



Left:
Richard
Coleman
being
button
holed by
Susan
Iskander



Above:
chatting
at
lunchtime.

Left &
Below:
Talk-Shop
Groups



Left:
more
chatting
at lunch

Right:
Rev'd
Stuart
Kimber



Being Alongside

Rabbi Sufrin



Bob Finch

(More 'Talking Heads' within,
and on back cover)

'Mind and Spirit' Conference
at Chelmsford, in February.



Siobhan Pearce



Felicity Young & Ruth Smith

the Bi-Monthly Newsletter of the
**Association for
Pastoral
Care in
Mental
Health**

**May - June,
2007**

Success is Closure; Failure offers Opportunities

A.G.M. A.G.M. A.G.M.

as a Member of APCMH, you are invited to the:

National AGM: 19 May 2007

12-1pm - AGM

*(an opportunity to hear about the work of other Branches:
Merton, Forest Hill, North Marylebone, Croydon, Haslemere)*

1-2pm Complimentary Lunch

2-5pm - National Committee Meeting

*Those who would like to become part of the regular
National Committee, meeting four times a year to discuss
and make plans concerning all aspects of APCMH,
are welcome to stay till 5pm.*

**Call APCMH 0207 383 0167
(leaving your contact details),
to book or to represent your Branch.**

Venue:

St Paul's Church Centre 3 Rossmore Road, NW1.

(nearest tubes = Baker Street & Marylebone)



The Who and What of APCMH

Patron	Bishop Stephen Sykes	
Patron	Professor Andrew Sims	
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APCMH is a Christian based, voluntary association of individual members and affiliated groups who recognise the importance of spiritual values and support in mental health. It has a network of supporters throughout the United Kingdom and it welcomes and encourages people whatever their own faith or belief system.

Governed by its National Committee, APCMH is primarily concerned to promote and encourage "being alongside" people experiencing mental or emotional distress

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*The views expressed in *Being Alongside* are
not necessarily those of the Association.*

This code of behaviour guides children of the tribe during their developmental years, providing a sense of dignity and belonging. However commendable these words and the ideals which Caroline Myss conveys, I think to a major degree the family unit we knew in my era has broken down.

Now more than in any previous generation we view the individual as the sole source of meaning. At one time the family unit was sacrosanct. The bonds between parents and children, and family members were bonds with honour and respect which held them, their communities and society together. What happened? Many members of society today have become lonely selves seeking only their own fulfilment. That must surely be wrong, as life alone for them, must only be half a life. So it is worth reminding ourselves of what we must all have recognised here today that there is such a thing as ethics. It is an essential part of the life we live together. We heard presentations today from all the faiths and beliefs all presented to us with such graciousness, thoughtfulness, and sensitivity; the courage and combining it all together, the psychological strength. We need to be able to adequately respond to different people in different ways. To become aware of what each person needs to fulfil in the scheme of things, is as close as one would come to living God's way. Some people have the gift of healing by just listening, others by inspiring us by their sheer passionate enthusiasm.

In Peter's opening address this morning he mentioned that one very important word "love" and this reminded me of Leo Tolstoy's essay *The Law of Violence and The Law of Love* in which he wrote a short while before he died about 100 years ago -

"Remember that what is here offered to you, is not invented by me, but is the fruit of the spiritual efforts of all the highest and best minds and hearts of humanity, and that in this alone lies the sole means of deliverance from misery, of gaining the highest good within the reach of men in this life."

What wonderful words and such meaning... Finally, some further words from the Chief Rabbi Professor Sir Jonathan Sacks from his book *To Heal a Fractured World*:

The kind of person we are is testimony to the ideals in which we believe.

How true.

Martin Aaron

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Thank You ... and Please....

Thank you to those who support APCMH financially via Direct Debit or Standing Order.

For those who don't, would you care to complete and return the (hopefully enclosed) Renewal Form?

Many thanks in anticipation.

John Vallat & Suzanne Heneghan

Front Page

from Suzanne Heneghan of APCMH and Allan Brown of InterAct

'Spirituality changes our mood; religion changes our life'
Chief Rabbi Professor Jonathan Sacks

Mind & Spirit – Chelmsford 5th February 2007.

