

## **Frank Margison:** **Back to the Future: Tracing the story of CAT**



"Frank is a psychiatrist working in Manchester, UK- currently working in the two Manchester universities in student counselling and mental health services.

Before that he was clinical lead in the Gaskell Psychotherapy Centre in Manchester working as a relational psychoanalytic psychotherapist as well as working in CAT and psychodynamic interpersonal therapy [PIT]

He is a CAT psychotherapist and is currently the non-Executive chair of Catalyse - the CAT organisation providing CPD and training mainly in Northern England. He has written articles on CAT and several book reviews for the ICATA journal and is currently writing a review of Ryle and Kerr (2020) as a way of synthesising developments within CAT. He is external examiner for the Inter-Regional CAT psychotherapy course (IRRAPT)

His research involved maternal mental health problems and bonding / attachment difficulties, and then co-developing a model of psychotherapy called the Conversational Model of psychotherapy (aka known as Psychodynamic Interpersonal Therapy [PIT]) with the late Robert Hobson.

He was a co-developer of the CORE outcome measure and sees routine outcome measures as a way of highlighting problems in therapy at an early stage.

He was a pioneer in developing and evaluating video teaching and role play for training mental health professionals in psychotherapy skills. In the last three years he has developed a set of 8 films on PIT drawing on the experiences in the late 70's and 80's when the initial methods were developed. He is also a member of the Catalyse film development group which is just completing the work on a further set of films on advanced CAT skills.

He was the UK vice-President for Society for Psychotherapy Research and in that role set up conferences in a hotel in North Yorkshire where Tony Ryle and colleagues presented the earliest versions of CAT as a researchable approach to psychotherapy built on the central importance of a human relationship. His presentations are based on that longitudinal view of CAT in the context of broadening access to high quality therapy".

### **Summary of presentation**

Since Tony Ryle first described CAT as a way of helping individuals to change there has been a process of change and renewal: we can track these changes through the key iterations of core textbooks and also through changing practice as reflected in films designed to model the CAT therapeutic conversation.

We look at how CAT has been through a gradual development in following the understanding of the self and how the self in relation to others changes through the experience of trauma.

CAT has developed several models of the self and these have gradually evolved over time from the shifting self-states seen in narcissistic defences through to our current model where dissociation as a result of trauma is recognized as a core component.

The paper looks at developing models from other approaches, and also our growing understanding of the damaged self in diverse public figures as disparate as Shakespeare's Richard III and Marilyn Monroe.

Is CAT in 2023 an extended version of what Tony Ryle developed in conversations at Society for Psychotherapy Research in 1983, his key book *Cognitive Analytic Therapy: Active Participation in Change* or his joint work with Ian Kerr in 2002, or its recent update in 2020?

Spoiler alert:

There *is* a coherent thread running through all versions that puts the conversation with another person at the centre of the work, but the model has been elaborated so extensively that we constantly need to remind ourselves of its basic simplicity.