

Summer 2007



IRISH ASSOCIATION OF ALCOHOL AND ADDICTION COUNSELLORS

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Letter from the Chairperson.

Dear Members, Associate Members and all Readers

You will have received a Newsflash from IAAAC immediately after The AGM and Conference. This was principally to give the members who could not attend the names of the new Executive Committee 2007/08 and to welcome them formally. We have listed them again in our AGM Spread in this issue.

We would also like to formally welcome the Association's first full time Development Officer, Hugh Sweeney. We wish him every success in this role.

'Summertime and the living is easy'...so enjoy your holidays wherever you are headed, but maybe, you just might consider taking a little time to send a contribution to the Newsletter. A profile of the agency where you work, a report and comment on a workshop or training that you have attended, an article or essay that you have been sitting on for ages... we would love to have your contribution.

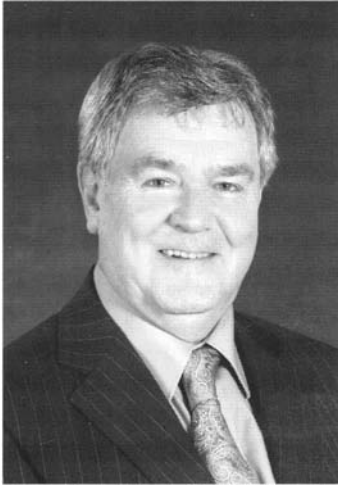
We have included in this issue, in its entirety, the IAAAC Newsletter No.3., March 1992. We hope that you will enjoy the IAAAC history written by Rolande Anderson. We have printed the full edition so that you can gain a feeling for the context of that time, another piece of history in itself.

Enjoy your summer break,

Brendan Moore
Chairperson IAAAC

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Introduction to Hugh Sweeney Development Officer

I welcome this opportunity to introduce myself as the newly appointed Development officer, to you, the members of IMAC.

Some of you might remember seeing me around for the previous three Annual General Meetings of IMAC. Two years ago I was elected to serve as the representative for Associate members. I also had the great pleasure of working on the newsletter sub-committee for that same period.

I am an accredited counsellor and have worked, as such, in a community based drugs rehabilitation programme where I was also the coordinator. My interest was, initially, around alcohol only but over the last four years my working experience has broadened to include poli-drug rehabilitation.

During my interview for this position I offered the notion that though my working association with IMAC was of only three years duration, this, on the one hand, could be considered sufficient to have gained a good working knowledge of the association, whilst, on the other hand, it was not long enough to have entrenched within me any particular bias. I remain open to hear all views from the members and from the executive.

My interest in addiction, in a non professional, voluntary capacity, goes back over a period of twenty five years. During this time my commercial life was divided between running my own film production company, specialising in the production of quality commercials and training films, where I was, both, the managing director and film director and working as a partner in a property development company. The later evolved from my initial restoration of a Georgian residence as my home and the former from twenty years in advertising working as an art director, copy writer and television producer. Both of these work experiences have introduced me to a wide range of situations where creative problem solving and solution based focusing became second nature.

It would be easy to assume that because I am the first full time salaried executive employed by IMAC that I will be furrowing new ground with innovative ideas for the future etc, etc, so I consider that the rediscovery of a long misplaced copy of the third edition of the IMAC newsletter to have been a timely event. The history of those first years leaves me in no doubt whatsoever that the vision of those first and founding committee members will be the measure by which my performance will be judged. I now have no illusions as to the hard act I have to follow!

I have suggested to the Newsletter sub-committee that they run this archived issue as part of this current newsletter so that the newer members like, myself can gain an appreciation of those formative years.

I hope in the coming months to meet with many more members throughout Ireland to hear their views and concerns and hopes for the future. I will do my very best in bringing forward our association into the new and changing environment of addiction treatment.

In the meantime I can be contacted directly on

01 857 2180 or E-mail;hughiaaac@eircom.net

Hugh Sweeney

Congratulations Recently Accredited

Elise Morrow.... Co. Galway
Patricia Byrne.....Co. Carlow
Gerry McWilliams.....Dublin 24
Bernadette Murphy....Dublin 8
Rosaleen Dodson....Dublin 24
Paul McCarthy.....Cork
Anne Daly.....Dublin 8
Robert Field.....Cork
David Kinsella.....Dublin 22
Kathy Watts....Dublin 24
Ita Peters.....Tipperary
Kate Gibney....Cork
Sean O'Farrell.....Waterford
Dermot Phillips....Dublin 1
Tom Holton....Limerick
Mandy Scully....Dublin 13
Lorcan Noone.....Roscommon
Paul Mullins.....Tipperary

Geraldine Tynan.....Dublin
Colm Kiely.....Wexford
Eileen Murphy.....Clare
Seamus Fagan.....Dublin 7
Marian Morning.....Kildare
Gerry Kelly.....Dublin 7
Ray Tonge.....Dublin 12
Caroline Dyer.....Limerick
Mark Gannon.....Dublin
Mairead Mc Mahon.....Dublin 7
Fiona Burke.....Meath
Tommy Hunt.....Dublin 12
Lucy Bathgate.....Dublin 12
Breda Ryan Long.....Co. Cork
Pearse Barnett.....Dublin 5
Sharon Bailey Hickey.....Cork
Maud MurphyCo. Mayo

IAAAC AGM 2008

Date for your Diary...

**Friday 7th & Saturday 8th March
2008**

**Bloomfield House Hotel
Mullingar**

**Come & celebrate our 21st
Anniversary....**

Up-coming Training Calendar:

Suicide Bereavement Workshop

Facilitator: Jean Casey

Date of Workshop: 9th Oct 2007

Venue: All Hallows College, Dublin

The focus of this workshop will be the impact of suicide on those closest to the suicide victim. Jean has personal experience of this and will outline the impact of her own husband's suicide on herself and her family. She will outline what she sees are the key steps to recovering from suicide bereavement and will talk about issues such as discussing the suicide of a family member with young children, suicide notes, depression and the question "Why". As the group are all counsellors she will focus on counselling the bereaved, people who have attempted suicide and through experiential work the participants will learn and understand the nature of trauma.

Besides fear, anger is the most obviously problematic emotion we experience in conflict situations. We fear it getting out of control and leading us into destructive words and actions. We can become possessed by it - suddenly hijacked by desire to scream, blame or hit out at someone. Or perhaps we find ourselves seething with fury for which it is difficult to give a rational explanation but which may unpredictably leak or explode. Either way, the result can be an escalation of conflict and have potentially disastrous consequences for our personal or working relationships. Anger, despite its destructive potential is extremely valuable. It tells us what is important to us, is an expression of our vital energy, it plays a key role in self-protection and embodies our drive to make things happen in our lives. This workshop will help you to discover and/or contain your own and other's anger, help understand it, take charge of it and use it in constructive ways. It will help you to be in control of rather than at the mercy of your anger. It will help you release anger build up in harmless ways, give you practical techniques to redirect it and to communicate what is important to you more effectively. It will also demonstrate how to deal effectively with anger of others in times of conflict and how to help your clients use these principles and practises to manage their own anger in a constructive manner.

