



IMPORTANT CONFERENCE ALERT!

People Not Pathology: Humanising Counselling and Psychotherapy – a two-day conference

Birmingham, 2–3 May 2020

Organised by Psychotherapists & Counsellors for Social Responsibility (PCSR) and the Free Psychotherapy Network

Psychotherapy and counselling in the UK are alive and well. The demand for therapy and the supply of therapists have both been growing steadily for decades. *But how well are we doing as a vocation of the heart and soul?*

For the last two decades at least, the humanity of our profession has been under attack from the state, the ideologies of the market and our own professional bodies. So, for example:

- ▶ the dominance of the medical model of mental health, psychiatric diagnosis and treatment plans
- ▶ the short-term utilitarianism of ‘evidence-based’ CBT and CBT-like state therapy – e.g. Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)
- ▶ the emphasis on individual responsibility over social responsibility
- ▶ our professional bodies have become state regulators of therapy and gate-keepers of training and employability – e.g. the SCoPED draft framework for the education and practice of counselling and psychotherapy
- ▶ the growing homogenisation of therapeutic practice and the human spirit

- ▶ the Department for Work and Pensions’ use of therapy as psycho-compulsion of benefit claimants
- ▶ the ubiquity of unpaid work by counsellors, psychotherapists, art therapists and group therapists.
- ▶ the growth of an underpaid, overworked, deskilled gig economy for psy workers in the public and voluntary sector
- ▶ open-ended client-led relational therapy increasingly the domain of the well-off.

It’s time to take a stand and start to turn the tide

How do we stand together to humanise our profession and play our part in transforming neoliberal narratives about mental health into a vision of society organised around people’s needs?

Most of us are versed in the arguments and the experience of how relational client-led and client-paced therapy has been undermined over the last couple of decades, to the detriment of clients and therapists alike.

We want this to be a conference prioritising action over analysis. What are we doing, what can we be doing to take a stand and to turn the tide?

We want the conference to be as participatory and ‘bottom-up’ as possible, prioritising small-group discussion in workshops, alongside relatively brief contributions from inspirational speakers. We hope the priorities for action will emerge from the

workshops on Saturday, and will be developed as decisions for action and networking on the Sunday.

Find out more and *book a ticket here*:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/people-not-pathology-humanising-counselling-and-psychotherapy-tickets-91118486847>