There's been an incredible growth of interest in an holistic approach to mental health recovery since the 2004 conference at Writtle College. The initiative began as a partnership of representatives from the professional, service user, faith and voluntary sectors, meeting regularly to develop understanding relating to mental health and spirituality. This culminated in the formation a steering group to coordinate the Mind / Spirit Programme to include representatives from the two Essex MH Trusts. 'InterAct' have been

facilitating throughout the journey and today reflects just a tiny fraction of their work in the field of mental health recovery both locally and nationally and also within the developing world. Their Christian ethic is clearly evident in all aspects of their work.

An estimated 230 people flooded into Shire Hall, a huge banqueting suite. Proceedings were topped and tailed by Philip Howe (left, *Director of Partnerships and Specialist Services, South Essex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust*) and Richard Coleman (below, *Chief Executive North Essex Mental Health Partnership Trust*). The objectives of



the conference were:-

- To celebrate the substantial progress made in Essex since February 2004
- To review the current national picture
- To provide an opportunity for individuals and groups to ask questions of an expert panel
- To consider how further steps can be taken to improve the partnerships and the experiences of people with mental health problems across Essex.

First keynote speaker was the Rt Rev'd John Gladwin, Bishop of Chelmsford, (pto), provided a



End Story?

Martin Aaron is Chair of the National Spirituality and Mental Health Multi Faith Forum. These are part of his closing remarks from his presentation at a Multi Faith Symposium in Staffordshire University in Nov. (See p11)

In all the several decades in which I have been involved as a lay-professional in mental health social care, I cannot recall feeling the same level of unique achievement in any seminar / conference as I have, and I believe everyone has experienced here today.

You must know that with all the work which has been done, the achievements today, the *NIMHE National Project on Spirituality in Mental Health* led so energetically by our dear friend Peter Gilbert now in its 5th year, and the work of the *National Spirituality and Mental Health Multi-Faith Forum* (Chaired by Martin Aaron), which has accumulated over 1000 participants one way or another, is really only just getting started.

Today marks a milestone in the progress of educating mental health and general healthcare professionals, the educators, and the trainers, in spirituality, for the benefit of the service users present and future. Much has been achieved, but so much more remains to be done. Sitting in on a workshop group earlier a few of the most important essentials to people that came out of that group were - listening to a person's needs, self worth, love, compassion, and giving hope. How vital they are.

Everything in my life that has professional, personal and spiritual value for me, I have learned from my Jewish faith's ethics and from working with people. We are all part of one spiritual community as has been proved here today. There is a certain sacredness, in the manner in which each individual faith community has presented its expression of spirituality in a genuine desire to convey the truth of their feelings from the very core of their religious belief. We all have a common need of spirituality to enable us to have the physical strength for our survival and our children's survival for future generations. To quote from Caroline Myss's book *The Anatomy of the Spirit*:

We are all born into a particular tribal culture. Beginning life as part of a tribe, we become connected to our tribal consciousness and collective will-power by absorbing its strengths and weaknesses, beliefs, superstitions and fears. Through our interactions with family and other groups, we learn the power of sharing with other people. We learn how painful it can be to be excluded from a group and its energy. We also learn the power of sharing a moral and ethical code handed down..."

Write On..!

WRITE AFRESH is a group set up after the closure of the Beehive Day Centre in Merton.

Supported by the Friends of Raynes Park Library and Merton Mind, Ann Vaughan-Williams leads a two-hour session of Writing, Reading and Discussion, with refreshments. Typing skills have been added, as each person is typing some of their work into a small booklet, with the help of George McGillivray, the Friend of the Library who has made all this possible.

Participants help with practicalities and supporting each other. At a working table, we have a coffee and discuss anything that crops up from everyday life, then write on a given topic (or a digression from it) for about half an hour, and then each person reads back what was written.

We incorporate use of the library and its books. Felt pens can be used to supplement words with colourful pictures or drawing. Some members need to walk about or go outside to the bench on the pavement. We have kept going every week from November to April, so far, and 6 to 9 of us come regularly. New participants are welcome, the nominal cost is 10 pence, and they must have a record of mental ill health and be able to reach Raynes Park Library which is beside Raynes Park station, on the 57 bus route.

