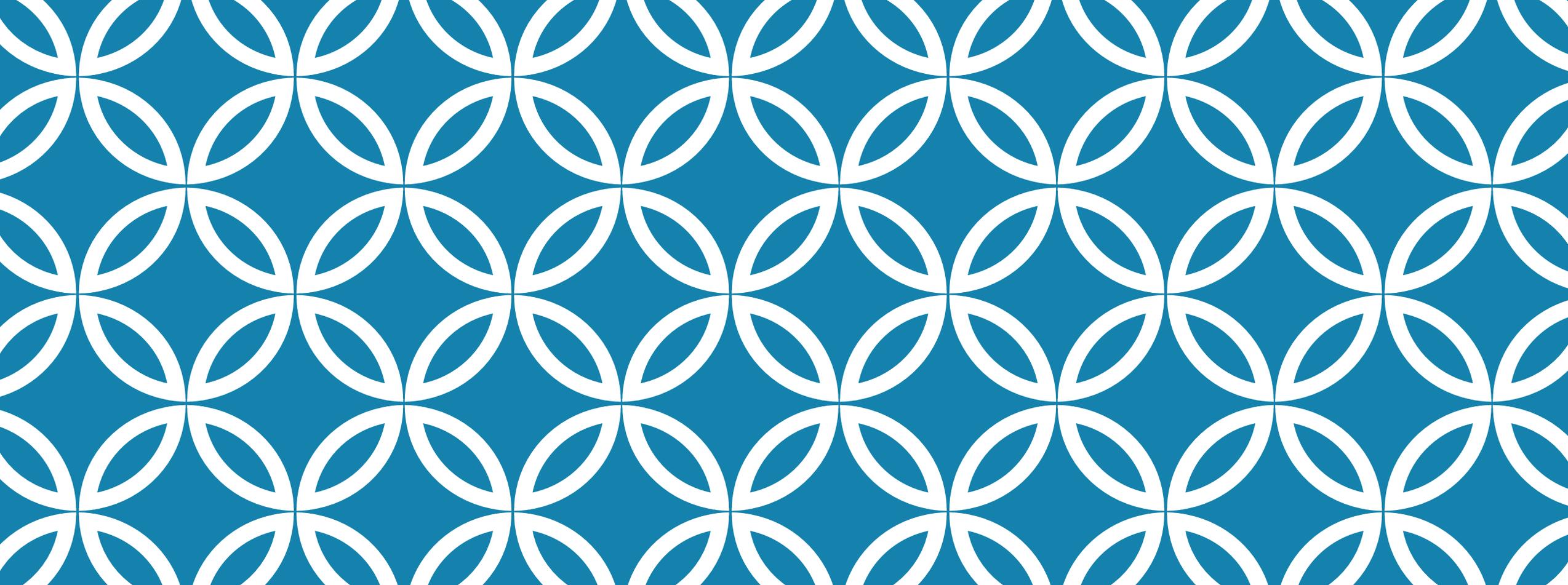


The Role of Psychotherapy in a healthy Ireland – Other Voices

Jean Manahan, CEO of ICP

This is an outline of a speech given at a joint Irish Council for Psychotherapy & Nessa Childers MEP conference entitled the Role of Psychotherapy in a Healthy Ireland, Wednesday 18th October 2017



THE ROLE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY IN A HEALTHY IRELAND

And other 'Voices'

OVERVIEW

1. The 'voices' of different people
2. Some of the challenges facing the Health Service and Mental Health Services
3. Some of the social barriers facing people with mental health issues
4. Suggestions around how Psychotherapy may make a difference.

VOICES WE NEED TO LISTEN TO

I went to Psychotherapy because I was being bullied at work and it took a terrible toll on me. What I discovered through therapy was that I have the resources within me to manage my life in a way that means I can be happy and fulfilled. I can make choices that are good for me.

- a service user

VOICES

Do you remember Jim? He used to play for my old football club. Well, he died yesterday. Age? 17, like me. Took his own life after leaving a message on Facebook. It was the last one of a whole load of messages asking for help. Why did no-one do anything?

-Mike age 17.

VOICES



I can't understand why my adult son can't access long-term psychotherapy in the community on his medical card. Along with his meds it keeps him stable and avoids the need for in-patient treatment which is much more expensive. It just doesn't make sense.

- a mother

VOICES

I knew the light had gone out inside her as she sat across from me. I didn't need any tests to confirm what I could see clearly. I also knew that what she needed was to talk to someone who had the time and skills to provide appropriate therapy.

- a G.P.

VOICES

He waited over 5 hours distressed, pacing the floor of the Emergency Department waiting room being watched by the Porter on duty in case he would harm someone. After 5 hours he left, he couldn't wait any longer. He was found the next morning. There was nothing to be done – it was all too late.

- a friend.

VOICES

I smoke weed because I can't sleep and I can't sleep because I'm stressed. I amn't any good at school and all anybody seems to talk about is going to College. I feel a failure and don't know where I'm going with my life. I mean what is the purpose of my life?

-Dan age 16.

VOICES ...

My greatest fear is that the small light, which I can see in this dark tunnel just above my head, will disappear. All my physical needs are attended to but no-one is looking inside me where my anxiety is screaming out to be heard. No-one thinks that an old man like me might need to have my inside voice heard. Nobody really sees me.

