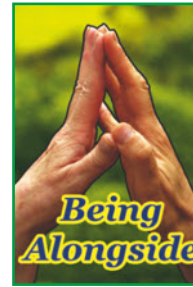




Last of the Summer Fruit!

A squirrel takes a Last Nibble before hibernation!



Being Alongside

November -
December '09

The Bi-Monthly magazine of *Being Alongside* / APCMH



Like us, Earth needs to sleep to replenish the energy,
growth and vision for the following year.

Let us not begrudge Earth her sleep,
Rather rejoice in the present moment of
the beauty she displays!

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 BA / APCMH

Mondays 2pm - 5pm

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: 020 7724 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

10.00am-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: 020 7435 7920
or Jean Marsham: 020 8455 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 & What of Being Alongside

Patron	Bishop Stephen Sykes	
Patron	Professor Andrew Sims	
Chair	Stephan Ball	0844 800 9744
Company Secretary	Mark Dadds	020 7724 8517
Membership Secretary	Mark Dadds	020 7724 8517
Co-ordinator	Pam Freeman	020 8647 3678
Web Master	Lionel Perkin	webman@pastoral.org.uk
Newsletter Editor	Steve Press	01303 277399
Printer	PrintInc	printinc2@btconnect.com

'Being Alongside' is the operational name for the 'Association for Pastoral Care in Mental Health', (APCMH), 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 at the Registered and Administrative office at:

St Paul's Centre, 5 Rossmore Road, Marylebone, London NW1 6NJ

tel: 0844 800 9744 (calls 5p / minute) / net: www.pastoral.org.uk

registered charity: 1081642

limited company: 3957730

All submissions welcomed by the Editor.

e-mail: steve.press@pastoral.org.uk

post: 9 St George's Road, Folkestone, Kent. CT19 4BE

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

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Book from Sue Holt

Psychotic Interlude is available from all bookshops / online or through [www.chipmunka publishing](http://www.chipmunka-publishing.com). Most libraries will order it. Published by Chipmunka ISBN 9781847479204

One review:- Sue Holt is very much a significant poet for me, as she raises, in stark terms, the vital question of why some mental health services seem to ignore the main motivating spark in people's lives, their spirituality and belief systems.

This new book of poems has a searing intensity as they come at a time of profound challenge and searching for Sue, and we follow her on that journey.

Sue reminds us of our own need to belong to something more, other people, nature and to the Divine.

She speaks of God 'wrapping sacred arms around', and we all need to remember our common humanity, our search for something outside ourselves, and to reconnect.

Peter Gilbert

Professor of Social Work and Spirituality at Staffordshire University,
and NIMHE lead on Spirituality.

Sue

Caught in the Net...

Visit <http://www.healthtalkonline.org/> a very useful internet site with lots of info about various illnesses & conditions, including MH issues. Has video clips with text transcriptions of interviews with sufferers talking of their experiences - good and bad: what / who helped and didn't.

Much to watch and read, so take your time.

Register to get 'right to reply' to the Forums.

Certainly one to 'bookmark' & resort to, if not to logon daily.

~ ba ~

In This Issue

Front Page: A5 Sister Theresa Pountney	p 2
C.B.T. For the Doc!	p 3
Poem: To Gabrielle: Irene Stubbs	p 6
Red Marbles	p 7
Sign Here? - a Petition	p 9
Another Phone Scam	p 10
Poem: Cheerful Cookies: Jean Wearn Wallace	p 11
Song: The Healing: Ian Young	p 12
An Email!	p 13
Day Conference: See What You Missed?	p 14
New DVD on Dementia & Spirituality	p 15

Many thanks to all our contributors! Your offerings are so vital. Copy is welcome from all areas of the community. We appreciate a well balanced magazine, but I can only put in what I receive - so I hope you're working on your next piece...!

Copy for next issue - due January 1st - to the editor by December 1st please, but sooner is always more helpful!

Front Page:

Reflections Throughout the Summer

by Sr Theresa Pountney

As we enter into the long winter months, I would like to reflect on the wonderful summer and autumn colours and my holiday breaks. Throughout the year I have been able to take walks in some of our wonderful London parks. During August we held a Holiday Club at St. Paul's Centre and we visited both Hyde Park and Regent's Park. In Hyde Park we were taken around in a trolley train, visiting Kensington Gardens as well, and some of our MH groups joined in with us. During the summer I also had an afternoon at Kew Gardens and was able to look at the wonderful colours in the trees.

