

Beacon Friends' Newsletter

April 2008

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In this issue – we bring you news about the winner of the 2008 Dorothy Boardman Award, some positive mental health well-being tips, a piece from one of our new counsellors and much more!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

80 miles per hour winds were forecast for the evening of our AGM, however, a room full of people turned up! Many thanks to all of you who braved the elements. As well as the usual annual reports from the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer sincere thanks were given to Joan Tsalikis for her 6 years as Chairman of the Trustees. After the short business meeting, Elysabeth Williams gave an interesting talk about her job with the Primary Care Trust promoting mental health well-being in Stockport.



Trustee Dr. Jackie Chang and Chairman Kevin Gaston chatting after the meeting

ANNUAL REPORT

Manager James produced his Annual Report for 2007 containing activity reports, statistics, reasons for clients coming to counselling etc. for all 3 of our services. It also contains a number of articles written by counsellors, staff and volunteers about how they feel about working for Beacon. If you would like to have a copy of this report please either collect one from the office or give Sandra a call and she will arrange to have one mailed to you.

☎0161 440 0055

ALAN HEWITSON - WINNER OF THE "DOROTHY BOARDMAN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR" AWARD



Manager James with Alan and his award

James handed a surprised Alan his award at the AGM and explained that he had shown tremendous dedication to Beacon during 2007. Always willing to fill in with reception work on the last minute as well as working his own slot with dependability and friendliness he thoroughly deserves this award.

Alan said a few words of thanks afterwards. He had been genuinely surprised and happy to receive the award and went on to say how satisfying it was to work for such a worthwhile organisation as Beacon. CONGRATULATIONS Alan.

WELL-BEING TIPS

Beacon's ethos is to work towards positive mental well-being for everyone who comes to us as a volunteer or client and so we have decided to include in our future Newsletters a short piece about how each of us can help ourselves, and other people, to lead happier and less stressful lives.

According to the website Swellbeing.org.uk barriers to mental health well-being are the very common human experiences such as anxiety, depression, insomnia and stress. Research estimates that at any moment in time 1 in 6 of us will be experiencing a diagnosable mental health problem. So as a start, they suggest a few positive mental health tips:

- **Talk about your feelings**
- **Keep physically active**
- **Take a little time out of each day to relax**
- **Drink alcohol in moderation**
- **Do something creative**
- **Get involved and make a contribution**
- **Eat well**
- **Keep in touch with friends and loved ones**
- **Ask for help**
- **Do something you're good at**
- **Accept who you are**
- **Care for others**

OUR NEW TRUSTEE



Mahesh Shah with Joan Tsalikis

We welcome Mahesh Shah as our latest member of the Board of Trustees. Mahesh is a retired pharmacist and lives in Cheadle.

THIS IS YOUR BEACON NEWSLETTER



Look out in the near future for our new and improved Newsletter. These are of course written entirely with you in mind so we want to tailor it to what suits you. So we would welcome some feedback as to what you like, or don't like to read about, such as:

- ▶ **Is there anything or anybody involved in Beacon that you would like to know more about?**
- ▶ **Would you like to write a piece for this Newsletter? Perhaps something interesting/amusing/challenging about being a volunteer or member of staff.**
- ▶ **Is there anything that you would like to change about Beacon? Why? And your constructive suggestions on change.**

If you have any suggestions or contributions please email or phone the office or contact Olivia at:

0161 485 6979 or
olive.hunt@ntlworld.com

MORE TRAINING FOR OUR COUNSELLORS

Beacon recently organised a 2-day training course in Bramhall for 16 of our counsellors on "Working with Clients who have experienced sexual and/or psychological abuse". This was funded by a grant from the John Lewis Partnership in Cheadle. The trainers were Helen Rose and Monica Wilcox from the Macclesfield Counselling and Training Centre and everyone agreed it was a most useful, dynamic and rewarding course.

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN THE NEWS



People who suffer from stress can find themselves in a “vicious circle” whereby their stress interferes with their ability to sleep, making them even more stressed an expert has said.

Figures show that up to 23 million British workers lose an hour of sleep every night because they dread going to work the following day, and 51% of workers lie awake worrying about mistakes they have made at work.

