

# Reflections Reflections

## **Reflections about starting to publish professionally for trainee psychotherapists**

This ‘reflections’ article is designed to give some very basic information for psychotherapy students and trainees, with particular reference to the fields of dance-movement psychotherapy and body psychotherapy or somatic psychology, about starting the process of getting articles published professionally.

### **Published journal articles**

- Are a significant part of your future professional life
- Contribute to the general body of professional knowledge
- Can be about theory, research, client work, methodology, or clinical work, etc.
- Can also include book reviews, conference reports, obituaries, reflections, poems, etc.
- Can be developed out of student essays, dissertations, theses, research studies, etc.
- Can contribute towards your continuing professional development
- Can be entered for student essay prizes, etc.
- Can help you get ‘known’ as a professional in the field
- Can form the basis of a conference presentation (or vice versa: a presentation can be expanded into a journal article).

If you are interested in getting published professionally, there is some basic information about publishing professionally available online (e.g. Wikipedia<sup>1</sup> or Author Aid<sup>2</sup>; or try entering ‘How to write an academic paper’ into Google). There is also a BACP<sup>3</sup> article<sup>4</sup> that outlines the basic structure of a research article, and gives a few hints.

When choosing a particular journal for your article, there are probably several professional journals in your particular field, method, modality, or specialty to choose from. There are various lists of journals

(usually arranged alphabetically) produced by some of the major publishers like Taylor & Francis, Guilford Press<sup>5</sup>, Sage Publications<sup>6</sup>, Springer<sup>7</sup> (particularly for German language publications), Elsevier<sup>8</sup>, and so on for many different countries, and in many different languages. There are also more specialist or independent psychotherapy journals (listed below under: Professional journals in DMP & BP).

Whilst you may have a good idea of what you want to write about, and you may have even written some of it in draft form, it is best: (1) first, just to block the article out roughly; and (2) don't start to write properly before you have chosen the journal that you want it published in. Hours spent writing may result in being wasted, as it all has to be re-written in a different style for a different journal.

It is probably simplest to choose a journal that has contained articles that have frequently appeared in your course reading lists. You will be more familiar with the style and content of the articles, and your article (the topic about which you are writing) is more likely to fit in with that journal's content.

Having decided on one, or possibly two, journals, you can now start to shape the article to fit the style of those journals. On all of the publishers' websites, and usually in the back of each journal, you can discover that journal's 'Information for Authors'. These give the parameters (length, format, style, word-processing program, etc.) for submitting an article to that journal. It is very important to follow these instructions carefully, particularly as they can vary from journal to journal. Most journals want articles in MS Word (94–2007) .doc format. Use the font and spacing they suggest or require (often double-spaced with wide margins); stick carefully to the word count; give page numbers of the reference text for any quotes; follow the format rules for references very carefully, and make sure that you include each and only each reference that you mention in the text (i.e. don't list all your reading books for the article); give your biographical information in the length and format they want; and put in an abstract and keywords. Otherwise you may be asked to revise all or any of this later, and your article may even be rejected before it has been properly read.

It is very important to make a back-up copy of each version, on a spare hard disc or on a memory stick, so if anything goes wrong with the latest version you can revert easily to the previous version. At the end of each writing period, save the latest version on your computer and to the back-up system, giving it a different 'name' each time, possibly using today's date: e.g. 'My journal article 01042010'.

Before you submit it to the journal, always get a friend, colleague, senior student, or your tutor to read it through. Print it out and give them a copy, or send them a copy by e-mail, and ask them if they are willing to give you honest feedback about the article. If you do not have English as a first language, and you are writing in English, it is *essential* to show a copy of the final draft to someone else in the same professional field who is a natural English speaker,

and to ask them to correct any English spellings, punctuation, or syntax before you submit it. Again, this 'English edit' is very important as it will often save time later, or even save it being rejected.

When you are finally satisfied that this is the 'final' version, submit the article to the journal's Editor, usually by e-mail in MSWord format. Again, always keep (more than) one easily identified 'final' copy; journals usually don't want to be sent a hard copy. Whilst it is your final version, expect there to be further changes suggested, either by the Editors or by the Reviewers. Please don't become too identified with 'this' version, even though you have put a lot of effort into it. The final, published version will almost certainly be different. Please don't submit to more than one journal at a time. If one journal rejects it, then re-shape the article slightly for the next journal on your list.