I had a tremendous holiday in Edinburgh, learning about the history of that place. Also, in August, I helped on a mission in Porthcawl, South Wales, another very different experience of beauty of the sea, busyness of working with children and adults in a different environment and seeking to meet their needs in mind, body and spirit. Some of these folk had MH difficulties or were caring for relatives and friends who were affected by MH difficulties. During that time in the chapel we had a prayer net and brought the needs to our Lord daily. I really loved my bus pass prayer pilgrimage from Bath to Truro.

During the months of August to October I heard the news that Liz, who helped us out at the Marylebone St. Paul's group for many years, was taken ill and this week I attended her funeral and said my goodbyes to her as she made her journey to Glory.

On my recent trips up to Newcastle, seeing her in her vulnerable and weak condition, I was also reminded of her amazing strength despite her many disabilities and needs. This also linked up with my reflections on my bus prayer pilgrimage and my thoughts on mental health.

In her illness and weakness, the strength of Liz's faith shone through, especially when we sang, "Turn your eyes upon Jesus" and when Liz joined in it was as if she was ministering to us. When we came to say our

DVD: It's Still ME, Lord...

The launch of a new DVD on dementia and spirituality, *It's Still ME, Lord...* took place on Tuesday 13th October at the Cathedral Centre in Salford.

Following an introduction by Rt Rev Terence J Brain, Bishop of Salford, there were short talks by the keynote speaker Professor Peter Gilbert and Reverend Dr James Hanvey SJ.

Ben Bano from *Telos Training* then introduced and provided a background to the rationale of the film. There was some time for questions and discussion before lunch.

It is hoped that you will find that the DVD reflects and builds upon the experiences of carers and practitioners in meeting the spiritual needs of people with dementia. It is hoped that the film can be a source of raising awareness and highlighting best practice on issues faced by those working in this area.

More information from:-

Philippa Gitlin, Director Caritas Social Action Network, or,
Lesley Versprille, Office and Events Co-ordinator, Caritas Social Action Network. Email Lesley.Versprille@cbcew.org.uk

Treacles Treasures

Est – 2009



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Thank You – Treacle



See What You Missed!



The photos here were taken at Jean Marsham's day conference on *Alternative Methods of Dealing with Mental Stress* at St Andrew's URC, Frogna Lane Hampstead, on 21 October. It was informative and fun with lots of insights as to how 'alternative' approaches can help practically with the burden of mental

illness.

Above is Autogenic Therapist Deidre King, left, chatting with Redwood; centre shows Alexander Technique Instructor Roz Hewitt helping lying down Susan eliminate physical stress.

The day also featured homeopathic medicine as presented by practitioner Francis Treuherz, and Isabel Clarke, a Consultant Clinical Psychologist at an Acute Mental Health Hospital. Once a serious student of medieval history, always interested in spiritual matters, Isabel now supports the emerging Spiritual Crisis Network as a volunteer.



Rev'd Chris MacKenna, Director of the Healing and Counselling Centre at St Marylebone Church and Chaplain to The Guild of Health steered the closing plenary session.



Jean, centre, with daughter Jessica left, and Suzanne Heneghan right, explored how a bipolar condition affects familial relationships.

More next issue!

final goodbyes to her, in the company of friends who knew and loved her throughout the years, we realized what a legacy she had left in our personal lives.

When I visited the cathedrals we realized what an historical and spiritual legacy we were given by those Christians from earlier centuries. In our mental health groups, whether we are a carer, fellow sufferer or someone who cares deeply about those affected by MH difficulties, let us continue to care and appreciate each other. Let us remember the words of St. Paul that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. (Romans 8)

"For I am convinced that neither death or 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."

Maybe the words of this hymn will help you in your need and weakness:

*"Because He lives I can face tomorrow,
Because He lives all fear is gone,
Because I know He holds the future
And life is worth the living because He lives."*

Sr Theresa Pountney

C.B.T for the Doc!

(CBT) Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is regarded by many as the 'talking therapy' of choice for many mh issues. By encouraging us to examine what we are thinking, we have a chance to question the underlying assumptions and perhaps change ('re-frame') them. If we can 're-frame' our perceived 'problems' as 'opportunities for learning', then we put ourselves in a possible 'win' situation. Instead of just enduring a 'problem', we can claim some self esteem as we survive, cope, learn and move on, rather than just suffering repeated blows.

