

solace

surviving exile and persecution

Welcome to the Solace newsletter May 2023

Solace Team

it's been an exciting time for Solace with new services starting, new therapists joining our team and more support being provided to people who need it across the region.

We now have a team of 32 therapists, and 8 non clinical roles so we have really grown. Most of us work part time, and we have a lovely mix of paid staff and volunteers. With all this development, time has been short to communicate with the rest of the world.



<https://www.solace-uk.org.uk/about-us/staff-and-trustees>

Solace Recruitment

As Solace is growing we have redesigned some of our management roles and are currently advertising for a new Operations Manager and a Clinical Services Manager as well as an additional Therapist for the Solace Children and Family Wellbeing project and another Therapist to be based in Leeds

Please take a look if you are interested in applying for any of the roles, and please share far and wide with anyone who might be interested. The closing date is 29th May.

<https://www.solace-uk.org.uk/about-us/vacancies>



Partnerships



Solace is delighted to continue the partnership with Nordoff Robbins Music Therapist Seb working one day per week running a music group and working with individuals, which includes a mixture of improvisation, singing and learning instruments. They are beginning to compose music, which they hope to perform during Refugee week. Recently, Fall into Place, a drama based group have begun a series of creative workshops. Along with Linking Leeds Social Prescriber Maninder, offering community based support at Solace every Wednesday, Karim of Positive Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (PAFRAS) is offering advocacy support every Tuesday for asylum seekers. Chapeltown CAB are also in the process of recruiting a new advice worker to be at Solace for one day a week as well. These partnerships with organizations who are experts in their field mean we can provide a much more joined up and effective service for the people who come to Solace for support.

New Psycho-education & Wellbeing Workshop Series



After two very positive pilot psychoeducation workshops of four weeks each, facilitated by Therapists Shamim and Sarah, they are about to launch a weekly Wellbeing group together with Solace, Farsi speaking volunteer Mashid. The topics include coping with anxiety, pain, sleep, keeping healthy and connecting with others using various group, expressive and grounding exercises. Feedback comments included:

“I loved that I could share my condition about not being able to sleep and how I am forced to take depression tablets for my condition. I would like speech therapy and would like to get rid of my anxiety and depression.”

“All the relaxation exercises for my muscles and body were good. I would love to know ways to help my sleep improve and to get rid of my stress and anger and have peace.”

“The practice for improving my sleep were very helpful. I would like to know how I can manage my emotions i.e. anger management and find ways to improve it

While this Leeds CCG funded project is designed for asylum seekers living in hotels in Leeds, it is open to all Solace clients

Resettlement Refugees

Refugees who come through the UK resettlement schemes are chosen because of high levels of vulnerability, thus many have serious health care needs in addition to the complexities of learning to navigate an new and often bureaucratic environment. With such pressures many parents can struggle to support their children in education and in their new communities, which is where the Solace Child and Family Wellbeing Support (CFWP) project can make a significant difference. Covering the vast distances of North, West and East Yorkshire, is challenging, however with remote technology we can work flexibly. The therapeutic work can include families or individual children and young people, groups or working together with schools. CFWP Therapist Hernan has recently begun an online parenting group for Arabic speakers to provide more ongoing support. Afghans in bridging hotels throughout Yorkshire are supported by Solace CFWP along with Therapist Paul Wood in Leeds through welcome and wellbeing sessions along with individual and family counselling in the community.

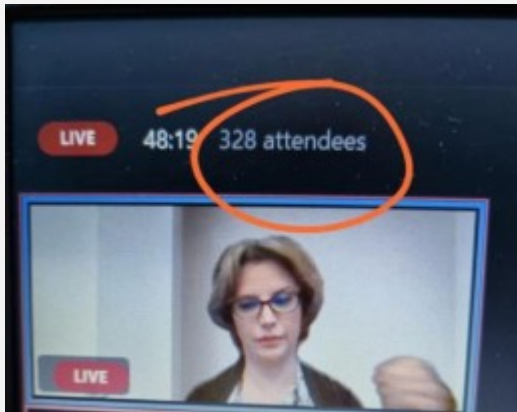


<https://www.solace-uk.org.uk/projects-and-partners/children-and-families-wellbeing-project>

Employment & Integration Service Connecting Opportunities



Since 2017, Solace has been a part of Connecting Opportunities, a project that provided a multiagency service to new refugees to enhance integration and access to employment. Therapists Andrew and Elmira provided counselling to facilitate mental health and wellbeing, however it has come to an end. Happily, Elmira has been redeployed in Solace and has begun a group for pregnant women at Urban House together with the Maternity Stream of Sanctuary, but Andrew Hawkins who was Solace's first manager turned into a psychotherapist has now brought his work with Solace to an end..



