

# Editorial

*Keith Tudor and Alayne Hall (Ngāti Whatua, Te Rarawa, Tainui)*

E ngā waka, e ngā mana, e ngā hau e wha, ngā mihi mahana i tenei tau hou ki a koutou arā me to whānau hoki. Tenā koutou, tenā koutou, tenā koutou, katoa. He tino hari maua, i te tari putanga na *Ata: Journal of Psychotherapy Aotearoa New Zealand*. To the many talented and esteemed who are propelled together by the four winds, spread throughout the islands, we warmly greet you and your families in this New Year and we are pleased to introduce another issue of *Ata*. We are, as ever, thankful to the Council of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP) for its commitment to deliver a journal that offers members a wide range of informative articles, and we encourage you all to participate in the current consultation about the journal. We have contributed to this outside the privilege of the Editorial (see Tudor & Hall, 2015). All we want to say here is that we are grateful to Council for its response to our — and other colleagues' — wish to have a discussion; we look forward to the outcome of the consultation and a decision that will settle the future of the journal one way or another. In the meantime, the journal continues to be available online to NZAP members on the members' area of the NZAP website and will be available by subscription.

In keeping with the cycle of issues we have established, this special issue is based on the theme of the NZAP's 2015 Annual Conference, held in Christchurch, "Shifting Ground". We are inspired by the efforts and determination of the 2015 Christchurch Conference Organising Committee and their ability to reflect on both the individual and community strength required to re-build both the personal and community life of a city damaged by natural disaster. Appropriately enough, the theme of "Shifting Ground" provides the ground to the six articles in this issue, which cover a range of intrapsychic difficulties and their components. We were pleased and delighted to see the return of Fakhry Davids to Aotearoa New Zealand as the keynote guest speaker alongside Pele Fa'auli. Together their ideologies portrayed shared notions whilst contrasting psychoanalytic tradition and the spiritually grounded tradition of Māori as tangata whenua (people of the land), aptly portraying how life problems and events are shaped by environment and are context-dependent.

The first article is based on Fakhry Davids' two keynote presentations "Shifting Ground in Aotearoa New Zealand: A psychoanalyst's view". Fakhry's article discusses the notion of mourning and aggression. He skilfully articulates these processes firstly through his personal experiences and observations and reflections on a bicultural profession. Secondly, and what follows, is a clinical illustration of Fakhry's work with a patient over a five-year period detailing the unconscious shifts occurring throughout his therapy sessions with a Muslim woman. Fakhry's respectful psychoanalytic engagement highlights the tensions that are encountered and made manifest when two cultures meet and one's sense of identity is threatened. The relevance of mourning and aggression are noted as important intrapsychic

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processes that must be addressed sensitively in the analytic relationship. In particular, Fakhry illustrates the incumbent difficulties associated with cultural difference and culture as a defence when “native” or familiar patterns are confronted by the reality of a new cultural environment.

The second article, by Alayne Hall and Margaret Poutu Morice, reflects on the theme of conference as an appropriate description of the shifting ground between Māori and non-Māori, specifically in the field of psychotherapy. Alayne and Margaret, both founding members of Waka Oranga, acknowledge the significance of the return of the conference to Otautahi/Christchurch in 2015 as the site in 2009 of the NZAP’s historic vote for a constitutional change to the organisation as one that recognised Waka Oranga as its bicultural Treaty partner. The article discusses Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the basis of a (more) balanced relationship between Māori and Pākehā and Tau Iwi; the establishment of Waka Oranga; and the journey towards biculturalism in psychotherapy. In the context of the impact of the earthquakes in Christchurch, they also observe the differential impact on Māori and non-Māori. They remind us of the importance of our relationship with the ground — as in the earth, Papatuanuku — and use the image and metaphor of the ground to reflect the need both to hold our ground (in the face of opposition) and to negotiate our common ground, especially when it’s shifting.

Whilst not directly addressing the theme of the Conference, the remaining four articles in this issue are based on presentations made at Conference and were, therefore, perhaps influenced by the theme at a more subtle level. In any case, the reader is invited to consider to what extent the articles represent or reflect some shifting ground.

In the first of these, Mary Farrell examines what she refers to as seismic relationships, i.e., the needs and expectations of couples who present as supposedly happy in their relationships. Mary illustrates her theme by means of a case study which explores the pre-conscious and unconscious expectations of relationships and makes links with attachment-based needs, and by utilising extracts from the American television series *Mad Men* (Weiner, 2007), a 1960s period drama in which societal expectations of male and female roles are depicted. Vignettes from the television series are included to explain and illustrate some of the often smouldering and underlying forces that influence the nature of psychotherapy work with couples. These revealing associations are further supported by the inclusion of lyrics taken from songs by Bob Dylan (1964), Leonard Cohen (1967), and Paul Simon (1970). The reader is encouraged to consider those forces that are most destructive in relationships and to recognise the important role of the therapist in assisting couples to relinquish the false expectations they may have of each other, while viewing each other with greater honesty.