This piece is from Dr Gerald Jampolsky's classic book *Love is Letting Go of Fear*. He had to seriously 're-frame' his first assumptions about a tight situation, because had he proceeded with 'received wisdom' the consequences might have been fatal...

The following personal vignette may help to illustrate today's lesson. The episode took place in 1951 at Stanford Lane Hospital, which was then located in San Francisco.

The situation was one in which I felt trapped and immobilized by fear. I was feeling emotional pain, and thought I was threatened with potential physical pain. The past was certainly coloring my perception of the present, and I was surely not experiencing inner peace or joy.

I was called at 2am one Sunday morning to see a patient on the locked psychiatric ward who had suddenly gone berserk. The patient, whom I had not seen before, had been admitted the previous afternoon with a diagnosis of acute schizophrenia. About ten minutes before I saw him, he had removed the wooden moulding from around the door.

I looked through the small window in the door, and saw a man six feet four inches tall weighing 20 stone. He was running around the room nude, carrying this large piece of wood with nails sticking out, and talking gibberish. I really didn't know what to do. There were two male nurses, both of whom seemed scarcely five feet tall, who said, "We will be right behind you, Doc." I didn't find that reassuring.

As I continued to look through the window, I began to recognize how scared the patient was, and then it began to trickle into my consciousness how scared I was. All of a sudden it occurred to me that he and I had a common bond that might allow for unity - namely, that we were both scared.

Not knowing what else to do, I yelled through the thick door,

"My name is Dr. Jampolsky and I want to come in and help you, but I'm scared. I'm scared that I might get hurt, and I'm scared you might get hurt, and I can't help wondering if you aren't scared, too."

With this, he stopped his gibberish, turned around and said, "You're goddamn right, I'm scared."

Play it Again, Sam - but Better!

A hopeful story heard recently...

A violinist was but a few bars into a virtuoso piece and a string broke. A hush descended over the auditorium as the audience wondered what he would do.

Calmly, he removed the offending tethers and gestured towards the conductor to begin again.

At the end, he turned to the crowds and said

Sometimes, when you lose a string and you have to struggle on with three, you find the tune is just as good, even sweeter for it.

He was then helped from his wheelchair - for he was a polio sufferer - to receive rapturous applause.

Steve Press

www.pastoral.org.uk

An Email..!

I noticed your editor comment after the Cherokee story (p11 Sep - Oct issue) and it caught my attention.

The point I thought it made, as I understood it, is that all our perceptions are created by our own mind.

What our mind loves grows in our mind; what our mind fears grows in our mind.

In my experience, both lead to a form of delusion, which needs to be tempered with reality. Perhaps our false perception, or delusion, is the "shadow" to which you refer. These are just my thoughts

a reader from Birmingham

Come on, folks do chip in your pennyworth...

Song: *The Healing*

Dear Steve

I am submitting this poem composed by our nephew Ian Young. Ian plays in a band, and writes the lyrics for the songs. These are lyrics for one of the songs the band sings, and I wondered if they would be suitable for publication in *Being Alongside*.

Sheila MacPherson

The Healing

I came up to you
Your head in your hands
Tears falling through
onto the sands

Then I looked close
into your eyes
All that hurt
come and hold me tight

ain't the first time
you lying on the floor
mentally abused
but you go back for more

well ... its been done
this much unkind
now let me in
to heal your mind

Chorus

*You're Beautiful .. beautiful
Beautiful you are inside
beautiful ... beautiful
Beautiful is your mind*

Talk to me
let it all out
and if you want
scream and shout

Oh Oh Ohhh No
I can now see
Listen listen listen
To me oh please

Shut them out
Slam the door
You don't need this
Or want it anymore

Its deep inside you
I know that you are
Help me dig it out
you bright shining star

You're alright ... alright
you're alright ... alright
get outa that hole
And into the ... Light

Chorus

Ian Young

I continued yelling to him, telling him how scared I was, and he was yelling back how scared he was. In a sense we became therapists to each other. As we talked, our fear disappeared and our voices calmed down. He then allowed me to walk in alone, talk with him and give him some oral medication and leave.

This was a very powerful and important learning experience. At first I saw the patient as a potential enemy who was going to hurt me. (My past told me that anyone who seemed disturbed and had a club in his hand was dangerous.) I chose not to use the manipulative device of authority which would have only served to create more fear and separation.