We meet from 10.30-12.30 on Tuesday mornings. Email ann@teahouse.demon.co.uk with enquiries, or for our flyer. There is a one hour creative writing group also led by Ann, with volunteer user David Johnson, from 5.0pm to 6.0pm on Wednesday Evenings, at the *Re-Think Wednesday Group* at *The Guild*, in Worple Road, near to Wimbledon station. This writing group is better suited to those who can't get out of bed in the mornings, a fact of life for many with mental ill health.

Ann Vaughan-Williams

Write On & Bring It On!!

Many, many thanks to those of you making contributions to *B.A.* I even have to apologise that some offerings will have to be held over! Wow! Unheard of! To those of you thinking about putting pen to paper it, don't delay! Material for July issue to me by end of May please, but asap is better!

Steve.

briefing on the '*Whole Person*' approach to spirituality with reference to the sacredness of the body, mind & spirit unity.

Professor Andrew Sims (below), who until recently was Chair of the '*Special Interests Spirituality Group*' at



the RCP, presented an update on clinical evidence – '*The Ups and Downs Of Spirituality in Mental Health*'. Traditional weighing scales were used to illustrate the proportion of overall positive and negative effects of religious belief on mental health, taken from an epidemiological study: (Koenig, McCulloch & Larson: *Handbook of Religion & Health*. ISBN:0195118669)



The positive affects of addressing the spiritual needs of an individual are clearly well documented; however Andrew's evidence is based purely upon the effects of religious belief alone. Is religion good for your mental health well being? Well it appears that the answer is 'yes' and that religious affiliation does show an overall correlation with good mental health but a more realistic response might be both 'yes' and 'no' – 'yes' – where God is perceived as a loving God of relationship and that ethos is reflected within that community and 'no' where the religious practice is based upon authoritarian doctrine, one that instils fear and breeds exclusivity. However the scales do show that the ups overall outweigh the downs and that the social benefits of belonging, finding meaning and purpose, and the ethic of trust in a loving God are typical elements that appear to be paramount to mental health recovery - The sense that one is indwelt by 'The Holy Spirit' as protector, or in the affirmation of the name for ones God who 'gives ease' can provide much comfort. Also to be considered are the harmful effects of not being allowed to express ones religious aspirations.

To sum up, should the religious aspect be honoured during treatment? – The study suggests 'yes', but Andrew stresses - whilst administering all the necessary precautions that one would apply in good ethical practice.

Christine Macdonald, (pto), was warmly received - presenting '*Me, My Bi-polar and God*', explaining how her experience within the worlds of



psychiatry and spirituality led her to recognise them as 'two opposing disciplines'. 'You learn that you don't mention God'.

Question time with the panel included representatives of the Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Jain and Hindu faiths. Rabbi Sofrin (front cover) discussed the validity of the recognition of the individual's need for a practitioner of the same religious affiliation with whom to work alongside during therapy. One delegate raised the question 'How can I develop any relationship with God without thinking that God is a symptom of my illness? Opening this kind of dialogue provokes much thought. Perhaps the only realistic solution that ensures that the religious aspect of a person is being affirmed is by having a detailed religion / spiritual programme incorporated within the training of all mental health practitioners, one that provides a window into the spiritual world of another, uncovering a common language, one that upholds dignity and respect and nurtures common understanding. (Dr Iman Elhag, above, was another panellist.)



Heading the afternoon, members of the 'Sunrise' Group, (left and below), gave an inspiring account of their remarkable achievements. The Rev'd Dr Nigel Copsey took the stand for 'Best Practice In East London and City MHT'—interpreting this accolade more in the way of 'Doing the best we can in a climate where funds are constantly being cut from the poorest East London NHS Trust in mental health provision'.

After ten years of development, within two NHS departments & East London University, Nigel says that the foundations are only just laid. He was passionate about the recognition of certain fundamental provision becoming normalised, such as accessible prayer



from Rev'd Roger Grainger:

I'm trying to carry out informal research into how users of psychiatric services feel about themselves in this role and the effect of diagnosis. I feel its important, and I don't think that the questions are ever asked.

