

newsletter

Covid 19 - Lockdown - Extended 3 Page Issue

Welcome

Hello community!

Welcome to the lockdown issue of our newsletter.

What a few weeks it's been, not in my wildest dreams did I think I would end up training during a pandemic.

Nothing could have prepared any of us for this. I want to thank all this year's students and the Cara team, how amazing you have all been. We have all had to adapt quickly, learn new ways of communicating and connecting and carry on supporting our clients. Who knew counselling practice would be conducted in breakout rooms on zoom by the end of the academic year?

Of course, there is also the uncertainty, frustration and sadness at not having our endings. The fast track level 2 suspended, all exams undone, portfolios left unsigned and celebrations delayed. We also say goodbye to Ray and thank him for all his hard work and commitment.

Our personal journeys have certainly taken a detour but that's ok, even if it isn't what we had planned for. Sometimes our greatest learning comes from adversity. We find our strength; we build stronger connections with ourselves and others and tap into resources we never knew were available to us. We discover lost joys, go into battle with our shadow sides, make peace, re-connect with loved ones and emerge bruised but resilient. Can't wait to see you all as soon as it's possible.

Love and light Deborah



Ray's Retirement Letter



As I write this, we are in the midst of a pandemic which is challenging all of us in many different ways.



This month I retired from teaching with Cara. I have worked for over fifty years and a wise man said, "Never work yourself to death."

The last twelve years or so training with Deborah have been the best. Starting Cara with her was amazing and exciting as well as challenging. I will always have a place in my heart for her and the Cara community

To all the students that I have trained, I would say thank you for the relationships and the inspiration that you have added to my life. Be kind to yourself, be humble yet wise and be gentle with others.

Always remember that your clients and peers are humans too; trying to work out their humanness with all its dilemmas, complexities and issues.

I have learned to embrace life and grasp the moment without regret. There have been many challenges including being neglected and fostered, living through an eight day hurricane at sea, being homeless and surviving ten years of heroin addiction.

Now, after many years of counselling, supervising and training others the time has come to make space for more of what I want to do - fishing, walking, painting, travelling etc. I'm also looking forward to spending more time with my family.

Stay safe and love lots. Peace in your heart is a wonderful thing to own. **Thinking of you all, Ray**

Quote



It's amazing how a little tomorrow can make up for a whole lot of yesterday

John Guare
Landscape of the Body

Summer Party

Sadly we have had to postpone our 'Summer Ceilidh' for now due to the current circumstances, however we will re-arrange a Cara Party as soon as humanly possible when we are allowed to socialise once more!



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Hi all. So how has lockdown been for you?

For me it has been reminiscent of having a baby. A shocking new 'normal' fuelled with anxiety, losing all sense of time, constant feeding, frantic stockpiling (albeit from nappies to toilet rolls), and the cessation of a social life. And yet again, a time when I truly feel that happiness comes from caring for something greater than myself, but knowing that caring for myself is part of the deal too.



Self-care during the pandemic has necessitated attending consciously to routines, diet, exercise and sleep. And I have to admit to lapsing in each of these areas a few times! There has also been a deeper level of nourishment in appreciating the simple things more; like laughter with my family and pottering in my garden.

How about you?

And what do you hope for once lockdown is lifted?

I hope that we are able to listen to one another's stories and explore thoughts and feelings attached, and with the compassion they deserve.

To continue to see in new ways and continue to concern ourselves with what really matters. To be willing to shine lights under beds and speak up to address the need for change... such as translating all that applause for NHS workers into a decent pay rise, and ensuring homelessness becomes a scourge of the past.

For me, inviting understanding and exploration of how collectively and individually we have been transformed by this experience is really important, in order that we are able to grow and learn and change from it.

Stay safe and beautiful
Eithne x

"So how are you all?" We can so often automatically respond with "I'm fine" can't we? But during this time of isolation, I think we all have a little more head space to reflect and notice what is really going on for us. I know I have and I haven't been fine.



