

NWRPA Friday Evening Seminars

Frank Kelley: How to do Structured and Focused Therapy without being Structured and Focused

Friday 9 May 2014, 6.30pm-8.30pm

Frank is a psychodynamic counsellor in the NHS. This is an account of counselling with a client who he was sure needed help with agoraphobia. There is no evidence that his exploratory approach is effective for this problem and what was really needed was a structured and focused approach such as cognitive behavioural therapy. However this preferred option had been closed off. For Frank this raised the question of how to do structured and focused therapeutic work while remaining committed to a person centred and exploratory approach.

Marie Naughton: Title to be announced. Marie is a psychotherapist and poet

Friday 13 June 2014, 6.30pm-8.30pm

As always these seminars are free to members and £7.50 for non-members. We meet at our regular venue the Manchester Institute for Psychotherapy, 454 Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton, Manchester M21 0BQ from 6.30 to 8.30 pm. A map is on our website. at www.nwrpa.org.uk

Membership for 2014

If you enjoy our seminars you may want to become a member of the Association.

If you would like to join for the calendar year 2014 you can:

- Apply to join using the form on our website.
- Pay your membership fee at a monthly meeting
- Send a cheque made out to "NWRPA" to the address at the end of the newsletter
- Pay online. Please email nwrpa2010@ntlworld.com and I will give you our bank details
- Our membership fee for the calendar year 2014 is £25.00 waged and £20.00 unwaged
- Membership gives you free entrance to all our seminars in 2014

For more information about the NWRPA go to our website at www.nwrpa.org.uk

Paula Gillespie-Fotheringham: On Self-Care: A Creative Approach Friday 11 April 2014



As you can see here and at the end of this newsletter Paula used a creative approach for her theme of therapists looking after themselves.

In a very unobtrusive way she got us all very involved in an interactive and creative process that encouraged us to place ourselves and our work in a helpful perspective.

As is our custom personal information about the participants are not included in this newsletter.



Like the other participants I found this process very useful. Paula fostered spontaneity in the use of art materials in quite an unobtrusive way. While absorbed in these creative activities I lost my sense of the focus of the evening. However when reflecting on the art created by those present I found a clearer perspective on mine and others working lives.

Paula began the evening with the squiggle game which was devised by the psychoanalyst and paediatrician Donald Winnicott. The squiggle is a technique for communicating with children

through drawing. He would make a "squiggle," a twisted or wiggly line drawn spontaneously on a piece of paper. The child then adds elements to the drawing, and Winnicott and the child would comment on its meaning. He then adds his own contribution to the drawing and both then make further comments.

Paula asked us to do the squiggle game with each other rather than with her as the facilitator as it very hard to be creatively involved and facilitate at the same time. Hence we responded to each others squiggles with a second squiggle. Paula asked us to play the squiggle game first and followed this by facilitating our comments and reflections on this process. These reflections and comments were both on the nature of the art produced, the techniques, colours, our sensual impressions and so on and the meaning our creations had for us both as creators and observers.

The pairs of squiggles often held quite different meanings to the two participants. Our reflection on the the squiggles facilitated a discussion which brought out themes of both oppressiveness and freedom in our different work places; themes which re-emerged in our second activity of the evening.

Our second creative activity is exemplified by the two illustrations in this newsletter. Paula asked us to choose a piece of paper and to use crayons and similar art materials to make our marks on the paper. She asked us to begin by placing a frame on this artwork. It is a principle with art therapy that it is used as a means of expression rather than requiring technique. Again we created our works in a spontaneous way, with very little discussion and within a bounded time set by Paula. This creative work was then followed by a period for comment and reflection.

It may not be obvious from the illustrations, but much of our art work depicted our working lives. This included our workplaces, our therapy rooms, the buildings we work in, the institutions we work in or in the case of private therapists the lack of institutions, and the other people we work with. It included our therapeutic work and also the other activities we engage in, paperwork and so on, and the non work activities too. You may notice cups of tea and coffee.

I was puzzled at the time. The theme of the evening was *On Self-Care: A Creative Approach* but much of our discussion was about the oppressiveness, strain and worries in our working lives. However I think that these are linked. We need to take care of ourselves because of these demands of our work. Can I add another thank you to Paula here. Looking after yourself was not only the theme of the evening but also the result of the work we did. It was a pleasure to be creative. It does feel good to counter the oppressiveness we can have in our work with a sense of perspective and a counter to the demoralisation we can experience from our work.

Paula Gillespie-Fotheringham founded Manchester Art Psychotherapy early in 2011. She is an Art Psychotherapist registered with the Health & Care Professionals Council (HCPC). She has worked with children and young people, particularly around issues of attachment, trauma and self-harm, together with adult work focusing on BPD, DID and attachment based difficulties.

Paula worked for over 10 years in mental health settings, including the NHS and Social Services prior to building her private practice. For more go to her website at www.manchester-art-therapy.co.uk

