INSIDE THIS ISSUE

“Progress by Degrees - The Future of Counselling/Psychotherapy as a Graduate Profession” by Eoin Stephens

Dr. William Glasser 1925 - 2013 Psychiatrist and Author

Positive Psychotherapy

Book Review: Understanding and Treating Sex Addiction:

Lecturer Profile: Jade Mullen

News and Moves
I would like to take this opportunity to discuss with you a number of highlights and developments within PCI College and the world of Counselling and Psychotherapy.

As you may have seen over the last year and since our last edition, there have been significant changes within PCI College especially within the area of technology. Changes have been afoot with the introduction of a new Student Portal to simplify access to documentation and create a PCI College online community.

This area is also supported with PCI College Facebook, Linkedin and Twitter accounts. The age of social media and technology has arrived into the world of Counselling and Psychotherapy! Some of you may have even noticed that there has been a move to deliver counselling session through Skype and other video applications. In fact PCI College ran a very successful workshop earlier this year entitled “Learning to Offer Counselling Online” taught by the College President Mr Eoin Stephens, which covered that very subject.

Going back to the Student Portal I would like to describe the composition of this development including key areas for students to avail of. The first is the Courses pages, where key module materials are held, access to the courses timetable and a forum to allow students to connect outside of the class room is available. Followed by a Resources area, where useful information is stored with access to the online mylibrary
and EBSCO Journals. In addition to this is a new exciting development ‘esubmissions’ where all essays are submitted electronically with direct feedback and results sent to the students email account. Therefore there will be no waiting for information in the post and wondering if it has been lost or delayed. To complement this service this is a particular area which should be of great interest to the student body where each student is provided with their own SkyDrive; an area to keep documentation and assignments stored in the cloud. This will greatly assist students with the ability to access their work from anywhere within the world and they can be sure it won’t be lost by PC/Laptop issues or data keys going missing. As part of the Portal development students are now provided with a PCI College email address allowing clear communication and no loss of messages which may have disappeared into junk folders in the past. All in all these areas of information sharing and storage should be complimentary to the learning and development in class and assist with growth and development of the whole College including the student body.

As the world is changing, technology is becoming prevalent in everyone’s life, welcome or not. It is important to remember that the world always grows and develops and one should not be left behind. Embrace these IT developments, take the challenge and see what journey it leads you on.

With the topic of change and challenges at the forefront of my mind it is interesting to see the IACP’s proposal recommending that Counselling and Psychotherapy training moves to a minimum of Level 8 Degree qualification for accreditation. Although this may take a few years to be implemented it is clear that education within the world of Counselling and Psychotherapy is extremely important. PCI College have for many years been leading the way in supporting this move to ensure clients have accredited and well trained Counsellors. Integrity within this sector is highly important and it is key to ensure that the profession is regulated and that minimum educational standards are adhered to. Would you visit a Doctor who is not fully trained? Can you stand by your training if it is not reaching minimum recommended standards?

PCI College are delighted to see this recommendation from the IACP and we hope that this proposal will be implemented in the future.

Education is key to improving oneself and assisting others. By evolving and improving our knowledge through education and growth in new developing areas we can be sure that we are providing the best knowledge we have to students, which they can use when working with and supporting clients.

It’s a journey it may be hard, but embrace the changes, don’t be afraid and enjoy the knowledge that you gain.

Education is key, where would we be without it!

R H Murphy
College Director
Introduction

Counselling/Psychotherapy has been gradually moving, in Ireland as in many other countries, towards an identity as a distinct profession. Not everybody supports this move, and indeed there should still be a place for the use of counselling/therapeutic skills by a wide variety of other helping and educational professionals (nurses, teachers etc) within their own work contexts (what John McLeod calls “Embedded Counselling” - see link below).

http://www.karnacbooks.com/AuthorBlog.asp?BID=43

But the role of the Counsellor/Psychotherapist is distinct from that of the Psychiatrist, the Clinical Psychologist and the Social Worker, and we need to be able to take our place at the multidisciplinary table (literally, in the context of case conferences).

Most professions require a university degree as a basis for entry (along with a period of internship or the equivalent). However, this is still work in progress within the helping professions in Ireland; within the nursing profession the transition to a requirement for a Level 8 (Honours) Degree only took place in the early 2000's. (See link to the 1998 Report of the Commission on Nursing below)

http://www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/commnrs.pdf?direct=1

PCI College, as a major provider of Counselling/Psychotherapy training and education, strongly supports this movement towards professionalization of our field, and has always had higher education as part of this vision. This was reflected in the 2004 name change from Personal Counselling Institute to PCI College, but it was always central to the vision of Liam McCarthy, who founded PCI along with Josephine Murphy. It was Liam who set up the collaboration between Middlesex University and PCI College in 2001 to provide an Honours BSc in Counselling & Psychotherapy, leading the way in typical Liam McCarthy fashion!

