



Australian Association of Relationship Counsellors
[AARC] Inc

QUEENSLAND NEWS

MARCH 2008

FROM OUR PRESIDENT DESK

I am pleased to let you know that the resolution to change the membership categories was adopted unanimously at the Annual General Meeting held recently in Melbourne. The changes have significant implications for associate members in light of PACFA's intention to include all of our clinical members on the PACFA register. The deadline for automatic inclusion on the register is the 30th June 2008. In order for applications to be processed before this date they must be received by the 30th of April, any applications received after this date may incur a higher register fee. If you have the experience required I strongly encourage you to reclassify to clinical member status. A letter and application form will be in the mail soon.

On the subject of AGM's, our annual branch AGM was held in November at which the new committee was elected. The positions are as follows: Sue Eaglesham – President; Margaret Roberts – Secretary; William Diplock – Treasurer and State Representative; June Lynch – Membership Secretary; Pamela Passmore – Newsletter Editor and Anne O'Brien – Workshop Co-ordinator. I would like to thank all of these folks for being willing to give their time to manage the business of the state branch. This will be a bigger than usual task over the next twelve months as we will be organising the 2009 symposium to be held on the Gold Coast.

Planning for the 2009 symposium is well under way and we are excited with how the program is starting to take shape. There is still a lot to do, but we believe the venue and professional development opportunities will make for a most enjoyable, intellectually stimulating and physically relaxing time. Please be sure to put the symposium dates in your diary.

We have two workshops planned for this year. Please make every effort to attend these as they are valuable opportunities for learning and will assist you in meeting the professional development requirements introduced with the membership changes. I would encourage you to begin keeping a log of professional development and supervision as it will make the task of meeting these requirements easier for you. Please be sure to put the dates for workshops into your diary. We will endeavour run these workshops at a reasonable cost to make it easier for members to obtain quality professional development.

The clinical discussion lunch meetings are being well attended and thoroughly enjoyed. These are a great opportunity to meet up with colleagues in an informal setting, enjoy a good lunch and a bit of brain stimulation. Clinical lunch meetings can also be counted towards professional development requirements. I would like to thank Eva Canning who has done a tremendous job in getting these going and is a skilled facilitator. I hope to see more of you there.

Yours in counselling,
Sue Eaglesham

Highlights of President's letter

Membership Implications

AARC Symposium
Queensland 2009

Two Workshops
planned this year

Newsletter Contents:

- President's Report
- Supervision W'shop review.
- Clinical Lunch Feb.
- Coming Workshop
- Symposium Date claimer

A Review by Sherry Wright of the 'Becoming an Effective Supervisor' workshop by Michael Carroll Ph.D.

In this report I will briefly outline some of the core concepts of Michael Carroll's training for those who weren't able to attend. The key principles of the training are based on the supervision books that he has co-authored/edited. It is my hope that readers will be enticed to read and discuss these principles and concepts more fully in order to engage in dialogue with others about supervision.

I thoroughly enjoyed the training that Michael provided, particularly his ability to present his work and ideas in such a congruent way to his supervision model.....I experienced the two days of training as "walking the walk" about the "talk".

There were approximately 90 participants at the Brisbane training. They came from a number of different organisations, including Government Departments, Private Practitioners and Non Government Organisations. The group consisted of Counsellors, Social Workers and Psychologists.

The presentation began with a self-introduction and an enquiry about the participants (workplaces, roles etc.). We were invited to consider applying the training to our work situations and professions in order to maximise the benefits that we might achieve through the training. The objectives for the training were outlined and included:

To define what is meant by supervision

To outline and practice the seven focus points of supervision (Hawkins & Shohet, 2001)

To present the five stages through which supervision moves-including writing a supervision contract

To consider the roles of evaluation and feedback

To review models of learning

To help supervisees use supervision effectively and

To practice supervision skills and consider case examples of supervision.

Participants were invited to consider types of Supervision, including Trainee, Consultative, Managerial and Tutorial Supervision to which he applied The Generic Tasks of Supervision, The Functions of Supervision and **Supervision Principles. These Principles include the following:**

Supervision is for the learning of supervisees

Experiential learning is the heart of supervision

Supervisors facilitate the learning of supervisees

Learning is transformational (not transmissional)

Learning is for the future (what do we need)

Learning includes finding a voice

Supervision is conversation-based learning - How to move from "I-learning to "we-learning"

I found the topic on "**Survival Mode**" particularly interesting. After describing and asking for examples of what might be considered as "survival mode", it was described as the fear response to real or imagined threat. This might be perceived to come from personal, professional, organisational or political sources. Responses included flight, fight, fragment and freeze. Questions we were asked to consider included:

How to recognise when we (as supervisors), supervisees, colleagues and teams might be in survival mode.

How to work with a supervisee who is in survival mode

How to ensure that individuals and teams do NOT move into survival mode

How to help organisations ensure that they do not spiral employees into survival mode.

Another topic that I found interesting and challenging was on **Feedback** and in particular negative feedback.

The elements of feedback which were highlighted as important are:

The WHAT of feedback

The HOW of feedback

The WHEN of feedback

The WHERE of feedback

The EMOTIONS of feedback.

The Characteristics of Good Feedback were described (and demonstrated) as:

Descriptive - Specific - Two sided - Constructive - Current - Relevant - Offered - Checked - Emotionally-aware - open.

Other topics covered included Levels of Learning, The process of Learning and Supervision from a Supervisee's perspective.