Style:

The workshop is experiential and participants can expect high levels of personal engagement to test out models and concepts. A combination of short talks about different ways of understanding and managing anger will be offered within a conflict framework. A variety of practices will be introduced to extend participants own ways of dealing with anger and conflict and these will then be extended through application with client groups. There will be opportunities to discuss and practice these in pairs and get some feedback in a supportive group. The workshop is confidential and will also suggest ways of doing more advanced work where that is needed.

Content:

Key issues include the role of anger in relation to values, needs, emotions, language and communication, conflict and behaviour. We look at how anger is created, its function and how to develop the capability to handle it in various situations. We will pay particular attention to issues of anger in connection with defensive reactions, unclear personal boundaries and underdeveloped identity in connection with addiction. Personal practice will be used to deepen understanding in preparation for working with client groups and helping to develop their capability. A draft outline of the workshop follows which will be refined in the light of responses to questionnaires.

Anger Management:

*Working with Clients in Alcohol and
Addiction Support Services*

Facilitated by John Mulligan

September 11th and 12th 2007.

All Hallows College, Drumcondra, Dublin 9.

This workshop is for staff working with clients that have difficulty in managing their anger and who need to find better ways of handling their own anger and whose work is to assist clients manage their anger effectively in conflict situations.

Anger, despite its destructive potential, is an extremely valuable feeling. It tells us what is important to us, is an expression of our vital energy, plays a key role in self-protection & embodies our drive to make things happen in our lives.

Day 1 Anger Management

- 09.00 *Understanding anger and conflict - generative forces and context*
- Introductions and programme outline
 - Creating a holding environment - a safer place to explore - ground-rules, etc.
 - The learning zone - where we can learn about anger and conflict
 - Choice line - from powerlessness to responsibility
 - Theory input and discussion – emotions, anger, **culture**, ownership, defensiveness, competence
- 10.30 Coffee
- 11.00 *Ownership and responsibility for our emotions- what is driving our anger?*
- Needs - discovering what we need through processing our emotions
 - Values - what is important and how important is it?
 - **Beliefs** – mental pictures, expectations, our rules - how our thinking generates anger
 - Unconscious defence mechanisms - fight, flight, play dead - boundary/identity awareness
 - Emotions that hide behind our anger - anxiety, fear, grief, shame, vulnerability, etc.
- 12.30 Lunch
- 13.30 *Managing emotional states - emotions are valuable, it is what we do with them that counts!*
- Psychological defences - recognising and recovering from emotional hijack and self-protection
 - Getting over the choice line - power, **powerlessness** and freedom
 - Containing pain and suffering - extending space and time, registering emotion, finding meaning
 - Venting - releasing anger harmlessly
 - Expressing our anger fully and constructively
 - Controlling defensive reaction and managing risk
- 15.00 Break
- 15.30 *The language of de-escalation and compassionate communication (NVC)*
- **Separating** observation from evaluation
 - Distinguishing feeling from other types of **evaluation**
 - Acknowledging responsibility for our **feelings**
 - **Identifying** unfulfilled needs generating our judgements
 - Communicating the meaning of our emotions
- 17.00 Close

Day 2 Anger Management

- 09.00 *Anger and intra personal conflict - enhancing self-understanding*
- Being in over our heads - internal stress **and** low anger thresholds
 - Conflicting needs, values and beliefs - conflicting emotions
 - Anger and damage to self esteem and identity
 - Anger and frustration - response to limitation of self assertion, freedom, internal resources
 - Anger, rank, power and authority and marginalisation
- 10.30 Coffee
- 11.00 *Difficult conversations - helpin? clients understand and take charge o what is happening during conflict*
- The what happened conversation
 - The feelings conversation
 - The identity conversation
 - The power conversation
- 12.30 Lunch
- 13.30 *Listening and drawing out- expanding client awareness*
- Conflict awareness mandala - self, other, issues, context
 - Personality differences
 - Conflict styles
 - Disabling/ **self**-limiting beliefs
 - Transference and projection
- 15.00 Break
- 15.30 *Developing client capability*
- Understanding of anger and conflict and options for handling it
 - Self awareness and valuing of self
 - Self management, self empowerment and self-assertion
 - Appreciation of differences and mutual understanding
 - Compassionate communication skills
 - Relationship building
- 17.00 Close

John Mulligan
Breakthrough Consultancy June 2007

Sexual Addiction Workshop

Facilitator: Eoin Stephens

Venue: Imperial Hotel Cork

Provisional Date: 17th September 2007

Relapse Prevention

Friday 19th October 2007

Facilitator: Austin Prior

Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone

Supervision Introduction Model

This will be a six day workshop, in a series of
three x two days.

Provisional booking is for Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th February 2008.

Two days in Autumn and two days in Spring 2009/or Autumn 2009.

Facilitator: Val Wosket

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Workshop

This will be a four day workshop (2x2 Days) and
will cover CBI's theory and research.

Basic skills, skill practice and application to case
material generated from course participants.

Facilitator: Christine Weatherill

Date of Workshop: 31 st March, 1st April 2008
21 st April, 22nd April 2008

Venue: All Hallows College, Drumcondra, Dublin 9

Anger and conflict

A short article and book review by John Mulligan

Anger, even when handled well, can be troublesome during conflict. However anger is not violent, aggressive, harmful or shameful. Anger does not break or damage relationships, hurt peoples' feelings, or mean that people will not like you. Nor does it mean that you are a bad or unfriendly person, being out of control or yelling and screaming. These and many other misrepresentations give anger a bad name and alienate us from the vibrant life-energy that is anger. Anger is a valuable emotion - it sets us in motion. It is how we understand and use this energy that may be harmful, violent and have undesirable consequences.

Anger is natural, healthy and meaningful. We need to take the time and have the skill to understand it. Anger is part of our internal emotional communication system - it alerts us to danger, it tells us when our needs are unfulfilled, when our values have been violated, when our beliefs or expectations have not been realised. Our emotions are like the display on the dashboard of our cars. They provide valuable information alerting us to how we are doing, what we need, what is going wrong. But we must learn how to read and understand them and act constructively on the information they provide us.

We often confuse the external threat or stimulus that triggers our warning system (anger) and blame the external trigger for our unpleasant feelings. For example: you make me angry, the noise is irritating me, that man enrages me, and so on. In actual fact, it is our own needs, values, beliefs and expectations that generate our anger, annoyance, frustration, etc. Failing to realise this can leave us at the mercy of circumstances and our anger outside our control. The first steps in taking charge of our anger and other emotions is becoming aware of the signals in our bodies and getting to the root of the needs, values etc. that generate them. We need to take responsibility for these. We create our emotions - nobody else does! And we also need to separate our emotional from our behavioural responses.

