

RESPECT FOR DIFFERENCE IN COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

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## **ABSTRACT**

The publications and critical commentary constitute a body of work spanning the period from 1988 to 2012. This has seen: the professionalisation of the field of counselling and psychotherapy, the development of a wide range of approaches; and an exponential growth of training programmes associated with these changes. The thesis constitutes the response of a systemic psychotherapist and academic engaging with the expanding formal knowledge of the field as it informs intervention with clients and the training of practitioners. This is to be understood as an extended exercise of praxis in the dialectical application of theory to challenges encountered in practice. From this a number of themes have emerged which have made an original contribution to the knowledge base of the subject area. These are: the development of a model for working with process; the application of systemic approaches to intervention with individuals; cross-cultural work; a critical response to the 'post-modern turn'; and a cross-modality approach to training. This response to an unfolding epistemological context opens the way to establishing a cross-modality position; one that argues for a 'respectful co-existence' which is appreciative of differences between theories and models but cautious in the face of claims to orthodoxy and supremacy.

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Bott, D. (1988) A Process Model of Developmental Failure and Associated Pathology, *British Psychological Society, Counselling Section Review* Vol.3 No.1. pp: 25-35 ISSN 0269-6975

### B

Bott, D. (1988) The Relevance of Systemic Thinking to Students *Counselling Psychology Quarterly* Vol.1 No.4. pp. 367-375. ISSN 0264-9977

### C

Bott, D. (1994) A Family Systems Framework for Intervention with Individuals, *Counselling Psychology Quarterly* Vol 7 No. 2 pp 105-115. ISSN 0951-5070

### D

Bott, D. (1996) 'Systems Theory'. In *Counselling, The BAC Reader*. Edited by S.Palmer, S. Dainow and P. Miller. London: Sage. ISBN 0 7476 0

### E

Bott, D. (2000) Integrating Systemic Thinking in Counselling and Psychotherapy. In *Integrative and Eclectic Counselling and Psychotherapy*. Edited by S.Palmer and R. Woolfe. London: Sage. ISBN -7619-5798-7

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Bott, D. and Hodes, M. (1989) Structural Therapy with a West African Family

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- Bott, D. (2001b) Towards a family-centred therapy - postmodern developments in family therapy and the person-centred contribution. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*. Vol.14, No. 2, pp.111-118 ISSN 0951-5070

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- Bott, D. (2002) Client-centred therapy and family therapy: a review and commentary. *Journal of Family Therapy*. Vol. 23 No. 4. pp 361-377 ISSN 0163 4445

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- Bott, D. (2003) Carl Rogers and postmodernism continuing the conversation. *Journal of Family Therapy*. Vol. 24 No. 3. pp 326-329 ISSN 0163 4445b.

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## L

- Bott, D (2007) In search of the Holy Grail: a response to Ivan Ellingham,

*Therapy Today*, Vol. 18, No1 p. 38.

## M

Bott, D. and Howard, P. (2009) Presentation: *Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration Conference. Seattle, USA. Difference and Dialogue: A UK Experience of Delivering Parallel Modality Specific Psychotherapeutic Trainings from a Meta-position.*

## N

Bott, D. and Howard, P. (2012) *The Therapeutic Encounter: a cross-modality approach.* Sage. ISBN 978-0-232-5

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Ms Pam Howard, Principal Lecturer and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist, University of Brighton;

Ms Alice Stevenson, Transactional Analyst and Psychotherapist, Kent.

The author wishes also to thank the clients, students and colleagues who have provided the rich context within which this work took place.

## **Declaration**

I declare that the research contained in this thesis, unless otherwise formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. The thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree and does not incorporate any material already submitted for a degree.

Signed

Date

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY AND PUBLICATIONS

### *Background and Context*

When a new client presents for therapy, the practitioner is inclined to ask the question 'why now?' – what is it that has brought this particular person at this time, when they might have come sooner or left their arrival to a later date? This has particular significance within systemic psychotherapy where problems can be viewed as arising from the negotiation of conflicting developmental tasks by individuals who are intimately related.

The same question can be asked in relation to the timing of the submission of these works in consideration for the award of Phd by Publication. They span a period from 1988 to 2012. Arguably, this has been a significant time in the development of the field. It has seen: the related areas of counselling and psychotherapy establish themselves as professions regulated by professional bodies, underpinned by a code of ethics; the development of a plethora of approaches each providing its own account of the aetiology and amelioration of psychological distress; and a massive expansion of training programmes at all levels. All this is to be set against the debates arising from the 'postmodern turn' within the social sciences with the impact of social constructionism and post-structuralism upon the theory, practice and organisation of counselling and psychotherapy. The works submitted can be regarded as making a timely, if modest, contribution towards establishing a critical position in relation to these developments.

It is difficult enough for professionals to grasp the range and complexity of therapeutic models let alone the layperson in distress, seeking to make an informed choice. The complexity of the field raises issues of: appropriateness of intervention, cost effectiveness and, significantly, the potential for harm. In recent years, government policy has been directed towards the protection of the

public through the statutory regulation of counselling and psychotherapy. Following a White Paper in 2007, the Health Professions Council set up a Professional Liaison Group consisting of representatives from the professional bodies and Chaired by Professor Diane Waller to take forward this process. The PLG aimed to develop generic standards across modalities while addressing the longstanding debate concerning the distinction between counselling and psychotherapy. This process was compounded by confusion within the profession surrounding the separate and coincidental implementation of Increasing Access to Psychological Therapy (IAPT) and the introduction of National Occupational Standards (NOS) for psychological therapies (Waller and Guthrie, 2013). As it is, the coalition government has put statutory regulation on one side in favour of a system of 'Assured Voluntary Regulation' under the auspices of a new Professional Standards Authority (formerly the Council for Healthcare and Regulatory Excellence (CHRE)).