As a service user – would you be willing to jot down a few thoughts – or do you know someone who might? Saying in your own words:

How does it feel to be diagnosed?

How does it affect your sense of identity? Who you are?

It will be completely confidential – and can be sent to me quite anonymously to me at 7 Park Grove, Horbury, Wakefield WF4 6EE

With Many thanks.

Roger Grainger

Roger Grainger

BSc (Therapeutic Counselling),
MPhil (Psychology), PhD, DD (London),
Chartered Counselling Psychologist
(Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society)

Humanising Psychiatry & Mental Health:

the challenge of the person-centred approach.

NEW BOOK by Rachel Freeth

Psychiatrist in General Adult Psychiatry & Person-Centred Counsellor.
Forewords by Brain Thorne & Mike Shooter.

200 pp; paper, £24.95; ISBN-10: 1 85775 619 3; ISBN-13: 9781857756197

'This book will be of significant interest and help to all mental health professionals including psychiatrists and psychiatric nurses, social care workers, occupational therapists, psychologists, person-centred counsellors and therapists. Health and social care policy makers and shapers, including patient groups, will also find it helpful and informative.'

The Barnabas Drop-In Sessions

'Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son Of Encouragement)' Acts 4:36

St. Paul's Community Project in partnership with APCMH

Mondays 2pm - 5pm

May	Keeping Well Mentally.
June	Keeping Well Physically
August	Outing – to be arranged
September	Story Telling
October	Poetry
November	First Aid

Plus various activities: Table tennis, dominoes, scrabble, art / craft, poetry reading, tea / sandwiches / cakes and chat.

Wednesday 10am - 12pm

A more reflective discussion time with tea and biscuits, an opportunity to all share concerns or to receive one-to-one support (by appointment)

All Welcome: Free Of Charge

Venue: St Paul's Church Centre,
3 Rossmore Road,
London NW1

(5 mins walk from Marylebone Station; buses 139 & 189 stop outside)

**call: Captain Mark Dadds,
or Sister Theresa: 0207 724 8517**

'When he arrived and saw the wonderful things God was doing, he was filled with excitement & joy, and encouraged the believers to stay close to The Lord whatever the cost. Barnabas was a kindly person, full of the Holy Spirit & strong in faith. As a result large numbers of people were added to the Lord. (Acts 11:19-24)

room provision to be written within the care planning / action stages. Nigel argues that *'Care In The Community'* had been largely unsuccessful following the closure of the big institutions because it had failed to provide a good alternative. At best such places had provided places of belonging, often in beautiful surroundings within supportive communities, with those sharing common experiences. Instead many found themselves isolated within a community of strangers - often stigmatised, left to cope and expected to integrate. The old asylums, of course, are not the solution but the example serves to highlight the fundamental need for the individual to reside within a community where they can be themselves, be accepted and cared about.

We heard inspiring testimonies from each of the four county cluster groups who'd had the faith and vision to just 'have a go' in response to the needs of their communities, in the provision of cafes, self help groups: *'Journeying through Depression'*, *'Good News In Bereavement'*.



Rev'd Diana Crook of Waltham Abbey, (left) describes *'Safe Haven'* as a spiritual home for mental illness – an encounter group where many of the attendees are not from a church background. 'The unique characteristics of which test the boundaries of what constitutes as 'church', where the facilitators themselves benefit and the boundaries slip away as all in their own way seek expression – it's sufficient for some just to know that it's there'.

Another of the groups – St Andrew's – Westcliffe-On-Sea, evolved quite naturally through the provision of a café – a space to meet and share, one which gradually became a haven for those with more specific areas of need to come together – just as we did today to celebrate our own differences for the better good of the whole.

Conference workshops looked at the links between mental wellbeing and spiritual fulfilment from the four separate perspectives of; the service user, the health professional; carers and members of faith groups. Some of the recommendations from the workshops included:

Training was identified as the overriding need from all of the groups:

- For faith groups to facilitate outreach to members of their own congregations and the wider community

- Mental health professionals in understanding the spiritual needs both or service users and carers
- To all parties to help them understand different expressions of spirituality and observance

There was a recognised demand for a more visible faith presence for in-patient care and greater access and understanding for those in the community, and to address spiritual needs within care plans.

