

Message from the Chair

Back in March, I planted my first ever potatoes.

I've been growing herbs for years but this is my first attempt at growing food. I'm really looking forward to harvesting food I've grown and feeding it to loved ones.

Shoots first appeared a few weeks later and, as advised by Monty Don (I've started watching *Gardeners' World*), I added more compost. As more shoots appeared, I thought, 'Brilliant! I have loved ones coming for dinner next week. What could be better than home-grown potatoes?' I am half Irish so it felt like connecting with my own roots, too.

I asked a friend if she thought they'd be ready next week or if I'd miss them by a week or two. Oh, how she laughed. Apparently, they won't be ready to harvest for months.

This made me (and my loved ones, who don't see me as especially patient) howl with laughter. And it's a bit of a theme for me at the moment.

New website and other changes within BACP

Because I'm so involved with BACP Coaching, I'm aware of all sorts of exciting developments that promise to be amazing for members.

We saw test pages for the newly branded website the other day and Sally Brown, our Executive Specialist for Communications, has been a star, liaising with BACP's Web Engagement Manager, Sally Mooney, to have our coaching website copy ready to go.

We know that other changes will happen much more slowly. While it's great to know the wheels are turning on initiatives like the coaching competencies and ultimately the coaching register, I have a similar feeling to the one I had seeing those potato shoots. I'm seeing some signs of progress but mostly I'm getting the chance to practise patience. I will share more as soon as we have further information.

For example, one of the questions I'm most frequently asked is for training recommendations. At the moment, while we have a list of available coach trainings, we haven't yet been in a position to rate them.

BACP's intention to develop coaching competencies means that robust coach trainings, especially those that honour practitioners with therapeutic backgrounds, will be easier to find in the future.

In the meantime, the advice I frequently give members who ask me for recommendations is to recognise the skills and experience you already have. In order to have qualified as a BACP registered counsellor, either the training you did was accredited and thorough or you came in via the competencies route.

You might also want to take a look at existing coaching competencies provided by coaching bodies such as the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC), the International Coaching Federation (ICF) and the Association

for Coaching (AC) and see which of these competencies you already demonstrate through your skills, knowledge and experience as a counsellor and those which you may wish to develop further through supervision, continuing professional development (CPD), or additional training. While this isn't especially helpful for those who are *currently* seeking training, our future members will find this much easier. At least we're planting those seeds.

The wider world of coaching

In an effort to contribute to the professionalisation of coaching, I'm continuing what our Past Chair, Gill Fennings-Monkman, started, by representing BACP Coaching in the Future of Coaching Collaboration (FCC) group.

The FCC is a multi-stakeholder group that includes representatives from leading professional bodies in the UK, academia, corporate and research institutions and the Coaching at Work forum. The group emerged from the Coaching at Work-led accreditation forum, which gathered professional body representatives with coaching sponsors to increase collaboration. It was launched in April 2015 with the aim of collaborating, professionalising and innovating to safeguard the coaching profession.

The FCC seeks to be wider in its scope and in the communities it represents. For example, it now includes representatives from academia and has expanded its focus to include: developing guidance on best practice; continued alignment across accrediting bodies on standards and quality control; and ethics, including a common code of conduct.

You can find out more and view the *Future of Coaching Collaboration Guidance Document* at www.futureofcoaching.org.

I welcome your feedback on this document, so do email me and I will take your comments back to the group.

Mindfulness and compassion in coaching

Liz Hall, of the Coaching at Work forum and FCC group, is also the author of *Mindful Coaching*.¹ I first met her at a BACP London meeting several years ago, when her integration of mindfulness and coaching inspired me enormously, (I was already integrating yoga and mindfulness, but what a delight to meet others with similar interests).

Liz has teamed up with one of BACP Coaching's former network group organisers, Margaret Chapman-Clarke, to launch a new journal on mindfulness and compassion, which had its first summit in Madrid this May. You can find out more at www.actwithcompassion.com/theijmcatwork.

My book

At the time of writing, the book I signed a publishing deal for last April and submitted last August is coming out in less than a week. *365 Ways to Feel Better: Self-care for Embodied Wellbeing*² integrates a variety of therapies I use, including psychosynthesis counselling and therapeutic coaching, and it includes some crystal therapy as well as neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), emotional freedom technique (EFT), meditation tools and yoga.

This book is the culmination of an enormous amount of work since I started training in and immediately integrating these different therapies at the start of the millennium.

My work with BACP Coaching (long before I joined the Executive in 2014), attending meetings and learning so much from so many multiskilled therapists has helped me feel more confident about writing this book.

Get in touch

We're aware that we mostly get to meet you at our events and that, due to the enormous changes going on within BACP, such opportunities have been limited recently.

While we have high hopes for next year, please get in touch with me by email in the meantime. I look forward to hearing from you. ■



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References

- 1 Hall L. Mindful coaching: how mindfulness can transform coaching practice. London: Kogan Page; London; 2013.
- 2 Cunningham EM. 365 ways to feel better: self-care for embodied wellbeing. Barnsley: White Owl; 2017.