Regulation presents a dilemma in that an account of the distinctions between disparate theories and models is essentially a matter of philosophy and theory where public protection is an important legalistic matter. The challenge is to find a 'legal' solution that, at the same time, takes account of the conceptual issue. Looking for commonalities to establish standards and competences can lead to reductionism and homogeneity against a field characterised by a rich creativity. An example of this has been the privileging of approaches which are available to empirical validation in the absence of a philosophical critique. This has been the case in the initial enthusiasm for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy within the IAPT initiative. The task at hand is to value difference and creativity in a way that is philosophically sustainable while acting in the public interest. A cross-modality position (Bott & Howard, 2012) offers one approach to addressing this. It has a contribution to make in managing difference while establishing connections and commonalities. To quote Paul Stenner:

‘ Some books are before their time and some are written too late, but *The Therapeutic Encounter* is a book ‘just in time’.<sup>1</sup>

### *Introduction*

The commentary opens with a research question:

‘Does respect for difference inform thinking and practice in counselling and psychotherapy? If so, in what ways?’

The dimensions within which this has been addressed within the publications are outlined and a number of themes are extrapolated. Here, a claim is made to an original contribution to knowledge. The following section sets out to locate the works against the formal knowledge claimed by the professions of counselling and psychotherapy. There follows a brief historical account of the development of counselling and psychotherapy with reference to issues arising from professionalisation. Then, a research approach is identified in the form of praxis and, consistent with this, the researcher is placed within the research. There follows an exposition of the ‘post modern turn’ outlining relevant aspects of post-structuralism and social constructionism. A cross-modality approach is distinguished from purism, eclecticism, integration and pluralism. The publications are then located thematically.

### *Research Question and Themes*

An under-pinning research question runs throughout the publications presented for consideration:

**‘ Does respect for difference inform thinking and practice in counselling and psychotherapy? If so, in what ways?’**

- Difference between cultural arrangements;

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Stenner, Professor of Social Psychology, Open University – publisher’s review of Bott, D. & Howard, P. *The Therapeutic Encounter -a cross-modality approach*. Sage)

- Difference between theories and models of counselling and psychotherapy;
- Difference between psychological and systemic thinking and intervention;
- Incorporating respect for difference in training counsellors and psychotherapists.

This has been addressed within a number of themes around which the publications are organised:

- Constructing a model for 'process' intervention which inductively invites the contribution of a range of disparate therapeutic approaches;
- Developing an approach for working systemically with individuals;
- Cross-cultural intervention;
- A critical response to the postmodern turn in counselling and psychotherapy;
- Designing and implementing a cross-modality approach to training.

These, in turn, come together in establishing a particular position in relation to: monism; eclecticism; integration and pluralism in the form of a cross-modality approach to clinical intervention and training. It is argued that aspects of this constitute an independent and original contribution to knowledge, located within contemporary developments. Current psychotherapeutic thinking represents the culmination of a process which has seen: the breakdown of traditional structures; the scientific and technical possibilities of the modern era; and the impact of a postmodern position which is sceptical of grand or total explanations in favour of a pragmatic perspectivism. The challenge has been to find a critical position in the face of the postmodern turn within the social sciences and, specifically, its impact upon the field of counselling and psychotherapy.



### *The 'Formal Knowledge' of Psychotherapy/Counselling and Professionalisation*

It is beyond the scope of this commentary to do justice to the complexity of the formal knowledge which underpins the professions of counselling and psychotherapy. That said, when psychotherapeutic thinking and practice are placed within historical and social context a number of themes arise.

The impetus for exploring the internal world of the individual can be located within the shifting concerns of the Enlightenment and Reformation, with the challenge to fixed social arrangements. Western European society in the medieval period was characterised by an absence of both geographical and social mobility. An individual would have been defined by a fixed place in a 'natural' social order, legitimated by reference to the Church (McLeod, 2005). The growing awareness of the individual self, of others and of the world as separate entities was a feature initially of the Renaissance with the possibility of self-expression; albeit still constrained by the hegemony of the Catholic Church. The process of taking forward the differentiation of the individual from the social order is to be found in the Reformation where Protestantism introduced a direct relationship between the individual and God free of the mediation of the priesthood. The Enlightenment proposed a 'modern' world characterised by a progressive science and a universal morality where it would be possible to establish objective knowledge independent of the knower. Two core projects of the twentieth century Marxism and Psychoanalysis set out to reveal the underlying structures that might explain the surface phenomena of society and the individual respectively (Pocock, 1995).

Freud, taking forward the earlier work of Mesmer and Charcot, emerged as a central figure in setting out to articulate a scientific account of the inner world of the individual against a background of classical scholarship and the hermeneutics of the Talmudic tradition. Subsequently, Fascism provided the

historical imperative which led to the expansion of these ideas in the New World. Freud had visited America with Jung and Ferenczi in 1909 and had found little to recommend its social and cultural arrangements. While, he eventually settled in Britain, Ferenczi, Rank and Erikson, amongst others, relocated to the United States where the concerns of psychoanalysis found a fit with a very different context. The isolated and fragmented individual stripped of a place in the world by social and geographical mobility could find in psychoanalysis a route towards meaningful relationships and a sense of identity (Cushman, 1995). At the same time the 'American Dream' promised the possibility of happiness and the therapist could be identified as having the capacity to deliver it. An approach originally developed within the context of declining empire and informed by biological science, classical scholarship and the Talmudic tradition required an accommodation to a very different social and cultural context. It also had to counter the resistance of home grown academic behavioural psychology (Watson 1919) with its focus on observable behaviour and laboratory experimentation. Humanistic approaches (Rogers, Berne, Perls, Maslow et al.) can be understood as a 'third' force located in the optimism of the post war period reacting to, while being influenced by, prevailing psychoanalytic and behavioural thinking and practice.

In the meantime psychoanalysis was subject to a number of developments arising from debates within the British psychotherapeutic world, opening the way to a range of competing approaches and groupings. Alongside this, a fourth force looking beyond the internal world of the individual and focussing on the family and the group, was gaining ground in the form of Family Therapy in the United States and Group Analysis in Britain.

