

60's Karaoke Anyone?

*Snow at Easter? Been known,
but two weeks after? Well, here's
the Living Proof. This is Ella's
- age 4 - Snowman, taken on 7 April.*

*Made me think of a song..
'Goin' Back' sung by Dusty
Springfield way back in '66..
Altogether now...*



I think I'm goin' back
To the things I learned so well In my youth,
I think I'm returning to Those days
When I was young enough To know the truth.

Now there are no games To only pass the time -
No more colouring books No Christmas bells to chime;

But thinking young And growing older Is no sin,
And I can play The game of life to win.

I can recall the time When I wasn't ashamed To reach out to a friend.
And now I think I've got A lot more than A skipping rope to lend.

Now there's more to do Than watch my sailboat glide,
And everyday can be My magic carpet ride,
And I can play hide and seek with my fears -
And live my days instead of counting my years

Let everyone debate the true reality,
I'd rather see the world the way it used to be.
A little bit of freedom's All we lack,
So catch me if you can I'm goin' back.

Gerry Goffin & Carole King

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

May - June 2008



Being Alongside

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

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).

Free. All Welcome.

Venue: St Paul's Church Centre, 3 Rossmore Rd, 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)

Mental Health Support Group

(The Dymphna Group)

St Andrew's, Frognal, United Reformed 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),
Hampstead (Northern);
West Hampstead (First Capital Direct)



The Who and What of APCMH

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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.

For Specific Contacts, see above; for General Enquiries reach us:

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

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Be Quick!

**The Manchester Women's
Conference:**

8-9th May 2008

**Hulme Hall, Oxford Place, Victoria Park,
Manchester M14 5RR**

Seminar series: 8th May

*'The Physical Health of Women with Mental
Illness'*

Workshops: 9th May

*'Developing and Implementing Healthier services
for Women in your Area'*

more Details & Booking:

Carol Rayegan, Centre for Women's Mental Health
Research, Williamson Building, University of Manchester,
M13 9PL.

Tel: 0161 275 0714 Fax: 0161 275 0716

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Front Page

As a mental health professional on a busy rehabilitation ward there are many ways of contributing to the provision of holistic health care. One of the joyous privileges I have witnessed is several Service Users continuing on their spiritual journeys. Service Users have requested and been given Bibles.

One Service User was confirmed during a very moving service led by the Bishop and we shared communion together. It was good to offer encouragement and support, particularly in the weeks leading up to the service. It was also good to be able to offer support when doubts and unanswered questions were threatening to overwhelm them.

Two other Service Users have been attending church since Christmas and one is requesting to be baptised.

Staff members and Service Users have been asking about Lent and as a result we have started a monthly discussion group open to staff and Service Users. There has been a growing interest among staff about spiritual issues which can result in good conversations.

The Service Users make very good use of the chaplaincy staff. Hospital chaplains attend the ward several times each week. They play a vital part in health care and will advocate for service users at their review meetings. Indeed, the chaplains have gained a good deal of respect amongst patients and staff.

Let us all, irrespective of our circumstances, follow the example of the Service Users mentioned and examine our own spiritual journey. Let us keep moving forward to fully achieve peace with our Creator, each other and ourselves. For as St Paul said in Romans 8:38-39:

'I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord'

David Allen,

APCMH Committee Member

Encounter

(an antidote to the Attitude of Stigma)

I was in an underground train, a crowded train in which all sorts of people jostled together, sitting and strap-hanging - workers of every description going home at the end of the day. Quite suddenly I saw with my mind, but as vividly as a wonderful picture, Christ in them all.

But I saw more than that; not only was Christ in every one of them, living in them, dying in them, rejoicing in them, sorrowing in them - but because He was in them, and because they were here, the whole world was here too, here in this underground train; not only the world as it was at that moment, not only all the people in all the countries of the world, but all those people who had lived in the past, and all those yet to come.

I came out into the street and walked for a long time in the crowds. It was the same here, on every side, in every passer-by, everywhere - Christ.... I saw too the reverence that everyone must have for a sinner; instead of condoning his sin, which is in reality his utmost sorrow, one must comfort Christ who is suffering in him. And this reverence must be paid even to those sinners whose souls seem dead, because it is Christ, who is the life of the soul, who is dead in them. They are His tombs, and Christ in the tomb is potentially the risen Christ. So whoever we are, whatever we've done, there is always hope for us and our rising.

