

International Journal
of Cognitive Analytic Therapy
and Relational Mental Health

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Editorial

WELCOME to the sixth volume of the International Journal of Cognitive Analytic Therapy and Relational Mental Health. This much delayed volume marks a point of transition. After nurturing it into existence the editorship is being handed over to Alison Jenaway and Caroline Greenwood Dower. They will draw together a new editorial group. For my own part it has been a rewarding eight years and much learning from the process of article submission, collating and passing on peer reviews and seeing through the step-by-step process of production.

Many thanks go to Ian Kerr who was the driving force behind the creation of the journal and co-editor of all the preceding volumes. Also to Derek Roger who has done an expert and sustained job of layout and preparation for publication. More recently for this issue many thanks to Anna Laws, Steve Kellett, Claire Regan and Elaine Martin and all the peer reviewers.

The journal is one of the products of the international Cognitive Analytic Therapy Association (ICATA) and the watching and guiding hand of the ICATA executive has been a constant value.

We are indebted to Harriet Fleetwood who singlehandedly has transformed our backlog of 40 articles over the five previous issues from pdfs to tml.

This issue brings the following rich mix of contributions.

Krystina Jacobs takes up a neglected but vital element of CAT's active use of time in therapy. She reports on her research into the use of follow up sessions. In detailed study, with recommendations for training, the therapist stance is a key variable (whether more cognitive and standing outside the follow up session or more analytic and feeling inside the follow up session).

Hanna-Marie Hilden and **Sami Kivikkokangas** take us to the heart of imagery rescripting as part of CAT technique in ways that help think about CAT as an activity-based therapy with a variety of means of joint activity within the therapy relationship.

Andy Horan theorises and shows CAT working with caregiver and child dyads as the focus of therapy. He writes: a key aim within dyadic CAT is to work towards caregivers offering a different relational experience to their child. The push and pull of mutuality and asymmetry of power from top and bottom ends of reciprocal roles both within and between the young person, carer and therapist as co-learners in relational therapy is described.

David Crossley explores the idea of

agency and otherness from a CAT point of view. He gives agency a new and relational space within CAT's approach.

Niall Power, Jo Varela and Caroline Wojnarowski offer the first of three articles on distinctive applications of reflective practice. They focus on work with Evaluating reflective practice in a intensive support, learning disability team. They point to the need for more research but stress the potential for reflective practice to reduce burnout and enhance team cohesion.

Siobain Bonfield and Laura Hayes explore the contribution of reflective practice and a relational mapping approach using CAT tools to increase relational awareness, emotional intelligence and clinical and therapeutic work.

Laura Bridges, Jenny Marshall and Divine Charura show the use of CAT reflective practice groups for team leaders in the British National Health Service. They draw out the double benefit of a more contextual relational awareness of the system and more internal and compassionate awareness of their internal stresses and conflicts. Their article echoes a theme in several contributions to this journal of both using reflective practice and focusing on the provider end of the helping equation.

Rebecca Kelly, Steve Kellett and Mel Simmonds-Buckley report on the development of cognitive analytic therapy guided self-help for depression. It builds on similar work done with anxiety. They point out the lack of choice and its

importance for retention of patients.

Agatha Payne, Stephen Kellett and Peter Taylor also focus on the provider in exploring therapist perspectives in a specific treatment choice. CAT can zoom in and out. Their focus is on brief CAT and their research design brings out key themes for facilitators that echo leaders' reflective practice in the article by Bridges et al.

Thank you to all these contributors writing as practitioner researchers and demonstrating the vitality and versatility of Cognitive Analytic Therapy as a distinctive therapy model and a general framework for working relationally. They all point to further research and to clinical innovation. Good practice is built and enriched in this way. CAT offers an integrative, overarching and pragmatic approach to working with the multiple causes of distress and disorganisation that we carry individually and collectively in current society.

Writing and research require curiosity and courage for practitioners. I hope the journal grows to attract diverse international voices. Please spread the word about the journal, its archive of past contributions and its openness to new contributions.

For the next issue of the journal, anyone with submissions, proposals or enquiries to the editors please send them to Journalicata@gmail.com The deadline is November 15th 2026 for publication in the spring of 2027.

Steve Potter
May 2026