There were of course many motivations for Liam in taking this step. As I have said elsewhere (http://www.pcicollege.ie/article/liam-mccarthy-scholarship-winner2012)

"Liam McCarthy was a man who believed passionately in personal development, and he knew that adult education could be a central element in that development for many people. One of his visions was to open up third level education to a wider pool of mature students who might not have otherwise seen themselves as getting a degree..."

But setting a new standard within the field was certainly one of the desired outcomes.

Again, not everyone in the field is completely happy about the fit between university education and Counselling/Psychotherapy training (I believe parallel discussions/concerns exist within the world of nurse education). Liz Ballinger, in her article “Insecurity of Tenure” (Therapy Today, Vol. 24, Issue 1, February 2013) proposes that “There are areas of potential fit between counsellor training and wider university cultures that suggest universities are appropriate settings for counselling training.” But she also looks at areas of concern expressed by those working in the sector. (See link below).

http://www.therapytoday.net/article/show/3547/

And, of course, one doesn’t currently need a degree to practice as a Counsellor/Psychotherapist (hence the 3-year Diploma within the 4-year PCI College degree, enabling students to begin working towards accreditation with the IACP). But there have
been some relevant recent developments which show that the movement I am talking about here, while happening slowly, is definitely happening.

**QQI**

In August of this year, Quality & Qualifications Ireland (a new statutory body incorporating what was formerly HETAC), published Draft Awards Standards for Counselling and Psychotherapy (see link below).

http://www.qqi.ie/Consultation/Pages/Draft-Awards-in-Counselling.aspx

According to QQI, this document “presents working draft awards standards for counselling and psychotherapy and is published for consultation purposes…”

“The Awards Standards for educational and training qualifications in Counselling and Psychotherapy are designed to be used by persons developing and reviewing specific programmes of education and training leading to major awards (at NFQ Levels 6 through 9 inclusively) in Counselling and Psychotherapy…”

“They provide a reference for benchmarking intended programme learning outcomes…”

“The draft awards standards are standards for ‘intended programme learning outcomes’ rather than standards for assessing candidates for particular qualifications.”

So, while QQI are proposing educational standards for the field of Counselling/Psychotherapy education (particularly for the programmes they validate, but this will inevitably influence standards within all similar programmes), they are not specifying at what point in a student’s progression from Level 6 to Level 9 (Masters) the student would be deemed to have a professional qualification in the field. This decision they see as a matter for CORU, the Health & Social Care Professionals Council (www.coru.ie), in discussion with the various accrediting bodies in the field (IACP, IAHIP, NAPCP etc).

However, they do make reference to a document produced by the Psychological Therapies Forum (a discussion forum for the main accrediting bodies) and presented to the then Minister for Health, John Moloney, in 2008 (see links below).


As I have mentioned elsewhere (http://www.pcicollege.ie/MA-Integrative-Counselling), this document included the following recommendations:

Baseline qualification and experience for registration as psychotherapist: Minimum four years of training in specific psychotherapy modality at master’s level (1,400 hours)...

Baseline qualification and experience for registration as Counsellor: Minimum 4 years training in specific counselling and psychotherapy modality Minimum 1250 hours...

Leading to a degree or recognised accredited equivalent in Counselling

This document seems to suggest that there is broad agreement about the need for a minimum degree-level qualification for practitioners in the Counselling/Psychotherapy field. However, it also seems to assume that there is some substantial and distinguishable difference between practising as a Counsellor and practise as a Psychotherapist, and that the former should require a Bachelor’s degree (Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications), with the latter requiring a Master’s degree (Level 9).
IACP Position Paper

In September of this year the IACP published a position paper on “Statutory Regulation and the Difference Between Counselling and Psychotherapy” (see link below)

http://www.irish-counselling.ie/iacp_position_paper

In summary, the position paper clarifies the following (italics added):

1. IACP, as an Association, does not differentiate between Counselling and Psychotherapy.
2. IACP, as an Association, sees no proficiency difference between Counselling and Psychotherapy.
3. IACP recommends that Counselling and Psychotherapy should be regulated, by the State, with the same baseline academic and practice qualifications.
4. Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) should serve as the baseline academic qualification for both Counselling and Psychotherapy.
5. There are other important considerations for the profession, as a whole, to work on relating to Statutory Regulation and the difference between Counselling and Psychotherapy.

This position is supported by PCI College, and I have written a letter to the Editorial Committee of Éisteach, the journal of the IACP, to state this support.

