

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit for Counselling and Psychotherapy Training & Education - brief

Background

The Coalition for Diversity and Inclusion exists in order to bring together psychotherapy, counselling, and psychological therapy bodies invested in increasing inclusive practice and bringing about positive change to the counselling and psychotherapy profession.

The first area of focus for the Coalition is on race, ethnicity and training. This toolkit is being commissioned following consultation with training institutions, training providers and tutors. The consultation identified:

- The need for a robust training programme and curriculum addressing the issues of identity, diversity, racism, mental health and anti-oppressive therapeutic practice;
- The current lack of resources to support and facilitate fully-inclusive learning within the field of psychotherapy and counselling;
- The need for a toolkit and resources to facilitate training on these topics in a way which fully allows for inclusive and reflective learning, and the application of knowledge into anti-oppressive therapeutic practice;
- The teaching approach itself needs to be anti-oppressive.

Coalition members are now committed to developing a Diversity and Inclusion toolkit that will support to those delivering training, such as tutors, programme leaders, courses and training institutions, through recommended resources, activities and frameworks.

Member parties of the Coalition: ACC, ACP, BACP, BAAT, MCAPN, NCS, PCSR, Place2Be (Chair) UKCP

Aim

The toolkit aims to support the development of skills, knowledge and understanding for delivering training in working 'within diversity', which will recognise and address that in delivering such training, all areas of the training environment need to be considered to both deliver training in anti-oppressive practice as well as model this in best practice throughout the training.

The first iteration of this toolkit will focus on race and ethnicity. The Coalition will commission an expert author to lead this work. They will have the flexibility to bring to this publication what they feel is appropriate. The project is underpinned by the following **key principles**:

- To ensure understanding and appropriate applications and adherence to relevant legislation (Equality Act 2010) in all aspects of the training environment and throughout the whole curriculum;
- To cultivate a culture within the psychotherapy and counselling professions which embraces and nurtures an equality of rights and opportunities for all members of society, values the diversity of ways of being in the world and seeks to include all members of our society within an attitude of mutual respect and recognition;
- To ensure inclusivity through anti-oppressive communication which seeks to validate rather than pathologise, enable freedom of speech and create safe, open learning environments thus enhancing development for all throughout the training process;
- To reflect a diversity of cultural perspectives on psychological theory and practice which is mindful of historical, ancestral and cultural differences and to include acknowledgment and identification of non-western models or modalities of therapy;

- To acknowledge that racism is not just about difference, it also involves the full spectrum of power imbalances, from one end of supremacy, privilege and structural/societal advantages through to trauma, oppression, inequalities, marginalisation and being minoritised at the other end of the spectrum;
- To be guided by social justice principles to cultivate cultural humility, a non-judgemental attitude and empathy;
- To enable students/graduates to develop therapeutic environments free from any sense of hierarchy and privilege where clients can explore ways in which they feel empowered or disempowered both internally (internalised oppression) and by external factors.

Objectives

The primary objectives of the toolkit are to provide support to three areas of course provision -

1. The institution
2. The training programme
3. The individual tutors.

For the **Institution**, the Toolkit will provide guidance in consideration of:

- Inclusive organisational philosophies, policies, practices (e.g. mentoring and bursaries)
- Recruitment of students (addressing possible unconscious bias and barriers to accessing training or completion of course, and identifying the additional support/mentoring needed by students)
- Recruitment of tutors (addressing tutor's competencies, knowledge and self-awareness of anti-oppressive practice)
- Organisational culture and values and how this is reflected in the teaching staff
- The roles and responsibilities of inclusive senior leadership
- Principles of fair and equitable assessment
- Use of student feedback to evaluate programmes.

For the **Training Programme**, the Toolkit will provide:

- Information and support to recognise and challenge the racism embedded in all levels of the profession: in individuals, training groups, placements, training institutions and professional bodies
- Practical examples of good practice, including case studies
- Content and experiential activities for training, including:
 - How to embed inclusive and anti-oppressive training throughout
 - Exercises for training of tutors and students in cultural humility
 - Recognition that cultural, diversity and anti-oppressive practice and training comes from a position of cultural humility, cultural empathy and cultural curiosity. It is an on-going life-long reflective process and practice of cultural understanding within therapeutic practice, process and relationships
 - Signposting to teaching materials and resources.
- Guidance for the provision of Supervision of tutors for their teaching and students for their therapeutic delivery to ensure anti-oppressive supervision and practice
- Resources to develop a Curriculum:
 - That reflects a diversity of cultural perspectives on psychological theory and practice

- that provides education to trainees on the history of Great Britain in relation to oppressive practice, structural inequality and racism; information on Imperialism and Colonialism and its impact on ethnic-minoritised people, and those who benefit from it.
- That offers support in the explorations of the trauma of oppressive practice, structural inequality, racism, slavery, colonialism and exploitation, and how these impact on ethnic-minoritised people, and also how this is passed down and shows up through inter-generational trauma across all communities of people, and those who benefit from it.
- Includes current writings, podcasts, discussions that reflect the change in the discourse, an increase in the sense of urgency around racism, which is inclusive of reflections and the impact for minoritised people, since the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent expansion of Black Lives Matter activities, and which includes, acknowledges and reflects on the full spectrum of power, white supremacy, privilege and structural advantages.
- Principles for creating a fair and equitable assessment framework and learning outcomes that take account of a diversity of cultural perspectives on psychological theory and practice
- Principles for ensuring all voices are taken into account in the evaluation and improvement of the programme

For the **Individual Tutors**, the Toolkit (using BACP EDI competencies for clinical supervisors as a guide) will provide:

- Resources to work with the race trauma in themselves to develop resilience in race conversations, in order to support trainees in working with it in themselves and their clients;
- Resources to increase tutor knowledge and discourse on experiences related to race and oppression, and its existence, reinforcement and continuing impact through privilege, ethnic supremacy and structural advantages. This will acknowledge both current and historical trauma of racialised communities, particularly in relation to the UK, colonization and imperialism;
- Increased understanding of how systemic disadvantages effect attraction and retention into the profession; including barriers ethnic-minoritised communities face when entering and undertaking professional training, and beyond;
- Increased understanding about the barriers to fruitful dialogue around race, including white fragility, white supremacy and white structural and societal advantages;
- Recognition of the impacts of racism, oppression, supremacy and of power dynamics at play within oneself, academic content and assessment, training (e.g. the classroom), and the profession more widely;
- Guidance in using student feedback to improve the programme and learner experience.

Design: the Toolkit will:

- Be in a digital format;
- Be concise and written using plain English;
- Designed in an accessible and engaging way;
- Encourage interaction with the content, and use of multi-media resources, e.g. podcasts, videos;
- Be no more than 40 pages in length, with three distinct sections meeting the objectives listed above;
- Contain a guide on how to use it.

Assistance will be provided on the design by Place2Be with sign-off from Coalition members.