The activity of counselling, originally an extension of psychotherapy but finding its origins in Education, Social Work and the Voluntary sector, looked towards humanistics and particularly the work of Carl Rogers to provide a brief and affordable alternative to the length and complexity of psychoanalytic

intervention. Subsequently, the identification of counselling and psychotherapy as distinct activities has been the subject of much confusion and debate. This can no longer be regarded as a matter of theoretical modality since there are psychodynamic counselling and humanistic psychotherapy trainings, as well as a plethora of approaches. Equally, academic level does not help since counselling is taught at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. Indeed, it has become the practice in some circles to refer to counselling and psychotherapy as a single activity. That said, psychotherapy trainings are of a longer duration and would claim to provide greater depth of understanding. McLeod (2009) provides a helpful position in rejecting the view that there is any absolute difference between counselling and psychotherapy while proposing a conception of counselling as 'a distinctively contextually oriented, strength-based and pragmatic form of practice' (p.10).

The works submitted are located within the context of: the emergence of the two broad overlapping areas of counselling and psychotherapy; the competition between modalities laying claim to the formal knowledge base which informs therapeutic intervention; and the professional arrangements which have accompanied this. In his account of the status of the professions in advanced industrial societies, Friedson (2001) identifies the claim to formal knowledge as the vehicle by which professions establish themselves. The distinction between specialised and common-sense knowledge accords status to those who lay claim to the former. The institutional arrangements which arise from this open the way for a subtle form of power or domination (Foucault, 1979). Professions establish themselves though credentialism and membership requires the demonstration of a grasp of a formal specialised knowledge. This usually takes the form of a qualification which follows from a course of study at an accredited professional school or institution.

These issues have presented themselves most vividly in the recent attempt to establish statutory regulation across the field of counselling and

psychotherapy. In their analysis of this experience, Waller and Guthrie (2013) make the distinction between a structural functionalist account of professionalisation which regards the process as relatively unproblematic in bringing together a largely homogenous set of principles and practices, and a process model which is characterised by variation and conflict while tied to a political process in managing tensions between public and professional interests. Drawing on the experience of the regulation of the arts therapies, Waller (1998) argues for a multi-professional perspective which is inclusive of both counselling and psychotherapy. Respect for diversity of approach and the type of engagement can be sealed by a 'regulatory bargain' with a multi-professional regulator. This opens the way for each modality to shape its own theories and practices while balancing the benefits of enhanced status and recognition against protection of the public from narrow professional interests.

A 'cross-modality' position is consonant with this view in providing an alternative to the misunderstandings and even hostility that have characterised the relationship between different modalities on the one hand and the problem of relativism on the other. This has come out of a critical engagement with the impact of postmodernism on the field of counselling and psychotherapy; one that is cautious about claims to truth while valuing knowledge. Orthodoxy is challenged while, at the same time, relativism is also questioned in that it fails to account for fundamental epistemological distinctions. Differences between the theories and models which inform counselling and psychotherapy are respected while constructive engagement between them is encouraged.

These principles have been applied in developing and leading a postgraduate training programme at the University of Brighton where single modality courses are taught in parallel with points of contact and conversation. A developing account of the implications of this position for practice has

culminated in the publication of a book which proposes maintaining the distinctiveness of modalities while working across them.

### *Research Approach*

Engagement with the world of counselling and psychotherapy can be understood as taking forward a moral imperative to contribute to the well-being of others. In this instance it has been a matter of a combination of personal and professional biography, with exposure to aspects of sociological and psychological theory, that resonate with the concerns raised by critical reflection on the alleviation of distress.

The impetus for the publications has come directly out of the activity of conducting therapy. This has taken the form of an inductive process and the challenge of finding adequate responses in the face of the complexities of human experience. In that sense, the clients worked with have been the research or, at least, have raised the research questions. Academic activity has been directed towards responding to these by interrogating the knowledge base of the field. In turn, this critical examination has been applied making for a dialectical process. The published works have been directed towards establishing a way of thinking and working across modalities underpinned by a philosophical position which is sensitive to the distinctions between ontology, epistemology and methodology. This has been applied in both a model for training and a framework for practice.

These activities come under the broad heading of 'praxis'; a cyclical reflexive process by which theory and practice are shaped reciprocally. Claims to neutrality are put aside with the recognition that research approaches are a function of beliefs about the world (Bernstein, 1983). Facts are to be understood in the historical, social and cultural context within which they are located (Lather, 1986). Gadamer's (2004) notion of 'fusion of horizons' would have it that the researcher brings to this their own historically embedded

consciousness. This places the researcher within the research and their biases become part of the argument.

Epistemologically, this represents a break with a modernist view which privileges theory over practice. The origins of this kind of engagement with knowledge lie in Aristotle's three-fold classification of knowledge as: theoretical, productive and practical. The latter, in contemporary application, has taken the form of praxis. This takes forward Aristotle's moral commitment to the 'good' in seeking to find answers to questions arising from the requirements for human wellbeing. Here, the search for knowledge takes the form of an inductive process seeking to challenge established 'reified' views in favour of emancipatory accounts of the world. In professional terms, the adequacy of an established knowledge base with its associated procedures is brought into question. Praxis is central to Marxist thought, carrying with it the distinction between understanding the world as a thing in itself, a matter of reification, and the ethical imperative to act upon it. Hence, the famous quote from Theses On Feuerbach (Marx, 1888); 'philosophers have only interpreted the world; the point is change it'. The application of praxis has been central to the work of the Frankfurt School, underpinning Habermas' 'theory of communicative action' (1973, 1979). An alternative is provided to the potential for the moral vacuum left by the perspectivism of post-structuralism by proposing a dialogue between differing views of the world.

Subject to the same influences, the commitment to social action is to be found in the work of Kurt Lewin (1951) in taking account the totality of a situation in order act upon it. Hence his much quoted assertion that 'there is nothing as practical as a good theory'. Lewin's contribution runs concurrently with that of Elias and Foulkes who bring together the influences of both Freud and Marx. Originally located in the University of Frankfurt in the psychoanalytic and sociological institutes, both emigrated to Britain fleeing from Nazi persecution and were influential in the development of group analysis. Elias argues for privileging the active application of sociological thinking over

philosophy as a thing in itself in that sociology has an active mission to help human beings manage the social world (Smith, 2001).

