

Student Counsellor Magazine

September 2022

Text Only Version

A note from Jyles, Interim CEO

Welcome to our September 2022 issue of Student Counsellor Magazine.

This edition is packed full of great articles and resources to help you on your journey. We really encourage all students, whether members of the NCS or another membership body, to share their stories and articles. In this edition we include two great pieces from NCS Student Members. Saima Khan, has written an article - "Reflections On My Counselling Journey... So Far" which explores her challenging educational journey. Matthew Geary takes an in-depth look at "Unconscious Avoidance and The Trickster In Therapy".

In this edition you will find lots of resources to help you as you progress through your studies. There are log sheets to keep track of your supervision and client (placement) hours, a free course on study skills, and an article on study tips for students with ADHD.

This magazine is for all counselling students regardless of which membership body you belong to. Please continue to share your articles, thoughts, and ideas about what you would like to see within these pages. Please do get it touch with our Communications Manager, Olivia: comms@nationalcounsellingsociety.org

Jyles Robillard-Day

[Read the last edition of Student Counsellor Magazine here](#)

Want to receive future editions?

We'll send them straight to your inbox.

Don't worry - we'll never use your email address for anything else.

[Sign up!](#)

NCS Student Membership

- Affordable membership costs & reduced fees for students.
- Access to a directory of discounted supervision and/or personal counselling for student counsellors.

- Monthly digital magazine that members can contribute to.
 - Discounts on insurance.
 - Student members of the Society can apply for a TOTUM card.
 - 20% discount on titles from PCCS Books, Routledge's products, and Jessica Kingsley Publishers' books.
 - 30% discount on selected titles with SAGE.
 - Free online CPD courses available to members.
- ...and much more!

[Find out more](#)

Reflections On My Counselling Journey - So Far.

With thanks to Saima Khan (Student Counsellor).

It is difficult to decide where to begin, because my educational journey has been long and arduous - but nevertheless quite rewarding. I have studied the postgraduate Certificate In Counselling and the Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling. I also have a few certifications in Education as well.

In my counselling journey I learnt about how stress and mental health challenges affect children, young people and adults albeit differently. The fact that mental health challenges can be overcome and dealt with as soon as they are detected. Early intervention is better than cure.

I have also learnt about human nature and that hope and resilience are connected - without positing that there is hope we cannot guide the client through the journey that they themselves have to navigate. So I latched on to the idea that the counsellor is the 'guide' not the 'fixer' of the problem or the issues that the client is encountering.

I was very fortunate in the sense that I was able to find and learn from teachers and practitioners who were interested in making a difference in the lives of others - based on the principle that "everyone wants to matter". The program was a hands on practical program - where 'you learn while you do' and the connections between theory and practice were made clear. So I have learnt and adopted the motto that 'everyone wants to matter' and that my higher purpose is to somewhat remember when seeing my clients that first and foremost - like me- they want to matter. I was also equipped with the tools to show or demonstrate unconditional positive regard and empathy - which are feelings which are somewhat lacking in the world that we inhabit. One feels this even more when one leaves the confines of University and step into the 'real' world.

I also developed a sense of being a wounded healer and gained insight into the quote by Carl Jung 'Only the wounded healer can truly heal' - which is one of the dictums of counselling in Australia. I have learnt that despite one's personal challenges one can strive to help others who are encountering similar or bigger challenges.

For me the Creative Art Therapies Unit was both the culmination of my journey and a marker for where the path may lead me later. I feel that though I have come this far - that the journey has just started. Learning in the art therapies unit about how significant metaphors are and how coming up with metaphors that define who and what you represent and your journey - is a remarkable and meaningful process.

Providing a safe place for the client wherein there is no judgement is only possible through gaining these insights- one has to recognize not only one's strengths and abilities but also what are the hurdles and blocks that hinder one from a. being the best version of themselves and b. the best counsellor they can be in the given circumstances. So, last but not the least one realizes the common humanity that we are part of and the fact that every life and every client - needs to have 'a chance taken on them'. The value of every human life is significant and everyone in their own domain and way 'matters'.

