



Journal and Newsletter No. 16

WINTER 1992

Editorial: This edition concentrates on the theme of Christian counselling & professional mental health support. Hopefully the underlying message coming through all the articles here is that those who suffer from mental illness increasingly feel the need for deeper friendship and a sense of presence (see the "*enchanted place*" of John Foskett's chaplaincy on pages 4 & 5).

APCMI is committed to helping the Christian churches to realise their responsibility and ability in meeting these pastoral needs. Our contributors speak out on behalf of all those who are already involved in this ministry.

Jeremy Boutwood

News from the Community. . . .

...and we are all part of the whole:-

It was, in a sense, consoling to hear at their recent AGM that CCHH (Churches Council for Health and Healing) had recovered from similar circumstances to those that still overshadow our Association, i.e. the drying up of major funding with a consequent need to dispense with paid staff. After over eighteen months of being led by a 'non-stipendiary' Director, CCHH have now been awarded specific funding for a three-year post.

Other parallels between the two organisations were highlighted by the annual lecture which was this year concerned with distortions often conveyed in attempts to communicate what Christian healing is about (copies of the text are available from CCHH).

Working in partnership is an important factor. CCHH held a one-day seminar for members of the medical profession to explore jointly the role of Christians in healing. A major concern was that the sufferers' needs would fall between medical and spiritual practitioners.

This subject was also raised at a half-day conference organised jointly by the National Schizophrenia Fellowship and CONCERN comparing *community care* in USA and UK. The issue of who should pay - local or health authorities seems to be focal, and to have important consequences for the quality of care provided to the individual.

. . . . and the Association

ANGLIA REGION (at Peterborough) A well-attended evening conference on 'Community Care 1993 - the Churches' response' has been held with our local patron and bishop, Stephen Sykes, as one of the speakers. Austin and Jane Lindon are continuing to extend the work of APCMI in the region following the pattern they so successfully established while in London.

BRENTWOOD/CHELMSFORD DIOCESE The project worker has now been appointed - in fact there are two people working part-time: Sister Launa targeting the five East London boroughs, and Rosemary looking towards Essex including Chelmsford. We wish them well in this joint project. Brentwood Roman Catholic Diocese are also considering appointing a Community Care advisor - an Anglican - who we hope will be able to give support.

BOW AND POPLAR CHURCHES BE-FRIENDING SCHEME APCMI has been able to support this scheme, which Dennis Murray helped to set up, by reallocating £20,000 over three years provided by the Mental Health Foundation. This money will complement a Church Urban Fund grant and allow the Scheme to employ a part-time worker to both manage and coordinate volunteer befrienders, and raise awareness of mental health issues in churches in the neighbourhoods.

Other news in 'Round the Country' on Page 8, and further reports from branches on Pages 2 & 7.

N.B. APCMI'S NEW POSTAL ADDRESS:-

**c/o HOLY CROSS CENTRE TRUST, THE CRYPT, HOLY CROSS CHURCH,
CROMER STREET, LONDON WC1H 8JU**

'ADIOS' from our remaining paid employee;

250 words I have been given! there was far more I would have wanted to write about my two years as Development Officer based at YORK.

Doing something for others can be difficult! I was finding that doing it in the way that they needed and at the time of their need could be more than a little daunting. Even more difficult to recognise that we have anything to give - that simply being what we ARE can be to other people a very precious gift.

As a result of 'CARE in the COMMUNITY' many have left hospital and are living within our local communities. Their needs, and those of the people who care for them, may well be relegated to even lonelier places.

Do we know they are there? Are we aware of our own potential to help?

ARE YOU ?

In my work for the Association I have been privileged to witness the dedication, generosity and depth of compassion of 'ordinary' people.

To all whose gifts of time, support; patience, friendship, hospitality and transport (to list but a few) have ministered to me during the last two years, many thanks.

Christine KELSEY; Pocklington near YORK.

REPORTS from BRANCHES: -

from CROYDON;

During the last few months we have been happily associated with a third Drop-in called "The Bridge" which opens in Upper Norwood on Sunday afternoons following interest shown at last year's APCMI training course. We are delighted to find volunteers, and are grateful to MIND and the Borough voluntary services group organised by Dennis Murray,

Our next course started in October and was oversubscribed. This we feel is a reflection of the raising of awareness of Mental Health issues throughout the Borough. Much credit is due to the excellent caring and imaginative work done by our Chaplain, Andrew Wilson. We have also benefited enormously from developing links with statutory and voluntary services concerned with Mental Health throughout the Borough.

