

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2006

The Annual General Meeting of APCMH

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The sad loss of Margaret Norris came as a shock to us all and seemed to overshadow all other events. Although few of us really knew her, she had been a devoted and committed member who took the time to listen and to discern how she might best help all those with whom she came into contact via the message taking service. We shall be dedicating the proposed APCMH book of poetry to Margaret.

John and Leona Rawson have kindly offered to take up the challenge of composing the booklet and they welcome contributions of poems new or previously published for inclusion in this venture. They also continue to need material for the newsletter, particularly from local branches, so we might adequately fulfil our role as National committee in a more integrated manner. We are ever grateful to John and Leona for all their hard work. Together they produce a much-valued publication of high quality. Pam Freeman reports that relations with the new printing company are healthy and we are pleased with their whole approach.

Thanks also to our Webmaster, Lionel Perkin. Our web site continues to flourish and favourable comments have recently been received. Membership subscription and Gift Aid forms are now available on line to download, which, after completion can then be sent as an email 'reply' or, of course, posted.

A more harmonious interplay of committee members' roles seems to have evolved of late and we continue to dedicate our efforts to the needs of younger people. Amanda Headley-White is currently producing a resource sheet, soon to be available for young people, and we are increasing our "Mind In Croydon" video resources as well as other videos which will cover many aspects of mental health and pastoral care, these are available for loan upon request via Sister Theresa Pountney who has agreed to co-ordinate the process.

As a National Committee, we continue to meet, mainly on a Sunday, in central London four times a year, and continue to review our role as the National branch. We would especially encourage new members to join us. We are keen to forge links with local APCMH branches and we would request that they do likewise so that a bi-directional relationship can better serve the organisation as a whole. We newly welcome Dave Allen as co-opted member.

Please continue to pray for the well being of the organisation.

Suzanne Heneghan

The Association for Pastoral Care in Mental Health..... "Being Alongside"

National Office : C/o St Marylebone Parish Church, Marylebone Road, London NW1 5LT

We celebrate 20 years of the APCMH this year and the National Committee would like to pay tribute to all who are 'Being Alongside' those with mental health problems. We have many groups affiliated to the Association, which are reaching out to those people in their communities who need friendship and support.

During the year several events happened which have had an impact on APCMH nationally. The Guild of Health of which I am chair, has moved to St Marylebone Pastoral and Counselling Centre, and conferences on mental health issues have been taking place there.

Continued

Hastings branch, associated with APCMH, have had to close after nearly 20 years sterling work in their area. Fortunately, under the umbrella of 'Mind' and the local Primary Care Trust, the excellent work that Claire Jouitt and her team set in motion and carried out so caringly is continuing.

Croydon's APCMH organisation is now independent of the National Association and its work in the community is being seen as an exemplary role model for other areas of the country.

As we give thanks for the last 20 years and look forward to the next 20, the National Committee is seeking offers of assistance from those people who would like to see mental health care existing as a bigger picture in this country and who would help to make suggestions and decisions regarding the future broad direction the organisation should be taking. If you are interested, or know somebody who is, please contact us at the Marylebone address.

God's blessings to you all.

Pam Freeman.

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*At the AGM, the main workshop was devoted to 'Listening'. Pat Dale, from Acorn Christian Healing Foundation, led a most interesting seminar. We hope the following notes may be of interest to our readers.*

## **Why is Listening Important ?**

### **1. Good listening is MINISTRY**

"The first service one owes to others in fellowship consists in listening to them. Just as love of God begins with listening to His Word, so the beginning of love for the brethren, sisters and children is learning to listen to them." **Dietrich Bonhoeffer.**

### **2. Good listening is HOSPITALITY**

"Listening is the highest form of hospitality... Hospitality is not to change people but to offer them space where change can take place...." **Henri Nouwen**

### **3. Good listening is HEALING**

"The gift of being a good listener, a gift which requires constant practice, is perhaps the most healing gift anyone can possess, for it allows the other to be, enfolds them in a safe place, does not judge or advise them, accepts them as they are without desiring to change them, and communicates support at a level deeper than words." **Gerard Hughes, SJ Walk to Jerusalem.**

### **4. Good listening is MANY LAYERED**

"Good listening is many layered...listen to the other person, not only to what he is saying, but to what he is." Anon: Rule for a New Brother, **Taize Community**

#### **Listen to : words**

language  
use of voice  
what is not said  
silences  
emotions  
facial expression  
body  
life style (eg loner, person  
changes jobs frequently)

#### **Listen with : ears**

eyes – not wandering  
mind – seeking to understand  
body – relaxed and attentive  
heart – caring about the person  
intuition,  
feelings  
listen to God for the person



# THE ASSOCIATION FOR PASTORAL CARE IN MENTAL HEALTH

## The Report of the Directors and Trustees for the Year ended 30 September 2005

The directors, who are the trustees of the charity, present their report and financial statements for the year ended 30th September 2005.