It is proposed that the third Essex *Mind and Spirit* Conference will be held in the autumn of 2008.

This piece has been assembled from contributions by Suzanne Heneghan, Chair of APCMH, and Allan Brown Executive Director, InterAct, Moulsham Mill, Parkway Chelmsford CM2 7PX; tel: 01245 608234; Fax 01245 356612;

email: allan.brown@interact.org.uk

net: <http://www.interact.org.uk>

The resultant conflation is entirely the Editor's, and he offers any appropriate apologies for any misrepresentations resulting! Thank you both for offering your features; I hope this hybrid will not dissuade you from offering again!

*And to close, a **Caption Competition!***

Pick a character in the scene below and give them a



thought or comment in a bubble. Photocopy / tear out the page and send to the Editor. His decision is final. The prize will be opportunity to present a paper at the next 'Mind and Spirit' Conference.

MSc in Spirituality, Health & Social Care

Read on if interested in boning up on the most important subject area in the world... (See also p15)

Staffordshire University are providing the 1st course of its kind to respond to growing challenge of implementing spiritual care across professional boundaries.

'This MSc in Spirituality, Health & Social Care covers theoretical enquiry, ethical implications, values and diversity & aims to develop or enhance skills in the identification, evaluation and application of spiritual care; developing environments that value the diversity of spiritual / religious beliefs which exist in patient & client groups; & developing skills in research & learning to engage in the development of UK focused evidence base to support spiritual care development across health/social care environments.

Further info: <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/maps/>

Rev'd Rob Merchant

Principal Lecturer Tel: 01785 353668; e: r.merchant@staffs.ac.uk

STOP PRESS

One Day Conference: **Mental Health & Well Being**

Saturday, 19 May

Jim McManus on 'True Self Esteem'

Kathleen Peter on 'Self Harm'

+ 9 workshops.

St Mungo's Academy, Crownpoint Road, Glasgow G40 2RA

tel: [0141] 582 0260

Mental Health Support Group

St Andrew's, Frognal, U R Church NW3

2nd and 4th Friday of each month

10.15am-12noon

Aiming to provide friendship and mutual support for those living with mental health concerns, both sufferers and carers, where matters may be explored and discussion encouraged.

contact:

The Rev'd Jonathan Dean: 0207 435 5725
or Jean Marsham: 0208 455 1240

Junction of Frognal Lane / West End Lane / Finchley Road;
near Finchley Rd. (Met / Jub); 113, 82, 13, 46, 268, 328, 139,
C11 (West End Green); Finchley Rd / Frognal (NL Metro),

My Wish For You

Throughout this Easter season, And the years to come,
As you witness the advent Of each new day's dawning,
Its ripening into noon, And its mellowing into evening,
May you ever have:

*Grateful appreciation of your blessings and opportunities,
Strength and courage for whatever the day may bring,
Wisdom for your problems and decisions,
Faith for your disappointments and sorrows,
Humility for your successes, Charity for the actions of others,
No annoying regrets of yesterday. No undue concern for tomorrow,
Kindness, patience, sane cheerfulness and unselfishness
In all things To all people.*

Mary Graye Hunt

Our sincere thanks to the author.

Twenty Years in Forest Hill

More news from a small friendly outfit at the cutting edge of fostering relationships that heal.

On June 20th this year the Forest Hill Branch of APCMH will be celebrating its twentieth birthday. It all began with a meeting in St Peter's Monastery, an offshoot in Dulwich, of Worth Abbey. There were over twenty people at that first meeting and after a long discussion some of us decided to jump in at the deep end.

Our objective was to provide support for people with mental health problems and for their carers as well as helping to raise awareness of mental health issues in our local area. We found premises next to Forest Hill station and opened our Drop-In centre for the first time on May 19th 1987.

Since our first session we have been open once a week every week, except for one year when our regular day coincided with Christmas Day. We have been open for over 1,000 sessions. The number of users built up steadily and we now about fifteen each week which means that, over the years, we have had about 15,000 visits. Of our current regulars one has been coming almost every week for twelve years while two others, who have moved away, still come from time to time from Kilburn and Cambridge.