In contemporary application, the process of praxis research begins in concerns arising from everyday experience. This is addressed from the standpoint of what is 'good' in terms of a moral intention to improve human circumstances. A dialectical process brings theory and practice together as part of a single hermeneutic process. As we have seen, in praxis, the intentions of the researcher are central to the research. This requires an explicit reflexive account of the historical, social and biographical context within which the work is located.

#### *The Researcher within the Research*

The background to the ideas which inform the publications is to be found in an early life in a deprived area of South London. The main cultural influence upon my family was a strong commitment to non-conformism and, within that, the influence of a self-educated father who had experienced poverty and the absence of educational opportunities as a child going on to become an enthusiastic reader and independent thinker. He had challenged orthodoxy through a conscientious objection to fighting while seeing through a courageous war in a field ambulance. The rich multi-cultural mix of South London life provided a colourful antidote to the greyness of 1950's London. The influences which led to: an ethical imperative in respect for persons; the tendency to question established arrangements; and a celebration of cultural difference were present from the start.

One of only two children from the local school to pass the eleven plus, a grammar school education opened the way to wider academic and cultural possibilities. An early departure without qualifications to speak of was followed by a return to education and, subsequently, engagement with radical

social theory via the contrasting experiences of 'O' Levels at Brixton College and 'A' Levels at Toynbee Hall in East London.

A first job as a social worker was followed by training in counselling. This, in turn, led to full-time clinical training in systemic family therapy at London University Institute of Psychiatry (a short walk from Brixton) and the opportunity to work with and learn from leading figures within the field. The publications submitted have come out of a combined career as a Systemic Psychotherapist and an Academic at the University of Brighton culminating in a current post as Director of Studies in Psychotherapy. A catalytic moment presented itself when a longstanding psychodynamic course provided by the University of Sussex was incorporated into the, then, humanistic subject area at the University of Brighton. This opened the way to go beyond previous antagonisms in building a cross-modality programme.

### *The Contemporary Epistemological Context*

The publications constitute a critical examination of aspects of the knowledge base of counselling and psychotherapy and can be located in what has come to be called 'the postmodern turn'. This refers to the European cultural and social movement whereby the aspirations of modernism in providing social progress on the basis of rationality and objective scientific evidence has been brought into question. Postmodernism rejects the possibility of universal truths in the form of 'grand narratives' like Marxism and Psychoanalysis in favour of local knowledge constructed out of particular interests and perspectives. Postmodernism as it relates to therapeutic activity has been informed by a conflation of American social constructionism and French post-structuralism. The former has had the most direct impact on the activity of therapy while post-structuralism has provided a critique of the philosophical and theoretical context in which therapy takes place (Bott & Howard 2012).

The origins of post-structuralism are to be found in France with a post 1968 challenge to Enlightenment principles in general and, specifically, the work of Hegel and Marx. The poststructuralists, in effect, turned their back on the grand but flawed enlightenment programme of humanity, progress and freedom in favour of a number of themes, many of which find their origins within the writing of Nietzsche. These are: the rejection of a programme of cumulative and progressive historical change; the celebration of difference over conformity; the privileging of local and irrational knowledge over the universal and objective; moral relativism; and a fascination with the surfaces of things. Significantly, Nietzsche's notion of perspectivism - that every thought is also an interpretation- would have it that there are no such things as facts but that knowledge is a function of competing sets of interests.

Lyotard (1979) draws on Wittgenstein's notion of 'Language Game' and the argument that, contrary to commonsense, words do not gain their meaning from their capacity to picture reality but through social interchange. In essence, a language game is a conversation engaged in to determine reality. On this basis, Lyotard declares 'an incredulity towards meta-narratives'. This brings into question the bid by any particular approach to claim supremacy over others. Each modality merely exists within the language by which it is constructed and, as such, there is no basis upon which to privilege one over another. An extension of this is that we are required to give up on the quest to find an over-arching global therapeutic theory, which will finally provide all of the answers. Derrida's (1974), proposition: 'Il n'y a pas d'hors texte' questions the adequacy of language in accounting for the objective, since it can only ever refer to other language. Much of the impetus for the 'postmodern turn' in therapy has come from what has come to be seen as oppressive 'modernist' practice. Foucault (1975) provides a convincing analysis of the implicit power imbalance in the therapist - client relationship, identifying the subtle forms of domination which follow from restricted access to knowledge. In the contemporary context, Nietzsche's notion of 'will to power' becomes 'will to knowledge' (Best and Kellner, 1991).

The other strand of postmodern thought, social constructionism, has had a profound and direct impact upon therapeutic practice, most significantly in the field of systemic/family therapy. Social constructionism reflects a North American cultural world-view characterised by optimism, openness and pragmatism. Its under-pinning principles date back to the work of G.H. Mead (1934), subsequently to be developed in the 1960's and 1970's by social theorists like Becker, Goffman and, notably, Berger and Luckman (1967). There has been a resurgence of interest in these ideas by contemporary thinkers, pre-eminent amongst these, the academic psychologist Kenneth Gergen (1999, 2008). Social constructionism would have it that theories construct the world in their own terms (Warhus, 2001,). Significantly, this requires that we give up on competition between schools of therapy and regard them as socially constructed communities of meaning. The challenge is to recognize the value of therapeutic approaches in providing accounts which make human distress intelligible while knowing them to be reifications of ideas arising out of the concerns of particular social, historical and cultural contexts.

The implications of the postmodern critique are that no theoretical or methodological approach can claim pre-eminence. At the same time, breaking down the boundaries between theories and models risks losing a coherent position from which therapy can be conducted. Brown and Stenner (2009) question the tendency to drag a phenomenon out of the rightful place in which it has meaning. Psychotherapeutic concepts and interventions can only be understood within the linguistic, theoretical and ideological framework in which they are embedded (Safran and Messer 1997).

