

# First words



When I can muster together a quality range of articles that truly reflect what's going on in the real world today, it always gives me a warm, fuzzy feeling. And in this issue, I believe we have a cracker.

I met Dr Walter Busuttil

at last year's BACP conference in Newcastle and was fortunate to chair his seminar. Walter is a consultant psychiatrist and medical director at Combat Stress. I'm grateful that he has presented us here with a fascinating insight into the work of the charity supporting ex-service personnel with mental health problems (p2). Afghanistan continues to make news headlines, sadly, too often because of further fatalities, yet the campaign continues, as does the potential psychological fallout for those involved. Hats off to Walter and his team for their sterling work.

We still seem to be mired in the 'recession' and quite how we'll emerge from it will no doubt be the subject of countless yawn-triggering debates from election posturing political parties. Maybe we should be voting in Vicky Sinclair who returns to the journal with an intriguing article on employee motivation during a recession (p10). She has taken a theoretical perspective merging psychology and economics to illustrate expectancy theory. This presents us with a really useful way to consider what motivates people at work.

Thanks also to Dr Michael Walton who has written an invaluable article about the impact of organisational dynamics on the workplace counsellor (p16). Akin to the introduction to the in-flight safety demonstrations 'even if you are a frequent flyer, do please give it your full attention'. The workplace is perhaps the most complex sector in which to counsel clients and all of us who practise would be advised to take heed of Michael's four 'world views'. I believe there is currently insufficient sector training or continuing professional development (CPD) to equip workplace counselling for the complex issues in this sector and I know that BACP is exploring how the community can benefit from more sector-specific training. Michael's article provides a mini-CPD update to caution workplace counsellors on colluding with

dysfunctional organisational dynamics.

Damian Stoupe adds to the 'organisational dynamics' debate by reflecting on 'mimetic desire' as a means to illustrate how bullying behaviours can emerge from potentially innocuous competition among work colleagues (p20). It makes a lot of sense. Damian helps us to consider bullying in a different light and his article adds to his rich contribution on the subject. In an ever-competitive workplace environment (more so when people are worried about keeping their jobs and willing to work more for less) and in a rampant consumerist society it's useful to consider when desires move to needs. One of my favourite websites at the moment is [www.iwantoneofthose.com](http://www.iwantoneofthose.com), a treasure trove of pointless gadgets and boys' toys bannered under a name that persuades you that you desire, nay want, nay need, gimmicky offal. But enough of my surfing habits.

Peter Jenkins picks up on Damian's concluding point about whistleblowing with a timely article on the position of workplace counsellors with regards to disclosure of wrongdoing 'in the public interest' (p24). At the moment we're bombarded by press reports on whistleblowing, either featuring someone making the call or the consequences of not doing so. And it further reflects the confidentiality and boundary tensions for workplace counsellors in terms of who's the client and who might be the beneficiary of disclosure.

I wonder if it's too much to disclose to say I'm now off to the above website to buy a slanket. They're all the rage these days don't you know. And yes, I do need it.

Enjoy.

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