



Creating healing opportunities and promoting wholeness of those who have experienced painful or traumatic events

Winter Newsletter

Issue 2

Winter 2010/2011

The Wider Circle AGM

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The Wider Circle held it's Annual General Meeting and an Extraordinary General Meeting on Thursday, 21 October in The Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. During the EGM a new Constitution was adopted and The Wider Circle's financial year changed to fall in line with the HMRC financial year.

Brandon Hamber talked on the topic of Political Trauma and Reconciliation and subsequently took questions from the floor and engaged in discussion with those present. This presentation was highly informative and we wish to offer our sincere thanks to Brandon for attending. Brandon's work largely focuses on the psychological implications of strategies for dealing with a violent political past. Brandon's website, www.brandonhamber.com, has links to much of his work.

Janet O'Hagan resigned from her position of The Wider Circle Chair at the AGM. We wish her all the best for the future and express thanks for her dedication to the organisation in the past year. Two experienced and skilled, new Committee Members were elected at the AGM, Dugald McCullough and Frank Holmes (please see biographies below). Dugald has been elected Chairperson and, with these valued additions to the team, we look forward to a bright new chapter in The Wider Circle's story.

Dugald McCullough's career has been in education and training in the field of social work and social care. He was Director of the Northern Ireland Diploma in Social Work, Employment Based Route for ten years and currently works part-time as a tutor for the Open University. He has four grown up daughters and a grandson, and lives with his partner Joan in rural Co Down.

Frank Holmes graduated from University of Ulster in 1990 with a Degree in Fine Art Painting. Since leaving college he has exhibited in Bosnia, Berlin, Bristol, Mexico and Ireland. Frank works as resident artist in a hospital whose patients have a learning disability, his role is to engage both patients and staff in a creative art process. Frank graduated from Queens University with MSc in Art Therapy, and is now a practicing Art Therapist registered with the Health Professions Council. Frank is also the Chairperson of Northern Group for Art as Therapy.

'In the depths of winter I finally learned there was in me an invincible summer'
Albert Camus

The Wider Circle Christmas Dinner

We held our Christmas Dinner on Monday, 13 December in Speranzas Restaurant, Belfast. Those present included Committee members, Staff and Facilitators and it was a very enjoyable evening of good food, good conversation and festive cheer!

(L-R) Joe Boyle, Frank Holmes, Dugald McCullough, Christine Cowan, Ruth Gunn, Gillian Mangan, Les Bedell, Siobhan Sweeney, Michelle Boyle, Nicole Atkinson, Catherine McGroggan.



The Steps To Healing Programme

The Steps to Healing Programme is a self- help group healing programme aimed at helping those who have experienced impacting incidents which have led to enduring hurt or distress. Participants share their experiences in a small and secure group setting. Each participant has the opportunity to convey their experience with those with a shared understanding. This takes place in a structured and confidential environment in which group trust is integral. Facilitators of the Programme have also taken the Steps to Healing, creating greater trust and understanding between facilitators and participants. Only those who have personal experience of trauma may facilitate and they too communicate their stories with the group.

Each programme allows for up to 6 participants with 2-3 facilitators. Two sessions are dedicated to each participant, one allows them to share their negative experience and one allows them to share their life story.

This structured format is effective as it enables the juxtaposition of each individual's trauma story with the story of their lives as a whole. This allows the participant to see, often for the first time that the trauma which they have suffered was in fact an event in their

lives with its duration in time often having been relatively short. This does not detract from the fact that the event will have had a disproportionate impact upon one's emotions - participants are encouraged to recognise the significance of the event. However, those who have participated in the programme over the years report that this structure effectively enables them to see that life was good before their trauma occurred and that there should be no reason why life should not be good again.

Aspects of Art therapy feature in the programme, although no artistic ability is required and participants are encouraged to take responsibility for their own healing. Feedback from former participants demonstrates that The Steps to Healing Process encourages those involved to place the negative experience firmly in the past, helping to prevent the experience from having an overbearing impact on the individual's present and future. Participants are enabled to visualise the experience as having a start and end point and thus preventing the incident from remaining a part of day to day life. It has been reported that this is a big factor in helping people to 'move on'.

Feedback from recent participants:

"It gives the opportunity, in a safe environment, to revisit an impacting incident and with the help of others, to move towards closure and a better future"

The Programme provides "time out from your busy life just for you. Time to focus on your internal journey"

"The Programme helped me let go of a lot of fear and anxiety associated with a traumatic event in my life and allowed me to listen and support others"

"A release and liberation through respect, listening, sharing and healing"

One kind word can warm
three winter months

Japanese proverb

Upcoming Steps to Healing Programme Dates

Steps To Healing Weekly Programme

Programme 1, 2011

Australia House, Belfast: Begins Monday, 17 January 2011 and runs 7-9pm every Monday night

This programme is to run over 10-12 weeks.

Steps To Healing Residential

Spring 2011

This residential will take place from Friday, 25 March 2011, until Sunday afternoon in Drumalis Retreat Centre, Larne.

The Wider Circle Residential in Benburb - update

During the weekend of 01-03 October TWC held its first Steps to Healing Residential in Benburb Priory, a peaceful and beautiful location for this weekend of healing. Evaluations of the residential have highlighted the positive effects the Steps to Healing Programme has on participants.

