



# FVC Newsletter



MAY 2012

## President's Report

### FROM THE ACTING PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Members,

Barbara Matheson is taking two months off from the President's seat and has asked me to keep it warm over that time.

The year is fast passing us by and there have been some great presentations at the monthly meetings. Recently, Sue Belmore spoke about Trauma and Hearing voices which was a very educational presentation, I found. The good news is that there are many more exciting speakers lined up for the rest of the year. A great opportunity to top up those professional development and supervision points.

I hope to see you soon at some of the meetings coming up

Warmest Regards

*Michael Woolsey*

Acting President

### Editor's Desk

Hi everyone,

Just a brief note to say thank you firstly, to John Dunn who very kindly filled in for me last month when I was preparing for my daughter's wedding. This month my heartfelt thanks go to Stuart, Sheelagh and Jennifer who generously gave of their free time to write articles for the newsletter. Without these contributions the newsletter would not be able to offer the diverse range of counseling topics. All members are invited and in fact encouraged to submit articles.

If you missed the CBD Meeting read all about Sue Belmore presentation on page 2. An article on Vicarious Trauma No sure what that is? Read all about it on page 4. Jennifer and I have been on parallel journeys as she has written a book review on Mindfulness and depression and I had written an article on Mindfulness. Mine will be a continued in next month's newsletter. I am hoping to have lots to add to it as I am attending a 5 day residential retreat on Mindfulness and Meditation at the Gawler Foundation in Yarra Junction next week. Enjoy everyday—practice mindfulness it adds a wonderful quality to every minute of everyday.

*Marilyn*

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**Church reformer  
Martin Luther  
once said,  
"Everything that is  
done in the world  
is done by the  
hopeful."**

**And entertainer  
Dinah Shore  
observed,  
"There are no  
hopeless  
situations - only  
people who are  
hopeless about  
them."**

## **CBD APRIL MEETING Speaker's Article**

### **PRESENTER: SUE BELMORE**

In addition to running her Counselling Practice, Sue Belmore runs the Emergency Relief Program at the Prahran Mission and facilitates The Hearing Voices Groups, around Melbourne

### **TOPIC: WORKING TOWARDS RECOVERY WITH PEOPLE WHO HEAR VOICES**

#### **HEARING VOICES EXPLAINED**

Within the Hearing Voices approach the term 'hearing voices' is used to describe a range of sensory experiences which are not always experienced as auditory and are known as 'hallucinations'. Essentially, it encompasses any extra ordinary perceptual experiences which are perceived as separate from oneself (outside).

#### **HISTORY OF THE HEARING VOICE MOVEMENT**

The Hearing Voice Approach began in 1987 in The Netherlands. Marius Romme, a Social Psychiatrist and Patsy Hage, a Voice Hearer, went on Dutch television to speak about Voice Hearing and asked people who heard voices to contact them. 750 people responded. Of that group, 450 heard voices. 350 of those could not cope and 150 were able to handle the voices.

Today, all around the world, Voice Hearers meet in groups to support each other. They explore ways to work with, rather than against, their voices. These support groups help Voice Hearers to re-claim control and rebuild their lives.

#### **WHO HEARS VOICES?**

Research shows that hearing voices is a natural variation of human experience and that it is relatively common. In some cultures Hearing Voices is regarded as natural. The list of world famous Voice Hearers includes Philosophers, Thinkers, Spiritual Leaders, Creative Geniuses, Leaders and Rulers.

In modern culture, Voice Hearing is frequently regarded as an indication of serious mental illness. A large percentage of people hear voices at some time in their lives, often after traumatic event. Research tells us there is a relationship between past or recent traumatic or intensely emotional events and the onset of voice hearing.

Many who hear voices are never diagnosed with Schizophrenia or any other mental illness. However, a high percentage of people who hear voices are diagnosed Schizophrenic. Hearing voices is also a part of many other mental health problems and found in the mentally well.