While we fully support (as I am emphasising in this article) the need for degree qualification within our profession, we see no basis for introducing Postgraduate qualification at this stage (usually reserved for specialisation and advancement within a profession), nor for making the distinction between Counselling and Psychotherapy in this way. We believe in treating “Counselling & Psychotherapy” as one unitary area, as is widespread (though not universal) practice in the field.

The IACP Website describes the situation this way: Counselling and psychotherapy are terms that overlap heavily and are often used interchangeably. They incorporate the giving of attention and respect in a confidential relationship.

The BACP website offers this definition: Counselling and psychotherapy are umbrella terms that cover a range of talking therapies. They are delivered by trained practitioners who work with people over a short or long term to help them bring about effective change or enhance their wellbeing.

http://www.bacp.co.uk/crs/Training/whatiscounselling.php

BACP also comment that: The proposal to differentiate between counselling and psychotherapy is out of step with research and other developments in the field of the psychological therapies...

http://www.bacp.co.uk/regulation/index.php?newsId=1603&count=32&start=12&filter=%3Ch2%3ENotes+from+the+Council+for+Healthcare+Regulatory+Excellence+%28CHRE%29+meeting++26th+January+2012&cat=&year=

And finally: BACP’s position has consistently been that there is no difference between counselling and psychotherapy. In terms of role, value and effectiveness, we believe that each occupational area has equal value. Many of our members use these terms interchangeably depending on the environment they are working in. Indeed, BACP’s research committee which comprises international scholars of counselling and psychotherapy were unable to differentiate between the two on the basis of evidence.

http://www.bacp.co.uk/news/index.php?newsId=833
Part of the difficulty here is that there is no widely agreed definition or even any consistent usage of the terms “Counselling” & “Psychotherapy”. While the term “Psychotherapy” is used by some only in relation to the Psychodynamic family of approaches, the fact that this is not the only well-established usage can be seen in the names of such large and influential bodies as the British Association for Behavioural & Cognitive Psychotherapy and the Irish Association for Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy.

Marcella Finnerty (Director of the Institute of Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy) points out that “The debate about whether there are any notable differences between psychotherapy and counselling has been ongoing for many decades and opinions differ, each side making justifiable claims for holding their particular viewpoint. Just as with the term counselling there is little unanimity in defining what is meant by the term psychotherapy” (Eisteach, the Journal of the Irish Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy, Spring 2005, p. 8).

In a similar vein, Colin Feltham and Ian Horton, in the Third Edition of their influential Sage Handbook of Counselling and Psychotherapy (2012, p. 3), state that “No single, consensually agreed definition of either counselling or psychotherapy exists in spite of many attempts across the decades in Britain, North America and elsewhere to arrive at one”.

Certainly, the PCI College/Middlesex University BSc in Counselling & Psychotherapy programme is designed with a broad, eclectic and integrative view of Counselling and Psychotherapy in mind. We support and look forward to the consistency of qualification standards that Statutory Regulation of our profession will bring, and believe that our students and graduates are in a good position to avail of this consistency when it finally comes.
On the 23rd of August 2013 Dr. William Glasser, world-renowned psychiatrist, author, and creator of both Reality Therapy and Choice Theory Psychology, passed away peacefully at the age of 88. We join with many throughout the world who feel this loss of such a pioneer in the field.

He had been in poor health for some time and died surrounded by his wife Carleen and family members in his Los Angeles home. Dr. Glasser and his first wife Naomi, who died in 1992, had three children, Joseph, Alice and Martin. In 1995 Dr. Glasser married Carleen Floyd. He lived all of his professional life in the Los Angeles area of California. His emphasis on personal responsibility for mental health problems helped sell millions of his books. He also advocated education reform. The Irish Guidance Counsellors have lost a great friend and mentor.

The Journey of Dr. Glasser

Born in Cleveland Ohio, USA, on 11th May 1925, Dr. Glasser reached international fame in 1965 when his ground-breaking book, “Reality Therapy”, challenged the traditional beliefs of psychiatry at the time. As an increasing number of people wished to learn his methods and to help train people in his approach he founded the “Institute for Reality Therapy” now called “William Glasser International” which was chaired by Irish Guidance Counsellor, Brian Lennon.

Reality Therapy is a method of counselling which teaches people how to direct their own lives, make more effective choices, and how to develop the strength to handle the stresses and problems of life. The core of Reality Therapy is the idea that regardless of what has “happened” in our lives, or what we have done in the past, we can choose behaviours that will help us meet our needs more effectively in the future.

Dr. Glasser first came to Ireland in 1985 invited by the then President of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, Arthur Dunne, and the interest in his work has flourished since then. Dr. Glasser’s practical common sense approach in Reality Therapy had an instant appeal for guidance counsellors keen to improve their professional skills, and he attributes his Irish colleagues with the inspiration to rename his psychological approach, as “Choice Theory”.

