

# A year of profound learning

**DR ZARA IRANI** shares the annual summary of her reflections journal kept while training with Red Kite in Liverpool

**J**OINING RED KITE Training in Liverpool represented for me a newfound commitment to TA, to its intricate theories, inclusive ethos and humanist philosophy. This process was enabled by the therapeutic work I commit to, which identifies and honours my need to feel emotionally safe, culturally accepted and intellectually stimulated, both structurally and functionally. This course chimed with Adult curiosity and discernment for alternative places and ways of being. It positively stroked my need to be OK in my difference. It was also fertile ground to explore where my responsibility lies in being accepted or not.

Identifying the struggles in finding the right training institute for me has been an important reflexive process. Particularly when considering aspects of my script formation. By examining and respecting how I learnt as a child, I was able to positively inform my development as a trainee. Acknowledging my multi-culturalism, I could intuit how a multi-tier learning environment might support and challenge my Child anxieties around flexible and safe group Imagos. As the academic year progressed, I witnessed significant shifts from feeling remote and uncertain, to connection and assurance in my position and contributions to the group.

By mid-term, I was starting to bond with certain members while able to embrace our differences. Often this was experienced as a 'twinship'. I explored this with curiosity and tolerance; relying on playfulness and observation to sustain energy. My courage maintained clear Adult thinking, and joyful connectivity. As group process evolved, I considered its synchronicity, appreciating the healing forces I witnessed and felt, particularly in relation to loss. This included the death of my father, an event which quickly, significantly impacted my place within the family Imago. The forming stage of the training group would ordinarily have been a slow process for me. However, my need to find a safe family of choice resulted in bonds forming sooner.

My TA training strokes and soothes my need to individuate, giving me a sense of containment and safety to continue asking the penetrating questions that psychotherapy requires. I appreciate how the exchange of feelings, mistakes and successes are a vulnerable yet shared endeavour of each group member. Adult curiosity about intellectual development within a multitier cohort remains high. I often wondered where my place was for other members in the evol-

ing Imago. I sit with the fact that for some I am perceived to be a potent, advanced and provocative thinker.

Because of my neurodiversity (Dyslexia), I can at times assume a literal interpretation. Yet simultaneously hold multiple, connecting theories and concepts, which I can sustain and account for. This often resulted in me being missed or unseen by the group. Consequently, I struggled with the stroke deficit I felt. This longing was enlivened through my connectivity with my supervisors, trainers and therapist. With their support, my ability to articulate my needs developed within the group, as I learnt to share my needs. I did so while compassionately appreciating our different experiences, stages and abilities, that may result in us wanting alternative outcomes for ourselves – informed by very unique frames of reference. My focus remains on achieving certification with high regard and commitment to the service of myself, my clients, colleagues and trainers. This ambition is resilient and sustains me.

I am proud of the way I continue to robustly and compassionately fulfil my academic needs. In time, as my bereavement allows, I share the more playful side of Child. Inherent are creative and spontaneous abilities that I look forward to integrating into my training more.

Immersing myself in the wider TA community this year, I witnessed significant ruptures, healing and political manoeuvres. This experience has been crucial to my development. I see a body of academics and practitioners I revere that strive to understand how difference and similarity can be acknowledged, reconciled, held. This has been an important consideration when exploring the impact of ethical practice, difference and diversity, on all who take on the responsibility of being a humanist.

Through this training year, I have witnessed and modelled different ways of tolerating, articulating and sense

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## Focus on: Student writing

making, which charges and energises my ambition for physics. In the company of TA elders, trainers, group members, I feel propelled by relational ways of communicating that have not been previously met in my childhood script.

Immersion into the TA community helped to support my wider commitments to the placement I began in January. I intentionally chose a demanding placement that supports student psychotherapists, offering training and internal supervision. I am interested in working with complex issues that these highly vulnerable adults present. This strokes my rigorous and motivated work ethic. I chose a service where I could access my clients via Zoom, a richer and safer experience for me, rather than via telephone where I may have been prone to vicarious trauma.

The relational approach is a demanding yet rewarding way of being. I am developing this in part, through the commitment I have to my own wellbeing. Without this, I am unable to sustain my resilience and professionalism. I am interested in how the professional and personal inform one another and have used supervision and my written assignments to explore this. I receive a great deal of positive strokes from my supervisors and clients. I feel the strokes reflect my hard work and diligence, particularly around client safety, my intellect and wellbeing.

I remain mindful of my continuing growth and development and feel they appropriately reflect my clinical experience. I perceive my cognitively driven disposition, to be a helpful form of defence, while I explore and orientate my capabilities safely and ethically at a pace I intuit to be right for me.

Though I place a great deal of emphasis on the relational, it was initially outshone by my interest in theory. This is due to both my enthusiasm for TA's abundance of theoretical models, and the reassurance I felt expanding my knowledge. This is something I have started to address in my supervisory relationships, which enable me a greater understanding of how supervision can be used.

The focus of my clinical work varies depending on client need, however general themes are emerging. Given my commitment to developing a relational practice, I note how fulfilling it is to have a client's Child experiences and needs to attend to. As someone with a strong Nurturing Parent I feel the significance of this presence. I am interested in how these experiences reveal themselves transferentially, and trust in my process as well as that of my clients.

In contrast to this I have also encountered clients who need me to be a 'bad' object. I appreciate my supervisory relationships to support me in this experience. This dyad evokes conflicting feelings that originate in my script, explaining the necessity of my therapy.

**Dr Zara Irani** (Red Kite TA trainee), is interested in integrating TA with her extensive experience in somatic/contemplative practices that incorporate less traditional modes and settings. She also has extensive training as a Fine Artist/university lecturer. [zarairani@gmail.com](mailto:zarairani@gmail.com)



# Event Reviews

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