Training and Support to other services

Solace has received increased requests for counselling support, supervision, training and consultancy from organizations in both the refugee and statutory sectors, Solace's training on working with interpreters with Azam Imani who began working with Solace in 2007 as an interpreter, administrator and now as a psychotherapist has become known nationally and is in regular demand. New initiatives in training are continuing.

<https://www.solace-uk.org.uk/training-supervision-and-consultancy>



Policy & publishing

Anne Burghraef, Solace Clinical Director has been involved in discussions about improving mental health policy for refugees and asylum seekers in such contexts as the Home Office, the Institute for Public Policy and the Joint Refugee Action Network (JRAN), a voluntary sector network supporting refugee mental health. She has a chapter on Social Justice Informed Psychotherapy with Refugees in the soon to be published Handbook of Social Justice in Psychological Therapies (eds) L. Winter & D. Charura.

<https://www.solace-uk.org.uk/training/professionals-monographs>



Child Psychotherapy

Our therapist Hernan has written a wonderful article about the Solace Child & Family Wellbeing project for the Spring'23 edition of the Child Psychotherapy Matters magazine (for members of the Association of Child Psychotherapists) featuring therapeutic work with refugees, in which he has opened up the complexities involved in this work with resettlement refugee children and families along with some poignant case

<https://childpsychotherapy.org.uk/child-psychotherapy-matters-magazine-spring-2023>

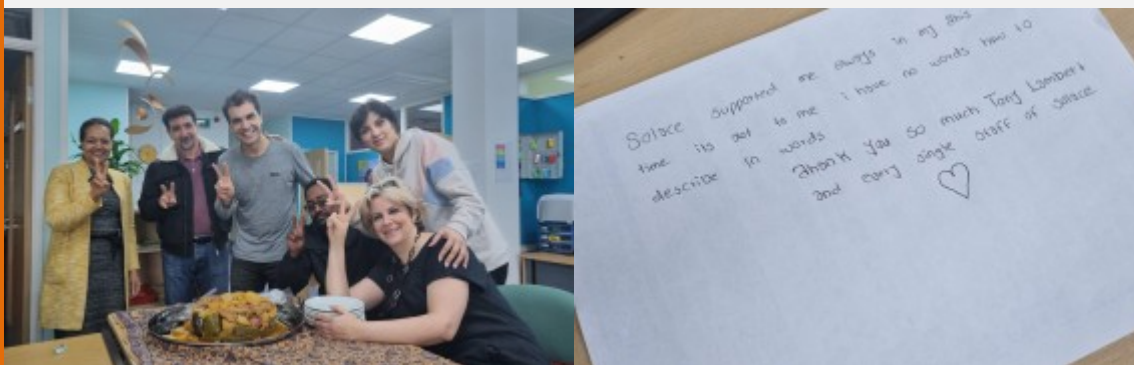
BACP conference/journey to the unknown



Solace therapist Anthea Kilminster presented at a BACP conference on the theme of a "Culturally Sensitive Trauma informed Approach to Psychotherapy" based on an article she had published in Therapy Today. It addressed the need for Western Psychotherapy to take account of the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers, and integrating it with the knowledge of how traumatic experience impacts people while taking account of the way culture shapes a person. .

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/search?q=Kilminster%20>

Happy Moments For Solace



Some of the best moments that are recorded forever in the calendar of Solace's memories are when our clients reach some peace and happiness, especially when given the security of being able to build a new life in the UK.

Idris is one of those expressed his happiness and gratitude to Solace for helping him to restore his life