



Journal of Contemporary Narrative Therapy

Editors: Tom Stone Carlson, Sanni Paljakka, marcela polanco, and David Epston

Editor's Note

By

David Epston

We are excited to announce the latest release of the Journal of Contemporary Narrative Therapy focused entirely on couples therapy. What is unique about this release is that it provides something of a historical account of what I consider to be promising new developments in contemporary narrative therapy practice with couples. But before I go there, let me first introduce our Spoken Word Publication for this release.

We are honored to include an interview with Sacha Mèdinè, a counselor from Vancouver, BC, Canada. In this interview, entitled “A Hope for Intimate Liberation: Activism in the therapy room”, he talks about his attempts to answer the question, “What do I need to do to justify therapy as my form of activism?” While there has been much debate about going beyond our offices in order to do justice work, Sacha, highlights the powerful ways that racism/white supremacy, sexism/male supremacy (and all of the other isms) have real and embodied effects on both marginalized and privileged persons and a hope and a demand for therapy to provide a healing space for intimate liberation.

The first written paper in this release is a chapter that I (David Epston) wrote in 1993 entitled “Internalized Interviewing with Couples: The New Zealand Version” that was published in “Therapeutic Conversations” and is reprinted here with permission. This paper highlights the history of internalized other questioning, which I first developed in 1985 under the name “cross-referential questioning” and later shared with Karl Tomm who renamed it as such, and includes a commentary from Michael White. We are republishing this chapter here as it provides an important historical look forward (a history for the future as I like to say) that will set the stage for the ideas and practices that are to follow.

The next paper in this release is a reprint of an article by Tom Stone Carlson and Amanda Haire, entitled “Towards a Theory of Relational Accountability: An Invitational Approach to Living Narrative Ethics in Couple Relationships.” This article was first published in the International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work in 2014. This article is being reprinted here (with permission) as it offers a reimagined look at the possibilities that narrative therapy ethics can play in helping partners enter into more accountable relationships with one another.

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Both of these historical papers are included here as they provide an important foundation for the final paper of this release by Sanni Paljakka and Tom Stone Carlson, entitled “Narrative Therapy in Times of Unlove: Intimate Witnessing in Narrative Couple’s Therapy.” In my opinion, the ideas and practices in this paper, represent some new avenues of contemporary narrative therapy with couples, which many of us have been awaiting. This paper dares us to enter into the often uncharted territories of love and 'unlove' and seeks for the means for partners to tell stories love one another, especially in the times of their most significant acts of 'unlove.'