Would you like to contribute to the next issue of Student Counsellor Magazine?

We're accepting article submissions from student counsellors on:

- Your placement experiences
- Your experience as an NCS Student Member
- Your specialist subject(s) of interest
- Books you would recommend to other student counsellors

Please email any submissions to comms@nationalcounsellingsociety.org for a chance to be featured in the next magazine!

Looking for a way to organise your CPD, Supervision, and Client Hours?

Download our log templates below!

[CPD Log](#)

[Supervision Log](#)

[Client Hours Log](#)

'An admirable evasion of whoremaster man' - Unconscious Avoidance and the Trickster in Counselling and Therapy

With thanks to Matthew Geary (Student Counsellor).

In counselling practice, all of us experience the late cancellation, the sudden illness or predicament, which means that the client will not be able to attend this week or in the future. In the early moments of the no-show, we often sit in umbrage or frustration at the apparent waste of time, money, and effort. The client's absence can also challenge our sense of value and worth. Have I failed the client? Am I any good at this? Have we gone too deep too quickly? Is the therapy not working?

The reasons for the client's absence might be genuine. There might be unforeseen logistical problems, terrible weather conditions, or illness. They might have forgotten to arrange childcare or even just forgotten about the appointment itself. But, of course, these reasons could also be avoidance/resistance. The client may be unconsciously avoiding confrontation with their own mind and difficulties, which has prompted all manner of ailments, life obstacles, behaviours, and difficulties: the unavoidable absence. If they return to therapy, these reasons and actions are to be explored.

Things being 'too much' is a reason sometimes associated with a client's absence. This impact might be the case even if the therapist has helped settle the client at the end of a session or if they have expressed the need for their self-care following. Indeed, the client might openly acknowledge in an email before a subsequent appointment: 'I don't feel up to it today'. In other words, the therapy is too much to bear, too shattering. A challenging session can make a client feel discombobulated, out of the body, preoccupied, blank, forgetful, crazed for a period. This change or disturbance is a particular issue if they have occupations, everyday tasks, or if they look after children.

On other occasions, however, the client's avoidance and their reasons are not so openly articulated or recognised. Resistance/avoidance, here, is a symptom. Indeed, as Sigmund Freud noted in his Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis ([1910] 2001: 9-55), the client's avoidance indicates that the therapy has come close to discovering the pathogenic material and the phylogenetic origin of the anxiety and avoidance. The threats to the client's ego are manifold. They risk humiliation, disapproval, guilt, rejection, re-traumatisation, and shame. They may feel exposed, vulnerable or like they have been 'found out'. They are on the threatening precipice of the reason for the work, and they are possibly about to glimpse some of their deeper, darker, more disturbing drives and motives. Hence, resistance/avoidance is a short-term fix for avoiding displeasure, recognition, and responsibility, among other things. Problematically, such resistance forestalls meeting and solving problems and the chance of achieving lasting relief, which is likely why the client chose to attend therapy in the first place. For Jacques Lacan, such refusal of knowledge demonstrates the analysand's basic neurotic position: a will not to know (*a ne rien vouloir savoir*) (Fink, 1997: 7).

After the departure of the superstitious Gloucester in William Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Edmund's soliloquies his theory about human evasiveness. He admonishes those who see their fate, fortune, motivation, or sin as attributable to some planetary or Godly influence: 'An admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star!'

Edmund, the villainous realist, sees humans as ultimately responsible for their actions. It is folly and all too easy to lay blame elsewhere. As Shakespeare, Freud and Lacan all knew, we have a dizzying, protean repertoire of defences, excuses, and intellectual rationalisations, known and unbeknownst to ourselves. In counselling and therapy, there are, without doubt, occasions when the client's missed appointment, sudden illness, logistical nightmare, or interruptive happenstance is legitimate. But, at times, especially if absences and incidences occur repeatedly, are these explanations not just 'admirable evasions'? Here, the therapist is presented with the gift of an opportunity to analyse the self-perpetuating resistance – to move the therapy from stagnation into more productive areas.

