

Counselling & Psychotherapy: A modern identity project?

Geoff considers some of the valuable conceptualising of modernity in the work of Anthony Giddens, a UK-based social theorist who has had little impact on the conduct of psychological/psychotherapeutic research in this country. The seminar is an attempt to demonstrate the research relevance of some of Giddens' key ideas. Researchers interested in forms of modern life and how they negotiate traditional cultural practices will find in Giddens some very productive lines of thought. This presentation will focus on reflexivity and intimacy in modern life and how psychotherapy is drawn into these 'projects'.

Short Bio.

In recognising that research tells us that all bona-fide psychotherapy produces benefits for clients, Geoff's research goes on from there in examining language practices in psychotherapy, the consequences of medicalising suffering for mental health management (both positive and negative) and the psychotherapeutic benefits of various forms of representation and naming in psychotherapy. Having worked with refugees and Vietnam Veterans he also has a particular interest in post-traumatic *recovery* processes (rather than the typical focus on diagnosis, deficiency and lack).

He is currently developing a book (with Dawn Freshwater) conceiving all psychotherapy and counselling as a transformative language event in a theorised communication context. The book aims to describe in communication terms the common elements in all psychotherapy and provide a springboard for important new research questions such as contextualising suggests. (A sketch of this reformulation appears in the Freshwater & Lees edited book mentioned below).

He has also been developing a training package for transcultural counselling that pays attention to audience responses to 'packaged training' with his indigenous colleague, Carmen Cubillo from Charles Sturt University in Darwin.

He is a practitioner/researcher, registered psychologist in Victoria (application pending under Mutual Recognition), a member of both the APS and NZPsS, and the Society for Psychotherapy Research. He is Coordinating Editor of the Australian Journal of Counselling Psychology, and member of the executive and past Chair of the Counselling College of the Australian Psychological Society.