

## **NWRPA Friday Seminar**

### **3 Words in Therapy**

**Friday 9 December 2016**

**6.30pm-8.30pm, free to members, £7.50 to non-members**

Three therapists each speak for 15-20 minutes on a word of their choosing from the world of psychotherapy and counselling. They'll be plenty of time for questions and discussion, and light refreshments are available. This event represents **2 hours of continuing professional development.**

#### **Marjina Mahmood on Silence**

Silence can be seen as peaceful and can also be uncomfortable. How much can we communicate with silence and how powerful can it be?

Marjina has a BSc and PG dip in counselling and psychotherapy, is a registered member of BACP, has worked in the mental health sector for five years - for the last three years as a counsellor with voluntary organisations and BUPA - and manages a private practice, see [www.mkprofessionalcounselling.co.uk](http://www.mkprofessionalcounselling.co.uk)

#### **Kit Leaver on Mothers**

Mothers: can't live with them, can't live without them; Madonna, maddening and mate.

Kit is a counsellor and Stepped Care Therapist, a mother and probably both maddening and a mate.

#### **Jim Davis on Curiosity**

Curiosity is a fundamental ingredient of aliveness and intimacy, and therefore so is the client's curiosity in their therapist - how they impact their therapist and in their therapist's attitude to them.

Jim is a gestalt, bodywork, transactional analysis, and relational psychoanalysis influenced psychotherapist, supervisor and trainer, interested in the use of the therapeutic relationship.

#### **Venue:**

**The Manchester Institute for Psychotherapy  
454 Barlow Moor Road  
Chorlton,  
Manchester M21 0BQ**

A map of our venue and more information about the Association is available on our website at: [www.nwrpa.org.uk](http://www.nwrpa.org.uk)

# 2017

## **Renew your NWRPA membership**

We begin a new membership year in January 2017. We hope you have enjoyed the seminars this year and want to renew your membership.

Membership of the NWRPA is £25 a year - or £20 if you are a student, unwaged or retired - which represents a generous saving of 66% on the cost of the ten seminars we will have in 2017.

To renew please send a cheque made out to the NWRPA. Our postal, email and website addresses are at the end of this newsletter. If you would prefer to pay online please email Frank Kelley for details of our online bank account.

If you are not a member and want to join there is information on how to do this on our website. Membership of NWRPA is open to qualified and trainee psychotherapists and counsellors, to members of related professions and to individuals who have a longstanding interest in psychotherapy and counselling. To apply for membership you will need to live or work in the North West of England and subscribe to a professional code of ethics that is recognised by the Association.

#### **CPD certificates**

If you would like a CPD certificate for the NWRPA seminars you attend email Frank Kelley at

[nwrpa2010@ntlworld.com](mailto:nwrpa2010@ntlworld.com)

## NWRPA Friday Evening Seminars

### Writing, Desire and Psychotherapy

Led by Ann Heathcote and Steff Oates

Friday 11 November 2016

Thank you to Ann and Steff for a lively organised and spontaneous workshop which met their intended theme. Ann is a Transactional Analyst who stopped her psychotherapy practice after 25 years though she continues to run the Worsley Centre for Psychotherapy and Counselling. Steff is a Teaching and Supervising Transactional Analyst practicing primarily as a psychotherapist and as a visiting trainer to several European countries.

Their theme was why do you want - or did you want - to be a therapist? What was your inspiration? What hinders you from being the best practitioner you can be? What are the joys and challenges of the profession? What are your hopes and plans for the future? This workshop used writing to explore our desire in therapy.

We began with an invitation which is shown on page 4 of this newsletter. After our invitation we had a grounding meditation. We were then asked to choose an object and to do this in a sensate way. This object would represent our counselling journey. As is the NWRPA custom I have not included any personal or confidential information from the workshop. I am happy however to include a picture my object which, as you can see, is a blue elephant. This elephant is a concrete reminder of all I gained from this evening.

Ann and Steff were kind enough to let us keep our chosen object if we wished.



While choosing we were told of the experiences of John McCarthy and Brian Keenan who were held hostage in a cell by terrorists in Lebanon. They often thought of death and were able to counter this in many ways and by, for example, being entranced by the feast of colour in a bowl of fruit. An aliveness in the depths of despair. This connected with the sensate focus of our object choice.

We were then asked to spend ten minutes writing about me and my object and then five minutes each talking in pairs about what we had written. We were asked to listen and particularly listen with our body with no rationalising, interpreting or attempts to fix things. We then had the opportunity to share our thoughts from this writing, talking and listening with the group.

One of the themes that emerged at this stage was that we loved our work and loved and were committed to our clients. However this meant that we absorbed our clients despair at a deep and bodily level. What we need to do is to find out how to be both open and to protect ourselves and give something back. A metaphor here is the lotus flower, that is open and with a protected core.