## **WORKING WITH VOICE HEARERS /VOICE PROFILING - THE THREE PHASES OF HEARING VOICES**

Startling Phase: During this phase the voices may be hostile or demanding, interfering with the person's life. Alternatively, the voices may be helpful with a sense of recognition. This phase can be confusing and frightening. People need reassurance and assistance to cope with such anxiety. There is a danger at this point to over medicate.

Organisational Phase: In this phase people seek to find meaning and to arrive at some understanding of their experience. They also seek to learn to accommodate and cope with the voices in their everyday lives.

Stabilization Phase: At this stage, the person has learned to cope with the voices and has begun to live in balance with them. The voices become less controlling and the person is re-empowered. The person can now choose to follow the advice of the voices or to follow his or her own ideas. The voices are now viewed as having a more positive influence. Anxiety is reduced.

## **WHAT IS NEEDED**

A new understanding of Hearing Voices as a natural variation in human experiences, typically a reaction to unresolved trauma and stress.

An acceptance of the person's experience of voices.

Encouragement to help people to become involved in Hearing Voices support groups so that they can diminish the taboo and the isolation.

Written by  
SHEELAGH HEGARTY

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### **City Meeting**

**Saturday 9th June 2012**

**There will be *NO* meeting on this date due to the Queen's Birthday long weekend.**



## The importance of managing Vicarious Trauma by Stuart Steinberg



Counsellors and other professionals, when attending to clients that have been subjected/ exposed to a traumatic event, need to be fully aware of the potential for Vicarious Traumatization.

Vicarious trauma is defined by Pearlman and Saakvitne(1995) as "The inner transformation that occurs in the inner experience of the therapist (or other professional) that comes about as a result of empathic engagement with clients 'trauma material ".Without effective intervention, its effects can persist for months and even years after working with traumatized clients.

Vicarious trauma (also known as secondary trauma) affects other people who have significant relationships with the immediate victim of the traumatic event. These people can include family, close friends, work colleagues, those caring for the immediate victim etc. Vicarious trauma can also be caused by graphic reports of disasters such as the September Eleven terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre Towers.

### **History of the term 'Vicarious trauma'**

Emergency workers were formally first observed in the late 1970's displaying similar symptoms to that of the trauma victim(s) they were assisting. Further research into other professions such as nurses and other crisis workers was then carried out. Workers' reactions to their clients' experience were originally seen as a form of 'burn out' or counter transference. Vicarious trauma, the term now used to describe a worker's reactions to being exposed to the traumatic experiences of their clients, was first introduced by MacCann and Pearlman in 1990.

How do counsellors and other professionals experience the effects of vicarious trauma.

1. When listening to clients that have been effected by traumatic events, counsellors will be sharing their clients various feelings and images (terror, fear, anger, horror, agony etc). While being subjected to the effects of sharing their client's traumatic event, a counsellor may question their own feelings, views issues of safety regarding the world around them.

2. Counsellors are trained to assist their clients in reclaiming their happiness and well-being but by doing so are often repeatedly exposed to distress.

Symptoms of Vicarious trauma include:

- Thinking more than you should about your clients trauma.
- Problems with getting to or staying asleep
- Problems with relating to others at home or at work
- Feeling depressed and/or hopeless
- Feeling overwhelmed about your clients trauma experience.
- Poor performance at work/home including difficulty concentrating, remembering things as well as making decisions.

Counsellors need to acknowledge the ongoing effects of Vicarious Trauma and be prepared to take responsibility for its management especially if they are involved in trauma counselling that can leave them psychologically and physically overwhelmed.



**One does not  
become  
enlightened by  
imagining figures of  
light but by  
making the dark  
more conscious**  
*Carl Jung*

### **Ways of Managing Vicarious Trauma (V.T.) Include:**

- Maintaining social and supportive relationships.
- Acknowledging that V.T. is a normal consequence of working with traumatized clients, and therefore detaching any stigma from it, can encourage workers to come forward and ask for help.
- Acknowledge the difficulties or changes you are experiencing and if necessary seek professional help.
- Regular supervision / debriefing with supervisors and / or colleagues.
- Decrease any unnecessary stressors.
- Try to balance your work load of the type of clients that you are seeing during the day.
- Allow someone special (especially a partner) to take care of / even to pamper you.
- Find people / places (nature) that you can relate to and feel comfortable around.
- Find physical activities that allow you to express various feelings such as grief, anger, joy and sadness.

