Dear Inner Nerdsters,

This is Issue IV of the Inner Nerd; a highly biased selection of abstracts chosen from the APA's PsycScan Clinical Psychology publication.

For those of you new to the IN, my job three to four times a year is to review circa 500 abstracts that are relevant to Clinical Psychology and to choose some of the more interesting ones which might apply to applied clinical psychology.

Today, on recovering from the excitement of attaining 'Tom Waits' tickets for the Thursday the 31st of July Concert in the Phoenix Park and also on recovering from having been on stage with Bobby McFerrin last night in the National Concert Hall (as one of his Bass singers), the Inner Nerd will expand beyond his usual five abstracts and maybe go even as far as six abstracts!

1 Knox, S. (2008). Gifts in psychotherapy: Practice review and recommendations. Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training, 45, 103-110.

Seen as it was my birthday yesterday, I could not but choose this abstract. I thought it was going to review a list of gifts that therapists prime their clients for peri-birthday, Christmas and therapy contract ending time, but alas there were no such suggestions.

I have noted from some senior mentors that leaving expensive bottles of Rioja on the shelves of the therapy room can prime most subjects into appropriate gift selection, but some clients need more defined prompting, such as joking at the end of a session by saying, "well, I see it is our last session next week, now, I don't want you going and spending a fortune on a nice bottle of wine for me, chortle", this although gauche approach apparently has a statistically significant better outcome when one completes a survivor analysis on which approaches result in a better vintage etc. The Board of Professional Conduct promotes this as a more transparent and ethically sound approach for registered psychologists.

The review article addresses both ethical and clinical perspectives in practice in relation to gift receiving as well as describing the very small extant literature which has been published to date.

2. Stroud, C., Davila, J., & Moyer, A. (2008). The relationship between stress and depression in first onsets versus recurrences: A metanalytic review. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 117, 206-213.

'Kindling' is a commonly used word in Tullamore, particularly seen as it is often 2-3 degrees Celsius colder down here than the rest of the country in our long winters. You are often prompted if leaving the house to 'not forget the kindling for the fire!'. The vocabulary of locals in relation to coldness and the effect on various body parts is quite essentially Midlandish.

These authors have more importantly supported Post's premise that first onset depression is likely to have had more significant stressful life events than subsequent depressive episodes. Their analysis of 13 studies finds that the kindling effect holds. Interestingly, it is not as robust in samples of women or those samples with younger participants.

3. Ehring, T., Ehlers, A., & Glucksman, E. Do cognitive models help in predicting the severity of posttraumatic stress disorder, phobia and depression after motor vehicle accidents? Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 76, 219-230.

It is nice to see that their failure to score highly at their recent performance in Belgrade at the Eurovision that Ehring, Ehlers and Glucksman are back at doing what they are best at; research! This fascinating paper which looks at common factors related to outcome following motor vehicle accidents (N=147) found that cognitive variables were good at predicting subsequent PTSD and Depression levels 'over and above what could be predicted from initial symptom levels'.

4. Shubs, C. H. (2008). Countertransference issues in the assessment and treatment of trauma recovery with victims of violent crime. Psychoanalytic Psychology, 25, 156-180.

Shubs as a name and even though it misses an 'r' might elicit ideas of topiary and green fingers. He does however cleverly outline three common types of countertransference reactions in therapists to victims of violent crime: (a) type I avoidance, (b) type II over identification and (c) type III communicative. He explains how this third type of countertransference involves defence mechanisms such as splitting, projection and projective identification. Incidentally, this third type of countertransference was what Professor Alan Carr and I found to be a good predictor of burnout in female trauma therapists, the results which we presented at the PSI conference in 2005 (abstracts on the PSI website).

5. Luchner, A. F., Mirsalimi, H., Moser, C., & Jones, R. (2008). Maintaining boundaries in psychotherapy: Covert narcissistic personality characteristics and psychotherapists. Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training. 45, 1-14.

This issue was discussed at a recent supervision training workshop in UCD which was facilitated by Dr. Jessica Braham. She has recently published in relation to Adult ADHD. During the discussion I raised the issue of a client who had asked to kiss me in a previous session, a particularly attractive young, bright and sartorially elegant client. I had explained to her that I could not kiss her as it would be both

unprofessional and unethical of me and that this was a common occurrence in psychotherapy. After a short explanation of transference to the client, I then suggested that "In addition, I probably also should not be lying so close to you on the couch either".

6. Hanisch, L., Hantsoo, L., Freeman, E., Sullivan, G., & Coyne, J. (2008). Hot flashes and panic attacks: A comparison of symptomatology, neurobiology, treatment, and a role for cognition. Psychological Bulletin, 134, 247-269.

No don't adjust your spectacles or re-read the title, this is a real article. This article addresses the differences and similarities between both events and it then provides an 'integrative conceptual model' which identifies key ways the psychological factors may influence the experience of hot flashes.

Well, that is it for Issue IV of the Inner Nerd. The next issue will be in July 2008. For those of you who cannot wait that length of time to read up on such abstracts, go to www.apa.org and join the American Psychological Association.

With Kind Regards,

Dr. Jonathan Egan,
Clinical Division Committee Member