Edmund in *King Lear* delivers remarkable cognition of our resistance to ourselves and incomprehensibility of our ourselves: our desires, motives, and splitting. For Carl Jung (1955), the 'Trickster' figure is the individual and collective archetypal, universal representation of such a phenomenon. Found in Native American folklore (coyote/raven), ancient mythology (Odysseus/Hermes/Loki), fairy tales (Mercurius/Rumpelstiltskin), Shakespearean theatre (Puck/Iago/Ariel), the Trickster is a cunning shapeshifter with dual nature: 'half animal, half divine' (1972: 135). It pertains to mythology and inner psychic experience. It indicates 'an earlier, rudimentary stage of consciousness'. In its clearest manifestation, Jung tells us, it is 'a faithful copy of an absolutely undifferentiated human consciousness corresponding to a psyche that has hardly left the animal level' (140). Thus, the Trickster often appears in a complementary or compensatory relationship to the grandiose ego-personality, often as a marker of splitting, unconsciousness, and foolishness. We might think of Sancho Panza's companionship of the title character in Miguel Cervantes' *Don Quixote* or even Ron Weasley's friendship with the titular character of the *Harry Potter* series. The Trickster's presence posits the need for humility, recognition, and integration.

In *King Lear*, the 'wiser' Fool stands in relation to Lear in such a way, asserting: 'Truth's a dog must start of his tragic demise. The Trickster, then, presents himself as an arbiter of truth and understanding. As Jung noted, it is related to the shadow archetype, and it manifests in the place of hypocrisy, ignorance, resistance, pretence, shame, taboo, the repressed, the unconscious, the unsaid and the unsayable (in *King Lear*, possibly Lear's intense incestuous love for his daughter). The Trickster has always been all around us: in a plethora of guises (human and animal), continually transforming, paradoxical, and functioning on multiple levels of meaning. In medieval alchemy, there is the figure of Mercurius: 'a world creating spirit', whom Jung deems as representative of the unconscious psyche. More recently, there are stand-up comedians like Lenny Bruce, Richard

Pryor, Bill Hicks and Stewart Lee, whose biting satirical craft is a spur for severe social and political commentary and reflection. In cinema, Joaquin Phoenix's portrayal in *Joker* (2019) demonstrates how harsh mistreatment and ill-fortune in a heartless world spurs his transformation into a macabre murderer and prankster. As Nathan Schwartz-Salant highlighted (Cruz and Buser, 2017: 61-68), there is also the bumbling, dangerous, almost laughable (if it were not so serious) ineptitude of a Donald Trump (the Trickster is not always synonymous with cleverness), whose election to a prominent position of power indicates the growing emergence of the shadow side of the collective unconscious in western society (racism, greed, elitism, misogyny, pathological narcissism, and extreme individualism).

The Trickster is in-between and outside of the law. The figure often has a sharp, objective wit and double perspective, which we cannot see. Barbara Babcock-Abraham states how with the Trickster: 'a situation of marginality exists whenever commonly held boundaries are violated' (1975: 150). Such boundaries include social structures and norms, law and custom, nature and the human, family kinship, and sexuality. The antinomian Trickster traverses but also paradoxically regulates these boundaries. As Babcock-Abraham notes, the archetype is both boundary-making and boundary-breaking. The Trickster is the abject excess and deviance that compels the social order. It is both sacred and profane. It is an alarm bell signalling calamity or that a dangerous situation is afoot. We ignore the Trickster's jesting at our peril.