### **Peer reviewing**

Your article will now be 'processed' and 'checked' by the Editor and his/her team. The initial checks are for content (does it fit with the journal); for both writing style and professional content; for length and language; for references, etc. If the Editor(s) don't feel that your article is appropriate, you will be informed of this, either by a notice of rejection, or with recommendations to revise and re-write according to some of the above. This is the first hurdle. If you manage to get through this phase, your article will then be sent for review.

Most professional articles are 'peer-reviewed', probably by two other fellow professionals: sometimes/often these are 'blind' peer reviews whereby your article has been anonymised, with your (the author's) name and details removed, and thus the reviewers should not 'know' who the author is. This allows them to review the article fairly freely. When written, the reviews are also anonymised and are sent back to the author (you) as a form of peer-professional 'feedback'. This allows (you) the author to revise the article with these comments taken into account, and hopefully without too many personality issues becoming involved in this complicated process. Some journals now have an Electronic Manuscript Management System that somewhat automates the submission and reviewing process, with automatically generated e-mails to the various people at various points in the process, though you usually have to anonymise the article first and then submit two copies: a full version and an anonymised version.

While this all may seem very daunting, the whole process is geared to produce the best possible version of your article for publication, so don't take any of it too personally. Go through with it and you really can learn and benefit from it. You are getting honest feedback from your fellow professionals: what greater compliment can they possibly give you? We have all done this: have had articles reviewed (and sometimes rejected); and had

comments back that can benefit us, our breadth and depth of knowledge, and our writing style. Sometimes it is also a little humbling.

Eventually, you should receive back the comments from at least two reviewers, and possibly some comments or suggestions from the Editor as well about what to do next, and when to do it by. At this point, your article is still usually within the publication 'process'. There are typically five levels of review comments: (1) good, acceptable, can publish; (2) good, needs a few minor revisions, usually with suggestions about what and where; (3) reasonable, needs quite a few revisions, possibly even a minor re-write, and yet can still stay within the publication process; (4) needs a major re-write, often with suggestions about how, where, etc., and then re-submit, which means that currently it is now 'out' of the publication process, but they would still like you to re-submit and go through the review process again; and (5) this is quite rare, the reviewers didn't like it, and the Editor has decided that it just isn't going to get published in that journal as this point in time. You should be given some valid reasons for such a rejection.

Incidentally, a rejection does not necessarily mean that the article is nonsense; it can mean that it doesn't fit the ethos of that particular Journal; or that you need to do quite a lot of additional work; or that you may be ahead of your time; or that the Editor has had to reduce the number of pages. Many articles have been published after an initial rejection, or even after a final rejection (after the review process). If you think you have something worth saying, persevere.

The re-write process needs to be done with the reviewers' and Editor's comment in mind, but it still needs to be *your* article. You will have to find a balance between making it 'acceptable' and keeping it 'yours'. And this needs to be done to a deadline. Welcome to the world of professional publishing!

Here follow some (hopefully) useful suggestions.

### ***Formatting***

- Try to avoid adding in additional spacing before or after a paragraph (again the default settings sometimes do this). The typesetter really needs a 'clean' text. Keep to a standard indent. Don't centre titles. Keep it simple! Again let the words speak for themselves. It will all be re-formatted anyway by the typesetter in the particular 'style' of the journal.

### ***Quotes***

- Always put the page number of a quote in as you write the article. It takes hours to try to find it again afterwards.
- Don't use too many quotes: employ them to illustrate or amplify a particular point that you are making.

- Any very long quotes, or full poem quotes, will need copyright permission. You will have to write to the original publisher and get this, stating the title and abstract of the article, giving the context, and indicating the journal that you are submitting the article to. You may have to pay for this permission: you would also need to acknowledge the permission.

### ***References***

- Try not to put in too many references from any one person; being new to publishing, you probably (hopefully) won't be too self-referential (as Editors don't like that either); and also don't put in too many references (a rule of thumb might be about 3–4 references per 1000 words).
- Make doubly sure that you have the references listed exactly according to the journal's style of references (usually a version of APA style): every comma, point, and colon counts. Make sure the page numbers of articles and chapters are included.

### ***Diagrams (figures)***

- Make sure you put in a complete version of a diagram; if the diagram has been built-up from many bits, do not submit that version: only submit a single entity. Trying later to find all the bits of the diagram when it reformats itself (as it tends to do) is a nightmare for an Editor.
- Don't put in too many diagrams, and make sure any colour pictures are formatted in grey-scale (most journals don't print in colour, or they will charge you for colour prints and diagrams).
- Always get copyright permission for other people's or previously published photos, diagrams, prints, and drawings, and attach this permission with the article. It is often easier to draw your own diagrams or take your own photos.

