

The New Zealand Journal of Counselling

Editorial

In this first issue of the *Journal* for 2008, we invite you into territory that may be both familiar and new, beginning with Philip Culbertson's challenge to engage in uncomfortable experiences in our search for professional competency. This paper was first presented as his keynote address at a one-day mini-conference in November last year for the Auckland NZAC branch, *Recent Research and Innovations in Practice*.

Peter Bray and Karen Lupe Ilinanoa introduce us to dimensions of experience that may be unfamiliar in the next two articles, which explore the permeability of the boundaries between the physical world and other influences on our lives and well-being. Through an example of an adolescent manifesting unusual behaviour, Peter Bray introduces the Grofs' concepts of spiritual emergence and spiritual emergency, and their implications when working with clients. Karen Lupe Ilinanoa's discussion of Bynum's work on the dynamics of the family unconscious, and its relevance in our own work as practitioners, may stretch our thinking and illuminate new perspectives.

Because those of us who are racially white tend to identify ourselves as "Pākehā" in Aotearoa New Zealand, and the term "white" is not widely used here, it may be that we avoid engaging with the concept of white privilege. In the following article by Nia Addy, the "invisible whiteness of being" associated with white privilege is exposed. We are invited to recognise the pervasive influence of this form of power, and encouraged to take positive steps to acknowledge and address it, as the implications for us as counsellors are explored.

In a different sense for practitioners, taking on the role of researcher can seem not unlike engaging with an unfamiliar culture. In the next article, Yvonne Evans helps bridge the practitioner–researcher divide, as she reflects on the benefits she experienced from becoming a researcher. Her account will be a source of encouragement for others. Susan Sliedrecht and Elmarie Kotzé then describe a research project investigating people's experiences of counselling following the trauma of major physical injuries. The multiple realities of hope and loss emerged as a strong theme for these participants, reminding us of the multi-faceted and multi-storied nature of human experiencing. Here, too, the theme of power relationships and the privileging of

certain stories within the medical context echoes the theme of power and privilege in Nia Addy's article.

Finally, the question "What has happened to the feminist movement 20 years on?" intrigued a group of women practitioners who came together to create a presentation for the NZAC Research Conference in 2007. The voices of Jeannie Wright, Sue Webb, Patricia Sullivan-Thompson, Elmarie Kotzé, Kathie Crocket, Sue Cornforth, and Nan Blanchard are heard here in an article based on their research performance, as they reflect on the "f" word, and the ways in which feminism has influenced their perspectives and their work with clients. The voices of Meera Chetty and Estelle Mendelsohn then "speak into" the space that has been opened up around this topic, in an invited Response.

The range of topics addressed and the authors who have contributed to this issue represent something of the rich diversity within our profession. Our hope is that the *Journal* will grow in strength in representing a range of perspectives, and will help stretch the boundaries of our awareness and understandings which will, in turn, enrich our practice. A space is open for dialogue here; we encourage anyone interested to submit an article that will enable your voice to be heard as well.

Margaret Agee and Philip Culbertson, Co-editors

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