Hence, Claude Levi-Strauss (1955), like Jung, reminds us of the Trickster's mediating and more positive function, contending that: 'mythical thought always progresses from the awareness of oppositions towards their resolution' (224). Such binaries include nature and culture, consciousness and unconsciousness, masculine and feminine aspects. The Trickster emphasises the arbitrariness of polarised categorisations and the possibility of a creative conjunction and higher integration of opposites. As Donald Kalshed points out, in a Winnicottian sense, the Trickster operates as a critical 'transitional phenomena':

As an antinomy, he holds together a pair of opposites and constitutes the missing 'third'. He is ideally suited, therefore, to the task of mediating the opposing archetypal dynamism that sweep over the psyche after trauma. In short, he is both diabolical (splitting) and symbolical (integrating) in his function. In his diabolical form, he severs connections in the inner world in order to prevent the unbearable from being experienced. In his symbolical form, he makes whole what was previously fragmented and does this by linking up the unconscious world with the ego through the symbol. (1996: 197)

In this passage, Kalshed highlights the positive transformational potential of the Trickster. Indeed, regularly a highly negative archetypal figure, the Trickster (the 'wounded wonder') is also, as Jung puts it: 'the agent of healing . . . the sufferer who takes the suffering away' (1972: 136). In this helpful capacity, the therapist can consider the presence of the Trickster inside and outside of the counselling room.

In my personal therapy, we have done a tremendous amount of work to acknowledge the Trickster's strength of presence and influence both in the therapy and throughout my life. I have spent whole sessions circling a subject and evading issues. I can subtly deflect the conversation into different directions. I have sometimes been late or missed sessions for reasons that felt wholly out of my control, or so it seemed. I had not been conscious of the skill, artistry, and prevalence of this avoidance/resistance until my therapist brought it to my attention. The subtlety and ingenuity of the Trickster still astound me.

Recently, I missed a student counsellor residential weekend after I had put the wrong dates in the calendar, despite having early notice about the scheduling. Checking the calendar for clashes, my partner booked a surprise anniversary weekend in London—covering the residential dates—with costly train, hotel, and theatre tickets to watch Ralph Fiennes perform T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets* (I am a T. S. Eliot scholar). We have three young children and rarely spend time alone, and she had also arranged childcare. So, I was in a dilemma. Should I attend the residential weekend as a vital part of psychotherapy training? Or should I honour my partner's considerable efforts to mark our anniversary? Previously, I would have put such a blunder down to forgetfulness or lack of organisation. This time, however, I considered the Trickster. I had attended a residential earlier in the year and had found it highly challenging. Despite this, I achieved positive results, and I left the residential with an altered outlook on my life history, difficulties, and circumstances. Around the time of the second residential, though, I felt exhausted, low, and disconnected from my partner. I wondered whether I had the resources to manage another residential weekend full of therapeutic interventions, practices, and reflections. After bringing up the quandary with the organisers, speaking with other people, and negotiating a tremendous amount of embarrassment and guilt, I celebrated my anniversary. I needed to spend time with my partner, and I had a moving experience, with Fiennes' recital affecting me greatly. In contrast, many people found the residential gruelling. I was relieved.

On this occasion, my Trickster led me in the right direction, providing me with just what I required at the time to revitalise myself and my relationship. It is also undoubtedly true that I might have avoided a difficult but helpful and healing therapeutic weekend. Was I avoidant of facing what I needed to confront about and within myself? Was I avoidant of change? And if so, why was this the case?

In this instance, I think my Trickster let me know what was manageable. Yes, there was avoidance and, yes, sometimes the Trickster impedes my progress or inadvertently compounds my confusion, suffering, and worries. Ultimately, though, I now understand that my Trickster is a wonderfully creative and old friend and improvisator who thinks they are acting in our best interest. Being stuck in life and therapy really is an art, an exhausting one at that. So, as therapists, we must acknowledge when the Trickster might be at play, whether it be the therapist's or the client's. We must hear their riddles and remonstrations. We must watch them slip, trick, disguise, juggle, and wobble. In the many sites of avoidance or resistance, the Trickster might be the capricious, baffling guide to our most

significant insights, most positive and radical transformations, and the precious gift of healing.