When I found a common bond in our fearful attitudes and sincerely asked for his help, he joined me. We were then in a position of helping each other. When I saw this patient as my teacher rather than my enemy, he helped me recognize that *perhaps we are all equally insane and that it is only the form of our insanity that is different.* (italics by editor).

To finish, an affirmation:

I am determined today that all my thoughts be free from fear, guilt or condemnation, whether of myself or others, by repeating: I can elect to change all thoughts that hurt.

Love is Letting Go of Fear by Gerald G. Jampolsky MD

Paperback: 152 pages; Publisher: Celestial Arts; 25th Anniversary edition edition (Jun 2004), ISBN-13: 978-1587611964

Pillow Talk

1] In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes. When you pulled the ropes the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. Hence the phrase: 'Sleep tight.'

2] It was custom in Babylon 4,000 years ago that for a month after the wedding, the bride's father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink. Mead is a honey beer and this period was called the honey month. We know this today as the 'honeymoon' possibly because the passage of months was measured by the moon's phases.

~ ba ~

To Gabrielle

This poem is a gift from mother to schoolgirl daughter.
It hopes for a bright tomorrow whilst realising life
cannot be all plain sailing.

Dear Gabrielle on your Saint's Feast Day

I wish you joy in many a way.

You have your beliefs I have mine

But we'll all agree in God's good time.

I wish you faith, hope and love

Which you are so deserving of.

Not only these I wish for you

But happiness all your lifetime through -

The anxious years that lie ahead

As on this earth your footsteps tread.

So many things - art, journalism, teaching, law

I pray you'll find the one you most adore.

I wanted you so many years

And loved you through the laughter and tears

That this world brings to us poor mortals

(though really life is not that awful!)

We have to take life's joys and sorrows

And look for even brighter tomorrows.

**Irene E. Stubbs*

Poem: Cheerful Cookies



*Get out the happy bowl
Merrily measure out
Carefree fluffy flour
Bubbly balls of butter
Lots of laughing sugar
Some dancing eggs*

*Swirl it all together
Add a pinch of passion
Put spoonfuls of confection
On the beautiful baking tray
Engulf in the oven
Heat tickled to perfection
As it takes the rise*

Consume while warm To let the cheer out

Jean Wearn Wallace

Help is at Hand

Samaritans:	08457 909090
Saneline:	08457 678000
Rethink Advisory Service:	020 8974 6814
Young Minds Parents' Information Service:	08000 182138
Carers in the Community:	01642 818332
MIND:	08457 660163
Maytree	020 7263 7070

~ ba ~

Another Phone 'Scam'...

I received a call from a 'representative' of BT, informing me that he was dis-connecting me because of an unpaid bill. He demanded payment immediately of £31.00, or it would be £118.00 to re-connect at a later date.

The guy wasn't even fazed when I told him I was with Virgin! I asked his name - he replied with the very 'English' name 'John Peacock' but in a very 'African' accent - and gave his phone number as 0800 **** *.

Obviously he realized I wasn't believing his story, so he offered to demonstrate that he was from BT. He told me to hang up & try phoning someone - he would dis-connect my phone to prevent this. AND HE DID !! My phone was dead - no engaged tone, nothing - until he phoned me again.

Very pleased with himself, he asked if that was enough proof that he was with BT. I asked how the payment was to be made & he said credit card, there & then. I said that I didn't know how he'd done it, but I had absolutely no intention of paying him, I didn't believe his name or that he worked for BT. He hung up.....

I did 1471 & phoned his 0800 number - this was not recognised!

I phoned the police to let them know, to be told I wasn't the first with this scam! Apparently it's only just started, but it is escalating.

Their advice was to let people know. The fact that the phone line does seemingly go off would probably convince some people it's real. The cutting off of the line is very simple, so simple that it will certainly fool some elderly and/or vulnerable people.

Please pass this on to friends and family and be on your guard.

~ ba ~

Just a Reminder.

If you require **extra copies** of *Being Alongside*, or, your copy has **failed to arrive in the post**, contact **Pam**: 020 8647 3678.

If your **download** copy has failed, contact **Steve**: 01303 277399

If you have a query about your **membership / subscription** status, please contact **Mark Dadds**: 020 7724 8517

Red Marbles

The www is a great source and re-source of very 'human' homilies. This tender piece, get the Kleenex now - shows the sort of heroes we need. Olympic champions & football victories might raise morale, but we need heroes for more than just one day - apologies to David Bowie!. For brevity, I have wielded an editorial pencil!!

