

Dear ACC Members

Hopefully, everyone will have received last weeks' newsletter. If not please check your junk folder.

We appreciate that the majority of items that follow are mainly of interest to our counsellor members. However, Pastoral Care members we hope will be pleased to know that we have set-up a space on the website for resources that may be helpful during the current times. It can be accessed here <https://www.acc-uk.org/news/hidden-holding-pages/pastoral-care-during-covid-19.html>

We would like to highlight to all members the revised dates for our AGM (July 2020) and Conference (February 2022) in item 8 below.

1. Collecting Experiences – Counsellors and Pastoral Carers

We have so valued the emails you have been sending us about life under lockdown and how it has impacted you and your practice and ministries. We would like to collect more of these experiences for publication in Accord and on our website. We invite anyone who has something that would like to share in terms of their experience to send in a short piece of between 200 and 600 words to office@acc-uk.org.

2. Updated IAPT Manual

Xanthe Townend the Programme Lead for IAPT has apologised to us for the delay in updating the IAPT manual. The work is now complete and can be accessed by following this link.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/the-improving-access-to-psychological-therapies-manual/>

Pages 73-74 include the listing for ACC accredited members.

3. NCS Accreditation now Eligible for Transfer

We are pleased to announce that the Board of ACC have re-evaluated NCS's accreditation process and has opened ACC's Accreditation Transfer Route to ACC registrants who have Accredited Professional Registrant status with NCS. Further information about the transfer process can be found on ACC's website <https://www.acc-uk.org/acc-membership/become-an-accredited-counsellor-copy.html>

4. On-Line Events Library to be opened for ACC Counsellors for FREE

Many of you have told us that you are finding the series of workshops on counselling on-line provided by on-line events to be helpful. We have also enjoyed the gentle and accessible style of John Wilson and he will be helping us with some events (see 9 below) to get us up and started on using Zoom for larger audiences.

In the light of these experiences, the continuing uncertainty about when we counsellors can safely resume working face to face with clients, and knowing that many of our counsellor members have experienced a reduction in clients as a consequence,

ACC want to provide support for its members and so this week the Board decided to purchase access to On Line events library of CPD training for ACC members. This will mean that this facility will be FREE for all members for a six month period. It may take a few weeks for On-Line events to set this up for us. When this is ready will be in touch with details of how to log on etc.

We hope that for some members this will be a valuable resource and a cost-free way of completing their CPD requirements for this coming period.

5. Latest Government Guidance.

As lockdown is slowly being lifted for some people who can now return to work, the question arises of when it is likely that counselling and pastoral care can be restored to its more normal forms of relating.

ACC's advice to our members is unchanged: everyone must follow government guidance. The introduction of an alert system and phased lifting of restrictions gives a broad sense of what might happen when in various parts of the U.K.– albeit that the devolved governments are moving at different paces. Uncertainty remains as a salient factor for all of us in relation to when it might be safe to start back meeting people face to face.

Having read the latest government guidelines for England, it is hard to see how counsellors in private practice, counselling centres and training organisations could justify opening under the current 'go back to work if you can't work at home' for construction, manufacturing and science industries directive, nor how they could implement the requisite safety measures to do so. The same applies for PC-UK members, who also need to follow the guidance set out up their local churches or organisations.

While this may be frustrating for some of you and for some clients – there seems little choice but to carry on in this fluid and uncertain world, acknowledging that the clarity we desire is not readily available to us.

6. Grants for the Self Employed.

Somewhat earlier than planned the Governments Self-employment support scheme is now open. To check if you are eligible go to <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme>

7. Sample Contracts for On-Line Working

As people have adjusted to new ways of working, we have not updated our general COVID-19 information on the website for some time. However, in response to a request several of our members have put up some sample contracts for working on-line provided by members that might be of value as a comparison.

8. Doxy.me

One of our members has recommended a product called www.doxy.me which is telemedicine online video conferencing application. Its end to end encrypted, holds no data - erasing the meeting and is also HIPAA compliant, which means that if there were any breaches the company would be liable giving them the incentive to keep the application safe. In addition, there's no software to download just sending an invitation link to your waiting room to your client and apparently, it's free.

9. Events

Tuesday 26th May 7-8 pm

Q&A Session on the COVID-19 Crisis Counselling Support Service

Sue Moncton-Rickett, Chair of ACC and Kathy Spooner, Director of Counselling will be joined by some of the volunteers who have set up the CCSS to respond to any questions from members and anyone who has volunteered for the scheme.

This will be a Zoom workshop and details will be sent to everyone who has registered as a volunteer. If you are a member and would like to attend, please let us know and we will send you the link.

Wednesday 15th July -10 am – 1.30 pm

ACC's AGM and Training Event.

We have Kay Lawrence who will be presenting some thoughts and ideas about despair and suicidal thoughts, followed by ACC's first on-line AGM. We hope that this will attract many more members that can normally attend in person and look forward to welcoming you to the event. At the AGM we will be holding elections to the Board and attached to this e-mail is a Board Nomination Form. Two Board members have agreed to stand for re-election, but we are also asking for nominations and are particularly looking for Board members with experience and expertise in marketing / promotion and legal areas.

Saturday 19th – Tuesday 22nd February 2022

ACC's National Conference

Due to continued uncertainty we have taken the difficult decision to postpone our National Biennial Conference until February 2022. The theme remains based on Galatians 3 v28 – how we work as counsellors and pastoral carers with difference and inclusion, however, we can see the programme expanding to include reflections on the impact of COVID-19 on counselling and pastoral care.

We already have some interesting training streams lined up for this conference and will be working hard in the next few months to finalise the programme, but please book out the dates now!! After lock-down it will be so lovely to see many of you in person again.

10. Funeral and Donations for Ros Hick

You may remember from last week's newsletter that sadly one of our members, Ros Hick has passed away. Ros' funeral is being held under current restrictions on Friday 22nd May at 2.30 pm. Anyone who knew her is invited to pause, reflect and give thanks for her life at that time.

Attached is a tribute from her daughter Elly and details of how to make a donation in Ros' memory.

11. Mental Health Awareness Week 18th to 24th May 2020 (more details www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

This year's theme is KINDNESS

The Mental Health Foundation says this about Kindness "it is defined by doing something towards yourself and others, motivated by genuine desire to make a positive difference. We know from the research that [kindness and our mental health are deeply connected](#). The research shows that kindness is an antidote to isolation and creates a sense of belonging. It helps reduce stress, brings a fresh perspective and deepens friendships. Kindness to ourselves can prevent shame from corroding our sense of identity and help boost our self-esteem. Kindness can even improve feelings of confidence and optimism.

It is of course listed as one part of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5 and Proverbs 16 v 24 says "Kind words are like honey – sweet to the soul and healthy for the body". As pastoral carers and counsellors we are all probably very good at showing kindness to others – it is what we do, but we are often not so good at showing kindness to ourselves. So, during this week – be KIND TO YOURSELF – say kind words to yourself and do something that is kind to yourself – look after your own well-being.

Best wishes

The ACC Team