Study tips for students with ADHD

With thanks to [medicalnewstoday.com](https://www.medicalnewstoday.com)

Students with ADHD may struggle to concentrate in school, which can make learning difficult. Using study tips and strategies can help them succeed.

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a common mental health condition that can cause inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity.

This can make studying difficult, and many young people with ADHD struggle in school. Students with untreated ADHD earn lower scores than students without ADHD.

Treating a person's condition can reduce symptoms, helping them perform better in school. In addition to treatment, certain study skills, tips, and interventions can help students manage their ADHD in school and at home.

Read more to learn about how ADHD affects students and study tips for elementary school, high school, and college students.

How does ADHD affect students?

Focus and attention are crucial components of learning while in school. ADHD directly affects these, making it difficult for students with the condition to learn in a typical school environment.

Many young people with ADHD have trouble learning, get low test scores, and fall behind in school. This can negatively affect their self-esteem.

ADHD can also affect relationships and social skills. A 2020 study found a relationship between ADHD, poor working memory and weak social skills, and experiencing bullying.

However, their struggle to keep up is not their fault – it is because the way their brain functions makes it hard to learn in a traditional school setting. With the right modifications, support, and treatment, they can succeed in school.

Some examples of how ADHD symptoms may affect students include:

Inattention: Students with ADHD may miss deadlines, forget their homework, and struggle to pay attention in the classroom.

Hyperactivity: Hyperactivity can make it difficult to sit still and follow instructions. It can also affect relationships, such as when it causes a student to frequently interrupt peers.

Impulsivity: This can make it hard to focus, communicate with peers, and resisting the impulse to ignore schoolwork. Students with ADHD may struggle to control their emotions at school.

These symptoms can make it difficult for students to succeed in school. A 2021 study found that college students with ADHD were more likely to drop out of school than their peers.

Students with ADHD can also underperform on exams. In a 2020 systematic review, researchers found a correlation between ADHD and worse performance at school and on academic achievement tests.

Tips for elementary and middle school students

Elementary and middle school students (aged 5-13) are in the early stages of learning to manage school with ADHD. While the average age of diagnosis is 7 years old, some children may go undiagnosed for several more years. This is particularly common in girls, who are less likely to be diagnosed than boys.

During their early school years, students with ADHD need support from parents and teachers.

Parents can help their child(ren) in school by:

- asking about disability accommodations, including longer test time, daily feedback, and a reward system for positive behavior
- talking with the child about ADHD, and helping them understand their condition
- developing a plan for managing symptoms
- enrolling the child in organizational and study skills courses
- They can also encourage their child to try several useful strategies, including:
 - using a simple system, such as a student agenda, to track deadlines and create daily plans
 - use a white board or visual aid to help them remember items they need for school
 - taking frequent breaks and avoiding multitasking
 - breaking large tasks into smaller chunks
 - asking for help if they are struggling with new material
 - taking notes in class and reviewing them later that day
 - reviewing information in small chunks instead of “cramming” the night before a test

Tips for high school students

In high school (ages 14-18), a student’s workload usually increases. They have more independent work and more frequent exams, making it difficult for students with ADHD.

High school is a good time for parents to begin encouraging students to advocate for themselves. They can learn to ask for accommodations and develop the skills they need to succeed in high school and higher education.

Students can try:

- experimenting with different organizational strategies, such as a paper planner, electronic planning, or app-based reminders
- taking notes in class and while reading
- building breaks into study sessions
- tackling the most difficult homework first
- asking for help early on
- establishing strong relationships with teachers
- developing a daily study routine
- creating a comfortable study space at home
- turning off phones and television when studying

Tips for college students

By the time students reach college, they have likely developed some skills that help them manage schoolwork. However, college can also pose new challenges. Learning to adapt, ask for help, and plan ahead will allow college students with ADHD to do their best.

They can try:

- building rewards and breaks into studying
- reaching out to professors with questions early
- breaking studying and large tasks into small chunks
- taking notes on everything, and reviewing those notes daily
- using well-organized lists with clear deadlines
- planning ahead by establishing and writing down a detailed schedule each day
- monitoring progress to determine which strategies work best

Treatment for ADHD

In addition to study tips and strategies, treatment for ADHD can help students do well in school.