Further, Thomas Kuhn's notion of paradigm (1962) requires that we respect the fundamental epistemological distinctions between approaches. This has particular significance in the distinction between systemic and psychological thinking. A cross modality approach sets out to respect the differences between theories of counselling and psychotherapy while seeking to promote

a relationship between them that is respectful and actively engaged. This is encapsulated in the notion of 'Respectful Co-existence' (Bott, 2005).

This is not to suggest that there are not other legitimate responses to the issue of difference and integration. Consistency requires that respect for difference in modality extends to respect for differences in the way difference is understood and managed. These range from orthodoxy and purism at one end of the spectrum to eclecticism and relativism at the other.

Many trainings and their associated professional organizations retain a single modality (monistic) approach. A particular modality is privileged to the exclusion of others. Taking a distinct epistemological position has the merit of opening the way to study in depth and practitioners become steeped in a consistent way of thinking and working. At the same time an unfortunate consequence of this can be a lack of self-reflexivity and a tendency to disqualify and even vilify other modalities. At the other extreme, eclecticism puts epistemological distinctions and theoretical inconsistencies on one side in favour of a pragmatic combination of techniques. While this is problematic in that it lacks theoretical consistency, there can be a place for eclecticism in informing interpersonal skills in the context of other professional frameworks which provide a super-ordinate coherence.

Where eclecticism is essentially an atheoretical, selecting out on the basis of utility, integration seeks to bring principles and practices from a range of theories together in a consistent whole (Hollanders, 2000; Wachtel, 2011). There are a number of convincing examples of this (Lapworth, Sills and Fish, 2001; 2007 Evans and Gilbert, 2005). In establishing underpinning commonalities within all modalities - humanistic, behavioural, systemic and psychoanalytic - a way is opened to a rich and coherent approach to therapy. This is found in the attempt to deal with unresolved developmental dilemmas in contemporary life (Stern, 2004), providing a core theme around which references to a range of approaches can be organized. Again, Kahn (1997) provides a useful integration of theory to inform working with the

relationship, bringing together psychodynamic and humanistic principles. An alternative tack is taken by McLeod and Cooper (2011) in developing a pluralistic approach. Therapy takes the form of a collaborative process on the basis of what is meaningful to the client in terms of desired outcomes and the means by which these can be achieved. There is a sound philosophical basis for this in an ethical position informed by Levinas (Loewenthal and Snell, 2007).

The background to the publications presented has been an attempt to develop a position which is pluralistic without falling into relativism. This has led to the development of an approach which emphasises epistemological distinctions while acknowledging the shared endeavour of all theories and models which seek to account for psychological distress. The view taken is that the encounter between disparate approaches is a generative process which not only fosters an appreciation of each but also clears the way for new ideas where both fail.

## THEMES AND ASSOCIATED PUBLICATIONS

**Bott, D-**

### I

#### A model for working with process

2012 (with Howard, P.) *The Drama of the Therapeutic Encounter: a cross-modality approach*. Sage. ISBN 978-0-232-5

1988 A Process Model of Developmental Failure and Associated Pathology, *British Psychological Society, Counselling Section Review*. Vol.3 No.1, pp: 25-35. ISSN 0269-6975

2013 (with Howard, P.) The Therapeutic Encounter- a kind of loving. *The Psychotherapist*. Issue 52, pp: 26-27. ISSN 2049-4912

### II

#### Developing an approach model for working systemically with individuals and organisations:

1988 The Relevance of Systemic Thinking to Student Counselling. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*. Vol.1, No.4, pp: 367-375. ISSN 0264-9977

1990 Epistemology: The Place of Systems Theory in an Integrated Model of Counselling. '*Counselling*', *the Journal of the British Association for Counselling*. Vol.1, No.1, pp: 23-5. ISSN 0264-9977

- 1992 "Can I help you help me change?" Systemic Intervention in an Integrated Model of Counselling. *'Counselling', the Journal of the British Association for Counselling*. Vol.3, No.1, pp: 31-33
- 1992 Systems Consultation to Teams and Organisations- A Structural Approach. *Counselling, the Journal of the British Association for Counselling*. Vol 3, No 4, pp: 233-236 ISSN 0264-9977
- 1994 A Family Systems Framework for Intervention with Individuals, *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*. Vol. 7, No. 2, pp: 105-15 ISSN 0951-5070.
- 1996 'Systems Theory'. In *Counselling, The BAC Reader*. Edited by S.Palmer, S. Dainow and P. Miller. London: Sage. ISBN 0 7476 0
- 2000 Integrating Systemic Thinking in Counselling and Psychotherapy. In *Integrative and Eclectic Counselling and Psychotherapy*. Edited by S.Palmer and R. Woolfe. London: Sage. ISBN -7619-5798-7.

### III

#### Cross-cultural Intervention:

- 1989 Structural Therapy with a West African Family with M. Hodes. *Journal of Family Therapy* Vol. 11, No.2, pp: 169-179. ISSN 0163-4445

### IV

### Critical Response to the 'Postmodern Turn'

- 2001b        Towards a family-centred therapy. Postmodern developments in family therapy and the person-centred contribution. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*. Vol.14, No. 2, pp: 111-118 ISSN 0951-5070
- 2002        Client-centred therapy and family therapy: a review and commentary. *Journal of Family Therapy*. Vol. 23, No. 4, pp: 361-377 ISSN 0163 4445, 2002
- 2003        Carl Rogers and postmodernism continuing the conversation. *Journal of Family Therapy*. Vol. 24, No. 3. pp: 326-329 ISSN 0163 4445b

### V

### A Cross-modality Approach to Training:

- 2005        Person-centred counselling and systemic intervention: respectful co-existence, *Counselling and Psychotherapy Journal*. Vol. 16, No.6, pp. 19-21 ISSN 174-5372
- 2006        Bott, D. Howard, P. Marchant, L. & Suss, L. Respectful co-existence in action, *Therapy Today* Vol. 17, No.6, pp. 15-17 ISSN: 17487846
- 2007        In search of the Holy Grail: a response to Ivan Ellingham, *Therapy Today*, Vol. 18, No1 p. 38