The company is a charity and exists to promote the relief of persons suffering from the problems of mental illness and their families by the provision of pastoral counselling and care, appropriate to their individual needs. The aim is to enable these people so to develop their spiritual, physical and mental capacities that they may realise their full potential as individuals and participating members of society and so that their conditions of life may be improved. This is achieved (a) Through the activities of local branches such as drop-in facilities and befriending schemes (b) By encouraging others to provide similar activities and appropriate pastoral care and (c) Through its web site and by the publication of a national newsletter and resource information. Volunteers, both locally and nationally, carry out all the work of the Association.

There are 4 active local groups that operate as branches of the Association. They are; **Forrest Hill**, **Haslemere** and **Marylebone**, whose branches run drop-ins, social clubs, and arranged outings; and **Merton** branch, whose main activity is a volunteer befriending scheme, summer and winter social events are held at this branch.

Until May 2005 The Guildford branch concentrated on raising awareness of mental health and associated pastoral care issues principally amongst faith communities. The branch organised seminars and conferences to achieve their ends. They decided to cease these activities and close the branch, because of the increase in similar activity by other organisations in the locality.

The directors continue to see that an important role of the national committee is to encouraging the development and continuation of local initiatives for the support of those with mental health difficulties and their carers. An emphasis is placed on seeing individuals for themselves rather than in terms of their illness and also on the importance of "Being Alongside".

During the year, the Association continued to receive donations through the Young Friends who had adopted the Association as its charity in 2003. We have worked closely with them, particularly through the strengthening of the national committee by the appointment of Amanda Headley-White, a Young Friend, and Stephan Ball. As a result the Association's work has focused more on younger people. In particular the Association sponsored a conference on Young People and Mental Health, giving the opportunity to promote and support a project whose aims were identical to the main objective of the Association and which was concerned with the welfare of younger people.

The Association's web site is visited by many more people over a much wider area than would be possible by traditional means. The national committee now sees this as a vital part of its awareness-raising role. The web site has been improved and is run by Lionel Perkin, the web-master, with additional expertise provided by another "Young Friend". The Association intends to continue to improve the web site and to reach an increasing number of people through it.

A newsletter is now published bi-monthly and sent to a readership of over 400. It is also made available on the web site.

It is proposed to publish a book of poetry written by or for people affected by mental ill health.

The Association will also continue to organise suitable conferences and seminars and to collate and make available to others relevant resource material and action sheets.

Continued .....



The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee

Directors and Trustees

Mr Stephan Ball (appointed 30<sup>th</sup> April 2005)

Mr Solomon Brown

Mrs Pam Freeman

Ms Amanda Headley-White

Ms Suzanne Heneghan

Sister Theresa Pountney MBE

Mr John Vallat

Treasurer

Miss Flora Njoku

Secretary

Mr John Vallat

Co-opted Management Committee

Mr Stephan Ball (until 30<sup>th</sup> April 2005)

Mr Dave Allen (from 12<sup>th</sup> February 2006)

Miss Dianne Klewin (from 30<sup>th</sup> April 2005)

APCMH Contact Line

01483 538936

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"An exploration of Clinical and Counselling Psychologists' perceptions and experiences of combining Spirituality and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy".

My name is Iliana Stamogiannou and I am currently in the second year of the Practitioner Doctorate in Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy at the University of Surrey. As part of my course I am exploring how Clinical and Counselling Psychologists' see the integration of Spirituality and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and what is their experience of it. I am interested in interviewing Clinical and Counselling Psychologists who are working on a one to one basis in private practice, who have been qualified for at least two years, and who have been using Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) as their only or primary model of therapy. They do not need to have any religious or spiritual affiliation. If you feel that you fit the criteria for taking part in my study I would like to invite you to think about participating in it. If you do not fit my criteria but you know of someone who does and who might be interested in taking part, I would be extremely grateful if you could pass this information to them.

There is a lot of interest in the integration of spirituality and therapy; however, no previous studies have been carried out to explore Clinical and Counselling Psychologists' views and experiences of combining spirituality and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. The aim of this project is to investigate what Clinical and Counselling Psychologists think about the possibility of integrating Cognitive Behavioural therapy and spirituality, the ways in which that might happen, the difficulties that might occur and, if relevant, practitioners' experiences of responding to spiritual issues and/or integrating them within a CBT framework. You will also be asked some questions about your views of spirituality. Finding out psychologists' perceptions and experiences of integrating spirituality and CBT will hopefully spark the debate in this area and will explore whether and on what terms such integration is possible.