A 2020 literature review found that medication could improve functioning and outcomes across many areas, including academic performance.

However, most effective ADHD treatment strategies include a combination of medication and other interventions.

Some options include:

- disability accommodations, such as classroom modifications to make learning easier

- therapy to help a person better understand their ADHD and cultivate strategies for dealing with it
- study skills and organizational training
- family therapy and parent training
- establishing a predictable routine and study schedule
- education about life with ADHD and how to better manage the condition

Supporting a loved one with ADHD

Supporting a loved one with ADHD begins with understanding that ADHD is a real medical condition and that people with ADHD face ongoing challenges. Their symptoms are not a choice, though they can make choices to reduce the severity of symptoms.

Some strategies to help include:

- Advocate for disability accommodations at school when a child has ADHD.
- Encourage a loved one with ADHD to seek treatment.
- Help minimize distractions by staying on topic. Avoid loud noises, television, and other background distractions when spending time together.
- Encourage people with ADHD to develop organizational strategies that work.
- Provide reminders and cues. For example, when a spouse has ADHD, putting relevant family information and appointments on an accessible family calendar or white board may help.

Summary

ADHD symptoms such as inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity can make it difficult for students to focus in school. This can affect people at all stages of life.

Missed skills in early elementary school can add up, so developing strong study and organizational skills early can help students thrive in higher education. Although ADHD may make studying more difficult, it does not make it impossible. With the right accommodations, students can succeed in school.

Free Online Study Skills Training

Nearly all of us will go through multiple series of education throughout our lives. It is crucial that when we do, we are capable of approaching our studies in a way that will lead us to the best results. In this free course from businessballs.com, they discuss all the various skills required to undertake a course of study, from reading and writing, all the way to quantitative research methods for further scientific research. It should provide you with all the knowledge and techniques required to achieve further qualifications, and to accelerate your Continuous Professional Development (CPD) or academic studies.

[View the course](#)

PSA Newsletter

The Professional Standards Authority publish a newsletter 2-4 times per year, which you can read for free on their website. You can view their Summer - Autumn 2022 newsletter by clicking the button below.

[Read the newsletter](#)

Prologue: A poem for new grad students

With thanks to Ben Caldwell of [psychotherapynotes.com](https://www.psychotherapynotes.com)

Welcome, new students.
You have chosen a career in mental health,
One of the most noble lines of work on earth.
I assume you chose this career because you want to
What's the cliché?
Help people,
And perhaps because at some point earlier in your life
You had a wonderful, transformative experience
With a therapist who gave you the help you needed when you needed it
Or
You had a horrible, traumatic experience
With a loved one who wasn't so lucky.

Whatever your story,
I presume that, all clichés aside, you are here for the right reasons
To begin a noble career of helping people.
I do not, however, presume
You know what that means.

First, you should know that when people talk about a career being noble
They mean it is unsteady
Underpaid
Sometimes unsafe
And always underappreciated.
Your noble sacrifice
Of the potential for a bigger house
A nicer car
Nights where you don't cringe every time the phone rings,
In fear that perhaps this is the night one of your clients followed through
Will not be recognized.
By anyone.

Confidentiality, baby.
No one can know what you do.
Great for your clients.
Sucks for you.

Second, you should know that helping people
Is not the feel-good movie of the summer.
It is hard.
It will weigh on you.
It is true that some people don't want to be helped;
Those people will not spend a lot of time in your office,
And even when they do, you will not worry about them so much.
What will break your heart
Over and over and over again
Are the people who want desperately to be helped
In ways you can't provide.

A warm conversation
Is not a warm meal.
A perfect diagnosis
Is not a bus ticket home.
Even the most brilliantly executed therapeutic intervention
Is not a mother's child back in her arms.