Yet so many of us are poor at noticing the early signs of emotion in our bodies and fewer are able to decipher the meaning of these signals in terms of needs, values (what is important to us) beliefs and expectations. Thankfully, the importance of these abilities is being increasingly recognised in education, management, and living in the drive for emotional literacy and competence. Such self-awareness and understanding forms the bedrock of effective social and work relationships. Anger is a name we give to an energetic experience we associate with lack of fulfilment or satisfaction. It is toward the stronger end of a family of emotions ranging in intensity from mild irritation, frustration, annoyance, etc. through to fury and rage. It is often generated when experiencing limitations or barriers

to self-assertion, to our choice and freedom, or when encountering obstacles to reaching our goals or desires. It serves to amplify or step up the energy available to meet the challenge, interference or threat. How we use this energy is critical to our sense of achievement and the relationships we have with the people around us.

Yet we all know that inability to manage our emotions, in particular anger, is one of the most difficult challenges we face during conflict. For some people this means that they suppress their anger and deprive themselves of the energy to assert their values and needs - for others, they are hijacked by the intensity of their anger and cannot separate emotion from behaviour - they are no longer in charge of their behaviour. Neither imploding, which damages yourself and your self-esteem, nor exploding which may damage others or your relationships, is healthy or satisfactory. So what can we do?

To begin with we need to understand how anger works as well as what drives it as outlined above. Anger, as I have said, alerts us to danger. It is part of our defence mechanism. Fight, flight, play-dead are our instinctual responses to danger. In anger, we are pumped up with adrenalin and in this volatile state we are primed to attack the threat, to annihilate it or, at very least, to overcome it so it is no longer perceived as a threat. It is very easy to lose control of our anger and actions in such a state, which is usually fear driven, though we may only recognise or acknowledge this once the perception of threat has receded.

These self-protective responses are pre-conscious - they get us into action almost instantaneously before we have a chance to consciously choose how to behave. We do not have control over these responses when we are in unconscious defence mode. However, we can learn from our experience to recognise our psychological vulnerabilities and, for the most part, avoid the destructive consequences of the sudden onset of defensive emotional hijack. When it does happen, the best we can do is to become conscious as quickly as possible that we are in defence mode, whether that is fight, flight or playing dead, and get back in charge. Self-awareness and mindfulness training and the feedback of those we trust can help here.

A further complication posed by our natural defence mechanism is that it cannot tell the difference between a threat to our physical survival and a threat to our psychological identity. In both cases it reacts as if there is a death threat and this often leads to over-reaction. Such over-reaction in the midst of a heated conflict interaction can escalate an already difficult situation. Early recognition of our defensiveness, however, can help us suspend our reaction, assess the danger and choose a more appropriate response. The old adages of stepping back from the danger and counting to 10 are still excellent strategies here if we can be mindful enough to use them.

(Anger and conflict continued on page 17)

***IRISH ASSOCIATION OF ALCOHOL AND
ADDICTION COUNSELLORS***

IAAC



NEWSLETTER

No. 3

March 1992

P.O. Box 48 • Blackrock • Co. Dublin.

.. EDITORIAL ..

This issue - our third since inauguration contains as a feature a history of the Association for our members and friends to enjoy. It should also serve as a reminder to the new Executive of the hard work that went into starting the Association and the need for that hard work to continue!

We thank our printers for the great help and expertise that they have provided in getting three newsletters out. They have been more than obliging and generous.

If our newsletter is to continue as a success we must have more contributions from the general membership.

For Your Information

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 1991 - 1992

Mary T. Walsh - Chairperson

Jim Comberton

Biddy O'Neill - Hon. Secretary

Colman Dunne

Jack Houlahan - Vice Chairperson

Michael Lacey

Caroline Harrison - Hon. Treasurer

Mary Ellen McCann

Jimmy Connolly - Membership Secretary.

Coos Murphy

Rolande Anderson - P.R.O.

Adrian Ahern

HUMOUROUS QUOTE

"ALIMONY- The high cost of leaving "

(Anon.)

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE



We now have 103 Accredited members who have had their Accreditation Certs and membership Cards, posted to them.

All Associate Members, 20 in all, have received their Associate membership Cards.

The process of Accreditation of the bulk of applications took over six months with the Accreditation Sub-Committee and the executive working almost non-stop. All accredited have received a letter outlining the criteria for continuing accredited membership.

The expiry date for membership for all members is June 30th. The Accreditation Sub-Committee and the executive wish to express their thanks to all members for their co-operation in the accreditation process.

Membership Secretary.

.. FOR THE RECORD .. THE HISTORY OF THE IAAAC ..

Although the IAAAC was officially launched on 27/1/90 in the Rotunda Hospital at a meeting attended by over one hundred alcohol! addiction counsellors from all over Ireland, the seeds for such a professional association were sown many years ago.

A workshop was arranged by the now defunct Irish National Council on Alcoholism on Friday October 23rd 1987. The main aim of this was to engage in a review and evaluation of the LN.C.A. Counselling Course. It was well attended by I.N.C.A. trained counsellors and there were also some Managers and Administrators present. The speakers on that day were Mr. Cunningham (Psychologist) Northern Ireland, Mr. Ingo Fischer (Psychologist) , Mr. Jimmy Connolly (Education Officer) I.N.C.A.) and Dr. Dermot Walsh, Consultant Psychiatrist and now the Inspector of Mental Hospitals. Mr. Fischer who is now sadly deceased and Mr. Connolly both spoke on the theme of the counsellors becoming organised. After much discussion a steering committee was formed. The IAAAC certainly owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Fischer and Mr. Connolly and also to LN.C.A. and Mrs. Mary O'Hagan , its director, in particular, who administered and organised the LN.C.A. courses. Without their input it is doubtful if the Association would have ever got off the ground. a sincere thank you to one and all.

The steering committee was made up as follows - Mary Walsh (Dublin) , Liam Curley (Ballinasloe) , Hugh McBride (Letterkenny) , Jimmy Connolly (Mullingar) , Seamus Coleman , (Wexford) , Anna Duggan, (Dublin), Cyril Ryan (Waterford) and Malachy Deery (Monaghan).

The first meeting of the Steering Committee was held in Jury's Hotel on Thursday December 3rd 1987. Jury's were to 'host' many meetings in 1987 and in 1988 although they will only now be aware of their contribution. We sat in the lounge or in the waiting areas and we did give Jury's some little custom. At this meeting Mary Walsh was appointed Secretary and Anna Duggan resigned due to a career change. Rolande Anderson was asked to take her place and agreed **to do** so.

