

Editorial

Jerome Carson



Our third issue of 2024 contains our usual diverse series of interesting papers.

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The first paper is from Nicky Lidbetter, Emma Eaton, Paul Cookson and Moira Bell. They describe the multi-modal practitioner approach. They have linked this to a postgraduate diploma which runs over two years and is a level seven qualification. The approach is grounded in a trauma-informed model of care. The four 30-credit modules are, “working with people”, “understanding mental health”, “physical health and long-term conditions management” and the “whole family approach”. The authors note an unintended outcome of their innovative training programme, which will be familiar to many managers, was that some of the newly qualified staff then moved onto other jobs, which they were partly able to obtain due to their newly acquired qualification! This is an innovative approach to developing staff who have a more holistic approach to working with people with complex needs.

Jo Smith, Gareth Hughes and Leigh Spencer discuss the growing problem of increasing mental health problems in university students. This has no doubt been made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors used a large number of focus groups, across a wide range of universities. One of their main findings was that peer mentoring could help assist students with mental health issues alongside more formal university mental health services. As in so many walks of life, your best support can come from the people in the same situation as yourself.

Our third paper is a Living Tribute to Andrew Voyce. The paper starts with a description of my own involvement with Andrew, now stretching back some 15 years. We both attended the University of Reading, and each ended up in the field of psychiatry. Andrew became “a revolving door mental patient”, and I became a clinical psychologist working in psychiatry. We previously compared our different, though parallel life journeys in a collaborative autoethnographic account, published in this journal ([Voyce and Carson, 2020](#)). The current paper comprises a number of tributes about Andrew from a range of people he has worked with over the decades. He has been involved with the Mental Health First Aid group for some time, once delivering a training session from a laptop in my own office! He was one of the first people I featured in my series of Remarkable Lives ([Voyce and Carson, 2013](#)). As this account shows, he truly is remarkable. Indeed, along with Patrick Hopkinson, we asked the question, why he recovered, yet a contemporary of his, the musician Syd Barrett did not ([Hopkinson et al., 2021](#))? Andrew went on to collaborate on a number of accounts of other musicians who experienced severe mental health problems, Peter Green of Fleetwood Mac ([Hopkinson et al., 2022](#)), and Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys ([Hopkinson et al., 2023](#)). After years of institutional care and “sleeping rough” in the community, Andrew now says, “You can end up in a happy place.” At last, he certainly has. This series of Living Tributes is a testament to this truly remarkable man.

Our fourth paper sees Mats Niklasson return to one of his favourite themes, creativity. He talks about the child within. He identifies the years between two and six as critical in the

development of our creativity. He argues that this period “[...] is a golden age not only for playing but also for the development of artistry and creativity”. This is the second of four papers he has promised us on creativity. We eagerly await the next paper in the series.

Cemil Akkaş and Aykut Hamit Turan look at the relationship between social network use and life satisfaction. They conducted a systematic literature review which identified 43 studies. While half of these were conducted with students, this is the group that is probably amongst the highest consumers of social networking. Some 30/43 used Ed. Diener’s Life Satisfaction Scale as their main outcome measure. As is sometimes the case with research, the results of the review were not clear-cut. A bigger problem with so much of this research is it is cross sectional, i.e. just surveying people at one point in time, whereas what we really need to tease out these relationships, are more longitudinal data. Nonetheless, this is a very scholarly study.

Our next paper looks at the unusual topic of maladaptive daydreaming. It is from Mahimna Vyas, Mehatab Shaikh, Shubh Rana and Anjana Gauri Pendyala, all based in India. Maladaptive daydreaming is “[...] excessive engagement in fantasy activities that disrupt daily life and replace human interaction”. Is it an escape from a painful reality? The authors suggest that to improve research in this area it should be added to the burgeoning Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Certainly, this paper puts this “condition” on the map.

A second review paper from Robert Hurst and Chathurika Kannangara explores the issue of post-traumatic growth from grief. This narrative review synthesises the findings from 125 different sources. The authors rightly point out that growth after grief is affected by the nature of the relationship between the bereaved and the deceased. The loss of a child has always struck me as an event that seems almost impossible to “grow” from. Life goes on, but it is fundamentally changed. The nature of how the person died is a further factor. In our last issue, Angela Woods courageously described how she was trying to re-frame the suicide of her sister more positively through her organ donation. Her sister’s death enabled four people to receive organ transplants. Robert and Chathurika also touch on the much neglected, topic of perinatal bereavement. They end this excellent review with a quotation from the current American president Joe Biden, who lost his son Beau. He stated, “The time will come when the memory will bring a smile to your face...before it brings a tear to your eyes.”

The final paper in this issue is from one of our regular contributors Kirsty Lilley. I have waxed lyrical many times about the beauty of Kirsty’s writing, and this paper is no exception. Her opening paragraph displays a quality of literary expression and description that I doubt I will ever be capable of. Mesmeric! Kirsty raises the issue of how and when to disclose really personal aspects of our deepest secrets. She comments, “I prefer to hide within the folds of an unremarkable tale of a happy life instead of naming and sharing what really happened.” Having not been listened to by too many professionals, she eventually found comfort with a writing group of fellow survivors. She notes, “[...] in the fold of this community I shared what had happened to me feeling the burden lift on every syllable spoken.” In common parlance, she had found her “tribe”.

Another inspiring issue of *Mental Health and Social Inclusion*, with contributions from the UK, Sweden, Turkey and India. It has included a systematic review and a narrative review. We had a description of a new service for people with multiple needs. We had a poetic lived experience account alongside a living tribute to a lived experience researcher. Added to this we had creativity and maladaptive daydreaming. All in all, a veritable smörgåsbord of all that this journal represents.

Professor Jerome Carson,
Editor-in-Chief

References

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