2009            Presentation (with Pam Howard) *Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration Conference. Seattle, USA.*  
Difference and Dialogue: A UK Experience of Delivering Parallel Modality Specific Psychotherapeutic Trainings from a Meta-position

## THEMES AND PUBLISHED WORKS<sup>2</sup>

### I

A model for working with process:

*The Drama of the Therapeutic Encounter: a cross-modality approach.* Sage (2012) - **Appendix- N**, co-authored with Pam Howard, encapsulates and takes forward a body of work which has been directed towards developing and teaching an approach to therapy that is directly related to practice while underpinned by a sound philosophical and theoretical position. Written by psychotherapists who locate themselves as humanistic/systemic and psychoanalytic respectively, the book proposes an approach which respects the distinction between models of therapy while outlining principles which are useful to all. The notion of 'therapeutic dance', essentially a systemic proposition, becomes the context within which the psychological preoccupations of the individual are acted out and worked with directly in the

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<sup>2</sup> Works submitted for consideration are in bold.

room. An opening section outlines these underpinning principles. This is followed by a series of chapters which are organized around dilemmas which might be presented in therapy:

*Chapter 1 Theorising 'Process': contemporary perspective.*

This introductory chapter makes the case for understanding therapeutic 'process' as a relational phenomenon, arguing that 'resistance' and 'change' can be located between the client and the therapist and are to be understood as a function of their relationship. The case is made for the relevance of this principle to all therapists regardless of modality. An account of the implications of social constructionism and poststructuralism for the field of counselling and psychotherapy follows. It is argued that these ideas open the way to a climate where, despite commitment to our own modalities, we can value the other. At the same time, it is proposed that a social constructionist perspective provides valuable insights into the process of the therapeutic encounter. This leads the way to an exploration of the notion of 'self' and 'other' in developmental terms.

Chapters 2 - 7

Each chapter presents the enactment of a typical dilemma representing a theme of human relatedness, within the therapeutic encounter. Working inductively from the dilemma the client is dealing with and the consequent relational invitation to the therapist, principles for productive intervention are proposed. In order to balance the need for depth while drawing on a broad range of theory, the chapters privilege a particular approach explaining it in some detail while taking account of others. Suggestions for intervention are informed by themes of human growth and development paying particular attention to the existential challenges faced by each individual:

- 1) Encountering the Self (developing a sense of 'I');
- 2) Encountering the Other (how we learn to relate);
- 3) Encountering the World (how we come to find our own unique place in the family, society and culture).

The fluidity of 'personal process' is privileged over the tendency towards the rigidity found in formal accounts of 'personality structure'.

*Chapter 2: Frozen in Time; the refusal to join in.*

Dilemma: 'How can I take part if I can't make a mistake?'

This chapter gives particular attention to psychoanalytic theory, making reference to transference and the Oedipal drama. It focuses on the client who struggles with a sense of imperfection carrying with it an inclination to find fault with the world in general and the therapist in particular. The therapist may well feel criticized and a sense of failure. Developmental models provide a framework to help make sense of this and it is proposed that successful intervention requires the therapist to take a non-defensive position while treating invitations to the client to express emotion with some caution.

*Chapter 3: 'You and Who's Army': the battle for control.*

Dilemma: 'How can I find love when I can't show I'm vulnerable?'

Here, systems thinking is privileged, drawing particularly on strategic intervention and the use of the therapeutic bind. This theme is associated with the client having managed painful losses, rejections and abandonments by

becoming heavily defended. Pain and longing for connection are hidden behind an angry exterior. In these circumstances, the request for help can be experienced as an attack. Treating fear as information, the therapist is more likely to form a productive engagement if the significance of the protection to the client is recognised and respected.

*Chapter 4: Hide and Seek: engaging with the emotionally unavailable.*

Dilemma: 'How can I get close and still be myself?'

This theme arises out of early experiences of intimacy where the child's expressions of need were met by others who were emotionally unavailable. As a result, the child learned to 'cut off' or negate their emotions and relationships have since come to be experienced as threatening and unsatisfying. The individual presenting for therapy appears disconnected and shows little evidence of distress. The therapist may be lulled into believing that there is no real need for therapy. Successful intervention will depend on the therapist's capacity to see beyond the defence and give a voice to the client's lost internal emotional world. Attachment theory provides a way of understanding and working with this dynamic.

*Chapter 5: Sweetness and Light: the need to be loved*

Dilemma: 'How can I keep everyone happy and still get my own needs met?'

Intervention in this chapter is informed by Script theory and the way that the Script is maintained in later life. The case illustration concerns the dilemma of the child in the family who is 'allocated' the task of keeping others happy and has played a part in the parental dynamic. As the old story is acted out, the

therapist experiences a sense of well being to the point of actually looking forward to the next appointment. The therapist needs to recognise the 'seduction' for what it is while remaining warm and inviting the client to combine the need to be loved with the right to be important.

*Chapter 6: The Centre of the Universe: an inability to relate*

Dilemma: 'How can I get love and still be self-sufficient?'

This theme emerges from early experiences where the need for intimacy has been experienced as a threat to the client either in terms of intrusion or abandonment. The therapist is allocated the role of applauding audience to the client's achievements, wit and intelligence. Intervention will succeed to the extent that the therapist is able to decline graciously the passive position they have been invited to take, connecting with the frightened and lonely toddler hiding behind the desperate performance. This chapter is informed by, and takes forward, accounts of narcissism.

*Chapter 7: Rebel Without a Cause: encountering oppositionality*

Dilemma: 'How can I get my way when I can't say what I want?'

In this chapter particular attention is given to the analysis and management of transactions drawing upon principles to be found in Transactional Analysis. Oppositionality is understood as a response to the dilemma of the young child searching for autonomy but subject to adult control. Where control is overly restrictive or punitive, autonomy may become confused with the defeat of the other. This plays out in adult life in self-defeating patterns of behaviour. In the consulting room, the client shows a tendency to do the opposite to what

they perceive the therapist requires of them even against their own interests. In its more subtle variant, the therapist is lulled into a false sense of security by apparent compliance only to be defeated at the very point of 'therapeutic' success. It is suggested that the therapist shows humour and playfulness combined with a refusal to be organised into 'parental' behaviour.

