

EDITOR'S NOTE

Beginning from late 60-ies of the last century behavioural and cognitive therapy has developed to become one of the most recognized psychotherapy approaches. Since that time, it has grown and developed to the extent that it is not considered as one approach, but more as a group of related therapies.

The roots of behaviour therapy in Croatia dated in from the early 80-ies in the last century. It started with the enthusiasm of Nada Anić who has spread the idea of behavioural and later cognitive thinking style in the region in time of strong predominance of psychodynamic therapeutic orientation. She has also set the ground for the systematic training in behavioural and cognitive therapies in Croatia and in neighbour countries. Today, we have a small but strong group of professionals, most of them university teachers, who provide training, counselling and research in CBT. In the last 10 years CBT has become more and more popular among clinicians, as well as among the patients and clients in our country.

The Croatian Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Therapies was founded in 1995 and became a full EABCT member in 1997. After just 10 years, we were given the organization of the European congress. It was the first time that Croatian association has organized such a big international event, which was a great honour, but at the same time a big challenge for the small group of our enthusiastic members. *39th EABCT annual congress* was held from 16th to 19th September, 2009 in Dubrovnik.

The congress attracted more than 800 participants from 50 countries, mostly European, but also from Australia, USA, New Zealand and Japan. It has had a strong scientific and professional emphasis. In his excellent opening keynote address "From science to practice" David Clark gave an inspiring introduction to the current status of cognitive-behaviour therapy and put a strong emphasis on strict research based data.

"We now have over 40 years of treatment, development research and randomized control trials that have really unambiguously demonstrated the effectiveness of CBT in a very wide range of conditions: anxiety disorders,

depression, eating disorders, psychosomatic disorders, psychosis, bipolar disorder, couples difficulties, children's disorders. In many European countries this achievement has been recognized in treatment guidelines, strongly advocating the use of CBT in most mental health problems", said David Clark.

As we could here at the rest of the congress, besides a very broad range of psychopathological entities, CBT techniques can also be applied in the fields outside psychopathology, primarily behavioural medicine (physical health problems), but also in education, parenting and coaching. The congress topics included the latest conceptualization of psychopathology in adulthood, elderly and childhood, as well as training and supervision in CBT.

According to the main topic of the congress "*New perspectives*", CBT promised to have a good perspective for future developments, as it makes a good sense to clinicians and clients as a useful, educational and effective treatment.

The present thematic issue of "*Psychological Topics*" is an important echo of the congress and includes papers from authors who participated, some of them as invited speakers, at the congress in Dubrovnik. We have also included two papers of Croatian authors who are well established CBT teachers.

This issue is far from the complete and exhaustive review of the current status of CBT. Included 11 papers cover some of the areas of research and clinical practice in CBT. There are theoretical articles discussing some of the important CBT concepts (schema, neurobiological correlates of CBT), articles dealing with specific psychological problems (child anxiety, depression, eating disorders, obesity, grieving, hopelessness). There is also a paper dealing with the emerging "third wave" of CBT, mindfulness. As one of the main challenges of CBT today is a problem of dissemination of the empirically well supported treatments, as well as the lack of highly trained therapists to provide services to everyone needed, I am very happy that we included the paper on the organization of services for people with mental health problems and training in CBT.

We are aware that many important topics are left uncovered, but we will leave it for some future issues.

Even if the first article presenting the behaviour therapy in Croatian was published in 1975 by Nada Anić, and there were more individual articles that follow it, this is obviously the first issue of one Croatian journal dedicated to cognitive-behavioural therapy, but I am sure it is not the last one. I do hope that the grounds that we have set will encourage more young psychologists to spread the idea, start new research projects and publish more articles and journals on CBT.

I want to express my sincere thanks to all the authors for their contribution to this issue, and hope that readers will enjoy in reading the result of our mutual work.

Ivanka Živčić-Bećirević