After a few days the 'vision' faded. People looked the same again, there was no longer the same shock of insight for me each time I faced another human being. Christ was hidden again; indeed, through the years to come I would have to seek for Him, and usually I would find Him in others - and still more in myself - only through a deliberate and blind act of faith.

But if the 'vision' had faded, the knowledge had not. On the contrary, that knowledge, touched by a ray of the Holy Spirit, is like a tree touched by the sun - it puts out leaf and flowers, bearing fruit and blossom from splendour to splendour.

Caryll Houselander,

A Rocking Horse Catholic. Sheed and Ward 1955. ISBN: 1556124015

try: <http://www.abebooks.co.uk> for second hand copies



Mind: Annual Conference 2008.

Brunel University

This event will be exploring the link between poverty and mental health, with speakers from both the finance and the mental health sectors.

5pm on Monday 16 June to 5pm on Tuesday 17 June.

There will be the option to attend as a residential delegate (with food, refreshments and single-occupancy accommodation available) or just on Tuesday 17 June (accommodation and entry to the conference on Monday 16 not included).

Who should attend:

*Mental health professionals
Those working in the finance sector
Citizens Advice Bureaux and other advice organisations
Service users and service user organisations
Local Mind associations
Housing workers and associations*

Further information, registration details etc will be forwarded as we have them. Or, you can keep an eye on the relevant section of our website:

www.mind.org.uk/Information/Conference+and+training/In+the+red.htm

or speak to one of the Conference and Training team on 0844 4480 4450.

Pru Sly,

Conference and Training Manager. Direct line: 020 8215 2311

A Word from the Chair....

It's meant to be spring and it's that time of year to encourage you to think about coming to our workshop and **AGM on Saturday 17th May** at St Paul's Church, London. The workshop will focus on gentle ways to relax and move using Chi Qong and there will be plenty of opportunity to talk, share ideas and gain encouragement on our life's Journey over lunch, the AGM and afternoon tea.

It's been another year of growing interest in spirituality and mental health. Within APCMH existing groups in the Westminster area and South London continue to meet regularly and there is a proposal to set up a new one in South London. The *National Forum for Spirituality and Mental Health* continues to attract many to its meetings providing a forum for people to share and exchange ideas and experiences from a variety of perspectives.

More and more people I personally meet in my work context (as a Community Mental Health Nurse) consider their spiritual needs to be important to their mental well-being and many have valued input from sensitive, spiritually involved people, such as the Community Chaplain). More colleagues are showing an interest, willing to recognise its value to users' mental well-being no longer to be ignored. Clinicians may be hesitant mostly because they lack experience and the language to engage – a real opportunity for education and training. Church and faith groups are similarly recognising their contribution in helping people to maintain their mental health and in healing and also may appreciate training and support. More books, research and articles are published every year (see, for example, *The Impact of Spirituality on Mental Health – a Review of the Literature*, published by the Mental Health Foundation, 2006). APCMH has a range of books and DVDs / videos (such as *Hard to Believe*) that can be borrowed from APCMH via Sr. Theresa at the St Paul's Church address.

Thank you to all of you for all that you do for one another and others, whatever that may be – even a smile or a 'hello' can make such a difference. I look forward to meeting some of you in May!

Stephan Ball

April 2008

A Poet's Soul

Last issue a couple of poems by Wendy Hill were included. Here she gives us an insight into the value she finds in writing:

Thank God I'm feeling much better now. Writing down the poems helps me express my feelings, especially the lingering doubts about my own worth as a human being.

There are so many people out there that have either gone through or are going through similar depressive / mental illnesses/ troubled relationships like mine that my heart just reaches out to them. The Lord has shown me great compassion in the last 6 months and now I hope to spend the rest of my life using my gifts to help others. I do know yet how I may best serve the Lord in this but I completely trust that He has a plan for me. He will use me as he feels is right, I am sure of it.