### *Chapter 8: The Therapeutic Encounter: A Safe Emergency*

The concluding chapter reviews previous chapters framing the therapeutic encounter as a dramatic event. Persistence and resistance are accounted for by reference to attachment theory, neuro-science and social constructionism. Finally, the implications for psychodynamic and humanistic intervention are considered.

A wide cross-modality literature is brought to bear, working inductively from the specifics of therapeutic intervention. In framing the activity of therapy as a dramatic encounter, a critical position is taken with regard to a tendency towards passivity found across approaches.

It is possible to divide each author's contribution to the book in a relatively straightforward manner. With the exception of the Introduction and concluding chapter (Chapter 8), which are a closely shared endeavor, it is possible to identify the specific contribution of each author.

David Bott:

Chapter 1, Theorising 'Process' : Contemporary Perspectives

Introductory section;

Postmodernism, social constructionism and the drama of therapy;

Family systems theory and the therapeutic dance, pp: 17- 35

Chapter 3 - The Battle for Control

Chapter 5 - The Need to be Loved

Chapter 7 - Encountering Oppositionality

Pam Howard

Chapter 1, Theorising 'Process' : Contemporary Perspectives, pp: 35-42

Chapter 2 - The Refusal to Join In

Chapter 4 - Engaging with the Emotionally Unavailable

Chapter 6 - An Inability to Relate

The book brings together the work of a number of the author's publications which address issues located within the recent history of, and contemporary developments within, the field of counselling and psychotherapy. The interest in engaging directly with process – the minute-by-minute manifestation of the problem in the consulting room - is to be found in one of the earliest publications: **A Process Model of Developmental Failure and Associated Pathology, *British Psychological Society, Counselling Section Review Vol.3 No.1, pp: 25-35 (1988). Appendix A***. This combines humanistic and psychoanalytic thinking to inform intervention. A 'model' of the way in

which developmental issues can be identified and worked with is proposed. Margaret Mahler's 'Object Relations' account of the psychological birth of the human infant (1975) is linked to Script Theory (Berne, 1974; Steiner 1974) This not only marks the beginning of an interest in client process combined with developing a cross-modality position but also sets out to bring this to life through the presentation of a series of matchstick vignettes. With some reservations about the modernist certainty which is a feature of the time in which it was written, this continues to be a valuable teaching tool. Trainees are invited to sculpt the developmental dilemmas giving them the opportunity to 'get inside' the dynamics associated with stages of development.

## II

### Developing an approach model for working systemically with individuals:

This interest came out of work at London University Institute of Psychiatry during a full-time clinical training in Family and Marital Therapy, working in the Maudsley and Kings College Hospitals, where I subsequently retained a clinical contract. The systemic paradigm had been developed as a way of understanding and working with families. My contribution to the field has been to develop a systemic model for working with individuals while respecting the distinction between thinking psychologically and systemically, i.e. locating concerns within the mind of the individual or giving primacy to context and relationship. In **The Relevance of Systemic Thinking to Student Counselling, *Counselling Psychology Quarterly* Vol.1 No.4, pp: 367-375 (1988). Appendix - B** the position is taken that students coming away to higher education are dealing with both individual and family developmental tasks at the same time. It is suggested that practitioners will be more effective if they take account of this broader context. Further, there is potential to do harm if a

family dilemma is resolved at the expense of pathologising the individual presenting for therapy. This paper has been taken up in accounts which directly address the field of student counselling. (Woolfe ,1995; Eon, 1996)

These ideas are taken forward and developed in subsequent publications and constitute an original contribution to the field by developing an approach to working systemically with individuals. An initial paper: 'Epistemology: The Place of Systems Theory in an Integrated Model of Counselling. *'Counselling', the Journal of the British Association for Counselling* Vol.1 No.1, pp: 23-5 (1990) proposes an approach which argues that the epistemological distinctions between thinking psychologically and systemically can be respected but held by the same practitioner; an epistemological debate cited and taken up by Boddington, (1993 &1996) and Owen (2006). The critical point is that this cannot be a matter of simple eclectic addition. It requires a more considered approach in moving from the 'figure' of the individual to the contextual 'ground' in which it is located, making this, in turn 'figure'. Within this are to be found the seeds of a developing cross-modality position. A subsequent article: "Can I help you help me change?" Systemic Intervention in an Integrated Model of Counselling. *'Counselling', the Journal of the British Association for Counselling* Vol.3 No.1, pp: 31-33 (1992) outlines an application of these principles by arguing that for an individual to effect change they need to 'manage' their relational context. This requires a constructive return to family arrangements as distinct from the tendency to move away from apparently destructive dynamics. The subsequent development of a systemic framework for working systemically with individuals -**A Family Systems Framework for Intervention with Individuals, *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*. Vol 7 No. 2, pp: 105-15 (1994)** - has been taken up in the literature (see McLeod, 2009). See also Papandopoulos et al (2003).

- 1994            **A Family Systems Framework for Intervention with Individuals, *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*. Vol 7 No. 2, pp: 105-15. Appendix - C**
- 1996            **'Systems Theory'. In *Counselling, The BAC Reader*. Edited by S.Palmer, S. Dainow and P. Miller. London: Sage. Appendix - D**
- 2000            **Integrating Systemic Thinking in Counselling and Psychotherapy. In *Integrative and Eclectic Counselling and Psychotherapy*. Edited by S.Palmer and R. Woolfe. London: Sage. Appendix - E.**

### III

#### Cross-cultural Intervention

- 1989            **Structural Family with a West African Family with M. Hodes. *Journal of Family Therapy* Vol: 11 No 2, pp: 169-179. Appendix - F**

This paper came out of work I conducted with a West African family during my time at the Institute of Psychiatry. This is a cross-cultural piece which draws attention to the fit between thinking and working systemically using

Structural Family Therapy and cultural arrangements which do not privilege the individual over the group. Significantly, it provides an account of intervention with an ethnic minority family referred to a child and family psychiatry department which is responsive to critiques of Eurocentric views and practices. It is contemporaneous with the influential work of Littlewood and Lipsedge, (1989) which identified the way in which ethnocentric attitudes on the part of healthcare professionals impacted on the experience of black and ethnic minority service users. Intervention was sensitive to, and guided by the views of the family which included the need to engage with figures in their West African home village. In that sense, it provides an example of working in a way which is sensitive to cultural difference and invites ethnic minority patients/clients to develop their own voices and solutions (Fatimilehin, I & Coleman, P. 1999). Although it is an early paper, it is included as it is in keeping with the core theme throughout my publications of locating intervention in cultural context. It has been taken up in the literature which informs cross-cultural work and continues to be cited, e.g.