After many meetings and a period of inactivity the steering committee really started to get moving in late 1988 and early 1989. At this stage the committee was revamped , some members retired and new members were asked to join. The committee in March 1989 consisted of ; Mary Walsh, Jimmy Connolly, Rolande Anderson, Seamus Coleman, Coos Murphy, Caroline Harrison , Malachy Deery and Adrian Ahern. Malachy left the committee due to pressure of work a little later, so the gang of 7 met and a date was set for the inaugural meeting on the 27th of January 1990. The committee now met regularly, mostly in St. Patricks and also in the Rotunda and the Red House, Clonliffe Road, once or twice a month for three hours at a time and great work was achieved. There were also many phone calls and informal meetings. Much earlier the committee asked all members of the original steering committee, those who joined later and any other potential member to pay £10 each to help the Association get going. The committee and a small number of our members responded. There was much discussion on membership grades, code of ethics, objectives and aims, the title of the Association and plans for the future. As the inaugural date approached there was still more feverish activity and many late nights. Eight speakers from the field of alcohol! addiction were invited to talk for a short while on their hopes and aspirations for the new Association; Hugh McBride (Letterkenny) , Audrie Kilgallen (Dublin) , Pearse Bamett (Dublin), Biddy O'Neill (Dublin), Carol McDade (Northern Ireland Council on Alcohol) , Martin Marshall (Mullingar) , Jack Houlahan (Derry) and Jim Comberton (Dublin) . Dr. Matt **Murphy** , Consultant Psychiatrist and Director of the Alcohol Programme, St. Patricks Hospital was a guest speaker and he gave a most encouraging welcome to the new Association. The steering committee had received sponsorship on request from most of the main treatment agencies and others such as the Brewers Association , Ballygowan and Fison's Pharamceutical's. Once again the Association remains grateful for their help. The day was a great success and the talks and workshops were both stimulating and energetic. The steering committee was given great support and was re-elected as a group to form the first committee of the Irish Association of Alcohol and Addiction Counsellors. Seamus Coleman resigned due to family commitments and there were six others elected to form the "gang of 12 " . The new six were Jim Comberton, Mary Ellen McCann, Michael Lacey, Biddy O'Neill, Colman Dunne and Jack Houlahan. The IAAAC had at last arrived!

Our arrival was reported by the Irish Medical Tunes and the Irish Medical News. At the first **executive** meeting the officers of the Association were elected **as follows** , Mary T. Walsh (Chairperson) , Jack Houlahan (Vice Chairperson) , Biddy O'Neill (Secretary) , Jimmy Connolly (Membership Secretary), Rolande Anderson (P.R.O.), Caroline Harrison (Treasurer). At the following A.G.M. the same c'ommittee was re-elected in total and the officers remained unchanged. Since the inaugural Meeting **in** January 1990 the executive has met at least once a month for three hours at a time. An early important decision was to stick with the title " The I.A.A.A.C." and a significant milestone was the acquisition of a P.O. Box address. There were further general meetings in St. Patricks on June 16th 1990 and another A.G.M. in the Rotunda Hospital on the 2nd March, 1991. There were also a number of regional meetings and visits by members of the executive to agencies in different regions throughout the country. The hard working and diligent committee produced fliers, a logo, attractive stationery, a Newsletter, a code of ethics, a constitution and draft work on membership grades in its first year. These **were** exciting times. It had been agreed that everyone would be considered an associate member till the membership grades were sorted out.

The A.G.M. of 1991 endorsed the Constitution and listened to the speeches of the executive officers. There was much discussion on membership grades and the draft proposals of the executive were amended. It was finally agreed to have two grades "Associate" and "Accredited ". Accredited members would have to satisfy three requirements under the headings "Education" , "Supervised Training" and "Work Experience " (see information leaflet). These requirements reflect the high standards required for membership **and** the diversity of professional qualifications and experience of alcohol/addiction counsellors in this field. The fee for accredited membership was set at £25 per annum.

ow almost a year later and deep in preparation for our third A.G.M. the committee can reflect on a year where more workshops and regional meetings have been held, the enormous task of processing applications for accreditation has been achieved, two more newsletters have been published and the Association is on a sound financial footing. In addition we have a document on confidentiality, a very attractive information booklet containing a "Code of Ethics", "The Constitution" and "Membership Grades ". We are now consulted by Government Agencies as a significant pressure group, and there are one hundred and three accredited members who have received certificates that are fitting to the style of our association (see photo). We also have twenty associate members at the time of writing. Still much work needs to be done.



MARY WALSH, CHAIRPERSON, AND ROLANDE ANDERSON ,P.R.O., ADMIRE A
FRAMED ACCREDITATION CERTIFICATE IN MARCH 1992.
PHOTO: JONATHAN DURNING.

In outlining this history for posterity there has been an effort not to single out individuals. However, a special tribute must be paid to Mary, our Chairperson, for her perseverance and commitment throughout the formation and first three years of the association. The steering committee and the original executive committee have worked tirelessly and all members have played their part. Each member of the committee has given their own particular commitment and talent to each and all of the achievements to date. They say " self praise is no praise " but this writer has never worked with a more conscientious committee. There has been much work, some disappointment, a little hassle, great excitement, new friendships and exceptional vision. It is up to each and every one of us to ensure that the Association goes from strength to strength. New members of the committee please take note.

Rolande Anderson.

HUMOROUS QUOTE

*" Gambling - the sure way of getting
nothing for something "*

.. BOOK REVIEW ..

TRAINING AND SUPERVISION FOR COUNSELLING IN ACTION
Edited by Windy Dryden and Brian Thorne. Published by Sage Publications.

Price: £8.85 stg.

Available from Alcohol Concern Bookshop.

The purpose of this book is to address some of the key issues involved in the training and supervision of counsellors, and in the preparation of those who undertake supervisory and training roles.

Windy Dryden is Senior Lecturer in the Dept. of Psychiatry, University of London and Brian Thorne is Director of Student Counselling at the University of East Anglia. There are ten other contributors to the book, some of whom are articulate practitioners and others who are academics.

There are three sections, covering training, supervision and the final section covers the training of counsellor trainers and supervisors.

Windy Dryden and Brian Thorne cover the approaches to training of Counsellors and suggest that initial counselling training courses should provide trainees with learning opportunities in four main areas : (a) Self Exploration (b) Supervised work with clients. (c) the acquisition of Counselling Skills and (d) Counselling Theory and relevant academic material.

They give particular emphasis to self-exploration because " an unaware counsellor leading an unexamined life is likely to be a liability rather than an asset ". They argue that supervised work with clients is the central core of any course designed to train counselling practitioners. In the skills area they refer to Fords 1979 Research Review and conceptualise the process as involving instruction, modelling, practice and feedback. There is a case made for theory and academic work and that lectures have their place. They make the point that trainees in general will not tolerate a course where lectures are the predominant way in which knowledge is communicated. The other approaches to the academic side, mentioned, include seminars, tutorials and projects.