My experience of isolation has been somewhat unexpected to me. In the first few days I was scared, and my reaction to this was to cry, a lot. Although I knew my family was safe in our home, my parents safe in theirs, my mind wanted to catastrophise and hounded me with all the 'what ifs. . .'. I had a couple of panic attacks, something I have never experience in my life and these just intensified my fears of the loss of safety.

So we did as we were told, we stayed home, but life did not feel that different. Nothing slowed down and I found myself busier than ever. The extra time I had was consumed with navigating how to quickly transfer my clients online. Coupled with my own trepidations (as I was entering the online world I knew nothing about and had already made my mind up 'wasn't as good as face-to-face') I was stressed about my own ability to be present with my clients and stay in their frame of reference. A hard ask when their issues and concerns chimed so close to mine.

A few weeks in now and I'm breathing a little deeper and have had a chance to work out what I need. On reflection I have learnt my clients welcome a little bit of 'me' in the session. A few "yes, it's hard" or "I really understand" from my own experience, goes a long way. Especially so, at a time when connection is vital for all of us.

As I find myself with more time now, I recognise how I still need a routine, a structure to my day as it helps bring me familiarity. I like having something to look forward to, whether a dog walk or a call with a friend (not Zoom!).

My mood changes day to day and that's OK, I'm appreciating this slower pace of life, but it is tied up with a feeling a guilt, knowing how hard this time has been for so many. Before lockdown, I always found it difficult to relax, mainly because of expectations I put on myself, constantly running around. A persistent dialogue in my head. . . "when I get some time, I'll. . .read a book, learn yoga, meditate, make a lasagne(!), swim in the sea and on and on". Sound familiar? Lockdown expectations added to that, bake bread, homeschooling, etc. Now, I have the time, I'm just trying to stop. To have fewer expectations, of myself, and everything around me. I realised that, with all the uncertainty right now, I can only focus on what I can control and what feels right, eating well (maybe a lasagne), sleeping well and the odd gin and tonic! Everything else is the 'what ifs'.

So now, I'll ask again. . .how are you?

Free CPD - Bessel Van der Kolk - Trauma

Brain, Mind & Body In The Healing Of Trauma.



The world's leading trauma researcher and author of:

The Body Keeps the Score, Dr. Bessel van der Kolk discusses his research and the influences on his life work with trauma.

During the hour, van der Kolk draws the picture of trauma, the brain, and how various treatments work (and don't) on the trauma client. Discover a new picture of trauma, its impact on the brain, how our brains work and most of all, the important new treatments that promise hope to those suffering from PTSD and trauma.
www.pesi.com/Page/freeCE2016

Counselling Skills Lab

Come and join us and practice your skills via Zoom!

Sessions will take place:

- Every other Tuesday 10.30am-12.30pm
- Every other Wednesday 6.30pm-8.30pm

A great way to enhance your skills and keep connected with your peers and tutors.

Cara Mascot Baxter





Self compassion is so important, but especially now. During this pandemic we are each experiencing our own struggle regardless of our circumstances, I have heard many people say "I am really anxious, sad or worried"... "but at least I have a home or job" etc... Although saying this may give us some perspective and give us a short term coping strategy, it is important not to keep dismissing or discounting any feelings we have, each experience is unique and valid.

Journaling can help us process our feelings, maybe ask yourself:

How am I feeling?

Am I in flight/fight/freeze?

Am I angry, scared? What about?

What do I need?

What do I like/hate about lockdown?

What have I noticed about myself?

Routine, connection, nature, distraction, exercise, sleep routine & rules around social media, can help soothe anxiety.

What's next? Sometimes it can give us a break from the 'here and now' issues and high anxiety levels by remembering this will pass. Maybe spend some time visualising and planning some of the nice things you want to do when this pandemic is over...

- Who do you want to see?
- What do you really want to do?
- What are you looking forwards to?
- Where do you want to go?
- What are you going to plan?
- What are you going to eat & drink!



Counselling Tools & Understanding Grief

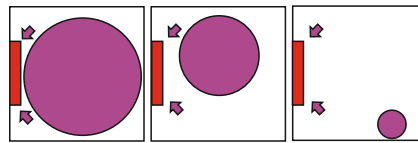
Grief plays a part in all of our lives, but it will be especially prevalent now due to this current pandemic.