Dr. Glasser has always been very aware of the key role played by a guidance counsellor not only in counselling but in co-ordinating a school-wide approach to counselling. The Institute of Guidance Counsellors conscious of his great contribution to their work conferred an honorary fellowship on Dr. Glasser, something he treasured very much. Bill Glasser, the man, also appealed to us with his relaxed personal style and had a generous appreciation for an Irish joke. He enjoyed the Irish and we enjoyed him.

Dr. Terry Lynch’s publication “Beyond Prozac” (2001) inspired Dr. Glasser to write a book about the dangers of the biochemical analysis of human distress. Later Dr. Lynch was invited to write the foreword to Dr. Glasser’s own book; Warning: Psychiatry can be Hazardous to your Mental Health (2003). Dr. Glasser wrote a total of 27 books as well as publishing many articles. A biography of Dr. Glasser by Jim Roy, “Champion of Choice” is due to be published in the autumn.

Dr. Glasser believed that “everyone who needs psychiatric treatment suffers from one basic inadequacy: he is unable to fulfil his essential needs”. He believed that whether a person in mental distress exhibited psychotic behaviours, anxiety or depression, that person was in fact opting for the best possible solution available to him or her. He believed that, in general, these people do not have anything wrong with their brains or brain chemistry but do need to learn new ways of coping with their situations. According to Dr. Glasser (2003) “these people may be a product of the past, but not victims of it because they have control of their present and future".
The *Reality Therapy* he developed enabled people with personal distress to operate in the present in a caring relationship offered by the therapist and the main aim is to help the person find and learn new ways of dealing with life. Thanks to the influence of others such as William Powers and W. Edwards Deming, Dr. William Glasser developed a new psychological theory he was to call “Choice Theory” and published this in 1998. A core tenet of Choice Theory Psychology is that we cannot control others, only ourselves and most of our behaviours are chosen (though not necessarily consciously). Dr. Glasser believed that many of the world’s problems at personal, social and even political levels derive from an often unwitting reliance on what he called “external control psychology”, the belief that we can control other people or that they can control us.

Such beliefs lead to a lot of human misery. Choice Theory Psychology provides a very good structure for helping people learn about personal wellbeing and in the last decades of his life it was this positive approach to mental health that dominated Dr. Glasser’s talks and writing.

Having started his professional life working with delinquent girls, Dr. Glasser always kept a strong interest in both therapy and education. In 1969 he published “Schools Without Failure” and went on to develop an approach, the Glasser Quality School model, based on Choice Theory, where the emphasis is on meeting students’ needs in a non-controlling way.


Around the world over 84,000 people in at least sixty countries have done basic training in Glasser’s ideas and 12,000 have completed full training. In Ireland over four and a half thousand people have completed the basic training course. Over a thousand students have completed training in Reality Therapy / Choice Theory, and they include guidance counsellors, teachers and psychotherapist. Dr. Glasser sees the counsellor’s role as one of helping the client learn the principles of Choice Theory in his or her own life and to focus on their “internal control rather than external control psychology”.

**Honours for Dr. William Glasser**

Dr. Glasser’s challenge in the sixties to the established ideas in the field of counsellors and psychotherapy required a special brand of courage from him but eventually he was recognised by his fellow professionals. In 1989 the Milton Erickson Foundation’s Evolution of Psychotherapy Conference admitted him as a member of the distinguished faculty of Pioneers in Psychology. In 2004 the American Counselling Association awarded him their Legend in Counselling Award, and in 2005, the American Psychotherapy Association designated him as a Master Therapist. In May 2013 the California Senate passed a resolution to honour Dr. William Glasser for “a lifetime of achievements and meritorious service to humanity”. It was so fitting this last honour should have been in his home state and city. Reality Therapy has been named by the European Psychotherapy Association as one of its recognised therapies and training provided in Ireland can now lead to a European Psychotherapy qualification.
My own journey with Dr. Glasser

Dr. Glasser came to Ireland in July of 2005 for the annual Convention which also coincided with my Certification Week in UCD. Dr. Glasser was celebrating three extraordinary milestones both in his personal and professional life. He was celebrating his 80th Birthday, he was celebrating 20 years of Reality Therapy / Choice Theory being in Ireland and Carleen and Dr. Glasser were also celebrating their 10th Wedding Anniversary.

I had the opportunity to partake in a role play with Dr. Glasser during that special week in UCD, which were both an honour and a privilege to be a part of. Dr. Glasser was gracious enough to sign several of his books for the participants while they were completing their certification week. He patiently posed for the many photographs that followed this auspicious occasion, which are now treasured possessions.

I have only met Dr. Glasser once but he will always remain in my Quality World.

At out WGII conference in October, we commemorated Dr. Grasser. Two quotes from the brochure are very appropriate at this time.

