISS) and the International Society for Sandplay Therapy (ISST)

**Contact Details: Mob 086 8201267**  
[www.johnjmoftt.com](http://www.johnjmoftt.com) [johnjmoftt67@gmail.com](mailto:johnjmoftt67@gmail.com)



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**Call Susan direct on 086 343 2992**

## 2022 Workshops on Bereavement & Loss

We are hosting a series of introductory workshops which will be delivered online from January – June on a range of topics covering loss and bereavement.

The workshops are targeted at professionals and volunteers who may wish to learn more about loss and bereavement and for those working with people who have experienced a major loss.

- Overview of Loss and Bereavement
- Bereavement in the School Community
- Supporting Bereaved People
- Understanding Grief and Supporting the Suicide Bereaved
- In the Shadow of Covid: How Ireland Grieves Then and Now
- Hidden Losses – Hidden Grief
- Prolonged Grief Disorder/ Complicated Grief
- Children and Loss
- Supporting Adolescents Through Grief and Loss
- Loss and Grief in Later Life
- Viewing Transgender Identities Through an Ambiguous Loss Framework
- Illness and Loss: Living with the Seen and Unseen
- Grieving Well at Work
- Handling Difficult Calls or Interactions – An Introductory Workshop for First-line or Front-desk Staff
- Addiction and Loss
- Supporting Staff Health and Wellbeing Workshop: Building Resilience and Developing Coping Mechanisms for Staff Working in End-of-Life Care
- Mindfulness, Self-Compassion and the Journey of Grief

More dates and topics to be added.

To book go to [www.hospicefoundation.ie](http://www.hospicefoundation.ie)

For further details please contact Iris Murray

email: [iris.murray@hospicefoundation.ie](mailto:iris.murray@hospicefoundation.ie) Tel: 01 679 3188




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Counselling & Psychotherapy**

Are you an accredited psychotherapist?  
Do you have the experience and passion for working with adults and/or adolescents?

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If so, this may be the place for you!

We have rooms to rent in a newly refurbished, discreet, centrally located therapy centre in Portlaoise with off street parking.  
Competitive rates and referrals available.

To find out more please send enquiries via email to [empathycounselling@gmail.com](mailto:empathycounselling@gmail.com) or phone Siobhán on 086-8258519.

Date for your Diary

# IACP AGM & Conference 2022

IACP 2022 AGM & Annual Conference will be held on Friday 14th and Saturday 15th October 2022 in the Galway Bay Hotel, Salthill, Co Galway.

Further information and booking details will be announced in the coming months.



Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

## MEDIA INFORMATION 2022 ADVERTISING IN THE IRISH JOURNAL FOR COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

Advertise in the most widely read professional journal for counsellors and psychotherapists in Ireland



The Irish Journal for Counselling and Psychotherapy is the quarterly publication for the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP)

The IJCP explores a wide-range of topics relating to counselling and psychotherapy through evidence-based articles on clinical theory.

The journal has an outreach of 5,000 readers (including institutions and universities).

Please see:

[www.iacp.ie/IJCP-back-editions](http://www.iacp.ie/IJCP-back-editions)  
for examples of the journal

# ADVERTISING IN THE IRISH JOURNAL FOR COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

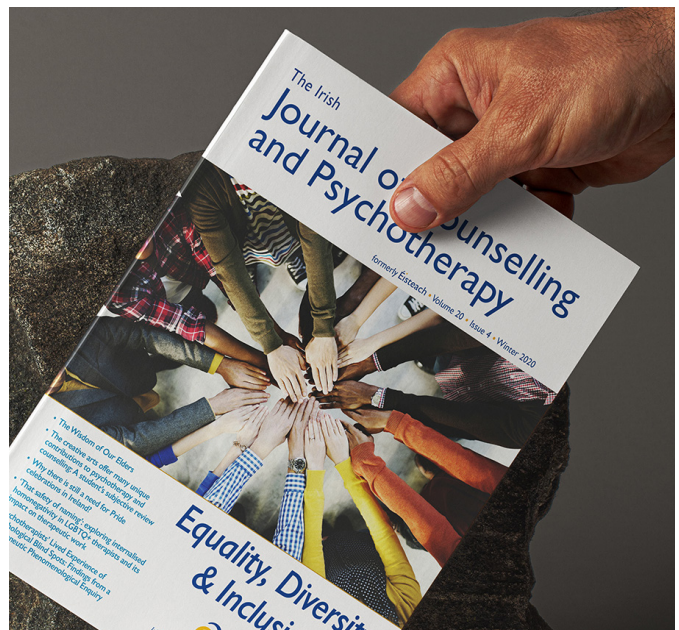
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<b>Please note: we do not charge VAT on our adverts</b>	

PUBLICATION DATES
Spring - 1st March
Summer - 1st June
Autumn - 1st September
Winter - 1st December

AD DEADLINES	
BOOKING	ARTWORK
1st February	5th February
1st May	5th May
1st August	5th August
1st November	5th November

DIMENSIONS FOR ARTWORK
All ads should be supplied at the correct dimensions as re-scaling can cause distortion or reduction in quality.
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For ad bookings and back issues please see:  
[www.iacp.ie/IJCP-back-editions](http://www.iacp.ie/IJCP-back-editions)





# Exclusive Offer for IACP Members

We are delighted to be able to inform all members of IACP of a special rate to prepare and file your income tax return.

Expert Services, based in Dublin but offering a nationwide, remote service, can look after everything for you.

Whether this is your first time having to file tax returns or you want to get a better deal on the service that you are currently getting, Expert Services can help you with everything.

For only **€200** plus VAT, we can offer you the following:

- ◆ Registration with Revenue / Change of Current Accountant
- ◆ Preparation of your Counselling Income and Expenditure account
- ◆ Advice on any credits or expenses that will reduce your final tax liability
- ◆ Preparation of your F11 Income Tax Return
- ◆ Filing of your F11 form with Revenue
- ◆ Liaise with Revenue in relation to any issues or queries in relation to your return
- ◆ Organise payment or refund of final tax amount
- ◆ Provision of a tax clearance certificate

Contact Jerry today for more information by emailing him at [jerry@expertservices.ie](mailto:jerry@expertservices.ie)  
Please ask about other accounting services that we offer.



## Expert Services

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City Junction Business Park,

Malahide Road, Dublin 17.

01 539 2870

[info@expertservices.ie](mailto:info@expertservices.ie)

The appearance of an advertisement in this publication does not necessarily indicate approval by the IACP for the product or service advertised.

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