I experienced his presentation on **The Theory of Core Qualities** (Daniel Ofman, 2001) with the challenges/information that it presented in supervision as very thought provoking. Basically the theory examines:

Core Quality..... something done consistently well e.g. loyalty, determination, patience etc.

Pitfall..... when there is too much core quality e.g. loyalty becomes collusion, determination becomes bullying and patience becomes passivity etc.

Challenge..... asks the question "How do I hold onto a core quality and not fall into my "pit"? E.g. loyalty needs objectivity, determination needs respect and patience needs assertiveness.

Allergy.....described as "what I can't stand in myself or others". E.g. loyalty can't stand betrayal, determination can't stand uncommitment and patience can't stand impatience.

Michael spoke about his move into the Coaching mode of practice. The coaching movement is a new and growing popular professional service that has been in existence for about ten years. It can be described as a goal-oriented, results-focused professional alliance that helps clients bridge the gap between where they are now and where they want to be. Coaching has resonated with organisational consulting, management development and work place training.

He provided a comprehensive reading list in the Training Booklet which was provided to all participants. This included his website www.supervisioncentre.com with instructions on how to access the Knowledge Vault. The Knowledge Vault includes a number of useful articles which are available for free. Examples of a Supervision Contract and a Supervision Session Report which would be written by the supervisor and shared with the supervisee were also presented.

I experienced Michael's training as engaging and involving, from the perspectives of both a supervisor and a supervisee. He covered all learning styles, from verbal (in his delightful lilting Irish accent), visual (through the use of power point), experiential (through large group demonstration with courageous volunteers) and small group practice/role play sessions, as well as the provision of the Training Booklet for post training reading. I found myself moving between supervisee and supervisor positions for most of the two days of training and was able to experiment with both of these roles in the small group exercises in which I engaged.

I was reminded that when I engage in an activity, my personal, professional and political selves are also engaged. Michael stated that most books on supervision had been written from the perspective of the supervisor. Although there was reference to his book *On Being a Supervisee* (Michael Carroll & Maria Gilbert, 2006), the training was mainly from the perspective of a supervisor. As I looked around the room, I was again aware that the majority of the participants were women, which parallels the profession (particularly in organisations providing counselling). Issues of power and social control were not discussed in depth. Many of the participants work with much more than the "worried well" and although he agreed that his training was towards an "ideal" model, I wondered how many of the participants (myself included) would struggle to attain and sustain that ideal given the reality of organisational and political constraints operating in workplaces.

I experienced Michael's openness with examples from his own professional and personal experience as useful demonstrations of the topics, although I would have liked to have heard more about his experiences as a supervisee.

His use of his cat to demonstrate the "indifference" to reflective learning was a bonus to the content of his training for me and his use of The Johari Window (Joseph Luft & Harry Ingham, 1955) was a reminder that self-reflection is immeasurably enhanced in the company of others.

Sherry Wright

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TRANFERENCE IN THE COUPLE RELATIONSHIP

Brisbane Clinical Luncheon Meeting 15.2.08

Report by Eva Canning, AARC Member, Psychologist, NSW Northern Rivers

Author Harville Hendrix (*Getting the Love You Want – a Guide for Couples*) describes a familiar pattern in relationships from romantic love through the “power struggle” and on to “reality love”. Hendrix describes these stages as something of a natural course. Yet for those involved (and their therapists!) the process can be challenging and anxiety provoking.

The struggle to maintain a sense of authenticity and personal truth in the presence of a significant other is quite a journey, often involving some time in the metaphorical wilderness, where projections, transference, assumptions, different use of language, deeply held beliefs and feelings, family of origin patterns and wounding can individually or in combination create an atmosphere of tension and confusion.

The luncheon discussion on 15th February began by noting that HOW COUPLES COME INTO THE COUNSELLING ROOM HAS POTENTIAL FOR A WHOLE RANGE OF IMPACT UPON THE THERAPIST. In an endeavour to come to terms with the topic and all that it evokes and provokes, there was indeed a sense of parallel process and struggle during the meeting.

It was acknowledged that even with the help of clinical education and supervision, we are nevertheless still in a position of seeing through our own lenses and schema. Working with couples in the moment, is a delicate task, especially when strong feelings and differences manifest and are sometimes also blurred by unspoken feelings between the couple. There may also be partly formed thoughts and reactions that are tricky terrain to traverse safely.

It was acknowledged that breaks in good connection are inevitable from time to time and can provide, as the Chinese symbol for conflict suggests, a “dangerous opportunity” for learning and healing. As the words of poet and songwriter Leonard Cohen also imply, the process of recovery can be fertile ground:

There is a crack, a crack in everything – that’s how the light gets in ...

Future topics on the drawing board are:

Further discussions on Transference

Feelings

Working with Adolescents

The role of humour and playfulness in the Therapy Room

How do we work with narcissistic personality?

DATE FOR YOUR 2008 DIARY – The next AARC Brisbane lunchtime networking meeting is scheduled for 12 noon – 2 pm Friday 18th April 2008* (*to be confirmed) at The Continental Café in New Farm.

Please RSVP to eva.canning@bigpond.com (02) 6684 5213 for catering numbers if you are able to attend.

WORKSHOP

WHEN: 11th April 2008

TIME: 8.45am Registration

9.00am - 4.00pm

WHERE: Uniting Church Merthyr Centre

52 Merthyr Rd.—New Farm

COST: \$88 for members \$122 non-members

PRESENTER: Karol Misso

TOPIC : Sexual Desire

DATE CLAIMER

AARC SYMPOSIUM 2009

When: 26th—28th March 2009

Where: Greenmount Beach Resort

Coolangatta

Watch this space for more details.