

Introduction

Kia ora tatou, Te Roopu Kaiwhiriwhiri o Aotearoa. Nga mihi nui ki a koutou CPANZ! Welcome to this, the first “careers”-focused issue of the *New Zealand Journal of Counselling*.

In 1985 when I joined what is now NZAC, there was also a professional association for careers counsellors – the New Zealand Vocational Guidance Association (NZVGA). The two associations had and continued to have a history of interaction and support and, in many cases, a shared membership. A quick browse through Gary Hermansson’s history of the Association, *Pieces of Silver* (1999), shows that career counsellor members have been demonstrably active at local, regional and national levels of NZAC.

Political and economic restructurings led inevitably to the disbanding of NZVGA. In 1992 the Association formally entrusted NZAC with the remainder of its funds and the kaupapa of fostering the career portfolio, and the interests of career counsellors. Since then, with active assistance from NZAC, local career focus groups have been encouraged and two career conferences held: “Careering ’95” in Hamilton and “Wellsprings – Careering ’97” in Auckland. It was at the latter conference that the Career Practitioners Association of New Zealand (CPANZ) was conceived!

NZAC continues to assist its members who are career counsellors and to foster the place of careers in New Zealand. This Special Topic issue of the *New Zealand Journal of Counselling* is another example of inter-association support. Lee Brodie, the current National President of CPANZ, has kindly agreed to provide the guest editorial.

Pauline Templeman

NZAC Executive with career portfolio responsibilities

Editorial

I have a strong belief that the growth and development of the profession of counselling is enhanced by a co-operative rather than a competitive model. If we, as practitioners in the field of counselling regardless of our specialisation, are able to share with each other our insights and knowledge, the quality of our work with clients will be collectively improved.

This publication is a reflection of this co-operative model and I applaud NZAC for their initiative in publishing a “careers”-focused issue of the *New Zealand Journal of Counselling*.

I observe a general reluctance among skilled and experienced career practitioners to conduct and publish research. CPANZ is currently in the process of identifying those who are formally engaged in careers-related research in New Zealand, and our initial findings indicate a positive increase in the number of research projects that are in progress.

I am delighted to read the seven articles for this edition of the *Journal* as I consider them to meet two key objectives – careers-related publication and practical encouragement for practitioners to consider research.

Sue Mortlock and Fran Parkin, in their article “A Mirror? A Rainbow? A Check? A Map?”, present a concept of multiple metaphors used as an integrating theme for viewing approaches to supervision for career practitioners. I was immediately inspired to consider pictures or metaphors of my own personal practice and of supervision within our profession as a whole. I agree with Sue and Fran that this article will keep the discussion of supervision for career practitioners moving forward.

In “Volunteering Overseas: A Career Episode”, Sheena Hudson presents a study of New Zealand volunteer aid workers recruited by Volunteer Service Abroad. She reports on some findings of a recently completed longitudinal study of volunteers and compares them with other research related to overseas career experiences.

In the context of the globalisation of careers she explores how voluntary aid work can satisfy motivational factors such as altruism and fulfilment of lifetime dreams and how the experience can positively reflect on future career choices.

Judi H. Miller’s “Building a Solution-focused Strategy into Career Counselling” offers career practitioners a strategy to use with clients that is collaborative, practical

and change oriented. She introduces a three-stage, solution-focused model for career counselling and suggests techniques and ways in which counsellors may use them to encourage client self-helpfulness.

Judi encourages the counsellor to stand back from their own ideas and enable the client to make sense of their own learning, knowledge, strengths and resources. She suggests that counsellors, “once freed from having to think for the client, by adopting a stance of curiosity ... can replace their role as advice giver with a role of curious inquirer”. Specific examples of questioning techniques and the use of the qualitative assessment instrument, the scaling question, are explored. I found the article to be a fund of questioning suggestions.

In their article, “Where Have They Gone? What Are They Doing? The Profiles and Destinations of Counselling Graduates 1997–2002”, Sue Cornforth and Sue Sewell present the findings of a survey designed to examine the employment outcomes, perceptions of training and future career/life plans of counselling graduates.

They discuss the survey outcomes of the 79 respondents, of whom 14 were career counselling graduates. Their concluding comments around the current EFTS-driven, student-centred focus of tertiary education are timely. They suggest that this focus is at times at odds with the requirements of professional training guidelines, and that the management of these conflicting interests may be one of the most pressing challenges of the next decade.

In “Counselling and Counselling Psychology in New Zealand: Similarities and Differences”, Robert Manthei, Peter Stanley and Kerry Gibson look at how these fields developed in New Zealand, and the pressures and challenges facing each discipline. They also explore the possible impacts on these two fields of the current legislation, the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act. A number of specific issues that I believe are very relevant to our profession are discussed, including how to register only safe and competent practitioners, the possibly prohibitive cost of registration, and the cost of “policing” registered or licensed members.

In his second article, “Encouraging Counsellors to Become Active Researchers and Users of Research”, Robert Manthei notes that according to professional literature, counsellors around the world and in New Zealand do very little research, nor do they read to make use of research that does exist.

This view could be supported by the difficulty the editors had in attracting career-specific articles for consideration for this *Journal* edition. Robert Manthei’s practical approach, which addresses roadblocks to researching, fears about writing ability, concern about the worth or correctness of ideas, and the problem of identifying the topic to research and write about, is accurate and topical. This article makes a case for

more counsellors to become research active, suggests how they might initiate that process, and provides practical steps and hints. It is an article that should be in the hands of all practitioners.

In conclusion, and continuing the research theme, Fran Parkin reviews John McLeod's 2003 publication *Doing Counselling Research*. She comments that what makes this book so readable is "its coverage of the importance of both mastery (mastering and scientifically predicting human behaviour) and mystery (accepting that human behaviour also defies understanding)". I found the review to be motivational and inspirational, as a practitioner contemplating careers-related research, but procrastinating.

This *Journal* is great reading. I am optimistic that the collaborative relationship between NZAC and CPANZ will continue to flourish and that this publication will be enjoyed by counsellors from all specialisations. I am also confident that the articles you will read will act as encouragement and inspiration for your work with clients, and for more practitioners considering research in the future.

Lee Brodie
President
CPANZ