



Annual Reports
2008 - 2009



Chair's Report



The period covered by this report ends on 31 March 2009, the very date that we gave notice to Margaret Jacobson - our manager - that we were making her redundant. This move was brought about by a need to reduce our operating costs so that, in the face of potentially difficult financial times ahead, the future of TLC was secure. And so it is. We have much to thank Margaret for and we wish her well.

Margaret's departure has meant that TLC has had to transform into a leaner organisation that relies on its volunteers and on the newly formed Management Committee chaired by Colin Wels to make things happen. The new TLC is orchestrated by task teams, each with an area of responsibility. The organisation is stronger as a result.

The new branding, donated by my own branding company S-Group, has helped signify this new era, conveying a clearer and more confident image, but still focused on heart-based listening.

The future is bright and for this we have to thank everyone who supports The Listening Centre - the organisations and individuals who give us money, the volunteers who give us their time, energy and ideas, and the wider community that supports us in our work.

Julian Sharples

Chair
September 2009

*" I was at rock bottom
before I came to you..."*

TLC client

*" I have very much enjoyed my many years of
working for TLC and feel deeply privileged to
have had the opportunity to accompany my
clients on their journeys..."* TLC counsellor

Treasurer's Report



During the financial year 2008/2009, TLC's income from grants and donations was similar to that in the previous financial year. This was the result of hard work put in by our Manager and Fund Raising Officer, as well as Trustees and volunteers who contributed to our annual Alexandra Rose Flag Day and other events. Our total income, after bank interest and client contributions were taken into consideration, was £36,768, compared with £36,208 in 2007/2008.

However, increases in salaries and other costs resulted in a deficit of £6,440 on the year's activities, which reduced our total assets to £5,886 by the end of the year, compared with £13,326 the previous year. It was for this reason that the Trustees decided to reduce our operating costs by making the Manager's position redundant with effect from the end of April 2009.

With this reduction in operating costs and continued support from our funders, the financial prospects for TLC in fiscal year 2010 are healthy.

For full details, please see the full set of accounts included at the end of this report.

Edward Wates
Treasurer
August 2009

"It is good to talk, and not a sign of weakness to tell or ask for help...that I can and will find happiness again..." TLC client

"I have greatly appreciated the opportunity to work for TLC first as a trainee practitioner and then to continue for a while as a fully qualified psychotherapist..." TLC counsellor

Manager's Report



This has been a significant year in the life of TLC and the end of this period sees the start of a new phase in the life of our organisation.

A year of changes

During the year there have been many changes on the board of Trustees. We said goodbye to Tony Wragg, and welcomed Larry Sanders, Naomi Evans, Julian Sharples and Edward Wates at the last AGM in October, and Ian Eastwood who was co-opted in 2009 to give a full complement of members. These people all bring a wealth of experience and expertise in differing areas which will be much needed in the years ahead.

I am indebted to Jean-Luc Barbanneau for his role as Acting Chair during the first few months of this reporting period. I have valued his wisdom, insight and support throughout my time with TLC.

New counsellors have joined us during the year, and it has been a joy to welcome Rebecca Townsend, Maretta Stark, William Bentley, Memory Nyumbu, Deborah Mclean-Thorne, Sherene McPherson, Guy Harrison and Diana Chikako Mita. At the same time Amanda Tilbury, June Thomson, Brian O'Gorman, Randy Ulland and Stuart Kenner have all moved on from their work at TLC.

During this past year, we have been able to set up and settle into a wider service which includes sessions at Rosehill Children's Centre and The Leys Health Centre as well as our continuing sessions at Cuddesdon Corner.

Away Day

With Julian Sharples as facilitator and Chair, we held a very successful Away Day in early February. The snow did not deter many and we were a very full house, enjoying the beauty of the setting in its white blanket of snow. It was an opportunity to get to know each other with so many new faces, and to confirm and re-commit to our aims, values and vision.

Continued...

"I was so pleased that your organisation was the only one that bothered to reply or ring back." TLC client

"These years have been invaluable to me. During the past few years TLC has traversed some testing territory but continues to provide a secure base for both practitioners and clients..."
TLC counsellor

Manager's Report



Changes for the coming year

This report is being written at a time when we are reviewing the impact on us not only of the recession and the resulting reduced levels of funding, but also more locally of IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies).

These factors have led to some difficult discussions recently and resulted in decisions to end the contract of our Freelance Fundraiser, Bob Taylor, and to offer redundancy to me as Manager.

Although funding levels have been reduced, the demand for our service remains, with a constant flow of referrals, and increasing numbers referred on from the IAPT provision within GP surgeries.

The coming year will see a period of transition within TLC, changing roles and re-structuring in order for TLC to continue to provide the level of service we have grown into.