Next came freewriting (or speedwriting.) This follows the work of Natalie Goldberg (*Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within* - 1986.) Her work is based on Zen Buddhism. We wrote three two minute pieces based on Goldberg's principles of:

- Keep your hand moving
- Do not cross out
- Don't worry about spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Allow yourself to lose control
- Do not think or be too logical
- Go for the jugular (dive into the scary and naked)

Our next freewriting experience was to complete the following sentences.

- My desire to be a counsellor/psychotherapist came from . . .
- Last time the demons of doubt paid a visit I . . .
- To be the best counsellor/psychotherapist I can be I need . . .

Again this was followed by a group discussion. Some thoughts from this were that we need to face despair and not to avoid or laugh at it. This is part of our professional responsibility to our clients and to ourselves. It was also noted than in TA terms freewriting comes from the Free Child position and this is great.

## Writing, Desire and Psychotherapy

Ann Heathcote and Steff Oates

Thank you to Ann and Steff for the good heart and skill which they gave to this workshop. What they offered was met by our members willingness to join in and *go for the jugular*. It truly was an experiential experience.

After such a complex experience how else could we end with but the positivity of the *Tree of Aspiration*. This is on page 5 of this newsletter.



### Contact the Association:

Frank Kelley  
Secretary NWRPA  
159 Garners Lane  
Stockport  
SK3 8QW

Phone: 0161 432 8653

Email: [nwrpa2010@ntlworld.com](mailto:nwrpa2010@ntlworld.com)

Website: [www.nwrpa.org.uk](http://www.nwrpa.org.uk)

(NB this is a mailing address only)



# THE INVITATION

By Oriah Mountain Dreamer (1999) THE INVITATION. London: Thorsons.

IT DOESN'T INTEREST ME WHAT YOU DO FOR A LIVING.

I want to know what you ache for, and if you dare to dream of meeting your heart's longing.

It doesn't interest me how old you are. I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool for love, for your dream, for the adventure of being alive.

It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your moon. I want to know if you have touched the center of your own sorrows, if you have been opened by life's betrayals or have become shriveled and closed from fear of further pains. I want to know if you can sit with pain, mine or your own, without moving to hide it or fade it or fix it.

I want to know if you can be with joy, mine or your own, if you can dance with wildness and let the ecstasy fill you to the tips of your fingers and toes without cautioning us to be careful, to be realistic, to remember the limitations of being human.

It doesn't interest me if the story you are telling me is true. I want to know if you can disappoint another to be true to yourself; if you can bear the accusation of betrayal and not betray your own soul; if you can be faithless and therefore trustworthy.

I want to know if you can see beauty, even when it's not pretty, every day, and if you can source your own life from its presence.

I want to know if you can live with failure, yours and mine, and still stand on the edge of the lake and shout to the silver of the full moon, "Yes!"

It doesn't interest me to know where you live or how much money you have. I want to know if you can get up, after the night of grief and despair, weary and bruised to the bone, and do what needs to be done to feed the children.

It doesn't interest me who you know or how you came to be here. I want to know if you will stand in the center of the fire with me and not shrink back.

It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom you have studied. I want to know what sustains you, from the inside, when all else falls away.

I want to know if you can be alone with yourself and if you truly like the company you keep in the empty moments.

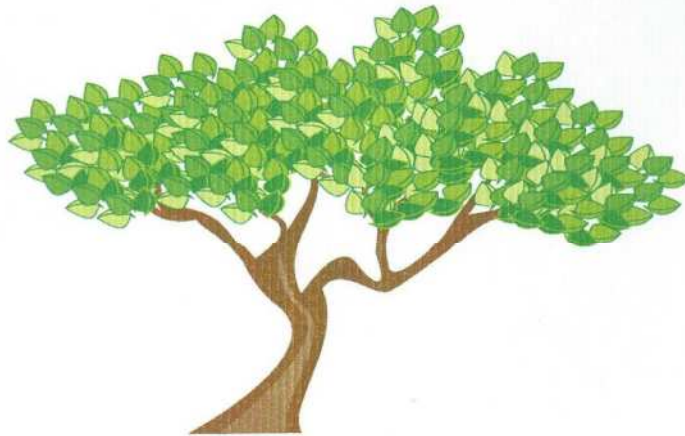
Prepared by: Ann Heathcote and Steff Oates for  
"The power of writing to explore your desire in being a TA practitioner"  
February 2016 workshop, Cumbrian TA Conference.  
Email: [ann.heathcote@btinternet.com](mailto:ann.heathcote@btinternet.com) and [steff@xxist.com](mailto:steff@xxist.com)

Tree of Aspiration

High spots so far?

What will grow?

Hopes and dreams?



What will help you grow?

Where to from here?

What ideas are taking root?