### ***Language***

- Avoid using 'which' instead of 'that': as 'which' usually has to be preceded by a comma. Make sure your spell checker and grammar checker is turned on.
- Make sure that the 'Language' setting of your article is correct: 'US English' or 'UK English'. Decide whether you are going to use English or American spellings, e.g. 'categorise' or 'categorize'.

Assuming everything is now 'hunky-dory' (and, by the way, please don't use slang unless you have to – as in direct quotations, or to make an especial point), your article should now be accepted, and the Editor will then send it on

to the publisher or printer. You should be informed of this. That is it: no more changes. Except...

Within a couple of weeks, you should get a proof copy sent back to you, often direct from the printer and the publisher (i.e. the Editor is now out of the process), and often in PDF format. Do not use this opportunity to try to make any significant changes: only correct mistakes (yours or theirs) in punctuation, typos, formatting, spelling, layout, split infinitives, etc. You may be asked to add in page numbers of quotes or references, etc. (You should have done so earlier: I did warn you!) And the **deadline** will be really tight now, so do it *immediately!*

And, by the way, I really hope that you didn't use too many bold, italic or underlined words (like I have just done in the paragraph above): it starts to make the article look a little tacky. The words should speak for themselves.

Once the proofreading has been done and corrections re-submitted, there are two more things that can happen. The article may first be published on-line. This means that people can buy the article online, and read and download it. The abstract and keywords are freely available, and it will stay online until the article is actually published in the hard copy edition. The second thing is that you can purchase several copies of just your article, if you want to (usually in batches of 10). Then comes the publication day and a couple of weeks later you should get your (single) author's copy of that issue of the journal. Hopefully you also subscribe to that journal. Once you have been published in a journal, you may also be asked to review other peoples' articles. Well, that is about it!

Oh, I forgot to mention, a word about citations. Some really popular and seminal articles have been 'cited by 5241' or 'cited by 1627' (which means referenced by other people in their articles on a similar topic): that is usually very good news. Journal Editors really love it if you have quoted or referenced from other articles that they have published in that journal. This helps build them up their 'score' of citations. In due course, other articles may reference your article and so your 'score' of citations will build up.

And now for a final word of warning: I stated earlier that this article was for people (with particular reference to the fields of dance-movement psychotherapy and body psychotherapy or somatic psychology). Some of these disciplines just love their own 'jargon': they are steeped in polysyllabic, 'invented' words, possibly accurate and descriptive for dynamics which are not easily described in everyday parlance and, and herein lies the warning, these are virtually meaningless to anyone outside of that particular 'cabal'. Body Psychotherapy is particularly prone to this: words and phrases like 'orgonomy', 'character-analytic vegetotherapy', 'psycho-organic analysis', 'sensori-motor psychotherapy', etc. abound in writings and articles from such disciplines. Each one of these requires a (probably extensive) footnote, if it is to be understood professionally by other people. Nothing less will do!

On a more positive note, most journals really welcome articles from trainees and students: such articles often have a freshness, dedication, intensity, and attention to detail that would be equally welcomed in more professional or long-standing authors. These are their authors of the future. You may not have been involved in many research programmes, or in-depth studies, or with masses of clinical examples, but you have been studying hard, for several years, from books which are probably more up-to-date than many that your more senior peers have read, and possibly you have been reading and studying wider than many professionals currently practicing in one particular area or discipline. Please do not imagine that you do not have something worthwhile to say (sorry about the double negative) and so, please get writing. As mentioned above, there are often student essay prizes (or something similar) as an additional incitement, but nothing ever beats the feeling of seeing your first article in print.

### **Professional journals in DMP & BP**

For people training in Dance-Movement Therapy/Psychotherapy, the main relevant journals are:

- *American Journal of Dance Therapy*<sup>9</sup> published by the American Dance Therapy Association
- *Journal of Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*<sup>10</sup> published by Taylor & Francis
- *The Arts in Psychotherapy journal*<sup>11</sup> published by Elsevier

For people training in Body Psychotherapy or Somatic Psychology, the main relevant journals are:

- *USABP Journal*<sup>12</sup> published by the US Association of Body Psychotherapy (partially peer reviewed)
- *Journal of Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*<sup>13</sup> published by Taylor & Francis (peer reviewed)
- *Energy & Character*<sup>14</sup> published by the Institute of Biosynthesis (not peer reviewed)

And there *are also various* other independent journals specific to the various methods of Body Psychotherapy (also usually not peer-reviewed) e.g. the *Hakomi Forum*<sup>15</sup>, the *European Journal of Bioenergetic Analysis*<sup>16</sup>, the *Journal of Ergonomy*<sup>17</sup>, etc.