### **Conclusion:**

Vicarious Trauma is an occupational hazard that not only substantially affects the individual worker but can also impact on their organisation. As a result, unless there are sufficient strategies in place for the management of V.T., an organisations' internal structure can be seriously disrupted. Good morale and successful workplace performance / planning are all important aspects of a well managed organization.

While the effects of V.T. upon trauma workers is unavoidable due to the nature of the work, its effects can be minimized by both the individual and organization taking a proactive role and responsibility for its consequences.

Although there has been an increased recognition of the consequences of V.T. together with other effects of working with trauma / abuse clients, V.T. at times can remain hard to acknowledge, accept, discuss and manage.



## **FVC CBD MEETING**

### **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> MAY - Anti- Oppressive Practice**

Presenter – Penny Armstrong



AOP (Anti-oppressive Practice) is an excellent tool for Professional Counsellors to adopt during their therapy sessions with difficult clients. It is also a framework to use to protect ourselves, when our own issues may surface during sessions.

Although AOP is mainly used in social work practice, Penny has found it very useful when facilitating group counselling workshops and dealing with vulnerable people.

AOP is based on the principal that the term “anti-oppressive practice” is generally understood as an umbrella term that encompasses a variety of practice approaches including, but not limited to, radical, structural, feminist, anti-racist, critical, and liberatory frameworks. This practice approach can be seen to add perspective towards practice. This workshop will be based on Dalrymple and Burke’s (1995) framework.

#### **SUPERVISION – OPEN FORUM**

Members are encouraged to discuss cases of their own which they would like feedback from the members on.

## **FVC FERNTREE GULLY MEETING**

#### **PLEASE NOTE THE NEW VENUE ADDRESS OF:**

Mountain District Learning Centre  
13 - 15 The Avenue  
Ferntree Gully  
Near Ferntree Gully railway station

### **SATURDAY 28th APRIL—How to change a habit the easy way**

Presenter – Robert McInnes

Robert McInnes is a level 4 ACA counselor in private practice and Principal drug and alcohol counsellor at Active Recovery Centre, Springvale  
He created Cognitive Principle Therapy and aims to promote it.

#### **Supervision—Open forum.**

Counsellors are encouraged to present their cases which they wish for feedback on.



## Mindfulness Part 1

"Bringing one's complete attention to the present experience on a moment-to-moment basis." (Marlatt & Kristeller)

"Paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally." (Kabat-Zinn).

"The non-judgmental observation of the ongoing stream of internal and external stimuli as they arise." (Baer)

"Awareness of present experience with acceptance." (Germer, Segal, Fulton)

### The Benefits of Mindfulness

Practising mindfulness helps you:

- to be fully present, here and now
- to experience unpleasant thoughts and feelings safely
- to become aware of what you're avoiding
- to become more connected to yourself, to others and to the world around you
- to become less judgmental
- to increase self-awareness
- to become less disturbed by and less reactive to unpleasant experiences
- to learn the distinction between you and your thoughts
- to have more direct contact with the world, rather than living through your thoughts
- to learn that everything changes; that thoughts and feelings come and go like the weather
- to have more balance, less emotional volatility
- to experience more calm and peacefulness
- to develop self-acceptance and self-compassion

### What is Mindfulness?

'Mindfulness' is an ancient concept, found in a wide range of spiritual and religious traditions, including most martial arts, yoga, tai chi, Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. Gradually, over the last 30 years, Western psychology has started to recognise the many benefits of mindfulness training, and it has now become an empirically supported intervention in a wide range of clinical disorders. 'Mindfulness' can be defined in a variety of different ways, but they all basically come down to this: paying attention with flexibility, openness, and curiosity.