Next James Driver unpacks some of the underlying motivations that lead to gaming addiction. Based on his Master’s research and dissertation (Driver, 2014) and his presentation to the 2015 conference, James advocates that clinicians are better positioned to support clients when the functions of addictive behaviour are understood. He offers statistical evidence which highlights misconceptions and increasing negative outcomes associated with gaming exposure and accessibility. Drawing on both his research and his clinical experience, James provides a discussion that recognises the connection between addictive behaviour and the desire to experience purpose and meaning in life. Clinicians who work with clients with this form of addiction are encouraged to ask a series of questions which

help reveal and identify the motivating factors that are critical for understanding the nature of unmet needs and desires. The apparently superficial world of gaming provides the catalyst for experiences of achievement and potency seemingly unobtainable in the relationship with self and others. The challenges and rewards of gaming provide a tangible sense of achievement and potency. James also alerts us to the social aspects of gaming and gambling where multiplayer games involve interacting with others in the online community. These interactions can provide both positive and negative experiences where a sense of community and belonging are managed in an in-game environment. Paradoxically, problematic gaming and the association with positive in-game social experiences is connected with the client's inability to manage social anxieties (Lee & Leeson, 2015). James then explores connections with emotional regulation and "escape" as a defence for managing more challenging emotions (Hellstrom, Nilsson, Leppert, & Aslund, 2012). Again, clinicians working with clients with these issues are encouraged to explore them by means of a series of questions which assist the client to overcome their addictive tendencies, and to think about issues that are related to identity and self-expression.

In the next article, John Farnsworth and Gerald McLaurin offer a valuable discussion concerning the construction and development of psychodynamic formulation. John and Gerald offer insights and practical ideas which clearly illustrate the various steps to and in their approach. They encourage us to consider several models of formulation and conclude with a well-argued rationale for the effectiveness of two triangles: the Triangle of Persons (based on work developed at the Menninger Clinic, Houston, Texas, USA, and written up by Malan, 1979), involving the figures of parent, others, and therapist; and the Triangle of Insight (Jacobs, 2006), representing insight, transference, and the client-counsellor/therapist relationship. John and Gerald present these as two clinically applicable and relatively straightforward formulations, and provide illustrations and clinical examples in a way that enables the reader to make connections with the therapeutic content and to consider the various aspects of the therapeutic encounter.

Seán Manning provides us with a thought-provoking article arguing why psychotherapy should be a secular profession. The article begins with a discussion concerning religion and violence, drawing on biblical quotes to support his argument that Christianity and Islam are dangerous movements. Seán invites the reader to consider transformative, transcendent, and visionary experiences as portrayed through Christof Koch, a biologist interested in the scientific study of consciousness and neural activity. The reader is drawn into an exchange of ideas concerning the simplistic and unsophisticated nature of faith-based explanations and spiritual beliefs, where a bid for scientific endeavour is purported. The article opens up an argument for quantifying illusionary conceptions of self and the testability of consciousness. Seán's article will no doubt ignite the long-standing tension between those who argue that psychotherapy is a scientific discipline, and those who consider that inherent values and their characteristics have an important influence on psychotherapy. In light of the NZAP 2016 conference theme "Mind, Body and Spirit", it seems likely that Seán's article will arouse a vigorous and stimulating response from the psychotherapy community in Aotearoa and beyond. We imagine — and, indeed, hope — that this particular article might evoke some responses, and welcome further articles on this important subject.

Next year (2016), we see a couple of changes. The first is that the first issue of the year

(scheduled for July) will be the issue associated with the 2016 NZAP Conference (rather than the second), and, therefore, will have the theme of “Mind, Body and Spirit”. The second change is that the second issue of the year will be the first issue of *Ata* produced by a guest editor, Dr Mark Thorpe. Mark will edit a special issue on the theme of psychodynamic psychotherapy and welcomes submissions in the usual way, i.e., to [ajournal@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ajournal@aut.ac.nz). We are most grateful to Mark for initiating this and very much look forward to taking a back seat in driving that issue! The fact of two special issues in 2016 also means that we are hoping to build up more articles for our generic issues — so do keep them coming.

As ever, we are very appreciative of the work of Jyoti Smith, our Editorial Assistant, who does so much more than assist; we are very grateful for her skills and initiative — *tēna koe*, Jyoti. We also continue to be appreciative of Hineira Woodard and her gracious and continued support of the journal with her expertly written translations and interpretations of the English abstracts — *tēna koe*, Hineira. Hineira’s input helps to distinguish *Ata* as a journal that reflects the nature of psychotherapy here in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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