

## Memories of Chris Freeman

Chris Freeman was born and brought up in York, where he particularly hero-worshipped his father. He was one of two children but sadly lost his younger sister to asthma. He was open about his own life and experiences and warmly curious about other people - colleagues, patients or others.

He originally came up to Edinburgh University to read Veterinary Medicine, but could not identify with the 'tweed-jacketed' fellow vet students and switched to medicine, and particularly Psychiatry. However, he surrounded himself with animals all his life. He had a special propensity to adopt abandoned, damaged or sick animals. Despite a tolerant and positive attitude to disturbed people, he was unable to tolerate the notion of anyone who was cruel to animals. His generosity characterised his professional practice too – he gathered around himself a staff group including many of us who had unusual career paths, medical or mental health problems of our own, or family commitments preventing us from working fulltime. He enjoyed a thoroughly multidisciplinary environment and was extraordinarily successful in forming loyal and enthusiastic teams which transcended the common professional rivalries of those days.

As a young psychiatrist, Chris won awards such as the 1979 Royal College of Psychiatrists Gaskell Gold Medal for research, published extensively, and appeared on TV for the Open University discussing ECT – one of his lifelong specialties. The field of Eating Disorders was only one of his many interests, but it was one he particularly relished because it exercised his medical, pharmacological and psychosocial virtuosity all at the same time. He was fascinated by Borderline Personality Disorder, which he insisted on calling 'Borderline Disorder' as he believed it was not a lasting personality diagnosis. In 1984 he was appointed as the first Consultant Psychotherapist in cognitive behavioural psychotherapy in Scotland having trained in Philadelphia with Tim Beck. In 1989 he set up the Cullen Centre (named after William Cullen the Edinburgh Physician who first coined the term neurosis) and this became a nationally recognised centre for training and teaching in psychotherapies.

The Centre provided outpatient treatment for people with Eating Disorders (who had previously been routinely admitted to hospital wards) but was also a service offering new structured psychological therapies to people with OCD, trauma, and a range of other difficulties. At this time, he also set up SEDIG (the Scottish Eating Disorders Interest Group) and was its first chair. This unique group united clinicians of all professions with former patients and carers, and has continued to meet to the present day. In 2005 Chris and Aberdeen's Harry Millar co-chaired the QIS Recommendations on the management of Guidelines on eating disorders. These became the accepted standards of care for eating disorders nationally in Scotland.

By this time he had already established a local cognitive therapy training programme together with Professor Ivy Blackburn. When Ivy Blackburn left, Kate Davidson joined the project and they developed the South of Scotland CBT course as a two year Diploma course affiliated to Queen Margaret University. The Course was incredibly popular with trainees, and even more so with the teachers and supervisors involved, for whom Chris organised annual 'winter retreats' in the Highlands.

Not content with a single model of Psychological Therapy, Chris trained in Canada in IPT, the Interpersonal Psychotherapy model of Klerman and Weissman, and delivered IPT training

in Edinburgh and elsewhere, as well as conducting a head to head research trial of CBT versus IPT for depressed patients in Primary Care. He also fostered practice in Cognitive Analytic Therapy (CAT) and Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT), and explored several other therapies without always introducing them into our service.

The Lockerbie Disaster sparked another new interest for Chris, and in 1997 he set up the first Scottish specialist treatment centre for traumatic stress in Edinburgh. The Rivers Centre was named after W H R Rivers the Psychiatrist who worked at Craiglockhart Hospital in World War I and treated Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen. Chris had discovered their original medical records in a disused storeroom and become fascinated by their story. He arranged a premier of the film 'Regeneration' as a launch of the Rivers Centre. He remained active in Trauma work into his retirement as a founding president of UKPTS (United Kingdom Psychological Trauma Society).

Chris will be remembered as a charismatic presenter, capable of improvising impressive performances at the drop of a hat. He was an excellent teacher in workshop formats. As a supervisor and mentor – or simply a brilliant conversationalist – he was inspiring, although not entirely reliable. Senior trainees would sometimes find he had triple-booked. A patient would appear for their appointment at the same time as the booked supervision, only for the secretary to reveal that Chris was presenting in Australia. The patient was invariably a most interesting person. Some of the best teaching happened when we would gather as a small group in the Victorian villa that the Cullen Centre occupied in Morningside on Wednesday evenings over pizza, to discuss different models of psychotherapy and ethical conundrums.

Jane Morris, September 2017