

DECEMBER 2012

Issue No 31

## AN ACC STATEMENT TO ITS MEMBERS DECEMBER 2012

After conversations with some of our members we are issuing a statement to support and clarify our ethical framework. Our statement arises out of a debate around same sex attractions. ACC wishes this issue to be viewed in the wider context of good counselling practice.

All counsellors are required with due diligence to provide safe practice on behalf of their clients. This requires the counsellor to practise fully within the Ethics and Practice framework they are using with each client. The client is to be aware of the Framework being used as essential information during contracting and guidance given as to which complaints procedure is in operation.

The particular ethical considerations taken from the ACC Ethics and Practice are:

- 5.1 "Members should be trustworthy...maintain confidentiality..."
- 5.2 "Members should respect their clients' right to take decisions for and to act for themselves."
- 5.3 "Members should be committed to securing the client's best interests."
- 5.5. "Members should avoid any action which might cause harm to a clients."

One of the most important aspects in counselling is client autonomy. Any client seeking counselling has the right to indicate their goals and aspirations within counselling and to be respected for that choice. If a client seeks to explore change to their lifestyle or behaviour then using the core conditions the counsellor needs to respect that desire and work with them to their benefit. For the counsellor to reject this out of hand implies that they are seeking to impose their own agenda on the client and this is unethical. However the counsellor needs to be sure that what they offer in response is within their competence. If during the process the counsellor experiences personal conflict with their beliefs they need to work that through in supervision or appropriately outside the counselling relationship.

ACC acknowledges that clients may for a variety of reasons wish to modify behaviours in their lifestyle out of choice. Dilemmas for clients can be significant and the driving force may not be scientific argument but the effect on their emotions or relationships which are thought or feel to be under threat. Compassionate accepting support is the natural consequence towards such need.

It is important that all members keep up to date with the latest research in the areas in which they seek to provide counselling. This will enable them to engage appropriately with clients and explain what is being discovered in a clear and appropriate way. It may help to signpost clients to the better studies on both sides of the current debate. At present in the area of sexual orientation there have been "no high quality randomised trials carried out" that sufficiently form a basis on which to assess whether efforts to promote 'change' are effective or whether they are not".<sup>1</sup>

ACC believe that people who present with inner conflicts around identity, whether heterosexual or having same sex attractions, need to find a safe place to explore their issues and feel that their conflicts will be understood. ACC counsellors seek to provide a safe and confidential environment for clients to explore the range of outcomes best for them.

ACC statement of Ethics and Practice states

5.1.1.12 page 4

A key principle of the Christian gospel is that all people should be received in a non-judgemental and accepting attitude and ACC affirm this as essential for its members

Some suggested reading:

Marin A. *Love is an orientation*. IVP Downers Grove. ISBN 978-0-8308-3626-0

Goddard A & Harrison G. *Unwanted Same-Sex Attraction*. CMF, London ISBN 978-0-906747-42-1

Davidson MR. *The Right to Decide*. Core Issues Trust ISBN 978-0-9573739-0-7

[http://www.nitherapy.net/assets/images/2012/05/BACP\\_LGBTreview.pdf](http://www.nitherapy.net/assets/images/2012/05/BACP_LGBTreview.pdf)

<http://www.firstthings.com/article/2012/01/same-sex-science>

<sup>1</sup> Goddard A & Harrison G . *Unwanted same-sex attraction* CMF, London. 2011

## NEW NETWORK GROUPS HAVE BEEN SET UP IN THE SOUTH EAST REGION

To join a Network Group please email [southeast@acc-uk.org](mailto:southeast@acc-uk.org) stating clearly which group you are interested in.

Future Network Meetings:-

Caterham 17 Jan 7.30

Dartford 15 Jan 7.30 and 12 Mar 7.30

Guildford 11 Feb 7.30

Pembury 15 Jan 7.30 and 12 Mar 7.30

Reading 14 Jan 7.30

Southampton 7.30 on Fri 18 Jan

London dates to be arranged in the new year

### CONFERENCE DELEGATES PLEASE READ

Before your preparations for Christmas get into full swing I would like to remind you about our Saturday entertainment at conference in January. Think about how you can contribute. Do you remember this:

“Once upon a time there were four people: Their names were Everybody, Somebody, Nobody, and Anybody. Whenever there was an important job to do Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. When Nobody did it, Everybody got angry because it was Everybody’s job. Everybody thought Somebody would do it, but Nobody realized that Nobody would do it. So consequently Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done in the first place.”

I am sure we have people who can read a poem, dance a jig, sing a song, bring a reflection, perform a monologue, do some tricks, to contribute to “**ACCs Got Talent.**” This evening of entertainment depends upon you as conference delegates...no offers, no night of fun. I will be contributing, so I trust there are at least a dozen others who will join me...or else I will be very lonely and the night will be over very quickly! Do email me to let me know that you wish to take part [ceo@acc-uk.org](mailto:ceo@acc-uk.org)

Furthermore and a little more seriously, we need someone who could as a minimum play the piano competently. If you are an experienced worship leader and wanted to do more than play we would be glad to hear from you. As you are aware we have worship on Friday evening and Sunday afternoon. I would be very pleased to hear from you if you would be able to serve us in this way. Please contact me [ceo@acc-uk.org](mailto:ceo@acc-uk.org)

### EYES WIDE OPEN

The Winter 2012/13 edition of **accord** is about to hit your doormats. Look out for important information on changes to accreditation and re-accreditation. You will also find information on the new price structure for 2013. Oh joy!

And finally...

**HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND EVERY GOOD WISH FOR THE NEW YEAR**