If you agree to participate you will be asked to take part in a one to one interview with me which will take about one hour and which will be carried out at a time and place that is suitable for you. Each interview will be audio taped and then transcribed by me. All information, which is collected during the course of the research, will be kept strictly confidential. Any information about you will have your name removed or altered so that you cannot be recognised from it. All data will be treated in accordance with the 1998 Data Protection Act. The transcript, consent form and tape will be kept in a safe place and the tape will be erased after the doctorate has been submitted.

If, at any stage you decide that you do not want to carry on with the study you may withdraw without giving an explanation. The data collected from the interviews will be written up and submitted for my Doctoral course and also possibly for publication. We can arrange for you to receive a copy of the research after it has been submitted. If you would like to find out more information about this study or would like to participate in it please contact me via this address: School of Human Sciences, Department of Psychology, University of Surrey, Guildford GU2 7XH or via e-mail psm1is@surrey.ac.uk

Iliana Stamogiannou ; Counselling psychologist in training

The Importance of Being Alongside

I received flowers for my birthday last year – flowers that turned out to mean so much to me. Why? You might ask – because they arrived just when I put a knife to my skin and on my pc screen I had looked up 'the best way to commit suicide'. Such a lovely thought, and at exactly the right moment – I felt tears to my eyes. This 'unconditional gift' meant someone had thought of me.

No longer did I have to face my pain alone, and so I told Pam and Barry just what those flowers meant to me! Pam and Barry had been coming to my toddler group with their granddaughter Holly. She'd been to my son's Christening and on reflection had been there all along!

Pam leant me a video about self-harm and I began confiding in her about my life and my feelings, including the voices! I'd hear. She encouraged me to seek help from my GP, once she wrote to me, "I feel somewhat incapable in many ways". No, this time I'm going to get better permanently, I said, too long now I have felt like dieing. Nothing the GP can do for me, no medication can heal my emotional pain – as I had discovered previously.

Gradually it came to light that she volunteered for two charities, one of them being the APCMH, I had known Pam over a year and she had never mentioned this, thinking back she'd never really talked about herself; she was more interested in listening to others.

Pam was there for me when I called her from Beachy Head; she's been there for me when I've needed to talk, she's been there for me to read my desperate letters, and she's sent me kind notes and cards. Pam was the only one to send me a card the day I moved into my new home! She has always taken me seriously and never judged me.

The many little things Pam has done for me has helped me to grow as a person, view myself and others with new perspectives and develop spiritually. As I underwent a 'personal metamorphosis', Pam was alongside me the whole time.

I am certain things in life happen for a reason – whether positive or negative, but the negatives are much easier to bear when we are alongside each other 'unconditionally'.

Thank you Pam Freeman.

Mandy Lelliott

The Meaning of Life

Remember, life is not about becoming famous, or writing many books. Life is about relationships, human relationships. The purpose of living is to learn to love one another, because so often we just pretend to care. We live in a society where human values are deteriorating. Most people make trivial things important, and important things trivial. They are trying to accumulate more things. It's easy, the more you get the more you want, and remain impoverished as a result. But there are individuals, not necessarily religious, who put people first.

Howard Isenberg

Dear Editor

I read David Roe's interpretation of the piece Capital Under Stress – November issue. That was a report I wrote as a professional medical journalist, not necessarily my own views. My own passionate views are that we are **MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT** and you cannot address one without the other. Hence I believe in approaching the problems through Psychology, Nutrition and Divinity.

I believe in cognitive behavioural therapy; that we damage our minds by incorrect food and drugs and lifestyle; and I believe that the whole picture is in God's hands.

In an address to the College of Psychiatrists ten years ago the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Carey, spoke to the Royal College of Psychiatrists under the title; "Towards wholeness: transcending the barriers between religion and psychiatry."

"Religion and psychiatry occupy the same country. A landscape of meaning significance, guilt, belief, values, vision, suffering and healing."

I have heard it said that if only Christ was reigning in mental hospitals they would all be closed!

Last month I attended a London conference on the effect of Omega 3 on the brain and the impact of nutrition on human behaviour. Work by Professor Caroline Stokes of Sheffield shows increasing evidence of the important role nutrition plays in mental health. Evidence suggests that optimum nutrition is essential for maintaining physical and mental health. Her department is currently offering nutritional intervention within standard treatment for first episode psychosis. This involves the prescription of multi-vitamin and mineral and omega-3 fatty acid.

American psychiatrist Dr Joseph Hibbeln, has found greatly lowered incidence of depression in countries like Iceland and Japan where a lot of fish is eaten. Trials with Omega 3 fatty acids have shown protection from cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease, stroke and homicide as well as from increased risk of major depression, postnatal and bipolar depressions.

I hope this letter will show readers where it is I am 'coming' from.