I was at the corner grocery store buying some early potatoes when I noticed a small, rather delicate boy, hungrily apprising a basket of freshly picked green peas. Pondering the peas, I couldn't help overhearing the conversation between Mr. Miller (the store owner) and the ragged boy next to me.

'Hello Barry, how are you today?'

'H'lo, Mr. Miller. Fine, thank ya. Jus' admirin' them peas. They sure look good.'

'They are good, Barry. How's your Ma?'

'Fine. Gittin' stronger alla' time.'

'Good. Anything I can help you with?'

'No, Sir. Jus' admirin' them peas.'

'Would you like to take some home?' asked Mr. Miller.

'No, Sir. Got nuthin' to pay for 'em with.'

'Well, what have you got to trade me for some of those peas?'

'All I got's my prize marble here.'

'Is that right? Let me see it' said Miller.

'Here 'tis. She's a dandy.'

'I can see that. Hmmm, only thing is this one is blue and I sort of go for red. Do you have a red one like this at home?' the store owner asked.

'Not zackley but almost...'

'Tell you what. Take this sack of peas home with you and next trip this way let me look at that red marble'. Mr. Miller told the boy.

'Sure will. Thanks Mr. Miller.'

Mrs. Miller came over to say, 'There are two other boys like him in our community, all three are in very poor circumstances. Jim just loves to bargain with them for peas, apples, tomatoes, whatever. When they come back with their red marbles, and they always do, he decides he doesn't like red after all and he sends them home with a bag of produce for a green marble or an orange one, when they come on their next trip to the store.'

I left the store smiling to myself, impressed with this man. A short time later I moved to Colorado, but I never forgot the story. Several years went by, and I had occasion to visit some old friends in that Idaho community and while I was there learned that Mr. Miller had died. They were having his visitation that evening and knowing my friends wanted to go, I agreed to accompany them. At the mortuary we met the relatives of the deceased and to offer whatever words of comfort we could.

Ahead of us were three young men. One in an army uniform and the other two wore nice haircuts, dark suits and white shirts...all very professional looking. They approached Mrs. Miller, standing composed and smiling by her husband's casket. Each of the young men hugged her, kissed her on the cheek, spoke briefly with her and moved on to the casket.

One by one, each young man stopped briefly and placed his own warm hand over the cold pale hand in the casket. Each left the mortuary awkwardly, wiping his eyes.

Our turn came to meet Mrs. Miller. I told her who I was and reminded her of what she had told me about her husband's bartering for marbles. With her eyes glistening, she took my hand and led me to the casket.

'Those three young men who just left were the boys I told you about. They just told me how they appreciated the things Jim 'traded' them. Now, at last, when Jim could not change his mind about colour or size . . . they came to pay their debt. 'We've never had a great deal of the wealth of this world,' she confided, 'but right now, Jim would consider himself the richest of all.'

With loving gentleness she lifted her husband's lifeless fingers. Resting underneath were three exquisitely shined red marbles.

The Moral: We will not be remembered by our words, but by our kind deeds. Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath.. It's not what you gather but what you scatter that shows what kind of life you have lived.

~ ba ~

Sign Here?

Hi Folks

I am writing to ask you to please take a few moments to sign the petition against the proposed elimination of Attendance Allowance, & potentially Disability Living Allowance too.

Please find a detailed description, along with a petition to sign, here..
<http://www.benefitsandwork.co.uk/disability-living-allowance-%28dla%29/dla-aa-cuts>

Please help by signing the petition & also by sharing this information, to all those that you know, &/or, are members of your support group etc.

To sign your support you do not need to be in receipt of either of these benefits, nor do you need to be disabled, chronically ill or a carer etc. But please bear in mind that illness & disability does not discriminate and can strike anyone at any time.

As the Benefits & Work web page says..

'If we let them get away with this, if we all look the other way as one and a half million sick and disabled pensioners have their attendance allowance stolen from them and are plunged into deepest poverty, how long do you honestly think it will be before the government comes back to steal your benefits as well?'

And who will you ask to speak out for you in the future, if you remain silent now, just because you don't think this affects you?'

Thank you for your time, & in advance of your help & support.

Yours Sincerely,

Judy Hiron

(33 year old female long term sufferer of multiple chronic illnesses, ME, Fibromyalgia, Central Nervous System Disorder, Autoimmune disorders)