May we pay tribute to Geoff WALKER on his retirement from APCMI activities. It was he who developed our first Drop-in centre and contributed enormously to its success. His hard working and dedicated chairing of the Branch will be missed. In his quiet way Geoff has been a good friend to all who have met him.

Pam FREEMAN; branch secretary.

and from DULWICH and FOREST HILL;

The branch continues to flourish. We have a regular core of members to the Tuesday evening Drop-in with an average attendance of 15. Others come to us from time to time with various problems. We respond as best we can and where appropriate refer them to other groups.

Social events have included two barbecues in the garden and a weekend at Hengrave Hall Ecumenical Centre in Suffolk. It was good to get to know each other better and spend time away from the depressing environment in which many spend their lives.

Once again the London Musical Company supported us with a gala evening. It raised £500 for our funds; gave us a bit of publicity and a further opportunity to meet. We are very thankful for their continued support.

We have some very devoted volunteers, but needs are great, and more would be welcome! Several of the statutory services have contacted us in the hope we could assist. But for the time being, with our limited resources, it is better that we concentrate on what we are doing well!

Evelyn SUMPTION; branch chair.

STOP PRESS: The SOUTH LONDON branches are planning a "SUPPORT" day on Saturday 8th MAY 1993. Details from branches.

The Four Friends.

One of the loveliest stories from the Gospels which tells of the restoration to newness of life is that of the healing of the paralysed man (Mark 2:1-12).

In all our sharing of this story it has often struck me that a group of central characters is overlooked, namely the four friends who carry the paralysed man. They are the ones who bring the man to the source of healing power that he needs. They are the ones who facilitate his renewal, his recreation, his discovery of abilities beyond his wildest dreams.

It seems to me that Christian Counselling gives us the opportunity to fulfil the function of the four friends. We can say four things about them that offer food for thought about the practice of counselling.

[1] They knew **what sort of healing was appropriate** for the paralysed man and where to find it. One of the basic essentials in any counselling is to know what sort of help is appropriate and where to send people to get it. If we can offer the help ourselves, wonderful!

However there is an enormous temptation to take every situation on board ourselves. One of the bravest and indeed most helpful things we can say to anyone in dire need is:- "I cannot help you with this one, but I know someone who can."

[2] They were **totally committed to the healing process** and determined that the paralysed man should find the newness of life that he longed for—nothing was going to stop them, least of all a crowd and roof!

It is a necessary prerequisite or counselling that the people we are dealing with are totally committed to the process. If that commitment is not present, we should not be surprised when the counselling does not bear fruit: determination and the ability to face the unknown with courage must be to the fore!

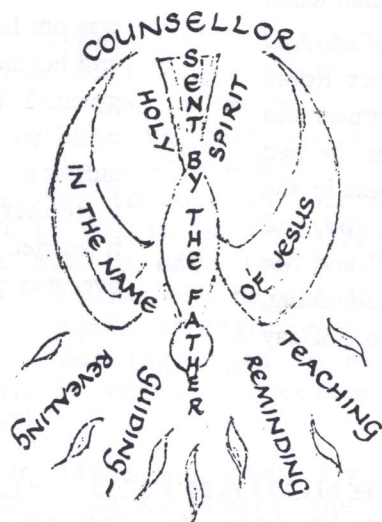
Neither should there be any question about our own commitment to the individual; in the counselling session we exist for them and for them alone.

[3] They, **all four of them, worked together**; they could not have accomplished their task if one had dropped out. Co-operation was the name of the game. In Christian Counselling it is always necessary for us to work in co-operation with professionals from all sorts of disciplines. What is at the heart of our co-operation is the renewal

of the individual. If one tries to go it alone, or tries to drop out of the process, the task cannot be accomplished. The paralysed man will never reach his goal.

[4] They had an **over-riding compassion** for the one who was paralysed. Above all else they wanted him to find newness of life. Surely such compassion is the sole motivation for our offering Christian Counselling? We recognise that so many who

come to us are 'paralysed', unable to respond meaningfully to situations, unable to enter into joyful relationships, unable to realise their creativity. The healing for the paralysed man in the story came with the words "your sins are forgiven". Just so, in Christian Counselling, we share the deep privilege of bathing with those who are 'paralysed' in the forgiving stream, freeing them from the bonds of the past and releasing within them a new response/ability, a new relatedness to others and a deep well of creativity.