The chapter on the selection and assessment in Counsellor Training Courses covers a range of counsellor approaches, psychodynamic person centred and eclectic, and is not very relevant to Addiction Counselling.

In Part Two - Supervision - Robert Sholet and Joan Wilmot make the supervisory relationship the main focus. They explore what can block good work and what the relationship ought to focus on. Supervisors need to have a range of styles and approaches which are modified as the counsellor gains experience.

Level 1. is called the Novice with dependence on the supervisor, the main characteristic.

Level 2. The apprentice - a fluctuation between dependence and autonomy by the trainee.

Level 3. The Journey man - more professional self-confidence with only conditional dependence of the supervisor.

Level 4. The Master Craftsman - characterised by personal autonomy, insightful awareness, personal security, stable motivation and an awareness to confront his or her personal or professional problems.

The appendices provide information on the BAC Code of Ethics and practice for the supervision of counsellors. The BAC describes the various models of supervision: One to One: Supervisor - Counsellor, the most used. One to One Co-Supervision - Two participants providing supervision alternatively for each other. Group Supervision - with Supervisor. Peer Supervision - Eclectic combinations of the above.

The final chapter "Training Counsellor Trainees and Supervisors" raises many issues of relevance to the IAAAC.

There is particular emphasis on continuing personal, professional and educational development for trainers. Most important it is necessary to keep the training instrument "The Self" in good form, and to set an example of self-care by a good quality of life. It is by doing this that burnout can be avoided. This of course presumes that ignition did take place -

This book is part of a Counselling in Action Series covering: Gestalt Rational Emotive Counselling, Cognitive Behaviour Counselling, plus a plethora of other counselling approaches. This book is recommended not just for those engaged in supervision and training but for those wishing to be trained, whatever their theoretical perspective. By: Jimmy Connolly

.. LITERATURE / INFORMATION UPDATE ..

The WHO Regional Office, Europe, have a range of short publications on Aids and my.

These include:

- Psychosocial aspects of HIV and Aids and the Evaluation of preventative strategies. Published 1990.
- Guidelines for Counselling about **MV** Infection and Disease. Published 1990.
- Guide to Planning Health Promotion for Aids Prevention and Control. Published 1990.
- Suicidal Behaviour among People with **MV** and Aids. Published 1990.
- Training on Aids for Personnel in **Drug** Treatment Centres.
- HIV Sero Positivity and Aids Prevention and Control. Published 1989.

The Irish Sales Agents- TDC PUBLISHERS
12 North Fredrick Street, Dublin I.

The Tacade Brochure for 1992 contains much of the old, tried and tested material such as "Locating Drug Education" aimed at Youth and Community Workers.

Tacade produce Alcohol and Drug Material. Health and Personal and Social Education Material together with training manuals designed to develop professional skills and address specific topics.

*Tacade (The Advisory Council on Alcohol and Drug Education) can be contacted at :
1 Hulme Place, The Crescent. Salford. Greater Manchester, MS 4QA.*

*Health Education News,
the newspaper of the Health Education Authority in the U.K. , report in the Forum edition that the Drinkwise campaign is to be extended for a further three years. This campaign **initiated in** 1989 with a National Drinkwise Day, will continue to focus on sensible drinking.*

*This high profile, well financed campaign is going to place considerable emphasis on the drinking environment as a direct way of introducing sensible drinking information. **This will take place in:** the home. drinking pubs, restaurants, discos and the workplace. There is nothing similar to this type of campaign in Ireland.*

The Addiction Research Foundation of Ontario have published a Handbook on Assessment for Addictions! Assessment/Referral Services.

This very comprehensive book covers Intake Policies, Treatment, Planning, Case Management, Initial Interview Questionnaire, Alcohol Dependence Scale and a Drug Abuse Screening Test. It also addresses issues such as EAP Clients, Clients with outstanding court involvement, Justice System referrals, Staff served with a subpoena, evening appointments and assessment/referral procedures and policies. The address of the Addiction Research Foundation is :

ARF.
Sales and Promotion **Dept.**, 33 Russell Street, Toronto.

Two colleagues working in the addiction area can vouch for the value of this particular handbook.

FÓGRA

If there are any interesting news items, books, literature in the Addiction area that you have come across, please send in your piece to the P.R.O.

•...SEMINAR REPORTS...•

SEMINAR REPORT

"Quality Assurance in Drug and Alcohol Agencies", was the theme of the morning session of our Conference held in St. John of God's Hospital, Stillorgan on 9th November 1991. How do we match Client and Treatment Agency? How can we improve the quality of services we offer / How do we evaluate our services / Performance indicators, and the need for performance audits - were some of the topics raised.

Tony Lester (" Alcohol Concern ") our main speaker from the U.K. saw good services as effective , efficient and economic. The content and presentation was to a high standard, well and simply put and because of its participative nature led to good discussion and exchange of ideas.

The afternoon session was led by Dr. Joe Barry, Aids, Drugs Co-Ordinator E.H.B. and concerned itself with the National Drugs policy. Much discussion took place regarding the direction of policy. The issues raised were not altogether new to those in the field, needle exchange, harm minimisation, methadone, etc.

Some confusion seems to exist between Drugs Policy, Aids Policy and some participants felt the greater emphasis was now being placed on the Aids side, and was not a Public Health perspective / initiative on drug problems per se.

This Seminar, was certainly a worthwhile venture, was thought provoking and while containing little new for some, served as encouragement to all.

ADRIAN AHERN, COUNSELLOR
Alcohol & Drug Counselling Services, Portlaoise,
Executive Member 90/91/92

SEMINAR REPORT

WORKSHOP ON CONFIDENTIALITY ST. JOHN OF GOD HOSPITAL

20/2/92

The committee had invited John Haskins (Deputy Commissioner, Data Protection) and John Short, Barrister.

. John Haskins explained the Data Protection Act, including people's rights and responsibilities and gave examples of restricted access to medical and social data.

Adrian Ahern (IAAAC) put forward some of the problems counsellors may encounter around the issue of confidentiality. John Short talked about confidentiality from a common law point of view and a lively discussion afterwards clarified some aspects but also left room for further discussion. I think overall members felt it was a very worthwhile and informative meeting and would welcome a futher workshop on this important aspect of our work.

REGINA LIEPE, Counsellor,
St. Patricks Hospital.

.... SEMINAR DATES

1. ALCOHOL / DRUGS AND THE HOMELESS - 6th April 1992

Venue: University of Ulster, Magee College.

Organised jointly by IMPACT '92, Northlands Centre and the University of Ulster.

International Speakers. COST: £280 or £316 (includes B&B) /

Application Form and further information from Jack Houlahan - Northlands .

