

Editorial

John O'Connor, and Wiremu Woodard (Tuhoe)

Korihi te manu	The bird sings
Tākiri mai i te ata	The morning has dawned
Ka ao, ka ao, ka awatea	The day has broken
Tihei Mauri Ora!	Behold, there is life!

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā manu tioriori, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa!

Jean Knox (2013) noted that in his seminal paper, *The Ailment*, Tom Main (1957) observed that in response to the “special patient” (someone whom many of us would now understand as a person tormented by traumatic early relational experience), the psychotherapist often experiences guilt “accompanied by compulsive reparative efforts and omnipotent attempts to be ideal” (Main, 1957, p. 140). Main noted that when attempts at “super therapy” fail the therapist can switch from omnipotent rescuer to persecuting hater. Jessica Benjamin (2004) similarly noted how frightened the rigidly organised psyche is of feeling like the “bad one”, and emphasises the importance of the co-construction of a symbolic third between therapist and patient, one in which each can hear the other’s voices and their own. Knox (2013) described the centrality of emotional contagion to the experience of empathy, whilst also emphasising the capacity to think as well as feel: to feel for the patient, and to draw on our ability to contain and bear without defensiveness, in order to create new relational experience within the intersubjective third. As Benjamin (2009) suggested, “I can hear both your voice and mine as can you, without one cancelling the other out: I can hear more than one part of yourself, you can hear more than one part of yourself — especially not only the part that is negating me, but also the complementary part that I’ve been carrying as you negate it” (p. 442).

We suggest that there is a parallel between the above ideas, and the clinical and collegial challenges of being a psychotherapist in contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand. There are many different voices requesting, if not demanding, our therapeutic loyalty. We are all challenged to hear the voice of the “other” whilst retaining our own mind, as we seek to develop dialogue together, to understand our theoretical, cultural and multiple other differences, seeking to deepen the inter-psychic and intersubjective field between us, in the service of diverse and creative clinical practice.

We think the contributions to this issue of *Ata: Journal of Psychotherapy Aotearoa New Zealand* reflect the opportunities and tensions of the challenges we all face, both in our

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collegial relations and in our clinical work. We are delighted therefore to present a diversity of voices reflecting upon psychotherapy in contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand.

We are very pleased to present John Farnsworth's stimulating, insightful and wide-ranging exploration of the nature of contemporary psychoanalytic relationality, including consideration of the historical context out of which this has emerged, the many tensions that result, and the invitation to the reader to navigate these tensions with flexibility within the "hothouse" of the clinical moment.

Emma Green and Margot Solomon provide a sensitive, hermeneutically informed exploration of the first author's use of somatic counter transference when working with anorexic presentations. The authors' observations and considerations, offered through the lens of a hermeneutic sensibility, provide a moving and thoughtful exploration of soma and psyche in relation to this delicate clinical work.

Gabriela Mercado offers us a delightful and illuminating opportunity to listen in on her warm and intelligent conversation with the renowned psychoanalyst and writer Patrick Casement. London-based Casement has influenced many of us here in Aotearoa New Zealand, and to read of his insights in conversation with Gabriela is a pleasure. The experience of reading this interview provides the opportunity to continue learning from this remarkable psychoanalyst.

Helen Palmer provides an evocative, potent and invaluable exploration of how culture shapes identity and the challenges this presents for us all. She utilises a psychosynthesis lens, very much located within the Aotearoa New Zealand context, to explore the challenges and possibilities of recognising our shared humanity whilst engaging deeply across cultural differences. Her paper, which Helen originally delivered as a keynote address to a conference in Oslo, movingly explores the creative tensions that the Aotearoa New Zealand cultural landscape offers. She emphasises the essential need for us all to move beyond the violence of reactive "othering", and by contrast describes the enriching possibilities a psychosynthesis lens, and in particular its practice of disidentification, offers for deep cross-cultural work, both here and overseas.

John O'Connor invites us to stand at the waharoa (gateway) of the marae, and from this standing place, to consider the cultural histories each of us brings to the cross-cultural clinical encounter; the many emotional tensions such encounters might evoke, and the implications these have for cross-cultural clinical work. In particular, John considers potential shame dynamics in the encounter between indigenous Māori and non-Māori within the Aotearoa New Zealand psychotherapeutic clinical context. John includes reflections upon his own cultural histories and difficult clinical experiences to illuminate the tensions and opportunities of emotionally infused cross-cultural clinical work.

Finally, Anna Fleming provides a stimulating discussion of John O'Connor's paper, as she encourages us to find our own place to stand, neither submitting to, nor avoiding the challenges of, cross-cultural clinical work, but grappling for genuine engagement.

We hope the combination of articles in this issue proves enriching for readers.

We thank Hineira Woodard for her generous and expert work providing te reo Māori interpretations of the abstracts; tēnā koe, Hineira. Our deep thanks to our creative, skilful, unfailingly cheerful and always punctual designer Katy Yiakmis; tēnā koe, Katy. We are delighted that Nikky Winchester has joined our team as our editorial assistant. Nikky has

brought a keen eye for detail to this role and we are greatly appreciative of her dedicated contribution to the preparation of this issue: tēnā koe Nikky. Finally, we thank you, the reader (NZAP member or subscriber), for your continuing support of the Journal; we hope you will find this issue an evocative, provocative, enjoyable and engaging read, and we look forward to editing the next issue.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

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