- a Parkinson's sufferer in a nursing home

CHALLENGES FOR MHS

The challenges facing Mental Health Service (MHS) provision are mostly the same challenges which face the health service as a whole

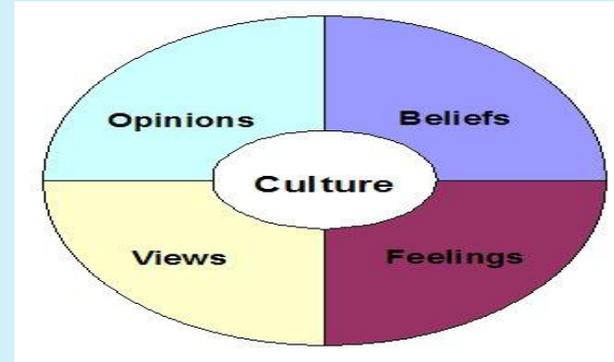


CHALLENGES



- The Irish health service tends to be service provider centred rather than service user centred eg. not 24 hours/7 days a week
- Thus, culture not driven by client/customer focus
- It has no competition and does not have to 'perform' for funding

CHALLENGES

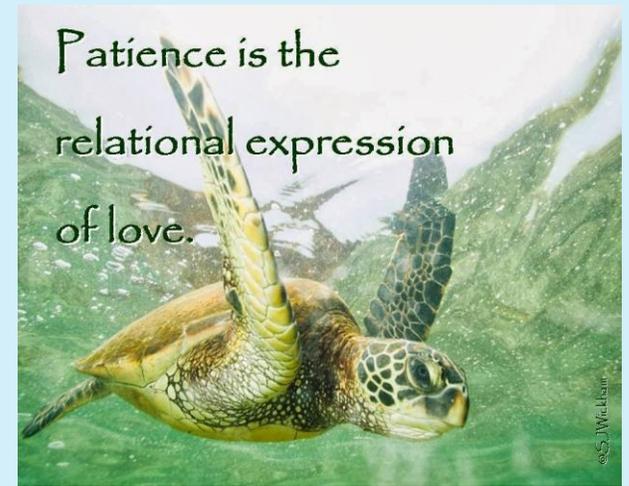


- Hostility to management masked as ‘clinical independence’
- It is bureaucratic and unwieldy
- Not underpinned by human rights

CHALLENGES

- Over dependence on hospitals, particularly Emergency Departments
- Under-resourced primary care infrastructure
- Lack of robust Advocacy right across the system

PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE!



‘Patient’ is a term that should be banned, other than to describe a virtue (when waiting for health services!)

SOCIAL BARRIERS



- Social exclusion and discrimination against people who experience mental or emotional distress shown in poor services and employment issues
- Lack of peer support and advocacy as a means to recovery;
- Understanding the role of families in recovery;
- Human rights framework (or lack of it) which would underpin services;

SOCIAL BARRIERS



- The interface between mental health and the criminal justice system;
- Challenging the dominance of the pharmaceutical industry in psychiatry (and medicine in general);
- Institutionalising older people in a way that promotes stultifying boredom and/or anxiety
- Existential angst ie lack of meaning or purpose

ROLE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY IN HEALTH

❖ A person centred focus



❖ Time

❖ Listening/ Empathy

ROLE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

❖ Therapeutic Relationship

❖ Advocacy – personal, policy, political

❖ Cost benefits in the long term



ROLE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY



- ❖ Support for over-worked GP's and primary care workers
- ❖ Greater understanding of work related stress
- ❖ Improved business outcomes due to better health

PSYCHOTHERAPY



- ❖ Potential to provide 24/7 support in ED's and primary care centres
- ❖ Less crime due to managing health issues which can lead to crime
- ❖ Understanding what makes a person 'flourish'

FLOURISHING

- The wise / thinking / questioning human being – homo sapiens
- The relational human being
- The search for meaning and purpose across philosophy, art, religion, science, spirituality

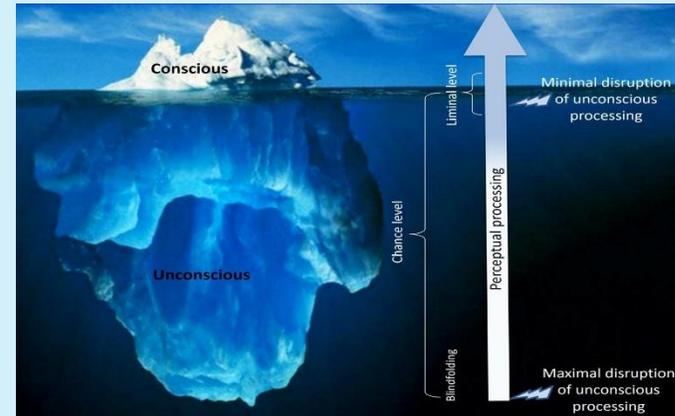
MEANING AND PURPOSE

Viktor Frankl, wrote in 1984,

‘Happiness cannot be pursued; it must ensue. One must have a reason to ‘be happy...’ A human being is not one in pursuit of happiness but rather in search of a reason to become happy...

Encountering happiness requires first encountering a **meaning** worth its weight in it...’

CALL TO ACTION



Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate – Carl Jung