Tel: (From Dublin) 08 0504 363011

2. 12th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND TRAFFIC SAFETY 28th September 1992.

VENUE: Cologne, Germany. COST: Not known at time of publication.

Application form and further details from: Conference Secretariat

TUV-AKADAMIE, RHEINLAND, GMBH .

ICADTS -792, AM GREUN STEIN, 5000 KOLN, GERMANY.

3. INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS - THE ROUTE OF DRUGS 26-28th June 1992.

VENUE: Genoa, Italy. COST: Approx. 700,000 Lira.

Application form and further details from

"GARVIAGGI" Via San Vincenzo, 22R, 16121 Genoa, Italy.

4. 1st EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON THE PRIMARY CARE OF HIV INFECTION with special emphasis on

PROBLEM DRUG USE. 16-18 September 1992

VENUE: University College Dublin. COST: £175 approx.

For application form and further details contact :

Fionan O'Cuinneagain ,Corrigan House,

Fenian Street, Dublin 2. Tel: 01- 763705 /763706 Fax: 01-761432

NEXT ISSUE

Closing Date for contributions on or before Mat 1st 1992. It is hoped to publish thrice yearly!

We want:

- *Feedback* • *Articles* • *Social News* • *Comments* • *Regional News*
- *Anecdotes* • *Letters* •

Please sent tp *p.a.* Box 48. Blackrock, Co. Dublin
Mark clearly "*FOR PUBLICATION IN NEWSLETTER*".

This issue has been compiled by the PR. O. (sincere thanks to all contributors)

(Anger and conflict continued from page 8)

Besides overcoming the limitations of our instinctual defence mechanisms, the other major challenge in handling our anger is to notice the internal signals, discover their meaning and communicate it in a clear but constructive manner. Once we recognise we are in defensive mode and have checked that we are not in physical danger, we may be able to create the time and space to discover what it is that is at risk or under threat and that we are protecting. Most commonly if our safety or that of others close to us is not at risk then it is often our freedom/choice, what we regard as important, our goals and our psychological identity - self-esteem and self-concept that may be at stake. The more we get to know ourselves the easier it will be to recognise what is under threat and to choose appropriate action.

An example of blocked choice is the child who wants to eat sweets rather than a nutritious dinner but is prevented from doing so by parents who want to ensure a healthy diet for the child. The limitation on the child's freedom of choice comes in the form of an angry tantrum of frustrated crying and stamping of feet. Most of us appear to have a strong drive toward self-direction and freedom and we experience anger when this is interfered with or we are forced to comply with directives of others that appear not to serve our interests, or as we mature, of those we love.

Our anger mounts rapidly when what we value is at risk or is violated. This may be our health, interests, freedom, family, possessions, our future, and so on. Most of our values have been conditioned/assimilated through our upbringing in our families, schools, religious education and communities and while we live our lives by them we are not necessarily conscious of them nor have we chosen them freely from among alternatives. When I ask the question "what are your values?" many find it difficult to answer. Most of us tend not to be clear about our values or about their relative priority (order of importance) in our lives and work. Not being clear about our values renders us more vulnerable to emotional hijack and inarticulate angry outbursts.

Besides danger alert, anger is very much about values - what is worth fighting for. It is very common that we discover that something is important to us when we have had an angry reaction to the violation of one of our prime values. Unfortunately when this happens such reactions and interactions are often heated but inarticulate in communicating what is important to us. It often comes across in a negative form - what we hate or are against rather than what we are for. This may fuel the frustration we have about not being understood or being able to communicate our values. It takes time to clarify our values and this is best done prior to engaging in conflict where possible as it leads to clearer communication and makes it more likely that what is important, i.e. what is driving our anger, gets addressed.

Along with danger alert, constraint on our freedom and values, our anger is most often triggered when there is a threat to our identity, self-esteem and self-concept. Most commonly if our self-esteem or self concept is fragile or vulnerable we may be on a low threshold of defensive reaction - we may be a bit oversensitive to direct or indirect attacks, typically, on our worth as people, our competence, our goodness or lovability. When our self-esteem is low, we tend to be very critical of ourselves and in this vulnerable state we tend to take things personally. We pick up the slightest inferences or criticism, even if unintended, and react angrily as if the sender of the message were responsible for our pain and suffering.

The angry response may temporarily protect the gaping wound in our self-esteem or identity but it also has the unwanted effect of alienating others and the support and comfort they bring. Only by owning, and taking responsibility for rebuilding our damaged self-esteem - the cause of our anger - will we be able to heal our wounds and strengthen our identity. With a stronger sense of identity and self-esteem we are less vulnerable to negative comments, criticism and angry outbursts - even if they are true!

Book review: Fisher, M., (2005) *Beating Anger*, London: Rider

This book provides an excellent exploration of anger and rage. Part one provides concepts, frameworks and exercises to help people understand anger and their own in particular. Part two provides guidance, exercises and practices which enhance people's ability to manage their anger and rage. It is primarily for those who have difficulty in expressing their anger in a constructive manner in social or work settings but it also provides guidance on how to do some of the inner-work needed for effective anger management and self-development in this regard. The book addresses issues such as anger and power, transference and projection, shame and shadow, emotional regression and how to overcome the effects of early trauma. Essentially this is a practical self-help book but I suspect it works best when linked with a workshop and with the help of a support network recommended in the book.

The Conference and AGM 2007 in words and pictures.

With a start date in early March the volunteer sub committee, remitted to organising the Annual General Meeting and Conference, had started work towards the latter part of the previous year. Choosing and booking the guest speaker and selecting the venue being of primary importance.

The office staff, which has doubled with the welcome arrival of Claire, were the first to arrive and set up their stands and registration. Sharon is pleased to have Claire's full time assistance throughout each week now and it was a pleasure introducing her to the excitement that is inevitably generated by the AGM.

As in previous years Merck sponsored the friday evening gala dinner. Frank Noon and Paul McFadden of Merck sent their apologies for being unable to attend in person but wished IAAAC ongoing success into the future.

Des Corrigan delivered a thought provoking key note address on the role of the National Advisory Committee on Drugs.

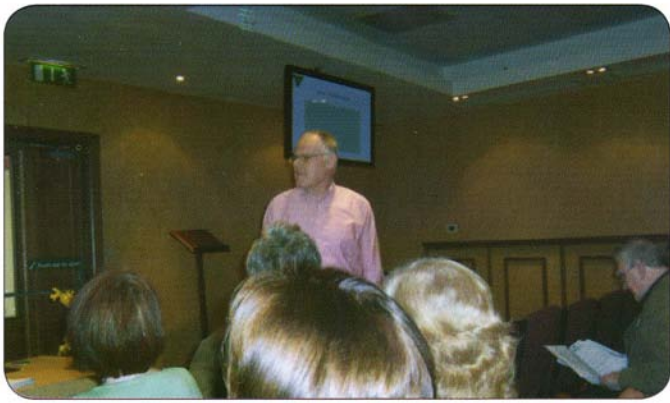
Friday concluded with a choice of pleasant venues within the hotel, dancing for those energised by the good food or just sitting round and shooting the breeze with old friends for those of a more sedate disposition.