Yours sincerely

Fenella Dening SRN

Past Chairman of Guildford APCMH

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## ***A People Place***

If this is not a place where tears are understood,  
    *Where shall I go to cry?*  
If this is not a place where my spirit can take wing,  
    *Where do I go to fly?*  
If this is not a place where questions can be asked,  
    *Where do I go to seek?*  
If this is not a place where my feelings can be heard,  
    *Where do I go to speak?*  
If this is not a place where I can be accepted as I am,  
    *Where do I go to be?*  
If this is not a place where I can learn and grow,  
    *Where can I just be me?*

***William J Crockett.***

***A poem pinned up on the wall at The North Bank Centre,  
Muswell Hill Methodist Church, North London.***

## WRITING FOCUS

The blue screen is in its place, to shield from other ears,  
Behind it, a writing table, a window to the sun.

A pursuit of logos brought up the football shirt  
People would always remark on, J.'s was unusual.

J.A. brings his travels by coach, to hills that were far and wide.  
He's pounded out a pedestrian's objections to knock-over bicycles.

C. came up with a garden of seclusion, her fat notebooks.  
There were trees of dankness, fingerings of ghosts by P.

The help A. dispenses may include the making of lists,  
Or spider-grams for finding a word to pop-start,

Sometimes it's flow-writing ekes out a new seam.  
An 'I hate' or 'I love' tirade can unblock feelings

A shakeout of someone's seemingly terrible family.  
Loneliness may find its way in, like a stray.

The bus ride along Worple Road can jolt up  
the irritating child, rage against its mother.

These wild fruits crush to make a juice to be distilled  
in poems or a piece of prose, from beginnings.

T. brings his couplets of the last of the steam ships,  
The consequent history of redundancy. There's a sequel

For a relative was sunk in The Titanic,  
There was one who never recovered from that.

We move to M.'s grandfather, Egyptologist,  
Try to uncover some tablets of loss. Find old Ink-works,

There's mother behind her books. Anxieties  
on the tops of buses, the sympathies of a kind priest.

Foxes and their cubs play in the snow on the slopes  
of Atkinson Morley hospital, long ago.

In J.'s poems we feel the cat walk in, a shadow  
curls in her lap. Knows deluge, knows survival.

Old playground fights come up, friends,  
estrangements. By your pen you can re-view.

Remarks have splintered, snide and snark have hurt,  
Convertible to witty words, to a jalopy

Re-assembled at a workbench.  
To concentrate, trying to write, pull the kite string.

Some days the wind gusts. Maybe a haze won't shift.  
Pills subdue tyrannous voices that plunge us.

These are days for closer entwinement with words,  
The way they swoop and drop, then a lift-off.

**Ann Vaughan-Williams,**  
at the Beehive MIND day centre Merton, March 2006.



## An extract from a poem by Charles C. Finn

from "Healing the Child Within" published by C. L. Whitfield 1987

Beneath lies confusion and fear and aloneness.  
I panic at the thought of my weakness and fear being exposed.  
That's why I frantically create a mask to hide behind,  
a nonchalant sophisticated façade, to help me pretend.  
to shield me from the glance that knows.  
But such a glance is precisely my salvation. My only hope, and I know it.  
That is, if it's followed by acceptance, if it's followed by love.  
It's the only thing that can liberate me from myself,  
from my own self-built prison walls,  
from the barriers that I so painstakingly erect.  
It's the only thing that will assure me of what I can't assure myself,  
that I'm really worth something.  
But I don't tell you this. I don't dare to. I'm afraid to.  
I'm afraid you'll think less of me, that you'll laugh,  
and your laugh will kill me.  
I'm afraid that deep down, that I'm nothing, that I'm just no good,  
and that you will see this and reject me  
  
A long conviction of worthlessness builds strong walls.  
The nearer you approach me, the blinder I may strike back.  
It's irrational, but I fight the very thing that I cry out for.  
I don't like to hide. I don't like to play superficial phoney games.  
I want to stop playing them.  
I want to be genuine, and spontaneous, and me.  
  
Who am I? You may well wonder?  
I am someone you know very well.....  
For I am every man you meet,  
and I am every woman you meet.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

So much interest has been shown in the poems that appear from time to time in the Newsletter that the National Committee of APCMH has decided to publish a modest booklet of poems written by, or for those affected by, mental health problems.

Many of the poems will be those that have appeared over the years in the Newsletter, but we are also seeking new or unpublished poems from our readers. All established, and budding, poets are invited to submit for publication, poems for inclusion in the new book. Please send them, or even better email them if you can, to either of my addresses, which appear below.

Readers, let us know of your favourite poem.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR PASTORAL CARE IN MENTAL HEALTH

Registered Charity No. 1081642 and a limited company in England & Wales No. 3957730

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The views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Association

We welcome contributions for publication, please send them to the editor:

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