Understanding the natural processes of grief can enable us & our clients to accept our feelings of grief however and whenever they arise without confusion, fear, guilt, shame or a without setting a 'time limit' on grieving. Some of us will have learnt about Kübler-Ross and the five stages of grief which are: denial, anger, bargaining, depression & acceptance, however what we may forget is that these stages are not linear or compulsory, they are just a guide, we all experience grief differently.

There is often an expectation that we will 'get over it' at some point & return to the people we were before, 'grief free'.

However it is widely accepted that the grief stays, (the way we feel it on a day to day basis will change) but instead of it leaving us, we grow our world around it, encompassing it into ourselves.

The Ball & The Box by Lauren Hershel: In the beginning, the ball is huge. You can't move the box without the ball hitting the pain button. It hits the button over and over. You can't control it - it just keeps hurting. Over time, the ball gets smaller. It hits the button less but when it does, it hurts just as much. It's better because you can function more easily. But the downside is that the ball randomly hits that button when you least expect it. For most people, the ball never really goes away. But it will hit less and less and you have more time to recover between hits, unlike when the ball was still giant.



Another really useful tool for explaining grief is "How does grief change over time" see link:

www.facebook.com/bbcplayer/videos/bbc-stories-like-minds-on-bbc-iplayer/2168915343327846/



Mental Health

Anxiety UK - Working to relieve and support those living with anxiety and anxiety-based depression by providing information, support and understanding via an extensive range of services, including 1:1 therapy.



- www.anxietyuk.org.uk
- Helpline: 03444 775 774

NHS Every Mind Matters - Get A Free Action Plan With Simple Steps To Help You Look After Your Mental Health. Get support around Coronavirus and wellbeing as well as finding access to urgent support numbers.



- www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters

Domestic Abuse

Boots Safe Space - Boots pharmacies across the country provide access to support for anyone experiencing domestic abuse. People who wish to use the safe space consultation room need to ask at the pharmacy counter. Once inside, they will find the 24-hour national domestic abuse helpline, the men's advice line and phone numbers for services specific to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.



Hestia's mobile app Bright Sky - Provides support and information to anyone who may be in an abusive relationship.



SupportLine - Open to anyone of any age. Taking calls on a wide range of issues including relationships, child abuse, anger, bullying, eating disorders, exam stress, self harm, domestic violence, rape and sexual assault, disability, mental health, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, addictions, debt, phobias, conflict, sexuality, health concerns, homelessness, racial harassment, loneliness.



- Helpline: 01708 765200
- email: info@supportline.org.uk
- www.supportline.org.uk

Food Banks

The Trussel Trust - Support a nationwide network of food banks and together they provide emergency food and support to people locked in poverty & campaign for change to end the need for food banks in the UK. To find your nearest food bank visit:



- www.trusselltrust.org

Financial Support

Martin Lewis - Money Saving Expert offers lots of current Coronavirus related advice on all aspects of finance including benefits, universal credit, debt, loans, employee help, small business, help with bills & travel rights.



- moneysavingexpert.com

Get in touch

We know that this is a really difficult time...on top of that some of you may have anxiety about your studies and courses.

Please let us know if you have any questions or worries that we can help you with. We are here for you.

Send us an email at: news@caracounsellingtraining.co.uk

<p>NSPCC 0808 800 5000 (24hrs)</p> <p>Mind 0300 123 3393 (Mon-Fri 9-6)</p> <p>Cruse Bereavement 0800 808 1677 (Mon-Fri 9-5)</p> <p>Action on Elder Abuse 0808 808 8141 (Mon-Fri 9-5)</p> <p>National Centre for Domestic Violence 0207 186 8270</p>	<p>National Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 2000 247 (24hrs free)</p> <p>Victim Support 0808 168 9111 (24hrs)</p> <p>ChildLine 0800 1111 (24hrs)</p> <p>Respect Mens Advice Line 0808 801 0327 (Mon-Fri 9-5 or 8pm)</p> <p>Samaritans 116 123 (24hrs free)</p>
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