On Saturday morning Brendan Moore, chairperson IAAAC spoke on the question of our readiness for statutory registration. Brendan, with the aid of very crisp and uncluttered video slides related the background work that he has already undertaken and explored the possibilities for the future.



Mary deLacy & Guest Speaker Des Corrigan





The Annual General Meeting followed.

In the Chairperson's report Brendan reflected on moving from his Vice Chair role to Chairperson on the resignation of Aine Walsh. Aine was warmly praised and thanked for her wonderful service and leadership. Brendan reported that the main focus of the committee had been on the ongoing development of the association, mainly through the workings of the various sub-committees- training, accreditation, communications and policy. Brendan remarked that these groups had operated in a very competent and professional manner, reflecting the commitment and dedication of the members involved.

There had been an audit of office administration and procedure resulting in the appointment of an additional full time administrator to assist Sharon in the office. A website designer and trainer has recommended a suitable software programme, with training, which will allow for the development and continuous updating of the website. Ongoing problems, Brendan said, with the phone lines will be taken up with the authorities in All Hallows. In conclusion Brendan reported that interviews were being held again during that current month for the position of Development Officer.

The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were followed by a report from each of the sub committees, Accreditation, Newsletter and Education/Training. The chartered accountants BDM were reappointed. The outgoing committee were warmly thanked and the election of the new committee was conducted.

The new committee is as follows; Chairperson, Brendan Moore. Vice Chairperson, Eoin Stephens. Company Secretary, Mara deLacy. Treasurer, Mary 1. Walsh. Tony Jordan and Mary O'Shea continue on the committee and Gaye Linehan was elected as the Associate Representative.

After lunch saw the fond farewells and promises of 'not to leave it so long till next time' as the delegates set off for home, reflecting, hopefully, on a good, productive and enjoyable Conference

Note on the audited financial record of the association:
Due to technical difficulties, as were explained at the time, hard copies of the audited financial record of the association were not available at the AGM. Any member who would now like a copy may request same from the IAAAC office.



Left to Right, Gaye Linehan, Associate Representative. Mary O'Shea, committee member, Mara deLacy, Company Secretary. Eoin Stephens, Vice Chairperson. Brendan Moore, Chairperson. Mary 1. Walsh, Treasurer. Tony Jordan Membership Secretary.

Console Art

The pain of losing a loved one to suicide.

By Marie Whyte R.N. Miacp Miaaac
Counselling & Centre Manager, Console, Galway

A day in my life as a counsellor with 'CONSOLE'

This is not about anyone person in particular: The purpose of this article is to illustrate the emotional pain felt as a result of being bereaved through suicide.

Last night Console held it's monthly support meeting. The doorbell rang. A middle-aged lady, I'll call her Ann, not her real name, stood on the doorstep. I hadn't met her before. "Have I come to the right place for help?" she said, in a barely audible whisper. She stood there visibly shaking. "You see, I have lost my son to suicide," she whispered, fighting back the tears. Yes, I responded, you have come to the right place. You are very welcome, very brave for coming to our support group, here this evening. Her eyes were filled with sadness. The eyes are the windows to the soul; I've heard it said. I close the door gently behind her.

I introduce myself- my name is Marie. I extend my hand to shake hers. She held on to it for a second or two, her hand was cold, does that reflect how she feels inside, I thought?

Please come in, the kettle is on the boil; you might like a cup of tea. We chatted for a moment or two. The ice was broke; we'd made a connection.

At the beginning of the meeting Ann stated her case. She wouldn't be sharing tonight, she came only to listen. She couldn't speak without crying, you see, So many tears. "That's all right came the response," we know how you feel. She was reassured; there was no pressure on her to speak.

After a while, she spoke of losing her only son, at the age of 25, to suicide, some months past. She was still in shock and felt numb most of the time, she'd said. I had the illusion that suicide happens to other people, but not mine. She'd called him Patrick. That seemed fitting, to name her 1st born after our patron saint. His friends shortened it to Pat. She didn't care very much for that, but he preferred it, so Pat it was. She said she felt as if her heart had been torn right out of her chest...broken in pieces...never to mend again.

She spoke of the pride, both of them felt, at his chosen career, serving his community and his country. If truth were known, she'd held enough

pride for both of them. He gave his career, 110%, she'd said with pride. He was going to climb the ladder of success, he'd told her. He wasn't in it for the money, people were more important to him. He was mostly happy. There were times when she thought she saw a twinge of sadness. "I hope he is not too sensitive for his job", she'd thought. It's probably only girlfriend problems, she'd said to herself and he'll get over that! Full of Guilt and Regrets now that she hadn't explored the matter further. It must have been my fault, she said. After all I am his mother. Parents are supposed to protect their children, aren't they? Asks Ann. Ann is full of self-blame.

He came home every week to visit; he had so many stories to tell. They had so many laughs. He was all she ever wanted in a son. He told her everything, or so she thought. She feels so rejected and abandoned now. She spoke of the pride she felt in her heart, when she ironed and starched those precious uniforms. That same heart, that was so full of pride, is now broke, full of sadness never to mend again. The room was silent as she told her story. All that's left now, are those memories, and the uniform.

The uniform, she holds close to her face in the darkness of night, for comfort. The faint smell of his favourite aftershave still lingers. She remembers happier times. He was a friendly lad, knew all his elderly neighbours, would call out and wave to them from the open window of his supped-up car, music blaring from his powerful speakers, dressed to the nines, as he drove past. She watched with pride as he cleaned and polished his car through her kitchen window. They often squabbled over the noise and the music. Those lyrics would have been banned in my day, she'd told him. He was especially kind to the elderly, never forgot their names. "Never changed," they'd said. He was always kind, as a child never forgot to feed the birds in the winter.

She cannot sleep very well as the medication that used to help her sleep, doesn't work so good any more. When she sleeps it's always troubled by nightmares. She sits alone and cries into the uniform, worrying if she will stain it, how she will get the stains out, only to suddenly realise that he won't need it again. She's trying to make sense of the past few months, all those unanswered questions, the why's and if only's, haunt her. Ann struggles to understand the reasons for his suicide, asking herself over and over 'Why' replaying his last moments, searching for signs that he was suicidal.

I thought to myself, why, why are so many people with depression and mental health problems, not coming forward for help?

Only 2 out of 4 with depression will come for help. Soul pain is not just feeling a little down, it's worse, much worse than that. Feeling that they 'deserve' to be in such pain as they are worthless and of no value to themselves or others, giving serious thought to ending it all.