I know, and you know
We all only do what we can.
But people in other jobs
Normal jobs
They don't have to see
The enormous and deeply personal tragedy
Of how badly we fail every day
At being a community.

If you really want to help people,
You need to start by toughening up.

Few things are as frustrating
For a teacher in mental health
As a student who says she wants to help
But then is too uncomfortable to spend five minutes
In the company of anyone who actually needs it.

If you want to never be afraid
If you want to never have your beliefs challenged
If you want to never see the victims or the perpetrators
Of poverty, racism, rape, religious fanaticism, child abuse,
And everything else you cannot stand
If you want to never have anyone angry enough at you
To scream your name so loud that you can hear it several blocks away
If you want to never have to face these things
Not only are you in the wrong line of work
You are in the wrong line of life.
Because sometimes fear is your body's way of telling you to wake up and pay
attention.
Some of your beliefs are not just naive or misguided but simply wrong.

There are people suffering from all of those things all around you, every day.
And sometimes, screaming at someone who is trying their best to help you change
Feels really good.

In other lines of work
Or life
You may be able to just deny these things
Or pretend they don't really exist.
In this line of work
You can't.
In this line of work
Blinders are laughed at
And then violently torn off.

I don't mean to be a downer.
I just want you to go into this career with your eyes open.
This work is hard.
But if you're ready for it
Physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially
(A development process that will take at least three times as long
As the time you're in school
And that's if you have a good therapist of your own)
If you're ready for it
This work will be your window
Into more scratching and clawing out of the gutter,
Onto one's feet, and into the air
Than you ever thought human beings were capable of.
This work will be your window
Into more love found after years of having gone missing
Than some families experience in ten generations.
This work will be your window
Into how the mere act of being in someone's company in the right way
Can change their life
And their children's lives
And their great-great-great-grandchildren's lives.

That thing I said before
About the right diagnosis not being a bus ticket home
Is true
But sometimes, being in someone's company in the right way
Enables them to build themselves a new home
Right where they are.

You picked a line of work that will change you.
So get ready for it.
Really ready.
As in, brace yourself.
You are approaching turbulence.

If you are in a romantic relationship of some kind,
You will not be in the same relationship two years from now.
You may be with the same person, if they are adaptable
But I guarantee you that your relationship as it exists right now
Will not survive all that you are about to learn about people.
Are you ready for that?
Through this program you are about to begin
You will learn about oppression, bias, discrimination, and hate
And by that I mean your own
And if your teachers and fellow students are doing their jobs well
You will be held accountable.
Are you ready for that?
Perhaps most importantly
In this noble career you have just started
You will be not only called upon but actively taught and encouraged
To empathize with suffering worse than any you may have ever known.
Are you ready for that?

Once you are ready, we are
I am
Ready to teach you.
If you are not prepared, we
I
Cannot help you, for you will fight against this journey every step of the way.
Instead of the client who does not want to be helped
You will be the student who does not want to learn
And I will not worry that much about you.
I will simply encourage you to consider other career options.
If you are prepared, we are
I am
Ready to walk through this turbulence with you.

The kind of teacher I aspire to be
Is the one who tells you
“Hold on, there’s a rough patch coming”
And then lets you do the work of getting through it.
Doing it for you is not teaching you.
Letting you fail and then learn from that failure is.
Initially, I’ll be here at your side,
Telling you you’re doing fine
Or, if you’re not doing fine, reminding you that you have what it takes to do fine
And telling you what doing fine looks like.
As you get used to the rough patches
I’ll move a little farther away with each one
Because you’ll know how to get through them without me.
By the time we’re done here,
You will not need me at all anymore.

Getting to that place is difficult. And working in this career is difficult.
But if you’re well-prepared,

You'll love it
Long before you're good at it.
Are you ready
For that?

Let's get started.

Don't Forget - [NCS Student Members](#) can sign up for a Totum Pro card!

If you would like to contribute to or advertise in the magazine, please contact:
comms@nationalcounsellingsociety.org