In Christian Counselling we walk the path of the four friends, carrying those who need to be carried to the source of healing power, that the 'blind' may see, the 'deaf' hear and the 'paralysed' leap and run for joy.



"Where are we going?" said Pooh, hurrying after him, and wondering whether it was to be an Explore or a What-shall-I-do-about-you-know-what.

"Nowhere," said Christopher Robin.

So they began going there, and after they had walked a little way Christopher Robin said:

"What do you like doing best in the world, Pooh?"

"Well," said Pooh, "what I like best —" and then he had to stop and think. Because although Eating Honey *was* a very good thing to do, there was a moment just before you began to eat it which was better than when you were, but he didn't know what it was called. And then he thought that being with Christopher Robin was a very good thing to do, and having Piglet near was a very friendly thing to have; and so, when he had thought it all out, he said, "What I like best in the whole world is Me and Piglet going to see You, and You saying 'What about a little something?' and Me saying, 'Well, I shouldn't mind a little something, should you, Piglet,' and it being a hummy sort of day outside, and birds singing."

"I like that too," said Christopher Robin, "but what I like *doing* best is Nothing."

"How do you do Nothing?" asked Pooh, after he had wondered for a long time.

"Well, it's when people call out at you just as you're going off to do it, 'What are you going to do, Christopher Robin?' and you say 'Oh, nothing,' and then you go and do it."

"Oh, I see," said Pooh.

"This is a nothing sort of thing that we're doing now."

"Oh, I see," said Pooh again.

"It means just going along, listening to all the things you can't hear, and not bothering."

"Oh!" said Pooh.

They walked on, thinking of This and That, and by-and-by they came to an enchanted place . . .

. . . Being enchanted, its floor was not like the floor of the Forest, gorse and bracken and heather, but close-set grass, quiet and smooth and green. It was the only place in the Forest where you could sit down carelessly, without getting up again almost at once and looking for somewhere else. Sitting there they could see the whole world spread out until it reached the sky, and whatever there was all the world over was with them in Galleons Lap.

AN ENCHANTED PLACE.

"Will people come to say that of here?"

This was the question I posed at the dedication of a new chaplaincy centre in a large psychiatric hospital. I followed by stating that I hoped so and continued:— It's not going to be like Galleons Lap; but because it will be a place where Poohs and their best friends Piglets can meet and have Christopher Robins say:— "What about a little something?" One where days are mostly the hummy sort; where people can sit down and not immediately have to stand up and look for somewhere else to sit. Where whatever is in the whole world that matters to people can have a place at least in the hearts and minds of those who sit there. And most of all, in our aggressively striving society, be a place where people can do nothing. In so far as it provides something of these things the centre will be offering a very scarce commodity in our society. Sanctuary and Asylum are not easy to come by these days. And places like this chapel and this hospital, which did provide them are being discarded. Of course we know that is a pity, that there is a lot of asylum left in these old Victorian buildings, and sanctuary in great churches, and a lot of knowledge about how to create both amongst those of us who inhabit them.

But we have to travel lighter now, to take the gift which these places have treasured and like the ark of old (Joshua 6:12) carry it to new shrines, we disciples need upper rooms (Mark 14:15) in which to meet and eat, and be two or three gathered together in his name. This new centre is to be just such a place, one of St. John's many rooms (14:2) available to the pilgrim of eternal life.

As well as being an enchanted place it's going to be a symbol of enchantment as well. To the churches and to us christians it is nudging us forward away from our tired clerical denominational ecclesiasticism. Beckoning us on to a unity and diversity which we in our health and sanity continually resist. Here in this hospital and in places like it all over the country and the world, the needs and sufferings and yearnings of GOD's people make a mockery of our different orders and sacraments, and even our different faiths. Here a Moslem will probably receive communion and a christian chant a Buddhist mantra, a Jew say the rosary; and God, of course will be pleased that his people are different and at one. This centre will help take us where synods and councils fear to tread-and it will be Holy ground.