"External control is by far the greatest obstacle to mental health all over the world."

"Happiness is feeling good because you are choosing to behave in ways that keep you close, or get you closer, to the important people in your life."  Dr. William Glasser.

Today Dr. Glasser’s ideas on therapy, education, management and personal wellbeing are taught throughout the world with international conferences held every two years.

The William Glasser Institute Ireland is hosting our annual Irish Convention on 19th October 2013 at the IMI, Sandyford, Dublin 16, where we shall be carrying on with Dr. Glasser’s work. To share with the world everything he shared with us.

This Conference is being held in loving and grateful commemoration of Dr. William Glasser, Psychiatrist, Teacher and Inspiration to us all.

The title of the conference is Choice Theory for Everyday Living.

Dr. William Glasser, was an inspiration to all, he shall be sorely missed.

Gisela Oates on behalf of the William Glasser Institute Ireland - Executive Committee Member.

William Glasser International can be contacted through the Irish branch and for further information about The WGII Convention, Reality Therapy, Choice Theory and the Glasser Quality School see www.wgii.ie. A special tribute page for Dr. Glasser has been opened at www.wglasserinternational.org.

Gisela Oates
BSc (Hons) Counselling Psychotherapy; Diploma in Addiction Studies; Cert in Reality Therapy / Choice Theory; Prof Cert in CBT, WGII, MIAAAC / MACI, MIACP

Gisela works as a Faculty Lecturer in PCI College and is involved in both lecturing modules across the three year Diploma programme as well as administrative roles. She is also an Addiction Counsellor and Psychotherapist based in Co Kildare.

She has worked within the field of Mental Health for 20 years both with the NHS in the UK and the HSE in Ireland. In conjunction with the HSE and the Rathmines Pembroke Partnership, she was an advocate for Mental Health and facilitated a drop-in centre “The Gateway Project” for six years.

Gisela is an Ambassador for the ‘See Change’ campaign, and is currently on the board of the William Glasser Institute Ireland Executive Committee.

Gisela has a keen interest in the process of Intergenerational Healing and Family Constellation work.

Gisela is the founder of ‘Serenity Counselling Training’ and maintains a private practice in Newbridge.
Imagine there was a way to supplement your therapy with tools that can help your clients with depression feel better, sooner. Well, there is a way: Positive Psychology offers such tools.

Positive Psychology is a science of optimal human functioning (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It examines what is good about people and creates interventions that help them flourish (Seligman, 2011). It was originally created to examine the aspects of our psyche that were usually ignored. In the 90s, 17 out of 18 studies focused on human deficits and what was wrong with us (Peterson, 2006). Only one study in 18 looked at what is right about us. While the deficit approach is useful to understand unhealthy human conditions, it is crucial to take a balanced view and consider the positive side to us.

The traditional and positive psychologists’ approach are complimentary. We look at a human being from a different viewpoint. For example, when clients attempt suicide, traditional psychologists focus on what they lack in comparison to mentally healthy and well-functioning people. They create and use interventions to ‘fix’ them and help them feel ‘normal’ again.

On the other hand, positive psychologists examine clients’ character strengths and other psychological resources they can use to recover from adversity. Rather than ask them to ‘think positive’, we help clients explain the negative event in a specific way that is based on the research around developing optimism (Seligman, 1998). We are also curious about the small sample of people who, rather than PTSD, experienced post traumatic growth, as a result of their adversity. Therefore, both approaches are necessary for us to see the whole person. Ignoring one aspect of us creates imbalance in the way we view our clients.

Originally, Positive Psychology research focused on helping already mentally healthy people flourish. Positive psychologists created over 100 interventions that would help their well-adjusted clients further enhance their well-being. However, a few years into the research, a significant change happened. Martin Seligman, one of the founders of Positive Psychology, spent many years of his academic career studying learnt helplessness and depression. Having experienced it himself, he and his team wondered what would happen if positive psychology interventions were introduced to people suffering from mild to severe depression. Would they be effective in reducing their depressive symptoms?

The results surprised even the researchers. Compared to traditional approaches used in therapy, not only did the interventions help clients feel better, but the change happened sooner (Seligman, Rashid, & Parks, 2006). It was not because positive interventions have magical powers of transforming people. Rather, they create a shift in their thinking and help clients experience more positive emotions. Following from the initial research, a meta-analysis of positive psychology interventions with over 4,000 participants found that positive exercises seemed particularly effective with people experiencing
higher levels of depression (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009).

