

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
of
COGNITIVE ANALYTIC THERAPY
& RELATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH

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CAT

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What is ICATA?

It is a federation of national associations promoting training and supervision in the practice of cognitive analytic therapy from Australia, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, Poland, Spain, India, and the United Kingdom. There is an executive made up of two delegates from each member country or organisation with established or newly developing training programmes in CAT. The executive meets regularly and organises a biennial international conference.

Further details are available on the website internationalcat.org

Aims of ICATA

To develop knowledge, use of and further development of cognitive analytic therapy.

To offer support, training and supervision internationally and oversee national accreditation programmes and procedures.

To publish the *International Journal of Cognitive Analytic Therapy and Relational Mental Health*.

Aims of the Journal

To promote the use and evaluation of CAT and its further integrative development across a range of settings, cultures and countries, and to publish novel and challenging material relating to this.

It also aims to promote cross-disciplinary dialogue within the broad field of relational mental health thereby contributing to further psychotherapy integration and the further development of CAT.

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As well as the four volumes of this journal other CAT books are listed and available.

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WE are delighted to present the fourth issue of the *International Journal of Cognitive Analytic Therapy and Relational Mental Health*. We have now moved to an open access, online medium for the journal (though print copies are available for those who would prefer to read a paper copy). All four issues are now on the International CAT website www.internationalcat.org/journals

This issue has, unfortunately, been delayed by various unavoidable circumstances, most notably the still-ongoing, world-wide Covid pandemic over the past eighteen months. This has been, and continues to be, devastating in many ways for many people world-wide, and especially for those belonging to less privileged groups or countries. For this reason we are very pleased to carry, firstly, a reflective guest editorial on this topic by our new member of the editorial group, Hilary Brown, whom we also welcome 'on board'. We all felt strongly it was important to attempt, from a CAT-informed perspective, to make some deeper sense of the consequences and effects, both material and psychological, of the pandemic. Hilary's editorial addresses, amongst other things, the current and future urgent therapeutic challenge facing mental health practitioners and services in helping those many struggling with resultant serious mental health problems but also, importantly, the socio-political issues worldwide that have contributed to the severity of this pandemic in most places, and the, all too often, poor state of health services trying

to respond to it. From a CAT-informed perspective we would all wish to address and stress not only the prevalence of mental health problems and the challenge of how to respond to them, but also their broader socio-political context and determinants.

Beyond this, we are pleased to offer again a wide range of high-quality articles, characterised in general by a 'real world' concern with and focus on assisting colleagues (including trainees), staff teams and services with the inherent relational and systemic difficulties encountered in trying to help various client/patient presentations in a range of differing settings. We note also in general throughout these articles a high degree of personal commitment and involvement on the part of practitioners and researchers, and of critical, creative self-reflection on this. This 'involvement' could be described in terms of extended 'reciprocal role' enactments in various, often stressful, front-line settings. We note such approaches offer a further, deeper approach to thinking about the nature of mental health problems and about offering treatments, in comparison to the more 'decontextualised' reporting of outcomes of 'delivery' of supposedly standardised psychological treatments frequently encountered in the literature (see also Margison in this issue and below).

The current issue contains, in running order, articles on staff experiences of the helpful use of CAT reformulations in a challenging, 'learning disability' service

(Priddy *et al.*), on a rigorous, early intervention, replication study from the Netherlands for adolescents with ‘BPD’ (still a controversial but important topic) (Hessels *et al.*), a thoughtfully self-reflective paper on the challenges of endings (a key focus in CAT-based treatments) (Byron), a creative and challenging piece on the potential importance of awareness of and training in ‘embodied therapeutic presence’ for practitioners working especially with internalised psychological trauma (Sheard), a paper on the potentially important, but difficult to evaluate, contribution of ‘personal reformulations’ for clinical psychology trainees (Hamilton *et al.*), and, finally, a paper on the helpful contribution of reflective practice, aided by the ‘map and talk’ framework, in working with staff and systemic issues in an in-patient adolescent service (Mulhall).

This issue also offers an extended and deeply-thoughtful ‘book review’ by Frank Margison on the thorny issue of ‘evidence’ in mental health treatment and research, and how it is obtained, with particular reference to CAT, but far from confined to it. The review is prompted by a recent special issue on CAT of *Psychology, Psychotherapy Research: Theory and Practice*, but also reflects on a revised edition of *The Great Psychotherapy Debate* by world authority Bruce Wampold with Zac Imel a few years ago. We were especially pleased to have Frank do this given his previous editorial on the same topic some 20 years ago in an earlier incarnation of the same journal, which he here also helpfully revisits. In our view this major review raises very considerable and still unresolved issues, especially with regard to current dominant paradigms of research in mental health, and psychother-

apy in particular, that have some very important implications. For these reasons, we hope it will have an importance and readership well beyond the confines of this journal. We also offer a book review by one of the editorial group (SP) prompted by an encounter with a troubling book by Mary Trump, niece of the last US President. This raises some disturbing thoughts about the current socio-political world we inhabit, key to mental health broadly conceived, including the question of how, socio-culturally, support for such a President can arise.

We hope that the forward-looking hopefulness implicit in these various pieces and in CAT-informed approaches generally may be both provocative and inspiring to our readership, despite possibly some of the more sobering and possibly gloomy reflections also evoked. We note again that the journal welcomes correspondence on possibly contentious and/or debatable topics that may have been touched upon in this, or indeed previous issues. We hope too that this issue will, as mentioned above, possibly stimulate readers to contribute some financial support via our website to help maintain the journal which is sustained by a labour of love by all contributors, peer reviewers and the editorial team! We thank the members of the ICATA board for their ongoing support of the journal. And we thank the many colleagues who have contributed anonymously to the work of reviewing contributions to the journal. We continue to welcome submissions and will be aiming as usual, global events permitting, to produce our next issue by the end of 2022.

**Ian B Kerr, Steve Potter, Hilary Brown,
Louise McCutcheon** (as Chair of ICATA)

CAT around the world

What's on

ICATA special interest group

CAT in relation to the Climate and Ecological Emergency

This group has had two webinar meetings in 2021 including one scheduled for November 30th and plans meetings through 2022.

<https://www.internationalcat.org/event>



26th Annual ACAT Conference 2022

(postponed from 2021)

26th to 28th May 2022

Venue: Grand Hotel, Gosforth Park, Newcastle, UK

'Connections, Conflicts and CAT'

We are formed in our relationships, by our landscape and its culture. At the same time our individuality results in different ways of seeing and acting in the world leading to both conflicts and connections. CAT's focus on the dialogical and relational aspects of our lives promotes integration of these different parts, healing, valuing and giving voice to them.

This conference aims to provide a space to consider the factors that can influence all of us both at a micro brain level and a macro social level, central to us individually, in our clinical practice and in the broader work place.

#ACATconf22

For booking please visit <https://www.acat.me.uk/event/1060/>

For queries please email alison.marfell@acad.me.uk



ANZACAT Conference

20th August 2022

'Relating to change and uncertainty'

Melbourne, Australia

<https://anzacat.org.au>



ICATA International Conference

15-17th June 2023

Helsinki, Finland

<https://www.internationalcat.org>

