

Editorial

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

Welcome to this edition of the *New Zealand Journal of Counselling*, the journal of Te Roopu Kaiwhiriwhi o Aotearoa, the New Zealand Association of Counsellors.

For this and forthcoming issues Janet May joins the *Journal* as co-editor. Janet is a counsellor educator and practitioner who brings a wealth of professional experience and an abundance of enthusiasm. Nau mai haere mai Janet!

In the last issue the editors, Peter Bray and Brian Rodgers, briefly reflected on the pragmatic vision of the *Journal's* earlier editors to bring to its readership high-quality and ethical research—articles that honestly demonstrate and reflect the unique work of counselling and psychotherapy in Aotearoa New Zealand, and that inform and develop models of professional practice that positively transform the lives of those in our communities. As an editorial team, we are looking forward to taking up the legacy passed on to us by the previous editors.

A key strength that we possess as counselling and psychotherapy professionals is a capacity to work alongside our clients, recognising their strengths and using our training and personal resources to support them as they shape their futures. In our work, we continue to learn, by trial, error, and conscientious research, how our craft can be better practised. We keep gathering further knowledge, honing our skills, and marshalling our many resources. Throughout this ongoing, rigorous, and illuminating process we grow our professional selves, engage in personal development, and in our relationships with clients become the change that they seek in the world. We are transformed by the process. However, once our professional training is complete and the research, so carefully undertaken and prized during our training, is put away and forgotten, we shift our working focus back to its main purpose—our practice with clients. Inevitably, it then becomes more of a struggle to return to our researcher-selves, and the tacit promise that we made to the participants in our research to disseminate its findings and, in effect, close the loop.

As a new editorial team, we have been reflecting on the growing numbers of conversations that we have had with colleagues concerning the process and work

entailed in translating their unpublished research, such as commentaries, research reports, practice-based papers, single-case studies, and systematic literature reviews, into publishable journal articles—work that would be of immense interest and relevance to the field of counselling. We are aware that the pathway to continuing professional development, particularly through publishing, is not an easy one, but we would like to invite you to consider it more closely. Look to the *Journal* and your academic mentors for leadership, and your colleagues, supervisors, and clients for support and encouragement. Reflect on your research and ask yourself: What research and ideas have inspired me? What could I revisit, rethink, and recraft with fresh insight and share with my colleagues?

We look forward to hearing about your research and we encourage you to send us any ideas that will guide us in setting up processes and materials to support you and others to get through that initially demanding phase of commitment and preparation, so that you can work towards completing a draft and readying it for submission.

We believe that our journey toward professional maturity as an association is by building a research-active and research-inspired professional community of practice. We would like to gently encourage all our members to fulfil our obligations in this and help close those loops. As Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) is famously supposed to have said, “You are what you do, not what you say you’ll do.” A challenge to us all!

Our current issue features six articles in which counsellors and psychotherapists in different contexts take the opportunity to reflect on their lives as professionals, interrogate their practice, and discuss the needs and expectations of their clients. The first two articles bring uniquely rich perspectives to the ways in which personal practice can be enhanced through counsellor awareness and experiential style. In these cases, questions of culture, of origin and identity are discussed in the context of working with clients whose experience and worldview might be different from one’s own. To begin, and inspired by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Keith Tudor considers his adjustment as an immigrant to professional practice in Aotearoa New Zealand. Based on his own experiences, in “Hiki kakau! Navigating the waves—and the wash,” Keith shares some thoughts about how tau iwi might find their place in the waka of counselling and therapeutic practice, and reflects on some of the navigational difficulties and consequences that can be encountered when taking

up positions and making decisions that fail to fully acknowledge and understand te ao Māori.

In the second article, Maria Hunt sensitively weaves her narrative of being a counsellor and facilitator of therapeutic writing groups into her experiences of being a New Zealand-born Chinese woman. In “My story: A therapeutic writing journey,” she shares beautiful therapeutic writings that demonstrate how these inspired her to acknowledge and voice her true identity. In this insightful article Maria provides a number of useful examples of therapeutic writings and indicates the possible benefits of using these with the Chinese community as an adjunct to counselling and therapy practices and also as a possible access point to the greater use of mental health services.

Following this, there are three research articles that have been informally placed together to address common concerns that will be of particular interest to those working in educational environments. These include: identifying who clients of school guidance counsellors are most likely to be and what they bring to discuss; examining the school counsellor’s role and experience of working with students returning to school from stand-downs; and, finally, a review of the appropriateness of implementing school-based mindfulness programmes with younger children. In the first article of this group, “Who comes to the school counsellor and what do they talk about?”, Colin Hughes, Angela Barr, and Judith Graham report on their short-term research project looking at secondary school counselling services across 11 schools in the North and South Islands of New Zealand. Their results confirm the widely held view among the profession that school guidance services are intensely used by students across all year levels, and that most of the young clients that these counsellors see are self-referring. The results also suggest that counselling services in schools are victims of their own success, seriously over-pressured and critically under-resourced.

In article four, “Back for the future,” Helen McNaughton’s research puts forward the perennial question, “How do guidance counsellors work with learners returning from stand-downs to help them re-engage with school?” In her study Helen reviews the literature and, using qualitative methodology, asks school guidance counsellors about their experiences of working with both their students and their schools, responsibilities and counselling approaches, and how they see themselves in their professional roles at these times. Among a number of themes

that emerged, the most influential was the importance of working within an effective and cohesive pastoral team.

In the final article in this section, we are privileged to be able to publish the co-authored work of Karen Frewin, who so sadly passed away earlier this year, and Lisa Chaplow. Karen and Lisa review the literature concerning the use of mindfulness programmes with 5- to 12-year-olds. In “School-based mindfulness programmes: Are they effective or developmentally inappropriate?” they consider the growing popularity of using mindfulness-based programmes with adults to manage depression and anxiety disorders and review the potential and appropriateness of mindfulness as a tool with children who are still developmentally immature. From a careful analysis of the available research literature they were able to capture a snapshot of how school-based programmes are being evaluated, the variability of the intervention’s delivery and outcomes, and the developmental appropriateness of using mindfulness interventions with younger children in the school setting.

This issue concludes with a small-scale study that investigates what beginning and experienced counsellors do to manage their self-care. Contributed by Betty Lin and Jan Wilson, it reports on a mixed-method research project with a small group of counsellors. Entitled “Counsellor self-care: Six New Zealand counsellors talk about their self-care practices,” this study presents and discusses findings from the qualitative data in their study.

As editors we would like to thank the authors featured in this issue for making their research available to others and for their incredibly valuable contributions to our counselling community. It is our hope that you will find this collection of work encouraging and useful in your own professional contexts. We also hope that they will inspire you to look at your own practices, to develop your ideas, and to consider your roles as either counselling or psychotherapy researchers. Finally, we would like to sincerely thank our team of reviewers for their scholarship and commitment to this issue.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari, he toa takitini—Success is not the work of one, but the work of many.

Peter Bray and Janet May

Editors

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