Positive psychology interventions are different to the traditional ones. Consider the famous Pennebaker activity that is widely used in therapy. Over 20 years of research found that asking clients to write about their deepest thoughts and feelings for 20 minutes over three or four consecutive days results in many psychological benefits: mood enhancement (Pennebaker, 1997), reduction of depressive symptoms (Esterling, L’Abate, Murray & Pennebaker, 1999) and increase in effective coping behaviour (Spera, Buchfeind & Pennebaker, 1994). However, we also know that writing about negative events puts our clients into short-term stress (Pennebaker & Uhlman, 1994). Therefore, Positive Psychologists wondered if they can reduce it by asking them to write about positive experiences instead. Rather than dwelling on how trauma affected them, they were encouraged to recall a traumatic event and describe how their experience benefited them as a person and made them more resilient (King & Miner, 2000). In another series of studies, they wrote about the best possible self in the future when all they wished to come true, actually has (King, 2001). What the researchers found was that both negative and positive writing had the same long term effect of significantly reducing depressive symptoms. However, positive writing was considerably less upsetting and resulted in enhancing positive emotions noticeably sooner than negative writing.

Encouraged by the initial results, the researchers created a series of positive psychology interventions applied in therapy (Seligman, Rashid, & Parks, 2006). They were based on a 14-session programme which introduced activities enhancing clients’ positive emotions, engagement and meaning. The results showed more reduction of depressive symptoms and significantly higher remission rates than traditional therapy or antidepressant medication. Can they supplement your therapy?

Positive psychology is a rapidly growing science providing evidence for Maslow’s Humanistic theory. Recently, it is particularly flourishing in therapy with progressively more research showing strong evidence of its effectiveness not only with people suffering from depression but also schizophrenia and other mental disorders. What therapists find attractive about it is the science behind the interventions and their striking results. It may be a great supplement to whatever approach you use. Are you open to try them?

Jolanta Burke is a Positive Psychologist and a PhD researcher in Trinity College Dublin. She is passionate about improving psychological well-being in Ireland. She delivered programmes helping professionals apply positive psychology in their work. They included psychotherapists, coaches, guidance counsellors, youth workers to mention a few. She also published many articles about positive psychology in Ireland and abroad, a book chapter and spoke at many conferences.

Jolanta graduated from DCU with a BA in Psychology, MSc in Education and Training Management, Post Grad Cert in Positive Psychology at the University of East London and is currently pursuing a PhD in Positive Psychology applied in Education at Trinity College Dublin. Since 2009 Jolanta has lectured in Positive Psychology in DCU and Trinity College Dublin. She created the first Positive Psychology at Work programme in Europe which was accredited by the Institute of Commercial Management in the UK in 2011.
Book Review:
Understanding and Treating Sex Addiction:

A comprehensive guide for people who struggle with sex addiction and those who want to help them. Paula Hall 2012
“Sex addiction is a devastating condition that affects many millions of innocent people’ (Hall 2012:191)

At a time when Sex Addiction & Pornography Addiction is becoming increasingly recognised & accepted as an addictive behaviour, the publishing of Paula Hall’s ‘Understanding and Treating Sex Addiction” has been much anticipated and could not have come at a better time. Paula Hall, a registered Psychotherapist specialising in the field of Sex Addiction, and founder of The Hall Recovery Course, leaves the reader in no doubt, through clinical experience and valuable new research (the first of its kind in the UK & Ireland), that Sex Addiction is not only prevalent but a real & growing problem silently thriving in society. She also leaves us under no illusion that those suffering are struggling with an array of complex emotions and challenges. “In a nutshell, all addiction is used to manage emotional pain’ (Hall 2012:57).

Both refreshing and encouraging, this book gives clear insights into many aspects of sexual addiction, exploring trauma and attachment induced addictions, assessment criteria, and many other topics. Hall introduces new insightful theories such as the Six-Phase Cycle, which explores addictions which remain ‘dormant’.

Hall breaks through common misconceptions about sexual addiction and clearly illustrates the difference between it and other misinterpreted behaviours often associated with sexual addictions, such as hypersexuality & sexual offending. She challenges popular terminology specific to addiction such as Co-addiction in an effort to more clearly illustrate the complexity of sex as an addictive behaviour in comparison to other addictive behaviours such as food, gambling and drugs.

Throughout the book the author explores and defines with ease related areas such as human sexuality, sexual desire, fantasy, sexual dysfunctions, paraphilias and issues specific to the LGBTQ community, providing the reader with a strong overall view of areas which often coincide with or relate to sexual addictions. She builds a strong introduction to the neurochemistry of addiction as a contributing factor in the progression of addiction and identifies various addiction cycles and theories of progression. She has divided the book into an easy-to-reference chapter format and provides a good balance of theory, research and clinical & personal experience. To my mind she introduces a fresh honest perspective on sexual
addiction and a sincerity that treatment and recovery, whilst challenging, is possible.