Over the years most of our efforts have been directed at giving support to people with mental health problems, although carers do contact us from time to time and we have also helped to raise awareness of the issues by giving talks to local organisations.

We have moved premises four times and are now open every Wednesday at St Saviour's Church Hall, Brockley Rise between 6.30 and 8.30pm. We really are a "Drop-In" and any one is welcome - no referral is necessary.

Apart from the Drop-In we have outings in the summer. Most years we have a day in central London or a river trip to Greenwich or Kew. In the early years we went to Hengrave Hall in Suffolk for the weekend on several occasions and for three years we went to Whitstable - a trip which included a service in Canterbury Cathedral with a special prayer for APCMH.

We have deliberately remained small and informal. Friendship is key to what we do and our emphasis is on concern for our users as individuals, the whole person, rather than focusing on any illness they may have - that is the role of medical professionals. New volunteers do not need to have specific

knowledge of Mental Health issues – we provide guidance and training in that area. What volunteers do need is a concern for their fellow human beings and a willingness to listen.

We survive on a modest budget of about £2,500 per year which comes from local supporters including Churches and Rotary Clubs. Other groups and individuals have had fund raising lunches and theatre performances for us and one of our volunteers has run the London marathon five times.

If you would like to find out more come to the Drop-In at Brockley Rise any Wednesday or call **Solomon Brown** on **020 8291 6462** or **Gail** or **Nick Cotton** on **020 8670 5822**.

A New Publication (December 2006)

'Christian Congregations and Mental Illness: A survey of contemporary attitudes in their historical context'

Edna Hunneysett BA (Div) MA

43 Birchgate Rd, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough TS5 5NR Tel. 01642 818332

£12

The author seeks answers to a series of questions:

Is care extended in Christian communities towards people with mental illnesses?

Do Christians know what kind of support people with mental illnesses and their families need?

Does Christian faith make a positive difference to how such people are treated?

Are Christian ministers trained in this aspect of ministry?

The study sets the context for contemporary attitudes by an outline of the history of how mental illness has been understood by theologians, and also within Christian congregations. The research component was an attitude survey of 592 people from a sample target of three denominations, Anglicans, Roman Catholics and Evangelical / Pentecostals.

The result demonstrated more supportive attitudes than are evident among the general public. At the same time, there were indications of a lack of knowledge, and the need for better education at every level. There is a real need to raise awareness, so that the negative aspects of mental health difficulties can be addressed, and the stigmatisation and discrimination prevalent in society can be challenged.

This book shows how it is within the Church's power to make a positive difference to the lives of people with mental health difficulties, written by someone who has made a difference.

Bishop Stephen Sykes

This book is the fruit of countless hours and days, months of work and thorough research arising out of a lived experience. It will prove to be a source of help and reference and encouragement to many people in the Church and elsewhere working in the field of mental health.

Canon Eddie Gubbins, Episcopal Vicar, Middlesbrough

This is one of the most in depth studies into the Christian community's response to people with mental health problems I have come across.

Edna once again, following her previous book, *Carers in the Community*: "Why have you forsaken me?", approaches the subject with a wonderful personal touch. Edna offers realistic and positive actions for us to take. Although this is an incredible piece of research into our, that is the Christian community's, attitudes throughout history and especially in the modern day toward people suffering from mental illness, it is also a deeply personal drawing together of people's lived experience.

Everyone can learn a great deal from this book as many attitudes commonplace in the Christian community also exist in the wider community. Edna challenges us all to re-evaluate our perception of mental illness and people who suffer from it. These people often feel ignored and misunderstood. The consequences of "Stigma" and negative attitudes towards people who suffer from mental illness are laid bare.

As a chaplain to a hospital specialising in the care of people suffering from mental illness and a priest with frequent contact with people affected by mental illness, I found this book incredibly thought provoking and I learnt a great deal about my own attitudes, some of which left much to be desired.

For any Christian this is not a comfortable read, patting the Christian Churches on the back for a job well done. It is rather a prophetic call to all Christians, and indeed to all people, to rise to the summons of Christ to bring "Good News" to all people, to break down the stereotypes and the stigma that stereotyping brings, and see all people as children of God and give them the respect that that position deserves!

Rev Bill Serplus - hospital chaplain