Wiselberg, 1992; Al-Krenawi et al, 1994; Lau, 1994; Raval, 1996; Ariel, 1999; Patel, 2000; Guixing, 2003; Rivett & Street, 2003; Tamura & Law, 2004; Coulter, 2006 & 2011; Cole, 2008.

#### IV

##### A Critical Response to the 'Postmodern Turn'

The impact of postmodernism in the form of post-structuralism and social constructionism is a live debate within the field, significantly in relation to the emergence of pluralism. 'The Therapeutic Encounter' argues for a particular kind of pluralism; one which respects the distinctions between theories and

models while remaining skeptical about claims to truth. Much is made of the research which places the quality of the relationship above any specific modality but the need for that relationship to be located in a consistent and coherent theory is often lost. Further, I have taken the position that the relativism arising from the postmodern turn, while a useful position in as much as it challenges orthodoxy, is at odds with the Enlightenment values which are at the core of therapeutic activity, directly informing the therapeutic relationship. In **Towards a family-centred therapy - postmodern developments in family therapy and the person-centred contribution.** *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*. Vol.14, No. 2, pp.111-118. (2001b). **Appendix - G**, I argue for the acknowledgement of the contribution of humanistic values to a 'family-centred' approach and point to the danger of replacing modernist scientific certainty with philosophical obscurity. This paper has been taken up by practitioners seeking to find ways of humanizing systemic intervention (Bahr, & Bahr, 2009; Seach, 2010; Kennington, 2012) The editor of the Journal of Family Therapy 'commissioned' the paper **Client-centred therapy and family therapy: a review and commentary.** *Journal of Family Therapy*. Vol. 23 No. 4. pp: 361-377 (2002). **Appendix - H**, in the interest of revisiting a lost discourse and arguing for its relevance in the practice of 'user friendly' family intervention. The comment in the 2003 edition of JFT - **Carl Rogers and postmodernism continuing the conversation.** *Journal of Family Therapy*. Vol. 24 No. 3. pp: 326-329 (2003). **Appendix - I**, is particularly significant in that it engages directly in dialogue with Harlene Andersen, a leading American figure.

This work is to be seen within the context of a debate in the field of systemic therapy concerning the nature of the therapeutic relationship, focusing on the importance of locating the therapist within the therapy (Roy-chowdhury , 2006). Arguably, this constitutes a significant contribution to the field. The papers are widely cited in the literature and appear on course reading lists.

Citations include the following:

Alves, 2002; Katakis, 2002; Snyder, 2002; Davy, 2003; Guixing, 2003; Rivett, 2003; Wells-Ratcliffe, 2003; Flaskas, 2004; Hall, 2004; Styborski, 2004; Mearns, & Cooper, 2005; Carr, 2006; Сосин & Крамченкова, 2006; Evans, 2006; Roy - Chowdhury, 2006; Vetere, 2006; Huxley, 2007; Lee, 2007; Tiedekunta & Laitos, 2007; Seach, 2007; Sinclair, 2007; Hughes, Bamford, & May, 2008; O'Leary, 2008; Bahr, & Bahr, 2009; Robertson, 2009; Sander & Ziebertz, 2010; Alexandria, 2011; Hazler, 2011; Yoosefi, 2011; Baitar, Buysse, Brondeel, De Mol, & Rober, 2012; Gross, 2012 Kennington, 2012; Shawver, 2012.

A Cross-modality Approach to Training:

**‘The Therapeutic Encounter’** reflects, and is intended to contribute to, a unique approach to training that has been developed at the University of Brighton under my leadership as Director of Studies in Psychotherapy. In the following papers, I coin the term ‘respectful co-existence’ in accounting for an approach to training practitioners which acknowledges the differences between theories and models of therapy while opening the way to a creative mutual understanding and respect.

- 2005            **Person-centred counselling and systemic intervention: respectful co-existence, *Counselling and Psychotherapy Journal*. Vol. 16, No.6, pp: 19-21. Appendix - J.**
- 2006            **Bott, D. Howard, P. Marchant, L. & Suss, L. Respectful coexistence in Action, *Therapy Today*. Vol. 17, No.6, pp. 15-17 Appendix - K.**
- 2007            **In search of the Holy Grail: a response to Ivan Ellingham, *Therapy Today*, Vol. 18, No1 p. 38. Appendix - L.**

This reflects a position, which challenges eclecticism, while remaining skeptical of the self-referential orthodoxy which comes from only working within a given approach. Under my leadership, the University of Brighton offers a particular and arguably unique approach, which teaches parallel

humanistic and psychodynamic trainings with points of contact and dialogue. These three papers do not appear in 'peer reviewed' journals but provide evidence of the impact and the relevance and application of the ideas developed in earlier publications. The 2007 paper responds to a critique of this position. The approach has been the subject of conference presentations, significantly at the Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration conference, Seattle, 2009.

**2009 Presentation (with Pam Howard) *Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration Conference. Seattle, USA.***  
**Difference and Dialogue: A UK Experience of Delivering Parallel Modality Specific Psychotherapeutic Trainings from a Meta-position.**  
**Appendix- M.**

With the exception of papers submitted to 'Counselling' / 'Therapy Today', all articles have been peer reviewed. Chapters are parts of edited volumes. The book has been independently peer reviewed prior to publication. The non-reviewed articles have been included to demonstrate the impact of my work and its ability to arouse editorial interest.

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