This simple definition tells us three important things. First, mindfulness is a process of awareness, not thinking. It involves paying attention to experience in the moment as opposed to being caught up in thoughts. Second, mindfulness involves a particular attitude: one of openness and curiosity. Even if our experience in the moment is difficult, painful, or unpleasant, we can be open to and curious about it instead of running from or fighting with it. Third, mindfulness involves flexibility of attention: the ability to consciously direct, broaden, or focus attention on different aspects of experience. We can use mindfulness to 'wake up,' connect with ourselves and appreciate the fullness of each moment of life. We can use it to improve our self-knowledge – to learn more about how we feel, think and react. We can use it to connect deeply and intimately with the people we care about, including ourselves. And we can use it to consciously influence our own behaviour and increase our range of responses to the world we inhabit. It is the action of living consciously – a profound way to enhance psychological resilience and increase life satisfaction. This may explain why ACT has been proven to increase therapist effectiveness and reduce therapist burnout

**What we resist persists**

*Wise old catch phrase*

**NO CBD  
Meeting  
in June  
2012  
Due to the  
Queen's  
Birthday  
long  
weekend**

## **FVC Meeting Dates:**

### **Melbourne CBD Meeting - *next meeting* 12th May, 2012**

Meets second Saturday monthly at:

Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane, 1st floor, Room 3.

Costs - FVC members: \$5.00, Non-FVC members: \$20.00, Students: \$5.00,  
Non-FVC Students: \$5.00.

Phone: 0402 251 835 or email: [president@fvc.asn.au](mailto:president@fvc.asn.au)

Registration & Networking	12.30 - 1.00pm
Presentation	1.00 - 2.00pm
Break	2.00 - 2.30pm
Supervision	2.30 - 3.30pm



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### **Outer East (Ferntree Gully)**

#### **Next meeting: 26th May 2012**

Meets fourth Saturday monthly at:

Dayspring Training Centre - 15 Alpine St, Ferntree Gully (near Ferntree Gully railway station).

Costs - FVC members: \$5.00, Non-FVC members: \$20.00, Students: \$5.00,  
Non-FVC Students: \$5.00.

Phone: 0402 251 835 or email: [president@fvc.asn.au](mailto:president@fvc.asn.au)

Registration & Networking	12.30 - 1.00pm
Presentation	1.00 - 2.00pm

### **New Venue for Ferntree Gully Group for 2012**

**Mountain District Learning Centre  
13-15 The Avenue Fern-tree Gully  
( near Ferntree Gully station)**



## The Mindful way through Depression' ...

The Authors, Mark Williams, John Teasdale, Zindel Segal and Jon Kabat –Zinn, offer insightful lessons drawn from both Eastern meditative practices and cognitive therapy, as a way of freeing yourself from chronic unhappiness. It offers the reader a step by step guided tour through an eight session - mindfulness based - cognitive therapy for Depression.

This book gives a simple explanation of Mindfulness and how it involves daily meditative practise. This involves intentionally bringing one's attention to the internal and external experiences occurring in the present moment, so that emotional balance can be gained. According to the authors, the ability to direct ones attention inwardly to observe thoughts and feelings in a non-judgemental way takes patience, self-compassion, persistence and open-mindedness'. These experts explain why our normal attempts to 'think' our way out of a low mood or 'just snap out of it' turns on the struggle switch, leading us down a pathway to even greater rumination and despair. They say, as an outcome of using mindfulness strategies, that Mindfulness nourishes and develops our capacity for 'awareness, insight, wisdom and self-compassion', increasing and cultivating an abiding sense of Joy in the user.

This is undoubtedly one of the most powerful self- help books I've read in a long while. Its' brilliance is due to its clarity and down to earth practical strategies, personal stories, poems and insights from those who have dealt with depression. It's a quick and easy read, only 273 pages and many of their interventions would be a great addition to any counselling or psychotherapy session. Throughout the book it emphasises it is not a miracle cure and is not for individuals in the midst of an episode of clinical depression but may be more suited to those who are moving out of the depression. In part four, it focuses on how exercises and meditations can break depression's self-perpetuating cycle and, more importantly, prevents depression from striking again.

