

EDITORIALS

Editorial: An Important Conversation

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Whether psychotherapy should be recognised as a specialist identity within the counselling profession (Beel, 2024) or as a separate profession in its own right (Gale, 2024) are questions raised in this issue's two Viewpoints articles. Another article, "The Movements of Grief" (Cox & Fenwick, 2024), draws on contemporary grief models to posit three phases of grief: transience, transition, and transformation, with a liminal space opening up during transition. Liminality and grief are also themes in reviews of the books *Leaning Into the Liminal: A Guide for Counselors and Companions* (Thompson & Harris, 2024) and *Collaborative Writing and Psychotherapy: Flattening the Hierarchy Between Therapist and Client* (Carson, 2024). Led by a migrant from South Korea, a qualitative study on the understanding of mental health amongst South Korean migrants to Australia (Klingenberg et al., 2024) identifies themes centred around shifting cultural norms such as increasing individualism and issues of belonging. Levels of therapeutic relationship when working with men (Ellwood, 2024), the role of embodiment and mindfulness in group-based trauma treatment (Tempone-Wiltshire, 2024), and a systematic review of the ethical considerations around delivering video-based therapy (du Preez et al, 2024) are also featured.

The June 2024 issue of the *Psychotherapy and Counselling Journal of Australia* (PACJA) taps into an important ongoing conversation among members of the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) by presenting two Viewpoints articles offering different perspectives. The first is by educator and counsellor Nathan Beel, a steering committee member of the National Heads of Counselling and Psychotherapy Education. The article, titled "The Australian Counselling Profession in 2030: An Educator's Perspective", calls for psychotherapists to no longer have a primary alternative identity to counsellors but instead be recognised as a specialist identity within the one (counselling) profession. The second article, "Preserving the Integrity of Psychotherapy: Let's Not Throw it Under the Bus", is by psychotherapist Jodie Gale, deputy convenor of the PACFA College of Psychotherapy leadership group. She argues that psychotherapy is a

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distinct discipline which requires revitalising in Australia so that professionals who call themselves psychotherapists are rigorously trained and able to support clients who require psychotherapy. These two articles offer compelling reading for anyone interested in the identities of counselling and psychotherapy, particularly in the light of the forthcoming two-year review of national standards for our profession(s) (Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, 2023). *PACJA*'s article category, Viewpoints, is the perfect vehicle for respectful discussions on nuanced and complex topics such as professional identity and its evolution.

Exploration of the concepts of boundaries and transitions is continued in two articles and two book reviews. "The Movements of Grief" by Mandy Cox and Sonia Fenwick draws on contemporary grief models and theories to apply three distinct movements to grief: transience, transition, and transformation. A neutral zone or liminal space during transition provides opportunity for "review, reorientation, redefinition, and integration" (Cox & Fenwick, 2024, para. 24). This "space of 'betwixt and between'" (Cox & Fenwick, 2024, para. 25) is also highlighted in "A Qualitative Study on the Conceptualisation of Mental Health Amongst South Korean Migrants to Australia" by Annemarie Klingenberg, Sunjoo Heo, and Jaklin Elliott. Several participants in the study, which was led by a migrant from South Korea, describe themselves as metaphorically "living on the border of the country" (Klingenberg et al., 2024, para. 35) and emphasise the importance of a sense of belonging for mental wellbeing.

Underlining these themes, Willa T. Reid's review of *Leaning Into the Liminal: A Guide for Counselors and Companions* (Carson, 2024a) maintains that the book offers a metaperspective for understanding "the process of change that can occur either for an individual or a community ... through the disorientating passage from what is known, through unknowing, and into the new" (Reid, 2024, para. 2). Complementing the three phases introduced in "The Movements of Grief", Carson (2024b) likens counsellors and psychotherapists to "liminal guides" who "understand crossing thresholds" and "envision a future-oriented process, a passage of transformation" (p. 3).

Liminality and grief are also addressed in *Collaborative Writing and Psychotherapy: Flattening the Hierarchy Between Therapist and Client* (Thompson & Harris, 2024), reviewed by Kieran O'Loughlin (2024). As coauthor and client Dan X. Harris writes, "there was a momentum in our co-writing which opened up a new liminal space of [coauthor and therapist, Trish Thompson] saying more about the impact on her of our work together" (Thompson & Harris, 2024, p. 94). Sharing the vulnerability of grief over the loss of loved ones through collaborative writing is described as a form of "queering therapy" in that it "messes with the conventional, pseudo-clear framework of power and identity" in therapy (Thompson & Harris, 2024, p. 9).

After Australia-wide rallies expressed the “collective grief and trauma of violence against women” (Powell & Flynn, 2024), a special national Cabinet meeting on “the national crisis of gender-based violence” (Albanese, 2024, para. 1) was held on May 1, 2024. Announcing a \$6.5 million age verification pilot to boost online safety, Communications Minister Michelle Rowland said that inappropriate content such as pornography, misogynistic material, and graphic violence on digital platforms reinforced harmful gender norms, particularly to young Australians (Rowland, 2024). In his timely article in this issue of *PACJA*, “Levels of Therapeutic Relationship When Working With Male Clients”, Michael W. Ellwood (2024) notes that norms regarding masculinity can result in barriers “for men seeking and engaging in therapeutic support” (para. 2). Ellwood synthesises two models of therapeutic engagement and uses case study examples to propose strategies for practitioners to increase men’s levels of engagement in psychotherapy. Importantly, Ellwood highlights limitations of the levels of therapeutic engagement concept when working with men who use violence and suggests recommendations when doing so.

Two other articles complete this volume of *PACJA*. “The Role of Mindfulness and Embodiment in Group-Based Trauma Treatment” by Julien Tempone-Wiltshire (2024) provides a framework for the integration of embodiment and mindfulness interventions in group psychotherapy for individuals living with the impacts of trauma. Such interventions support group participants’ capacity to counter experiential avoidance, direct attention towards the present moment, and increase bodily and affective self-awareness, thereby reducing patterns of reactivity. With the use of video technology boosted by the COVID-19 pandemic, “A Systematic Review of the Ethical Considerations of Delivering Video-Based Therapy” by Elizabeth du Preez, Kirsten van Kessel, and Xanthe Webb highlights key ethical considerations including unique security and data safety concerns, the establishment of clear boundaries, and the accessibility and suitability of video-based therapy.

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