I know that I have not been the person that God wants me to be in the last few years. and that I have not always 'practised what I've preached' as it were but I am only human. I do not and never wanted to be someone else and I will always be grateful for the painful lesson I have had to learn about humility and grace. It is not easy for a person like me to admit they've failed in their own relationships with other people, particularly my own family, friends and colleagues. Mine has been a personal journey to hell and back several times (I'm a real glutton for punishment you know!). I believe that God, through His Son Jesus Christ has saved me from myself and has kept those I love safe too.

Yours in Christ

Wendy Hill

Many thanks to all our contributors whose offerings are always so appreciated. I always hoped that material for Being Alongside would come from the readership.

Steve

A Prayer

Irene Stubbs wrote this prayer at that 'gloomy time of year' when feeling the need for a bit of help.

Dear Lord,

*Let me not be so sore
about this illness, for I'm sure
There are other folks worse off than me.*

*It's no use saying what might have been
For it's You who plans our life it seems.*

*And let me not say 'Why me?'
As Father Gerry says, "Saints say 'Why Not Me?'"*

*So though we get angry and full of hate,
Let us be calm and meditate
on how, Dear Lord, You died for us
- and stop making such a fuss!*

Irene Stubbs

*Thou who hast given so much to me,
give me one thing more -
a grateful heart.*

George Herbert

Poem: *Malchus's Ear*

(John 18:10-11)

Acting on information
from the grass Judas,
Malchus silently led
the secret priestly police
force in the undercover
arrest of the wanted man.

Once identified in the
garden of Gethsemane, they
surged forward to make
the seizure. The culprits were
not expected to be armed.
With a flash of Peter's
left arm, Malchus's ear
ended up on the ground.

The wanted man, leaned
forward, touched the ear
restoring and healed it.

Machus knew why the
hearing in his right ear
was as clear as a young man
up to the day of his death,
but his Job as the High Priest's
right hand man meant
keeping the miracle quiet.

Jean Wearn Wallace

From Pam Freeman:

Form time to time I get requests for back issues of the newsletter to distribute at a day conference or for passing on to Friends. Don't hesitate to contact me if you would like to me to send you some.

Action Sheets are also available on request with the following titles:

Setting Up a Drop In.

Setting Up a Befriending Scheme.

Setting Up a Training Course.

Challenging the Stigma.

Arranging Public Meetings and Conferences.

If you would like a speaker for a meeting you are holding to discuss the above issues, or the work of APCMH in general, do not hesitate to let me know.

Also, copies of our poetry book *From the Heart* are still available price £2.00.

Best wishes,

Pam Freeman.

Happy Birthday to Yooo-ooo!

APCMH in Croydon will be 20 years old on June 1st.

They are having a celebration and will tell of it's joys in our next *Being Alongside!*

From Edna Hunnysett:
Day for Life 2008

The Irish and Scottish Bishops and Bishops of England and Wales decided the theme to be on mental health issues for the **Day For Life** this year which is the first Sunday in July.

The Catholic Communications Network always include a few podcasts to go on the **Day For Life** website to highlight the issue and this year are doing 4 interviews, 2 from England and Wales and one each from Scotland and Ireland. I've been asked by Maggie Doherty, senior media officer of the Catholic Communications Network, to be interviewed as one of the two from England and Wales.

Edna Hunnysett

Here is a summary of **Day for Life** this year:

Mental ill-health can happen to anyone - 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem at some stage in their life. Millions of people across Britain and Ireland are either living with or know someone close to them who has been affected by depression, schizophrenia, suicide, self-harm, bereavement, substance misuse or mental health difficulties at some stage in their lives.

Day for Life – the day in the Church's year dedicated to celebrating the sacredness of life – will focus this year on the theme of mental health.

It will help raise awareness of the needs of those affected by mental ill-health, their friends, their family and their carers, and the support that the parish community can bring.

Kind regards,

Jon Harris

www.pastoral.org.uk



APCMH
Workshop and AGM

Saturday 17 May 2008

10.30 – 2.30

St Paul's Rossmore Road, NW1 6NJ

10.30 Registration and coffee

11 – 1 pm Movement Workshop led by Tricia Teahan

Chi Gong is an ancient Chinese form of exercise, a simple meditative form of movement that helps calm mind & body.

