

Silver Jubilee Introduction

During the 80s a local bishop invited two of his senior clergy to meet with him to discuss the numbers of stressed clergy in his diocese. At any one time, he told them, up to 20% of the clergy were affected and off work, with many of them suffering from psychological problems. What was he to do about it?

The Guntrip Trust was born, so Murray Leishman its founder believes, when the first trustees met with the Rt Revd John Habgood, the Archbishop of York. It was on April 6th, 1987 and they were there to ask him to become one of the new Trust's patrons. Now, 25 years later, during a time of accelerating change in both Church and Society, with the help of many other patrons and trustees, the Trust has been reflecting on the various ways in which it has set out to meet these continuing needs.

The Trust has been a pioneer in Scotland and Northern England, both in modelling an attitude of care and support and in providing a service through the Scottish Institute of Human Relations.

Currently this has been in three main ways: the first, and the reason for which the Trust is best known, has been the provision of therapy and training. Since the Trust was formed, 99 beneficiaries have been helped to fund psychotherapy or training from the Institute. Usually the Trust pays half the costs of a course of therapy, sometimes over a course of years. Given the nature of the work, feedback and evaluation is hard to gauge formally, but anecdotal evidence is encouraging.

A second more recent development has been the funding of a series of work based learning and application groups. The groups are led by a psychotherapist, often with experience of organizations, and a minister. Participants in these, about 7 to 10 in each group, meet for 12 sessions. The first group was open ended, but learning from that, later groups have had an agreed life. There have now been 2 in Edinburgh, 2 in Glasgow and 1 in Newcastle. One member found the space to talk openly about problems 'without judgement very helpful, and this is a rare thing in ministry.' Another person, commenting on the excellence of the sessions said, 'I'd certainly recommend being part of one of these groups to friends and colleagues who are in ministry.' We are particularly grateful for contributions given towards this work.

A third development has been ongoing research into particular areas of concern in the pastoral field. An early conference was on the pastoral response to disasters, the Lockerbie bombing being the catalyst. A second series of consultations on Ministry and Sexuality followed. Currently we are engaged in thinking through the relationship between Psychotherapy and Religion. Two 24 hour conferences have been held at Scottish Churches House in Dunblane, and a small group is now taking this current year to think through the implications of the conferences by studying David Black's Psychoanalysis and Religion in the 21st Century. The idea is to reflect about how the discussion might continue in small groups.

The Trust was founded in August 1988 as a special committee of the Scottish Institute of Human Relations and it continued so until June 1994 when it was formally established as an independent Charitable Trust retaining close links with the Institute. During its initial phase as a Committee it made grants totalling nearly £22,500 and since its incorporation as a separate charity the total benefit disbursements have increased to almost £120,000 of which 31% has supported training, 56% has provided help in meeting the costs of therapy and 13% has provided support to seminars and study groups concerned with the principal objects of the Trusts. In all 43 individuals have been supported with psychotherapy training plus at least a further 100 who have participated in groups. Over 56 individuals have been assisted in meeting the costs of one-to-one psychotherapy.

In recent years, the Churches in Scotland are recognizing just how important it is to fund such works themselves, a development to which the Trust feels it can take some credit. The Trust will continue to provide its own services as long as funds hold out because we are convinced of the importance of the work. We have been most grateful to all who, over a quarter century have

supported the work of the Trust and very much hope fresh funders will be found – but equally we take delight in the wider development of these important pastoral concerns in the different Churches.

The Rev Canon David Goodacre (Chair till 2013)