To those around in the hospital, but also in Tooting and Wandsworth-the borough it serves-, this centre is a symbol in another way. It is a kind of transitional state between hospital and community showing the one to the other. Here people from out there can meet with people from in here. It's strange isn't it that we imagine that community is out there, and that those leaving institutions are going out to it. In fact we know that there is not much of it out there. And that what there is will need a lot of help from us if it is to survive and grow.

It's we, who are going to have to bring the ENCHANTMENT to the hostels, group homes, day centres, and community nursing services-the new shrines and resting places out there. Let us own that it is up to us to take community to the community, to those who wander lost in the jungles and deserts of South West London, at the mercy of the wild animals of materialism and consumerism. The chaplaincy centre is on just the kind of domestic scale that helps make that a possibility, it's a model that hopefully planners in church and state will take notice of and develop elsewhere.

This talk was originally given on All Saints day. Enchanted places need enchanted people-people like Pooh and Piglet and their friend Christopher Robin. Tooting and Wandsworth have as much need of enchanted and saintly people as anywhere. And saints, to be saints, need places to put down their sins and pick up their halos. We who live and suffer and work in places like this, know a bit about that. How to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling knowing that GOD is within us. (Philippians 2:12-13). We saints, who masquerade as sinners, know how to make the most of places where Poohs and Piglets can meet Christopher Robins and have a little something: where people can sit down and not get up again straight away. And most of all where they can do nothing, and in doing nothing begin to allow their sanity to emerge out of their sin, and begin to enjoy and celebrate that enchantment which some call the Kingdom of GOD.

At important moments in our lives we often sign our names to signify our commitment to what ever is being agreed. At the dedication those attending were invited to put their names to the enterprise of the new chapel. There was a cloth, it could be for an altar or just to spread out on the ground for tea-with honey of course. By signing their names somewhere on the cloth, I hoped it would be an encouragement when the going gets difficult-

just as the memory of Galleons Lap was to Pooh and Christopher Robin.

John FOSKETT-chaplain at the Maudsley; South London.

Wherever they go, and
whatever happens to them on the way,
in that enchanted place
on the top of the Forest
a little boy and his bear
will always be playing.

with thanks to A. A. Milne
for extracts from
"The House at Pooh Corner"
Methuen pg 168-176.



"The Great Divide or the Way of WHOLENESS?"

I sat uncomfortably between Sue, the Mental Health Manager, and Jill the Clinical psychologist. "I'm not really sure if you're offering psychotherapeutic help or religious help," said Jill, "somehow the two don't quite meet."

Jill was expressing a dilemma which many professionals in the mental health field have faced since my appointment in April as the Community Mental Health Chaplain. There have been some in the churches also who have wondered how I can practise as a psychotherapist and be a Christian - for them the two just don't mix! I, too, have had to face this on a very practical level as I've come to grips with a brand new job and worked to establish myself in this world of psychiatrists and social workers, CPNs and OTs.

My own resolution to this problem started about eight years ago when I started training as a counsellor. I learnt about human motivation, about transference and projection and a whole mass of other information which confronted much of my understanding of God and questioned a great deal of my religious experience. This process continued when I started training as a Transactional Analyst psychotherapist and I had to have therapy as part of that training. My internal conflict increased. Was it true that life and the world could be explained away as a consequence of genetic coding and the quality of our upbringing? In one sense the answer could well be, "Yes!".

As I faced this possibility I realised that I was making a very big assumption about the nature and action of God in the world. There was only a conflict if I saw the growth in the psychological understanding of people as in some way the diminishing or denying of God. Perhaps, instead I could view this new knowledge as part of the on-going gift of the creative Lord, that He was working through this knowledge in the same way as He was in the further developments in physical medicine. This may all seem very obvious but to me it was a big step. So when in TA (Transactional Analysis) we talk of "holding" internally our client then in christianity we speak of "holding" someone before God (intercessory prayer), when in counselling we see the damaging effects of an individual's early life being re-enacted with their children, in christianity we talk of the "sins of the father being visited on their children and their children's children".

As I developed emotionally, mentally and spiritually, I brought together the "bits" and integrated them. There was no "great divide" between theology and psychiatry and psychotherapy and that if the purpose of all health professionals was to facilitate wholeness then we too must see the spiritual healing as integrated in with physical, mental and emotional healing - it was all part of the same process. My task, therefore, as a Chaplain and as a psychotherapist is one and the same.