1 pm Lunch

(Contributions are invited to cover workshop & lunch)

2.15 AGM.

All are invited to stay for the AGM.

There will be an opportunity to meet the new secretary.

3.15 Tea and departures

For more details & to book in advance,
contact Pam Freeman:

02086 473678

16 Beechwood Court, West Street Lane, Carshalton, Surrey.
SM5 2PZ

In the play the Athenian women who are fed up with the men being away at war decide to withdraw their sex until the men make peace with the enemy.

George McGillivray, Friend of the Library, brought a fruitful starter for writing in the half sentence 'If only Fred had not said ... '

This month we also wrote poems and musings from focusing our minds on some objects including a piece of driftwood, a fossil on a stone, and a Russian Doll .

Some of the short scenes written from topics in this group are being performed by local drama groups.

Please get in touch if you'd like to come along.

Ann Vaughan-Williams.

Poem: Look to This Day

Look to this day for it is the very life of life.

In its brief course lie all the verities and realities of your existence:
The glory of action,
The bliss of growth,
The splendour of beauty -

For yesterday is but a dream and tomorrow is only a vision.

But today well lived
makes every yesterday a dream of happiness
and every tomorrow a vision of hope.

Look well, therefore, to this day.

Submitted by Mrs Bailey. From the Sanskrit.

Hymn: Oldie But Goodie

Faithful Shepherd, feed me
In the pastures green;
Faithful Shepherd, lead me
Where thy steps are seen.

Hold me fast, and guide me
In the narrow way;
So, with thee beside me,
I shall never stray.

Daily bring me nearer
To the heavenly shore;
May my faith grow clearer,
May I love thee more.

Hallow every pleasure,
Every gift and pain;
Be thyself my treasure,
Though none else I gain.

Day by day prepare me
As thou seest best,
Then let angels bear me
To thy promised rest.

T.B. Pollock

A&M Revised no. 415

Poems: Let's Show Them

Come on girls, let's show
them what we're made of. We'll
get our way, whatever way
they fight. My teeth are
sharp and ready now to bite.

They're strong and hide within
their stable. Let's drive them
out and force them to a fight.
They hang back, thinking they're
not able: let's go out and show
them they are right.

by Jane Dawney

Taking on a Caring Role

You cared for me when my mind broke down
With tender love as the tears fell to the ground,
And without any prompting you cared for me
To try and heal my shattered mind you see.

The road for us two was very long and hard
But all the time you cared and stood guard,
And as I gradually got better within myself
You did not leave me all alone on a shelf.

Then my health took a nasty turn about
The Cancer struck, all I could do was shout,
You would not go down the final road with me
Indeed your caring forced me to face it, you see.

I was not a good patient as well you know
But as I recovered you cared about me so,
I did not thank you as much as I knew I should
And you never complained - you were so good.

Then the tables turned upon you and me
It was your turn to have a replacement knee,
I tried and tried my best to care for you too
My state of mind would not let care come through.

So when you needed me the most to care
I let you down and left you in thin air,
Off to Springfield was the only answer for me
Not to care for your time of need and recovery.

And when I came home to you with your bad knee
You set out once more and you cared for me,
I now must try to find in my body and soul
The love you have shown me and take a caring role.

Terry West (April 2008)

WRITE AFRESH GROUP:

Ann Vaughan-Williams updates us about her creative group:

We meet every week on Tuesday morning at 10 30am-12 30am at
Raynes Park Library in Kingston Road, two minutes from Raynes Park
station in Merton SW20.

New members are welcome. Phone Ann Vaughan-Williams on 0208
946 3399. Jane Dawney and Terry West are regular members.

We talk over refreshments, we write to a suggested topic, and we
read our work to each other and listen to everyone.

These two poems show responses to two recent topics. Terry's poem
was in response to a theme of Carers and those who are Cared For,
including both angles.

Jane's poem on self-assertion was inspired by reading the beginning
of *Lysistrata*, a Greek play by Aristophanes, which David Johnson, one of
our writer members brought for our entertainment and we all had a good
laugh.