



What does a typical AIP member look like?

Part one of the analysis of the 2006 AIP membership questionnaire

We are a diverse lot. Apparently about all we have in common is that we are counsellors or psychotherapists (or both), we belong to BACP and AIP, and we took the trouble to fill in the AIP profile questionnaire last year. Unfortunately, only 5.3 per cent of our (then) 730 members responded to the request, but possibly some conclusions can be drawn.

Because it is such a small sample and because the ranges are so diverse, it does not seem useful to give averages, but rather to give ranges for the various answers. For example, in question one (How long have you been a member of BACP?) the answers range from 'just joined' to 28 years. The median (as many answers above as below) is nine years. Similarly, for question two (How long have you been a member of AIP/PRG/PRSF/PSMFT?) the answers range from 'just joined' to 25 years, and the median is two years.

Not many of the respondents log on to the BACP website (range: 0-10 times a month) and even fewer log on to the AIP website (range: 0-8; median: 0). Client hours per week range from two to 23, with a median of nine, and fees charged range from zero to £100, with a median of £32.50. The age range of members is harder to pinpoint as the options were

themselves given as ranges. However, only one respondent is in the 20-30 range; seven are in the 31-40 range and 12 in the over 60 range. Which means the majority (9) fall into the 51-60 range.

One quarter of the respondents also belong to other divisions of BACP. The majority of respondents (27 to 12) are accredited counsellors, though only four are accredited supervisors. The number of years in practice ranges from 'just started', to 39 years, with a median of eight years. The distance travelled for supervision varies from none (telephone supervision) to more than 70 miles.

Half the respondents work (as therapists) in organisations in addition to working in private practice, and half (not necessarily the same people) have non-counselling paid work in addition to their counselling work.

Our diversity really reveals itself in the number of orientations and speciality areas each respondent listed. Seventeen different major orientations were given by the 39 respondents: Adlerian, behavioural, CBT, eclectic, existential, Gestalt, humanistic, integrative, interpersonal, NLP, PCA (evidence based), person centred, psychodynamic, reality therapy, shamanic, solution focused, TA, and transpersonal. And no fewer than

30 different specialities were listed, ranging from abuse and violence, through adoption, cultural issues, death and dying, decision making, life coaching and relationships, to sexual minorities and trauma.

Respondents are equally well spread over the UK, including Northern Ireland, and one from overseas. Predictably more respondents live in and around London than anywhere else. Fifteen respondents practise in urban areas, five in rural areas, with the remaining 19 working in mixed areas. Only 10 respondents rent somewhere to practise; the majority see clients at home (the therapist's home, presumably, for the majority).

The widest spread occurs in how respondents' working time is broken down. There is no pattern at all: some respondents do far more EAP work than anything else, some do more supervision than therapy, and some do more non-counselling work than anything else. All of which simply emphasises how very diverse our membership is.

Part two of this analysis – featuring respondents' personal thoughts and wishes – will be published in the summer 2007 issue of *The Independent Therapist*. ■

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