

## **Council meeting 15 June 2024**

### **President report**

This is my last report as your President, and a reflection on our journey together.

### **Reflections on Council**

It has been a great pleasure to work with a Council team of dedicated, intelligent, but most importantly, compassionate and empathic people.

My time as your President was shortened by personal circumstances, I am thankful for your understanding and support.

As President, my aspiration for our Association was to create and reignite opportunities for us to reconnect around the 'fire' of our thoughts and feelings. In line with this aspiration, we initiated several projects together;

- **Mind-fields: Thinking Spaces** is running monthly and offering an opportunity for association, reflection, and sharing of ideas amongst members. I hope this initiative continues evolving.
- **Psychotherapy Day** in September, with an online presentation and regional gathering. Psychotherapy Day offers a free professional development event for our members, and an opportunity to gather in person in each region. I hope this event runs for many years to come, as it is well received and attended by membership.
- **NZAP Conference** in Rotorua, perhaps the marker of a new way of running conferences in our Association. This was a colleagues' run conference rather than a branch initiative, as it used to be before the 6 period trial ( as per the recommendation in the Conference Review).

We also dealt with receiving and gathering feedback on the SOGICE Report, presented to us on October 2023. The report brought to light the differing views amongst membership regarding sex, sexuality, and gender. Council is working consistently and thoughtfully, listening to the differing voices and collating responses. Council has been diligent in listening to these differing perspectives and is committed to honouring the work of the report's authors by carefully considering all voices from our membership.

We have the potential name change discussion and remits to attend to. The initial remit, presented at the 2023 AGM, was followed by a Special General Meeting, which generated further remits to be presented to Council. A name will be chosen at the 2024 AGM but there is further work, perhaps an in-depth discussion of what is our purpose, and direction for the future. Not a task we can take lightly.

I named here the projects and tasks we dealt/are dealing with as a group. There are many tasks that you dealt and are dealing with in your portfolios. I thank you for all the hard work you commit to them.

Claire, thank you for your dedication to the successful update of our website. I know the job was not straight forward and came with unforeseen complications. Thank you for not giving up and pushing through the stress it created. There is also the Academy, and the current difficulty of not having the leader of the project available at the moment. Thank you also for not giving up on this one. Your perseverance is truly welcomed and appreciated.

Marianna, thank you for a brilliant job with the Newsletter. I am sad to see you leaving, and I am thankful to you for leaving us with an up and running Newsletter. I know that starting the project of an online newsletter from scratch came with challenges, thank you for sticking with it, the outcome is fantastic.

Victoria, congratulations on a well-deserved Distinguished Service Award! It was such a pleasure to extend this recognition to you on behalf of our Association. Your work on Council has been relentless; Public Issues, Allied Health Aotearoa New Zealand, Mental Health and Addictions, and perhaps the most challenging, ACC. Our members have found you extremely helpful when needing support with ACC matters, particularly now, facing the latest changes to the system. Thank you for all the hard work you dedicated to Council. I will miss you.

Kate, our newest member of Council, welcome, welcome, welcome. I am looking forward to work with you and to get to know you personally. I am already enjoying your contributions and I look forward to continuing our mahi together. Bienvenida!

Delia, your ability to manage our budget, and to find creative ways of keeping our books on track is fantastic, and truly appreciated. Numbers are not necessarily a psychotherapist's strength and you did a great job at it. I thank you for that, and I thank you for your many contributions to our thinking. I will miss you, our phone calls between meetings, and your ability to help us to identify our blind spots in many occasions.

Catriona, thank you for all your mahi at Council, and at the Advance Clinical Practice committee. Thank you for your contribution to the SOGICE report response. Good thinking takes time, indeed. And you take time and great care to deliver your good thinking. I love your thinking, and your always gentle touch when offering your input. I will miss you.

Mihili, thank you for joining Council this year, and for many years to come, I hope! You bring the tangata Tiriti eyes to our thinking, which represents many of our members. Thank you for your contributions, I look forward to our conversations around the table and beyond.

John, your work ethic is well-known in our Association. You chair the Advance Clinical Practice brilliantly, and successfully. You are co-editor of Ata, our excellent peer reviewed Journal. You have a great mind, so many times put at the service of our Association in a very generous way. Thank you for the boundless hours of work and dedication to NZAP. And most importantly, thank you for the endless support to my role this year.

Susan, our Te Tiriti Bicultural Advisory Committee representative. You bring a wealth of experience to Council, and from Poutamas and huis, as you have endlessly participated and offered a substantial helping hand in many of them. I look forward our mahi on the future of TTBAC and to keep working together on Council matters. I am delighted to have you with us.

Waka Oranga, kia ora Anna raūa ko Verity, this year we experimented a new way of communicating and keeping on with our mahi. We found a successful way of working together in a more as per-needed basis, which gave you the opportunity to recover some energies, and helped all of us to stay connected and keep with the mahi during this period. I am delighted that Waka Oranga is now ready to join us back at our meetings. *Nā tō rourou, nā takou rourou, ka ora ai te iwi.*

Luisa, our warm, efficient, and well-predisposed Administrator, what a pleasure is to work with you!. This has been a very busy year for you, because you are the person spinning all the plates, the person we all ask for help with our projects and tasks. Your work with the updating of the website, the conference organisation, the updating of the invoice system, only to name a very few, has been wonderful. You are a great asset for our Association, Council is grateful to have you, and members only say great things about your welcoming and helping attitude. For many more years to come!

### **Thoughts on the future of Council**

We are an organization that functions thanks to the voluntary work of its members. The complexities of our current times require many hands to attend to all aspects of our Association: the journal, the newsletter, the website, ethics, public issues, our bicultural relationship, ACC, finances, pastoral care – to name just a few. An organization run on a voluntary basis has both advantages and disadvantages, as shown in the findings presented in the [Council Review 2019](#) document.

Among the advantages, we have a group of fully committed members who work hard to make things happen. While this is gratifying, it comes at a cost. The extra hours of work sometimes limit what members can offer. Among other recommendations, the Council Review 2019 includes: ‘That Council consider some form of payment or honorarium to Council members.’ Interestingly, this comment was echoed by several members at the latest Council-membership conversation held at the NZAP Conference 2024 in Rotorua. I believe it is time for our Association to consider some form of honorarium for Council members. I know this will require various

considerations, including modifications to our Constitution, but it may be a more realistic way forward given our current financial realities.

**Most importantly: Gracias!**

My journey has been marked by personal challenges as you are all well aware. I am deeply grateful to each of you for your support and aroha throughout this past year. The work of the President requires a collective effort, and I am thankful to have had an intelligent, thoughtful, and supportive team around the table.

I thank all and each of you, dear colleagues on Council, for your care, your hard work, your patience and your great heart.

Gracias de todo corazón.

**Gabriela Mercado**

NZAP President