'No body will notice and the pain will be gone'

Ann, trying to remember now when she last told him she loved him. She'd often told him she loved him, but as this embarrassed him, as he got older, so she stopped telling him so often. It's important now to remember the last time she'd told him. I am so tormented she said, trying to make sense of all those emotions, swimming around at such speed, inside. Life isn't fair, is there really a God, she asks? Not expecting anyone to answer. She felt angry now at the unfairness of it all. When she talks about her heartbreaking pain, heads nod in agreement. Will this pain ever end, she asks? The faces around her are now blank; 'no one has answers as they ask themselves, that very same question.

No one moved or spoke until she'd finished speaking. She felt it was safe to talk, knew no one was judging her, as her tears rolled and she wiped the drips from her nose. They understood she knew, they'd been there, hadn't they? No need to feel embarrassed. It's not the same with everyone, she continues. Some ask very personal questions, some avoided her, some; don't mention his name any more...and that's very hurtful.

My sister tells me to stop talking about it, upsetting myself. They don't understand that I need to talk about him, over and over again.

I feel confused, wonder sometimes if I am going mad, so depressed at times, I wonder if I have the strength to carry on myself.

There's still a stigma attached to suicide, she continues.

If only I could turn back the clock, she continues, surely I could have prevented it. This Guilt is too much for any human to bear. It's not fair says Ann. A mother shouldn't have to bury her son. "I'll never recover from this," she said. The tears flow. Ann, reaches for more tissues and stops sharing.

The room was silent. I look around. Everyone in deep thought, consumed with his or her own pain, wiping away a tear or two discreetly. A room, full of loving, caring, warm people, the salt of the earth type, that would give anything to have their loved ones back, if just for a hug. Faces full of pain, hearts

broke into smithereens, devastated in the aftermath of suicide.

Ann didn't leave with the others; she needed a little more time. We sat alone in the candle lit room. Ann was much calmer now as she began, to pour her heart out. She talked about things she wasn't yet ready to share with the group. She had her own battle with addiction and is finding it especially tough at the moment. She will talk about that another time. She felt safe and secure, to think the unthinkable and speak the unspoken. She cried some more. I look at the floor around her. Small pieces of tissue strewn around her feet like a light dusting of snow in the winter. She talked about the pride she felt in ironing his uniform's again. That meant a lot to her.

As she stood in the hallway before departing, I looked into the eyes of this broken woman, standing in front of me. The eyes are the windows to the soul; I've heard it said. Ann's eyes were filled with sadness. Her face, drawn and tired from lack of sleep. Her face tear stained and her eyes puffy from crying. She's cried since his passing but the tears haven't answered any of her questions. She felt confused, asking herself if she was going mad? I sometimes feel so depressed, I don't know if I have the strength to make it myself, she said.

Her greying, curly hair almost touching her shoulders now. "I haven't felt much like going to the hairdresser's," since his passing, she'd said. The fresh tea- stains on her jumper were visible. "My hands haven't stopped shaking since he's gone," she'd said. There were no biscuit crumbs on her jumper. "I haven't had much of an appetite since his passing" she'd said, as the other group members had tea and biscuits. They didn't feel much like eating either but were being polite, as I'd made the tea. I looked at the small crumbled pieces of tissue clinging to her hair and jumper. Earlier, those same tissues, wiped up the abundant tears, that ran from her eyes, like raging rivers down her face. Some of the tissue stuck to her crumpled skirt, "I can't face ironing any more," she'd said. The last thing I ironed, was his uniform. "You all know what that means to me," she'd said.

As I reached to open the door, she put her arm around me; hugged me, thanking me for my time. She thanked 'Console' for being there that evening.

As she departed, I thought I saw a glimmer of hope in those eyes. The windows to the soul, I've heard it said. "I miss his hugs," she says, smiling faintly as she walked out into the cool nights air.

Strengthening Families

By Robert O'Driscoll

H.S.E. South delivers exciting new Family programme.

Arbour House Youth Drug and Alcohol Services in conjunction with the Regional and Local Drug Task Forces have developed and piloted the "Strengthening Families Programme".

The Strengthening Families Programme is a 14 session family skills training programme designed to increase resilience and reduce the risk factors for substance misuse, depression, violence and aggression, involvement in crime, and school failure in high risk, 12-17 year old children and their parents.

Positive results from over 15 independent research replications demonstrate that the programme is robust and effective in increasing assets and protective factors by improving family relationships, parenting skills, and improving youths social and life skills

The SFP curriculum includes three courses (Parent skills training, Teen skills training and Family life skills training) taught in 14 two-hour periods. In the first hour, parents and children participate in separate classes, each class led by 2 co-facilitators. Parents learn to increase desired behaviours in children by using attention and rewards, clear communication, effective discipline, substance use education, problem solving, and limit setting.

Children learn effective communication, understanding feelings, coping with criticism, stress management, social skills, problem solving, resisting peer pressure, consequences of substance use and compliance with parental rules. During the second hour families practice structured family activities, family meetings, communication skills, effective discipline, reinforcing positive behaviours in each other, and jointly planning family activities.

Incentives for attendance, positive participation, home practice completion, and graduation are recommended. Family meals before each session, transportation, and child care all reduce barriers to participation. Booster sessions and parent run family support groups for Strengthening Families Programme graduates are encouraged.

This exciting new initiative has been undertaken with the cooperation of the Probation and Welfare Services, Liberty Street Homeless Services, and the Local Drug Task Force community workers.

I took a few moments to reflect on the evening.
-I wash the cups in the clear crypto water.
Looks can be so deceiving, I say out loud.
So much sadness, so much grief, words left
unspoken, unfinished business.
I didn't understand it all.

There is no template for Grief: There is a beginning,
no middle and no end.

I'm glad Ann found the strength to reach out to
CONSOLE for help and support that evening. Why,
you might ask? Without it, Ann could end up,
herself, another statistic of suicide.

There is no hell and there is no pain like the one
suicide brings.

This is a day in my life as a counsellor with
CONSOLE.

Console is a registered charity supporting and helping
those bereaved through suicide.
If you, your family or friends have been bereaved by
suicide and would like some more information about
our services please contact Console at the
following.

www.console.ie

info@console.ie

National Helpline: 1800201 890

Console Galway +353 91 537333

Console Dublin +353 1 8574300

Console Limerick +353 61 306792

Feelings

I look at my life and wonder what went wrong
What or who is to blame
And it always comes back to me.

Take responsibility for your actions,
I would hear, but not always so easy.
Life seems better now since I looked at my life
and knew it had to change.

I look at my kids and know their strength, their
smile; their innocence will help me through,
Today and for the rest of my life,
that I can be sure of.

By Jackie Luby