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# Editorial

By the end of its second year, the issues of PCEP will fit into a regular quarterly publication pattern. In the meantime, the issues in the second volume are coming thick and fast. The international nature of the journal is particularly reflected in the papers published in this issue, with principal authors coming from America, Germany, Argentina and Britain. As well as this international mix, there is an enormous variation in the nature of the papers.

The first paper, by Barbara Krietemeyer and Garry Prouty, is substantially devoted to a case study of Krietemeyer's work with a severely handicapped client, 'Laura'. This account gives the reader a real sense of the tentative nature of Pre-Therapy work, where it is often impossible to make 'sense' of what is happening and which almost totally relies on the therapist's willingness and ability to reach tentatively into the experiencing of the client, while simultaneously respecting boundaries nervously held. Krietemeyer's account of 'sitting at the doorstep' of the client's room for session after session shows not only her patience, but also the creative dimension of Pre-Therapy work. Interestingly, there are many crossovers between this work and the paper on play therapy by Behr in Issue 2:2. Although these works were created separately, there is considerable synchronicity in the fact that both emphasize the concept of the *resonance* as the fundamental dimension of empathy with clients who are very cut-off and tentative in regard to making contact. We hope that papers such as this one will stimulate readers to submit case studies of their own.

Claudio Rud offers the first paper from South America to be published in PCEP. The paper, 'Empathy: The adventure of being present', advances our growing dialogical understanding of empathy. Just as practitioners of other approaches are slowly catching up with the importance we have historically attached to the therapist's empathy, we are moving on from regarding it as a skill or even an 'attitude' of the therapist, to seeing it as embodied in the relationship — the 'contact' between client and therapist. Rud emphasizes that empathy is not what happens when we have 'contact', neither is it what creates the 'contact' — empathy *is* the contact.

The next paper in this issue is offered by the British practitioners Paul Wilkins and Martin Gill. This focuses on the issue of *assessment* in therapy. Here, 'assessment' denotes the process taking place in the first session, or even before formal therapy begins, to decide whether a therapy process can be meaningful. The authors provide a comprehensive review of the person-centered literature on assessment and describe a small empirical comparison between person-centered and psychodynamic therapists in terms of their concepts of assessment. Many person-centered practitioners are wary of the notion of assessment because,

historically, this tended to have been something done by the 'expert' to the client. However, Wilkins and Gill, in developing a theoretical framework for assessment in person-centered therapy, show how that process can be made consistent with the principles of the Person-Centered Approach.

Robert Elliott, David Orlinsky, Melissa Kline, Mona Amer and Rhea Partyka present some of the findings from the Collaborative Research Network. This Network comprises seventy therapist researchers in different parts of the world. The present research investigates 5,575 mental-health professionals, with sufficient numbers in 15 countries to make comparisons. The focus of this paper is on comparisons between humanistic and non-humanistic therapists in demographic variables and practice characteristics, and also on the differences reflected by varying degrees of experience. We hope that the paper will stimulate further thoughts about the 'extended family' of the person-centered and experiential therapies and the possibilities for mutual stimulation and cooperation.

Finally, Gunnison and Moore contribute another paper in what we hope will be a regular series of articles exploring relationships between person-centered or experiential therapies and related therapeutic traditions. (The first such article was the paper by Cooper in issue 2:1 published earlier this year, looking at relationships between person-centered therapy and existentialism.) For their part, Gunnison and Moore try to push the envelope further, challenging us to see similarities between the therapeutic positions and methods advocated by person-centered therapy and Ericksonian hypnosis. They argue that the resulting synthesis is empathic, growth-oriented, freedom-enhancing and effective.

The final issue of PCEP Volume 2 will be in print early in 2004. That will be a busy year of publications for the journal with the four issues of Volume 3 also appearing. Much of the content of these forthcoming five issues is already held within our international reviewing process. This includes a number of presentations, including keynotes, from the 2003 World PCE Conference. However, we still have openings for non-conference papers offered from any parts of the world. Please send these to any of the editors as described in the 'call for papers'.

Robert Elliott, Dave Mearns and Peter F. Schmid

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