Until now publications on sex addiction have been predominantly based on US studies, and Hall draws on an array of research and mounting evidence from renowned experts in the field of sexual addiction such as Patrick Carnes & Robert Weiss. However, one of the key themes throughout ‘Understanding & Treating Sex Addiction’ is Hall’s clinical research based on 350 people struggling with sexual addiction, some of who have gone through therapy. She provides first hand accounts and case studies from those suffering from sexual addictions, and a rich insight into the psyche of the sexual addict. Hall identifies how her research parallels and compares on many levels to US based research and how this helps identify issues specific to the UK.

The author explores as a common theme the impact of an ‘unprecedented explosion of the internet and ever-growing availability of pornography’ (Hall 2001:1) and identifies how this has contributed to an increase in those suffering from sexual addiction. She emphasises, in particular, the impact this explosion may be having on the younger generation. She identifies how the ‘availability’ of pornography and an array of sexual activity has given rise to an increased prevalence of ‘Opportunity Induced Addiction’ and clarifies how treatment and recovery differs from Trauma or Attachment Induced Addiction.

Hall’s open and articulate style of writing desensationalises and demystifies the issue of sexual addiction. She does so in an empathic & compassionate manner throughout the book, as she offers scenarios and associations which easily encourage the reader to relate on a personal level to rationalisations and other issues which arise as a result of sexually addictive behaviour and emotional distress.

With great emphasis on recovery, this book provides an overview of support & resources available to those seeking treatment & recovery in the UK and Ireland. As a Psychotherapist, I enthusiastically encourage and recommend this book to those who want to understand more about Sex Addiction or begin recovery, and indeed to anyone interested in gaining a good understanding of addictive behaviour overall, as it easily and cleverly flows into other areas of addiction in order to help the reader gain a more rounded understanding.

From a professional perspective ‘Understanding and Treating Sex Addiction’ provides those in the therapeutic field with a strong understanding of sexual addiction and identifies what to watch out for in clinical practice which may ordinarily be missed or unspoken. As Hall suggests “for many people it’s too painful or risky to talk about their sexual acting out so instead they will seek help for the consequences without openly acknowledging the cause’. (Hall 2012:18)

Orlagh Gahan is a Psychotherapist at The Centre for Sexual Addictions, Dublin, Ireland. www.centresexualaddictions.com

She is a member of ATSAC, and a graduate of PCI College, where she completed a Thesis titled: Sexual Addiction, Treatment & Support Service in Ireland.

Email: orlagh@centresexualaddictions.com
I recall approaching the end of my school education and feeling daunted about having to choose my next step (although perhaps it was my first step) in life. ‘What are you going to be?’ That is the question that was thrown around at the time. I felt that I was the only one of my peers that had no clue what I was going to ‘be’. When all of my friends seemed so sure that they were going to become hairdressers or teachers or nurses, I was at a loss. The one thing I was sure of was that I wanted to work with people. As I began to tease this out, I realised that my desire was more than just working with people, I wanted to understand people, who they were, why they were and what their lives were all about. It was on this notion that I embarked into the world of Psychology, completely unaware as to where this journey would take me.

I began an undergraduate honours degree in Psychology with DBS, where I became immersed in the world of psychology and psychoanalysis. These three years studying left me wanting more and I began to think about what the next phase could bring. I briefly flirted with the idea of delving further into psychoanalysis, having been offered a place on a Master’s in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, but I decided against this and instead, naively, jumped head first into the world of extreme mental health.

I accepted a job offer in Broadmoor Hospital in London and within a week I had packed my bags and uprooted. Broadmoor Hospital is one of the three high-security, psychiatric hospitals in England which treats people with mental illness and personality disorders who represent a high degree of risk to themselves or to others. Prior to beginning work with the patients, I underwent intensive training to learn how to keep myself, other staff members and the patients safe while working within the hospital. As the wait to begin working directly with the patients was prolonged, the apprehension began to build and lots of stories about infamous patients (some of whom you would no doubt be familiar with) and which wards were more difficult to work on started to circulate. I remember telling my family, who were quite concerned about this new venture I had embarked on, “It is all going great so far and I will be grand as long they don’t put me on ‘St. Mary’s’ ward”. Three weeks later, quite nervous and a little green, to say the least, I began my first shift on St. Mary’s Ward.

The experience I got working in Broadmoor was invaluable. It taught me many things about the human psyche and behaviour. I began to understand the complicated relationship we have with our biopsychosocial world and I received huge insight into this extreme world of mental health. I also had a chance to partake in a research project and was involved with behaviour observation and data collection. In addition to all of this, I learned a great deal about myself – my shadow side, my biases, my resilience. This experience left me curious and I knew for sure that I needed to study further in this area.