Most of the professionals I come across would accept that there is a spiritual dimension to human beings, but are hard pressed to say what that dimension is or how it would be expressed. They see it easily in the overtly religious and these are the people that are handed over (with considerable relief!) to the Chaplain. The reality is that the spiritual dimension is ever present and is inextricably wrapped up with all that makes the individual a person.

So, when a Community Psychiatric Nurse rings me up and asks me to go and see Mrs Bloggs with a problem about God or religion, I will first discuss with him or her how they might deal with this problem as part of the client's overall care. This may well mean helping the professional to understand their own spirituality and how this affects their perception of the client. Only occasionally do I get involved directly with the client and always it is alongside the professional already involved. My role is slightly different, although similar, with the church people who are involved with someone with a mental health problem. It is here that I act in some senses as a health care professional by giving information and advice about mental illness and acting as a supervisor in the counselling sense.

Whatever role I take it is both as priest and therapist.

Robin WALFORD; Community Health Chaplain ; LEEDS.

from HASTINGS and ST, LEONARDS;

It is now a year since our Branch in a corner of SUSSEX launched its BEFRIENDING Scheme. This is a depressed area, with much unemployment and poverty. It also has a great number of mentally ill people wandering about the town having been put into Bed & Breakfast accommodation.

Their need for support to get integrated back into society seemed to our committee to be great. Having studied other befriending schemes, thrashed out our own constitution; raised funds; constructed a training course and obtained the support of both Statutory and Independent sectors working in this area; we started. Volunteers were recruited by means of articles in local newspapers, posters and by handing out leaflets at public events. We have now completed our third training course and have 18 persons befriending. Selection and matching is made by our co-ordinating committee who also provide follow up support by phone and when needed by linking them to professional advice.

Local social and psychiatric services provide referral of those to be befriended. They are also expected to maintain contact with their clients and not use our service as a dumping ground. We consider anyone with problems of Mental Ill health between the ages of 18 and 64 but exclude those with a history of violence; misuse of alcohol or drugs.

Our volunteers are ordinary people seeking to form as far as possible a relationship of friendship. They are expected to make a commitment-for a year in the first instance- for roughly two hours a week of 'being with' their friend. Our first group, now just completing a year, have found it a rewarding experience and we have every confidence that they will continue so to meet part of the great needs of those often very isolated.

Bararba & Ian STUART; branch secretary & Treasurer.

VIEWPOINT.

I am sure most members of the association are aware of the conditions of poverty in which so many of those discharged from Mental Hospitals into the community live. It is all very well talking about community care, but it is impossible to be part of the community if you have no money. Successive changes to D.S.S. regulations-e.g. the loss of special needs payments-have made the lot of people with Mental Health problems in the community worse. It needs considerable skill to make ends meet on the pittance they receive. They find dealing with officials, who do not understand their problems, frightening and frustrating.

Belonging to an International church organisation-the Pilgrims of St. Francis-I go regularly abroad. This gives me the opportunity to find out what other countries do. Our Social Security benefits are some of the lowest in Western Europe. When other countries move patients from hospital into the community things are better. For example in Germany I was told that all rent, rates and heating, up to a reasonable amount are paid for, plus a living allowance which is roughly the same as here. But one big difference is that they are helped and encouraged to find work that recognises that sufferers cannot achieve the same standard as the fit. In addition to their social security they can work up to 100 hours a month for the equivalent of £1.50 an hour.

In Belgium, at Gheel, a system of care in 'foster homes' has been in existence for over 600 years! Again there is great emphasis on providing appropriate work/occupation and a social programme. I was surprised to learn that their personal spending allowance is about £60 a week. It stands to reason that if you live with a family you need money in your pocket to share in the family's activities and those of the community.

One of the great losses of the closing of the old Asylums is the sheltered workshops; similar facilities seem few and far between in the community.

It is demeaning to have to rely on charity for the little extras and thus not have the ability to choose. A life on the present rate of social security is NOT LIVING in the community-it is only existing! Although APCMI seeks to improve the lot of those discharged and to increase acceptance of them by the community. Part of this should involve speaking out on their behalf because we by ourselves can never hope to provide for these needs-nor should we-. We should aim to provide something different -that acknowledges them as people for whom GOD has a special care- whilst at the same time trying to influence the community, by our example, to accept and provide for them.