A sample of feedback from participants follows;

'I used the coping mechanisms gained from the programme to help me deal with the stress resulting from my trauma.'

'I put the collage on my wall and envisaged a change in my life.'

'Thank goodness I had the opportunity to do it.'





Winter Nourishment

It is important to nourish yourself during the long Winter months. This article contains some recipes for cooking with honey which is a wonderful health food. Below are some interesting facts about honey:

- * Since ancient times honey has been associated with mysticism.
- * Honey, and objects immersed in honey, have been preserved for decades and even centuries.
- * The aroma and flavour of honey depends on the flowers from which the nectar is collected.
- * The word honey has evolved into a term of endearment.
- * It is commonly used as a treatment for sore throats and coughs.
- * For millennia honey has been used to treat many ailments through topical application, only

recently has the antiseptic and antibacterial properties of honey been explained.

- * Local raw honey can help allergy sufferers as the pollen impurities are believed to lessen sensitivity to hay fever.

Honey-Glazed Carrots

Ingredients

- 6 carrots
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 tbsp butter or olive oil
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp orange peel
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley to garnish
- A pinch of sea salt to taste

Directions

1. Half and boil carrots for about 5 minutes or until tender
2. Combine honey, oil, orange peel and nutmeg; spoon over carrots. Bake 5 to 10 minutes or until lightly glazed
3. Alternatively drizzle over vegetables and stir over low heat until glazed

Hot Lemonade

Ingredients

- 250ml water
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 3-4 teaspoons honey

Directions

1. Boil the water.
2. Add fresh lemon juice and honey
3. Start with the lesser amount of honey. Add more, if you need it.



This drink may be soothing when you have a sore throat or cough.

Useful tips for cooking with honey

- * Use less honey as it is almost twice as sweet as sugar.
- * Honey burns quite quickly. If marinating, drain off the marinade, then pour it over the food halfway through cooking.
- * Honey should never be given to an infant under one year of age.

Publications by The Wider Circle

The Wider Circle Trauma Programme, 1999.

This manual sets out the steps involved in delivering the trauma programme and gives a brief explanation of the theory underpinning it.

The Wider Circle Teacher's Manual, 2000. This manual aims to help volunteer programme facilitators to have a better understanding of the theory underpinning the trauma programme.

The Sky Before The Storm, 2001. This book explains, in very simple terms, what trauma is and how to cope with it.

The Facilitators Pack. This is a step-by-step guide to help facilitators in the delivery of The Wider Circle Trauma Programme.

The Beauty That Sleeps, 2003. This book explores what you need to know about anxiety and trauma.

Jimmy and the Island of Magic, 2008. This book is a children's story which is designed to help children who have been traumatized in a safe way and includes a set of guideline notes for parents, teachers and others involved in child welfare.

Please contact the office for copies of any of these publications

Recent Feedback on Publications

'The Sky before the Storm is an integral part of my work with people who have suffered trauma, it is a valuable part of their healing process'

'Reading The Sky before the Storm has helped me to feel normal again'

'I saw the book in my doctor's surgery and asked for my own copy because I can see this really helping my husband who has been through a lot in recent years'

'Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face'

Victor Hugo

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**Season's Greetings and
Happy New Year to all
of our members and
readers!**

www.widercircle.org

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The Wider Circle is a company limited by guarantee (No 39785) and has Charitable tax status (XR39862).

The Wider Circle is a cross-community, voluntary organisation, a Registered Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. The aim of the charity is to help and support those who have been traumatised as a result of community or other violence, abuse or any other action.

The Wider Circle facilitates a process of self-healing in the form of group therapy programmes which restore a sense of hope in the lives of people who are experiencing memories of a shocking event which has left them with feelings of isolation, alienation, and pain.

The Wider Circle also publishes books and other literature designed to help sufferers to better cope with their problems as well as helping those who come into contact with them, to better understand what it is like to suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Management Committee

Dugald McCullough, Chairperson
Les Bedell, Secretary
Catherine McGroggan, Co-Treasurer
Maeve Mills, Co-Treasurer
Michelle Boyle
Frank Holmes

Staff

Gillian Mangan, Development Manager
Nicole Atkinson, Administrator

Getting involved

The Wider Circle welcomes your involvement.

We are currently recruiting **Committee Members** and we are seeking people with the time, skills and expertise to help us grow even further.

We are also recruiting **facilitators** on an ongoing basis. If you or someone you know is interested in finding out more we will be happy to help in any way we can.

We are currently compiling a bank of qualified and experienced **counsellors** The Wider Circle could recommend.

If you are interested in being part of The Wider Circle in any of the capacities mentioned here or wish to volunteer please contact us.

Membership / Donation Form

I would like to become a member of The Wider Circle (tick box)

I would like to make a donation to The Wider Circle (tick box)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Contact Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Comments: _____

Membership is free and by signing up we will keep you up to date with our events and activities.

I would like to donate £ _____ to The Wider Circle

I would like this donation to be treated as a gift aid donation (please tick this box if you pay income tax or capital gains tax and the charity will receive 25% in addition to your donation from Govt sources) (tick box)