More generally, the *International Journal of Psychotherapy*<sup>18</sup>, published by the European Association of Psychotherapy (EAP), welcomes student and trainee articles (as well as those from known or experienced clinicians,

researchers, and theorists). This journal publishes articles about any method of psychotherapy; and will also publish articles in the author's 'mother tongue', as well as in English. They have further compiled a list of European Psychotherapy Journals, available on their website, with links to all the journal websites and Editors.

There are also professional journals like *Counselling & Psychotherapy Research*<sup>19</sup> and *Psychotherapy Research*<sup>20</sup> for the more cognoscenti, and the *European Journal of Psychotherapy & Counselling*<sup>21</sup>, besides all the more specialist journals in the field, too numerous to list here.

I hope that this information has been useful: so, please now start writing your own journal articles.

Courtenay Young

### Notes on Contributor

Courtenay Young has written many journal articles (most are available on his website: [www.courtenay-young.com](http://www.courtenay-young.com)) and is a Co-Editor for the *Journal of Body, Dance & Movement in Psychotherapy* and Deputy Editor for the *International Journal of Psychotherapy*. He is currently editing the English-American version of the *Handbook of Body Psychotherapy* and he is also the author of *Help Yourself Towards Mental Health* (published by Karnac Books, 2010). He works as a counsellor and psychotherapist in Edinburgh, both in the NHS and privately. E-mail: [courtenay@courtenay-young.com](mailto:courtenay@courtenay-young.com)

### Notes

1. [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academic\\_journal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academic_journal)
2. [www.authoraid.info/resource-library/PublishingAJournalArticle.ppt/view](http://www.authoraid.info/resource-library/PublishingAJournalArticle.ppt/view)
3. British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy
4. Buckroyd, J., & Rother, S. (2008). *How to write a research paper and get it published* (BACP Information Sheet R10). Retrieved from [www.bacp.co.uk/research/Information\\_Sheets/index.php](http://www.bacp.co.uk/research/Information_Sheets/index.php)
5. [www.guilford.com/cgi-bin/search.cgi?type=dir&pattern=periodicals/per\\_psych&cart\\_id=154248.3248](http://www.guilford.com/cgi-bin/search.cgi?type=dir&pattern=periodicals/per_psych&cart_id=154248.3248)
6. [www.uk.sagepub.com/journalsCatListings.nav?display=cat&catLevel1=&prodTypes=journals&level1=800&currTree=Subjects&\\_requestid=138041&\\_requestid=149493](http://www.uk.sagepub.com/journalsCatListings.nav?display=cat&catLevel1=&prodTypes=journals&level1=800&currTree=Subjects&_requestid=138041&_requestid=149493)
7. [www.springer.com/?SGWID=0-102-0-0-0](http://www.springer.com/?SGWID=0-102-0-0-0)
8. [www.elsevier.com/wps/find/journal\\_browse.cws\\_home](http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/journal_browse.cws_home)
9. [www.springer.com/psychology/journal/10465](http://www.springer.com/psychology/journal/10465)
10. [www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/17432979.asp](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/17432979.asp)
11. [www.elsevier.com/wps/find/journaldescription.cws\\_home/833/description#description](http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/journaldescription.cws_home/833/description#description)
12. [www.usabp.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=4](http://www.usabp.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=4)
13. [www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/17432979.asp](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/17432979.asp)
14. [www.biosynthesis.org/html/e\\_euc.html](http://www.biosynthesis.org/html/e_euc.html)

15. [www.hakomiinstitute.com/Forum/TOC.htm](http://www.hakomiinstitute.com/Forum/TOC.htm)
16. [www.bioenergetic-journal.net/](http://www.bioenergetic-journal.net/)
17. [www.orgonomy.org/Second\\_Publications\\_Journal.html](http://www.orgonomy.org/Second_Publications_Journal.html)
18. [www.ijp.org.uk](http://www.ijp.org.uk)
19. [www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/14733145.asp](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/14733145.asp)
20. [www.tandf.co.uk/journals/TPSR](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/TPSR)
21. [www.tandf.co.uk/journals/routledge/13642537.html](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/routledge/13642537.html)