

CALL FOR PAPERS:

'Giving Voice: Dramatherapists with Disabilities & Illnesses' Special Edition

Brothers Grimm shared an old fairy tale that tells of how six travellers, each with an extraordinary ability that was dismissed by the people of the everyday world, banded together and used their giftedness to make necessary changes in their country (Pullman, 2013). This special edition aims to explore the world of visible and non-visible disabilities and illnesses (physical and/or mental) from the perspective and personal experience of the Dramatherapist and how this enters and affects their training experience and/or clinical practice.

Stigma is frequently attached to disability and illness, and although the *2010 Equalities Act* protects people from discrimination, it is limited. Dramatherapy uses the transformational potency of metaphor, imagination, embodiment and ritual as primary agents of therapy. In the broader field of talk psychotherapy, creativity as an acceptable vehicle for healing work can be unrecognised and marginalised. Dramatherapists may experience this in what David Read Johnson (1994) calls a '*shame dynamic*', a phenomenon which becomes more complex when the Dramatherapist comes from a marginalised community of disability and illness. Revealing difference jeopardises how they are seen.

As therapists and advocates for clients, we work within a system that places a stigma on mental and physical ill-health. How do we negotiate the challenges and misunderstandings in our practice when institutions and colleagues hold taboo perceptions and reservations about our fitness to practice? How does this dynamic play (or manifest) in our clinical practice when we want to be of service to our clients and challenge ableist structures? Although the Dramatherapist might seek to challenge this, there is a reluctance to write about the difficulties.

The special edition is an invitation for the silence to be lifted from Dramatherapists who identify and experience visible and non-visible disabilities and illnesses. It explores how professional work and the therapeutic relationship are affected. This edition invites authors to consider using self-reflection to explore personal and anecdotal experience making connections to social, cultural and political contexts. Additionally, authors are invited to write about how Dramatherapy works with the struggles clients from this marginalised community encounter.

Johnson, D.R. (1994) 'Shame Dynamics among Creative Arts Therapists'. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 21
Pullman, P. (2013) *Grimm Tales for Young and Old*. London: Penguin Classics.

Guidelines:

- **Abstract deadline: 16th January 2022**
- 200 - 300 words on what your paper will entail
- Authors must obtain written consent from clients and third parties to publish.
- A diversity of methodological approaches (including research, projects, reports, policy analysis and case studies) is welcome.
- Papers utilising an autoethnographical methodology are encouraged.
- Paper submissions will be subject to double blind peer review and book reviews will be subject to editorial board review in consultation with the author.
- Papers are 3000 - 5000 words (including references).
- Clinical comments are also welcome, and will be edited but not peer reviewed. These articles are no more than 3000 words (including references).
- We welcome submissions from Dramatherapists, and practitioners/professionals from related fields to Dramatherapy.

- Unpublished adaptations from completed student dissertations will be considered.

Please forward expressions of interest and abstracts to Hayley Southern and Mary Smail:

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Guest editors:

Hayley Southern is a Dramatherapist with visible and non-visible disabilities and illnesses. She is the co-convenor for BADth's Inclusion & Visibility Subcommittee, has a private practice at Southern Compass and has experience of working with a variety of client groups, including people with physical and learning disabilities and life-threatening and limiting illnesses.

Mary Smail is a Dramatherapist and Psychotherapist with non-visible disabilities. She has a long history as a therapist/trainer and presently works in private practice at SoulWorks UK, convenes the *Psyche and Soma* Sesame course and trains psychotherapists at Re-Vision.