Evelyn SUMPTION: (Dulwich & Forest Hill Branch)

ROUND THE COUNTRY

The two-year project for Northern development - funded by SANE - ended in October. Regretably we have not been able to obtain continuation of funding. Consequently Christine Kelsey's paid employment has had to be ended. Christine has provided a full report indicating ways forward (copies available from Adrian). Other commitments permitting, Christine is hoping to capitalise on her efforts over the past two years. A preliminary group is meeting as we go to press. Our thanks to Christine and best wishes for the future.

The YORK branch holds its third AGM on 24th November. Each month of this year they have organised successful fund-raising and social events, ranging from Karaoke to barbecues in the Rectory garden to a week's holiday in the Dales. Moving South to the Essex area both FOREST and HAVERING are looking forward to the

development workers mentioned on Page 1.

Our congratulations to Muriel Healy who will be their supervisor and Theresa Pride who leads the management committee. Both have played a significant part in getting this project established and in supporting the two branches.

Sadly CHELMSFORD group has had to disband but we hope that the contacts they have made over the past two years will bear fruit for Rosemary.

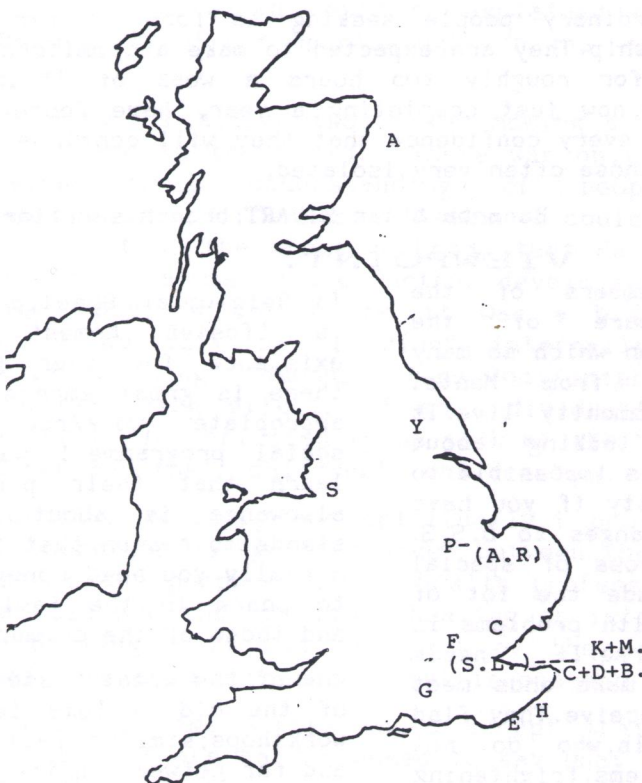
On the South coast EASTBOURNE continues to maintain its befriending scheme ably administered by Frances Rourke. HASTINGS have reported in more detail (see Page 7). GUILDFORD ran a study day with the Director of ACORN. This linked in with their development of a Christian Fellowship linked to a local day centre. In London the two eldest branches - DULWICH and CROYDON - report on Page 2. The new branches at BEXLEY and MERTON

have both got befrienders linked with befriendees following their well attended training courses. The latter, together with KINGSTON & ESHER are attempting to establish a regional base in South London. The arrangements for the Summer Study Day and AGM at KINGSTON auger well.

North of the River, Julian Hopwood has led the Holy Cross Centre through its initial year. The needs are great in this inner city area of King's Cross, and the project is expanding to meet some of them.

One need of the Association has been for an 'official' address - this the Holy Cross Centre Trust provides now that we have had to give up the City Road office. This and the lack of paid officials give a changed nature to the Association with an inevitable sense of fragility. This, however, could point us to a greater trust and hope in the power of the Gospel.

Over the past six months Adrian Tate has single-handedly provided the administrative back-up to the changed and therefore relatively inexperienced National Committee in trying to discover the right way forward. This is in addition to trying to keep the Association's national profile visible. For this we owe him a great debt of gratitude.



A topic that has arisen in a number of contexts is the objection to our name 'Association for the Pastoral Care of the Mentally Ill'. Some people think the term 'mental illness' tends to detract from the reality of the whole person, or that the whole name implies a paternalistic pastoral attitude. On the other hand, 'mental illness' reminds us that we are concerned with people experiencing serious and debilitating conditions, and not the "worried well".

In the next issue we would welcome any contributions on the theme:-

"WHAT IS THERE IN A LABEL?"