At the back page is a CD that offers 77 minutes of guided meditation practises, narrated by John Kabat-Zinn, covering topics such as body scanning, yoga, breath work and thought scans. This program is a new way of working with thoughts and feelings, unlike the mainstream methods, for example Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), in that it does not demand that you evaluate your thought, change thoughts or emotions. Mindfulness only asks you to be fully present in the moment and observe, without avoidance or judgement.

This book will become a classic as it offers a huge improvement over other CBT approaches. It is also available as an audio-book, for details visit [www.guilford.com/mindfulway](http://www.guilford.com/mindfulway). This book is worth buying, even if you do not have depression but want ways to deal with life hassles. It reinforces throughout the book that using Mindfulness can transform unwanted emotions by shaping learning, because it changes us at a cellular level so that relapse prevention is an outcome.

*A good read, highly recommended.*

By  
Jennifer Reynolds

## Being a member of FVC means to you:

**Support:** Our organisation provides an opportunity to get out of the office and to talk with others.

**Connections:** The organisation contains a wealth of experienced business people who are looking to make the right connections with other businesses.

**Education:** Business people always want to learn more and the topics we choose for these events have been directly contributed by the members themselves.

**Training:** Acquiring new skills is critical for the success of any business. Our training events are offered locally because we appreciate that relationships are built by meeting real people face to face.

**Social:** The FVC endeavor's to balance association and individual needs, and provide a forum to meet new friends through social events.

For further information on becoming a financial member visit the FVC webpage at [www.fvc.asn.au](http://www.fvc.asn.au)

The FVC needs your help! FVC need speakers, for all meeting areas, topics need to be counselling related, If you know anyone who you think could be interested, or if you have heard an interesting speaker, or you would like do a presentation yourself, we are interested to hear about it.

Contact: Michael Woolsey at [Michael@fvc.asn](mailto:Michael@fvc.asn) or 0419 545 260



## Articles and Advertising

Suitable relevant items and proposed adverts for FVC Bulletin can be sent to the FVC secretary by mail to: FVC Editor, PO Box 648, Eltham VIC 3095. All material is commonly subject to editorial discretion, approval and proofing. Closing date for the following month is the 15th of the previous month, e.g., April 15th for the May issue

## Advertising Rates

Effective from November 2010 No preferred positions are offered for display advertising – all approved advertising will be placed as Run of Newsletter (and may be placed on a page with other ads).

Costs for advertisements or classifieds do not vary depending on colour. The newsletter is an electronic format, and there is no loading on the use of colour.

Full page \$80 Half Page \$40 - horizontal only Third Page \$25 - either horizontal or vertical  
Classified \$10 - for single column width x 10 lines of text.

## Payment

Full payment is required prior to the deadline for contribution in full. Prior to making payment for advertising, contact FVC by email to [secretary@fvc.asn.au](mailto:secretary@fvc.asn.au) to confirm the space requirements.

## General Conditions

- No advertising agency commissions are provided FVC is not responsible for instructions or alterations unless confirmed in writing FVC reserves the right to omit or decline to run any advertisement, editorial or submission that it deems unsuitable for publication
- Cancellations must be received within 7 days of the booking deadline otherwise the advertiser may be required to pay for the space booked

## Advertising Sizes

Full Page Half Page Horizontal 196 x 260 cm (w x d) 196 x 125 cm (w x d) Third Page Horizontal  
Third Page Vertical 196 x 83 cm (w x d) 60 x 260 cm (w x d)

## Material Requirements

The Bulletin is produced as a word document and saved to a locked PDF. All items for submission must be sent in PC compatible format electronically to [president@fvc.asn.au](mailto:president@fvc.asn.au) Advertisements should be sent as a PDF scaled to finished ad size and also as a graphic as a tiff or giff file

- All editorial submissions must be supplied typed and spell checked.

## EDITORIAL NOTES:

If you have anything you would like to share with your colleagues, a funny story, etc., we would love to receive it. You can send it to [president@fvc.asn.au](mailto:president@fvc.asn.au)

## DISCLAIMER: