

Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice Policy

Scope

The principles of this Policy will apply to all staff, students and members of the BeeLeaf Register at all grades of membership. It will also apply to contractors and visitors to BeeLeaf.

Ethos

BeeLeaf Institute for Contemporary Psychotherapy is committed to the provision of equality of opportunity for all its students, members and staff and the promotion of inclusivity, diversity and social justice.

The psychotherapeutic modality of Contemporary Psychotherapy is explicitly committed to promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from a variety of backgrounds and experience can bring valuable insights and contribution to our training, working environment, practice and to the wider society.

Contemporary Psychotherapy also recognises the harm done by inequity, marginalisation and discrimination and promotes action to highlight and ameliorate the impacts of these on individuals and groups.

Contemporary Psychotherapy recognises that oppressions are part of all groups and societies. In view of this, we must, as individuals and groups, routinely reflect and address our part in these patterns and their consequences. It is acknowledged that denial and avoidance of these issues are natural initial reactions to being challenged on our privilege, and that responsibility as agents of change requires that we persevere beyond these initial discomforts to better understanding and action.

BeeLeaf Institute of Contemporary Psychotherapy commits all students, members and staff to actively and routinely address these issues in the fluid contexts of the therapeutic process and alliance, educational process, organisations, society and politics as they influence mental health and mental health services.

To these ends it is recognised that those with the most power and privilege are most obliged to actively address imbalances of power and privilege. This necessitates initiation of listening and engagement processes that routinely consider and review the impacts of inequity, marginalisation and discrimination, without further burdening people from minority or marginalised groups with the sole responsibility for raising awareness of these issues.

To actively engage with these issues is to accept that sometimes conflict, misunderstanding and uncomfortable change is part of the process to address unhealthy imbalances of power, patterns of exclusion and limitations to opportunity. At such times all efforts will be made to recognise competing rights, existing protections and contrasting vulnerabilities and to promote respectful collaboration towards enlightened and mutually acceptable remedy.

Redressing the balance of power within a relationship, or system of relationships, towards co-operative resolution and learning opportunities is a shared responsibility. Challenges are encouraged to be offered in ways which do not unnecessarily escalate conflict or aggravate power differentials.

Misuse or disproportionate evocation of disciplinary procedures to threaten or coerce change in another person or their behaviour before collaborative discourse is attempted may also be challenged as a misuse of power. Premature threats of legal action might also be perceived as intimidation or bullying, if such action is evoked before attempting to foster improved understanding and agreement to collectively manage competing perceptions, responsibilities and rights.

These measures must uphold other standards and policies and do not make exception of an individual who is unable to satisfy the requirements of the programme of study, and/or the responsibilities of their post, and/or practice psychotherapy at their level of qualification in accordance with these principles and other Codes of Ethics and Practice.

Principles

All students, members and staff of BeeLeaf will be treated equitably and will not be accorded less favourable treatment because of age, marital/civil partnership status, gender or gender identity, disability, body type, race, ethnic, cultural or national origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, religious beliefs, socio-economic status and social class.

We confirm our commitment to develop, implement and monitor a programme of equality measures so that unjustifiable barriers to educational and employment opportunities, or to psychotherapy, are removed.

Actions and Applications

BeeLeaf membership and resources will be actively steered towards initiatives which promote psychotherapeutic redress to the impact of inequity and towards the promotion of inclusivity and social justice for individual and society.

We recognise that experience of training and therapeutic processes may be influenced by individuals' past and current experiences of inequity and marginalisation, which may be in the forms of trauma, erasure, prejudice, assumption, identity conflict and social interface.

We undertake to develop and implement training and therapeutic processes to provide opportunities to address the impact of these experiences and patterns.

All students, members and staff of BeeLeaf therefore commit to their individual and collective responsibility to develop sensitivity, curiosity, humility and respect towards difference and inequity.

BeeLeaf Institute commits to challenge the wider psychotherapeutic community where it colludes with or perpetuates exclusion and injustice.

BeeLeaf Institute will actively seek to engage people from marginalised and minority positions and perspectives to positions of power and influence within the community, provided this aligns with all other policies and standards of competency and fairness.

Guidelines, information, resources and updates on issues of diversity, inclusion and anti-oppressive practice will be provided to members and periodically updated.

Training courses and CPD materials will include considerations of diversity, inclusion and anti-oppressive practice as integral to all subjects and training units, that is, not only to those units and updates which explicitly address these subjects.

Reasonable adjustment will be made to create flexible pathways for trainees to demonstrate their measurable competencies, when this is necessary and justified. These adjustments will be in forms which in no way diminish the standards required to measure fitness-for-practice and academic achievement.

Reasonable adjustment to increase accessibility to training and psychotherapy will include explicit invitation to applicants to disclose to trainers, supervisors and therapists any special needs or potential barriers to full engagement with training, competent practice or full benefit from engaging in therapy. Collaborative discussion and contract for any supportive adjustments from any or all parties to make participation possible will be agreed, possibly in writing. This process will include risk assessment for

the organisation, trainee/member, the public and to other trainee/members/clients and members of the public.

Reasonable adjustments from other students, members and service users may also be requested but will not be allowed to negatively compromise others' safety, participation, learning or membership.

In cases of a student or member with a history of mental health issues, such as addiction or depression, processes will include completion of a self-care contract to help articulate and support the needs of the student or member and those of other students, members and service users.

Staff of BeeLeaf will respectfully challenge, and be challenged on, dynamics such as assumption, exclusion and discrimination as they might appear in the training process, administration and in training materials used on the course. Students are invited to similarly challenge staff and other students respectfully on these matters.

Members of the BeeLeaf Register will also respectfully challenge colleagues and clients, and accept challenges from colleagues and clients, regarding dynamics created by power differentials within the therapeutic alliance and/or membership community.

Members will be sensitive to the impact of inequity, marginalisation and discrimination on the relationships and life experience of their clients and will raise these when this is relevant and in a manner that can be beneficial to the outcome of the therapy they offer.

Members may develop a system whereby they can offer some pro bono or reduced rate psychotherapy provision to clients. In these cases, the reasons and terms of such reductions and provisions must be made clear and these terms must not deteriorate the quality of therapy provided or be used to place unusual obligation on the client.

From time to time, Diversity and Inclusion student bursaries become available for participants who are able to demonstrate both need and merit. These will normally be reserved for trainees who have progressed in training to a stage where their suitability for the Accreditation pathway has been ascertained and/or their contribution to the public community is already measurable and articulated. Any accompanying expectations or requirements of the trainee connected to receipt of such a bursary will be explicitly stated in writing of a student or member before award.