I returned to Ireland and promptly headed to Cork to begin a Master’s in Counselling Psychology with UCC. Again, I had begun another eye-opening and life shaping journey. I was fortunate to be mentored by Professor Eleanor O’ Leary, who had worked with and was a great friend of Carl Roger’s, in an environment which was both nurturing and challenging all at once, with personal process around every corner. As there were only 3 other students in my class, there was certainly no room to hide so I really do mean it when I tell my students that I understand the ‘pain’ of the word dyad!

Having been away from ‘home’ for quite some time now, I was eager to return to Dublin upon completing my Master’s. One of the most interesting areas I have worked in since returning to Dublin has been in a special needs school where I worked with children who have a diagnosis of autism. I was based within the school setting teaching and supporting children from pre-school age up 18 years, through the methods of Applied Behaviour
Analysis and Positive Behaviour Support. This work has led me to develop a keen interest in autism, particularly in relation to psychotherapeutic supports, knowledge and psychoeducation for parents and carers of children with autism.

In addition to this work, I began to develop a relationship with PCI College through lecturing on the degree in Counselling and Psychotherapy course on a part-time basis. In June 2013, I came on board as a full-time faculty member and joined the team as Year Head for Years 3 and 4. It has been wonderful to experience PCI College from this new role as it enables me to have more hands on contact with the students. I am currently in the process of visiting the Year 3 classes around Ireland and it is great to be able to meet and talk to so many students face to face.

All the while my professional life has been unfolding, so too has my ‘other’ life behind the scenes. My family, who were rightly concerned in the early days and whom I so greatly missed while I was out of Dublin, are the escape valve for me and have kept me grounded throughout all of the above. I have recently come into a new role here also, that of a mother, and knowing what I know about family systems, lifespan development, attachment and Freud, I have a feeling that this is the role that will be my most challenging yet!

Spring CPD Programme
We have an exciting array of courses to choose from

- Professional Certificate in CBT
- Advanced Certificate in CBT
- Professional Certificate in Couples Counselling
- Professional Certificate in Sexual Addiction
- Compassion Focused Therapy
- Masterclass in Psychology for Counsellors
- Creative Intervention Workshops
- Body Work & Self Care Workshops

Save the Date: Saturday June 28th
2014 National Counselling & Psychotherapy Conference
“The Art & Science of Self-Care”

01 4642268 • info@pcicollege.ie • www.pcicollege.ie
News and Moves

PCI College is delighted to announce that Willie Egan, Donagh Ward, Pat Gavin and Gael Kilduff have joined the Regional Faculty team. They have previously lectured on a number of modules with the college and are a welcome addition to the PCI Faculty in Cork, Kilkenny & Athlone.

Jade Mullen joined PCI College in June 2013 as a full time Faculty Lecturer. She currently lectures on all years of the BSc in Counselling and Psychotherapy and on the Certificate course. Jade is the Year Head for Years 3 and 4 and Core Tutor for a number of groups within Years 2 and 3. She is also the thesis co-ordinator and an active member of the PCI College Research Committee.

We have also had a number of well-deserved promotions within the administrative team, who provide important back-up and support for our lecturers and those studying with us. Rhiannon Murphy now holds the position of College Director; Debbie Brennan now holds the position of Student Services Manager; Sinead Delaney now holds the position of Senior Executive Officer, Programmes Office; and Lynn Hanley now holds the positions of Junior Marketing Officer. We also have two new additions to the team, Brian O’Murchu, College Receptionist and Sinead Ni Mhaille as Executive Marketing Officer.

Congratulations to all of them. We wish them the best in their new roles.

If you have any news you would like to highlight in this section of Reflections please email info@pcicollege.ie

Congratulations to all the PCI College Graduates who gained their IACP Accreditation this year.

Aidan Lakes  
Aileen Emery  
Blanaid McDonnell  
Brenda Heffernan  
Bridget Kenny  
Celia Kennedy  
Eugene Cleary  
Geoffrey McCarthy  
Graham Emerson  
Jean Farrelly  
John A Lahart  
Lorraine Jenkins  
Margaret Tierney-Smith  
Maria O’Leary  
Martin McGlynn  
Patricia Carroll  
Pauline O’Hanlon  
Peter O’Toole  
Philip O’Neill  
Robert Mooney  
Rosemarie Masterson  
Sean Daly  
Teresa Walsh  
William Griffin  
Bernadette Mack  
Meree O’Sullivan  
Patricia Keogh  
Evelyn Hainsworth  
Jeanette Kirwan  
Josephine Mullarkey  
Margaret Gaskin  
Anne Reilly  
Caroline Corcoran  
Joana Murphy  
Ken Hannaway  
Lisa O’Hara  
Sean Kelly  
Shona Rusk
FOR MORE INFORMATION
about our programmes, courses, free lectures, workshops and events
please call 01 464 2268 or email us at info@pcicollege.ie

Information can also be found on our website, www.pcicollege.ie