

Editorial

Margot Solomon

I don't have nothing only words to put down on paper. Its so hard. Some times theres mor in the emty paper nor there is when you get the writing down on it. You try to word the big things and they tern ther backs on you. (Hoban, 1980. P. 161.)

This quote is from a novel called Riddley Walker, set two thousand years after a nuclear war, "the one big one." It "looks to the moment in the postholocaust future when humanity, well into its second Iron Age, begins once again to pursue knowledge that will destroy it" (Coward, 2009). The novel addresses problems of being human, those which we approach every day in our work as psychotherapists – and in this quote, the problem of expressing ineffable experience in a language that is inadequate.

I have never considered myself a writer, which is one reason for liking the quote from Riddley. New Zealand psychotherapists are reluctant writers. I want to thank all those who have been willing to show yourselves through your writing and also those who have participated in the process, the peer reviewers and the subeditors.

As I approach writing my last editorial for the NZAP journal I reflect on my role as editor. I have learnt a great deal about the process and hope to pass my learning on to the new team. The 2008 journal has been slow to come to print. This is due to the editor's struggle with ill health and workload. I apologise to those who have been waiting. The journal is packed full of tasty morsels, and each paper brings a perspective from the experience of the psychotherapist-writer that enriches the reader's reflection on their own practice. The subjectivity of the psychotherapist and the intersubjective process are central to the papers.

Four of the papers in the journal were presented at the conference in Waitangi, which had the theme "Imagining the other: initial contact in the psychotherapy relationship".

We start with a new departure: a paper is presented and then discussed by two writers. Paul Solomon's paper introduces the use of vipassana meditation as a resource for psychotherapists to enable a greater awareness of countertransference responses, especially body countertransference. The respondents are Josie Goulding and Paul Bailey.

Mark and Miranda Thorpe explore the ways immigrant psychotherapists induct themselves into the new culture. Immigrants have much to offer us if we can bear to listen. Each new person brings a fresh perspective to the culture that we take for granted. At the same time immigrants travel their own journey of mourning and discovery.

Keith Tudor, who is coming from the U.K. to join us in 2009 in Auckland. He offers the conceptual framework of organismic psychology to engage with the encounter with other. He uses the language of the arts and the psychotherapy language of humanism.

Ann Speirs, Sandra Buchanan and Grant Dillon all invite us to journey with them as they reflect on their clinical work. Ann takes us inside the process of training to be a psychotherapist with a specialist focus on the therapeutic community, although her ideas are applicable to any training experience. Sandra does a rare thing: she brings us the essence of an NZAP case-study. Grant's honest and deep reflections on his bi-cultural experience with his client Aria offers us the chance to reflect on our own assumptions and deeply held theories and practices.

Jonathan Fay considers conservative, liberal and radical orientations to psychotherapy, and recognises the dialectical potential of encompassing all three. Jonathan's paper has the potential to help us clarify our thinking as our psychotherapy association faces the changes that registration is bringing.

Finally, the theme of meeting the other is continued in John O'Connor's review of "Penina Uliuli". I hope you enjoy reading the journal and perhaps may even be inspired to contribute to a future issue.

References

Hoban, R. (1980). Riddley Walker. Summit Books: New York.

Cowart, D., (1989) The terror of history: Riddley Walker. Retrieved 19/4/09 from:
<http://www.ocelotfactory.com/hoban/cowart1.html>