

THE REACH APPROACH

The Reach approach is a unique and unusual arrangement of many traditions and disciplines. Our approach doesn't pretend that counselling-psychology has all the answers. In fact, we dare to say that, as wonderful a tool as counselling-psychology is, it is blunted by its failure to embrace other related and sometimes seemingly less related disciplines and we believe this undermines the effectiveness of many psychotherapeutic approaches.

Our model has four distinct phases: Life Map Work, The Hall of Shame, Dark Room Work (and other creative ways of working) and Lifestyle. Under closer inspection evidence of other psychotherapeutic approaches can be found within our model, such as Transactional Analysis, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Psychodynamic Theory, Existentialism, Person Centred Therapy, Rational Emotive Therapy etc. However, in equal measure you will find evidence of psychoneuroimmunology (how moods affect the body), diet and nutrition, orthomolecular medicine (the use of nutrients to treat specific diseases), hydrotherapy (the therapeutic uses of water), metaphysics (how natural laws apply to our thoughts and feelings) etc. What we are able to demonstrate through our model is that these apparently diverse and opposing schools of thought are subtly and deeply connected, making our approach unique and also extremely effective.

Our starting premise is that we work with the whole person. Otherwise, something is inevitably going to be missed. Human beings are multi-factorial and so there are many factors that can and do compromise a person's sense of self: relationships, work, environment, self-esteem, a sense of purpose and direction, to name a few. Taking a proper inventory of these 'life areas' often throws light on underlying issues, which might otherwise be overlooked. We don't pretend to be experts on all these subjects; however, we are sufficiently qualified and experienced in the core areas to be facilitators, enabling the individual to find solutions.

Our experience has taught us that when individuals are offered the appropriate resources and support, their capacity and potential for recovery and self-improvement is massively expanded. To this end we have produced a range of resources that compliment our holistic way of working. We describe ourselves as therapists offering counselling and personal empowerment and we believe that to truly empower, one must first 'inform' because it is only when the individual has a wide enough knowledge base that s/he can make informed choices.

The four stages, as listed above, start with Life Mapping. This is where the individual is given the opportunity to tell his/her story. It is important when looking for the best interventions to have a sense of that person's history and present reality and Life Map Work provides that. It also enables a relationship of trust, warmth and empathy to develop. The second stage is The Hall of Shame. Shame work is very powerful and helps to expose those intrapersonal dynamics that are most enslaving. It is the sense of shame i.e., not being good enough, the fear of being found out, conforming to be liked and loved, that most propels an individual's negative states. 'The Hall of Shame' is a very challenging and liberating experience. Thirdly comes 'Dark Room Work' and other creative ways of working. Based on the discoveries of the first two stages, this is where the process of dismantling those thought processes and emotions that limit the individual and compromise his/her endeavours begins. After successfully removing the blockages and promoting growth, comes the final stage. 'Lifestyle' is where the focus lies in sustaining the positive gains that have been made. For us it is not sufficient to provide weary travellers with a meal. It is far more important for us to teach them the art of cooking for themselves. Only then can they sustain themselves for the rest of their lives.