According to Neil Shah, director of the Stress Management Society, your mind can be “rushing around” due to chemicals that are released inside the body when a person is in a state of stress. “In that state your body is preparing to be under attack, so it’s very difficult for you to then be able to switch off and revert back to a state where you’re able to sleep” he explained. Mr. Shah recommends going for a walk, doing relaxing breathing exercises or having a hot bath to help to calm your mind before bedtime.

(Source – www.netdoctor.co.uk)

ONE OF OUR HEROES

Not too many people know this – but our IT man, the person who will come and look at our poorly computers at the drop of a hat, at weekends, and at all hours, is expert Mike Bailey (husband of Sandra!). He also set up our website a couple of years ago. A dedicated volunteer if ever there was one!

CHEADLE HULME RECEPTIONISTS

After Bramhall our next busiest venue is at the GP practice on Hulme Hall Road, Cheadle Hulme. We now need another volunteer receptionist there. Can anyone help us? It only entails less than 3 hours evening work per month, meeting and greeting clients, and a little paperwork. Training and support is given.

Our existing 3 receptionists in Cheadle Hulme need someone else to help spread the load. Elizabeth Zonca, Esther Maxwell and Maureen Jones are a fantastic team who really demonstrate what Beacon is all about - dedication, reliability and friendliness - and we are sure they must feel that their work there is just taken for granted. However, they are really valued, and to be honest, our Cheadle Hulme counselling simply just couldn’t exist without them! Thank you ladies!! (Incidentally, just because we only have lady receptionists at the moment doesn’t preclude all you men!)

Come on - it could be an opportunity to relax or read the newspaper or book in peace for a couple of hours while helping people from our local community.

For more information about being a receptionist, please call Sandra at 0161 440 0055.

DID YOU KNOW?

Counsellor supervision is an essential part of counselling. We have 8 Supervisors who all have very many years of experience in working as counsellors and who have also undertaken further training. Each counsellor is individually assigned to one of our Supervisors to discuss their casework and this enables them to explore any areas they find difficult. In addition all counsellors attend group supervision sessions. The position of the Supervisor is also to ensure the client is in safe hands. Our team of Supervisors however give far more than just supervision, they offer training, take part in meetings, advise on policies and procedures and help out with fundraising. We are very lucky to have such a great team.

*ONE OF OUR NEW
COUNSELLORS WRITES
ABOUT HER WORK
WITH BEACON*

I am a student on the counselling diploma course at Tameside College and in my second year. I applied to Beacon in July 2007 and started “properly” in September. So far I’ve counselled for about 25 hours so I’m still very new to the game! I feel like Beacon’s been a brilliant placement – I’ve had a wide variety of clients from different backgrounds and all with different presenting issues that they’ve come to counselling for help with. The staff in the office have been a delight to work with and have been very patient with me when I get in a fluster!

I’ve been really grateful for the one-to-one supervision that is provided and the opportunity to meet and discuss counselling issues with other counsellors in group supervision – it’s

been wonderful to discover that many of my worries or difficulties are shared with other counsellors and to get ideas about different ways of working.

It’s also really good that we get our travelling expenses paid, and as I am student that there are books and journals that we can look at. When I’m talking to my fellow students at college, I definitely feel lucky about the way that volunteer counsellors are supported and valued at Beacon.

The only thing that’s been hard is fitting in counselling with other commitments at work, college, with my family and friends and of course having all-important time to relax! But then I knew it was going to be a busy couple of years when I started the diploma. Overall my time at Beacon has been a great experience and I intend to carry on beyond qualifying.

Anna Reilly

LAST MINUTE NEWS!

Although we have already sold all our Beacon tickets for our Dinner on Friday 18th April we believe there are a few remaining that the Mellor Church haven’t sold yet so if you would like to come along give the office a call immediately. A delicious menu, an amusing speaker, some great raffle prizes and Olivia’s husband, Geoff, has been persuaded to be Master of Ceremonies! Geoff, this year’s President of the Bramhall and Woodford Rotary Club is an experienced public speaker. An added bonus will be an opportunity to win a free week’s holiday in a cottage in Ireland!

We care about people

Beacon Counselling

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