General

As I prepare to leave my role as Manager, there is a whole variety of experience to look back on and much that I will take with me into my future life and work.

It has been good to work with the staff at Cuddesdon Corner and more recently Rosehill and Leys Health Centre. And I will miss the good office atmosphere at Donnington with Full Circle.

I offer not only my thanks to all those who have supported both my work and the work of TLC along the way, but also my best wishes for the continued work of this invaluable project.

Margaret Jacobson

Manager
April 2009

*" I think I owe you so much
- it really helped to turn my
life around..."* TLC client

*" The work is often hard, but to see
someone's life begin to turn around, to know
that they feel heard and seen, and that they
matter, moves me more than words can say..."*
TLC counsellor

Chair of Advisory Group Report



I joined the Advisory Group late on in the period covered by this annual report, so my report is somewhat sketchy.

During the year:

- Two new members joined the Advisory Group: Sophie Khatib-Shahidi and myself
- New Trustees were appointed and the Advisory Group was involved in this
- The Advisory Group helped in the co-ordination of the Flag Day.

Since March 2009, there have been huge changes as TLC has learned to cope without a manager and working more as a co-operative. The Advisory Group has metamorphosed into the Management Committee, and all the counsellors and Trustees have joined a task team, each team carrying out specific tasks originally carried out by Margaret.

The Management Committee is now central to the running of TLC and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all members for their energy, enthusiasm and eagerness to adapt to new ways of working as we move through changing times.

Colin Wels

Chair of the Advisory Group
September 2009

"I learned to be more positive and take things one day at a time..." TLC client

"I still get support from being part of the organisation, which is a rarity in a profession otherwise known for the isolating nature of the work..." TLC counsellor

Financial Support and People



Financial Support:

The Listening Centre acknowledges financial support in the year 1 April 2008 - 31 March 2009 from:

Alexandra Rose Day
St Cross College
Cooper Charitable Trust
Matthews Wrightson Charity Trust
Charles Shorto Charitable Trust
Doris Field Charitable Trust
H D H Wills 1965 Charitable Trust
J A Pye's Charitable Trust
Lynn Foundation
PF Charitable Trust
Robert and Margaret Moss Charitable Trust
Yapp Charitable Trust
Inman Charity
St Michael's and All Saints' Charities
Friends of TLC
Individual donors (including anonymous donations)

Unrestricted

We gratefully acknowledge the receipt of an unrestricted grant from the Wates Foundation of £30,000 paid in three amounts of £10,000 over three years commencing June 2009.

TLC People:

Trustees

Jean-Luc Barbanneau
David Colbourne
Ian Eastwood
Naomi Evans
Sheila Harris
Marigold Hutton
Larry Sanders
Julian Sharples (Chair)
Edward Wates (Treasurer)
Tony Wragg (resigned 13 October 2008)

Minutes Secretary to Trustees:

Niamh Moriarty

Counsellors

William Bentley
Andrea Feucht
Guy Harrison
Tamara Herrmann
Sharmila Kaduskar
Stuart Kenner
Jane Leahy
Rachel Lebus
Hilary Lloyd
Deborah McLean-Thorne
Sherene McPherson
Diana Chikako Mita
Marie Murray
Yvonne Noble
Memory Nyumbu
Suzette Reynolds
Maretta Stark
Sophie Khatib-Shahidi
June Thomson
Anne Timpson
Rebecca Townsend
Randy Ulland
Barbara Wallis
Colin Wels

Clinical Consultant

Maja O'Brien

Centre Manager

Margaret Jacobson

Funding Officer

Bob Taylor

Bookkeeper

Barbara Coombes

Accountants to TLC:

Mercer Lewin, Chartered Accountants,
41 Cornmarket Street, Oxford OX1 3HA

Bankers for TLC:

CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Ave,
West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

"I was a very angry and unreasonable person, almost impossible to live with. I gained a lot of self-confidence and am happier from it all..." TLC client

"It was TLC that enabled me to work for the first time as a counsellor, and for that I will always be grateful..."
TLC counsellor

Aims and Values

The aim of The Listening Centre is to provide a counselling service at low cost to people on limited incomes in Blackbird Leys and surrounding areas who are unable to afford private counselling fees.

We offer clients a supportive environment in which healing and personal growth can be nurtured and we are committed to ensuring that no-one is discriminated against on grounds of age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion or disability.

The Listening Centre is able to offer this service with volunteer counsellors and psychotherapists gaining practical experience as part of their training or working towards professional accreditation.



The Listening Centre,
Cuddesdon Corner Family Centre,
61-63 Cuddesdon Way,
Blackbird Leys,
Oxford OX4 6SB

Tel: 01865 794794

www.thelisteningcentre.org.uk

Registered Charity No: 1098571