

Marketing Workshop with Naava Carmen (21 March 2019, at the Indian YMCA London)

ACT and the South West London Regional BAcC group came together for an extra special 4 hour Marketing Workshop run by Naava Carmen. I think many of us had been expecting to learn about social media and marketing strategies but it was far more engaging and explorative than a workshop on Twitter could ever be. Naava led us into a deeper more reflective look at our practices (& ourselves!). She shared ideas to help run them more efficiently, overcome blocks and find inspiration.

Whatever you do make it INTENTIONAL.

She started with a series of questions:

- What is it I need to know about you to help you market better?
- What is important to you right now?
- What is going on in your life to stop you making those things happen?

There was an opening up from the floor and a recognition that many of us face similar challenges, for example:

- motivation to do the less attractive sides of running a practice
- time and task management
- money matters
- balancing conflicting demands inside and outside our practices
- choosing the direction we take our practices in

Some practical suggestions from Naava:

- Write *everything* you need to do into a **'to do list'** app, like Wunderlist'. Do 3 things from the list every day and do the thing you least want to do first.
- Book tasks into free spaces in your diary so that you schedule them in the same way you would schedule a client.
- With regard to **blogs/social media** she said that if you are sitting there willing something to come to fruition and struggling, then that is probably what will come across.
- Talk to people at every opportunity about what you do - have a one minute **'Elevator pitch'** prepared, and well practised, that succinctly describes what you want to portray.
- If you want to attract particular clients then make that clear and reach out to them -see the front page of her website for an example.

Valuing what we give and how much we charge - Value & Price Justification Exercise

- What are your costs? Make your list.
 - Room fees, decorating, equipment, books, courses, membership, insurance, marketing, supervision, self-care, holiday pay, sick pay etc, etc.
- What is the value you are offering clients? Make your list.
 - Feeling heard and understood, being listened to, an hour of undivided attention, being held, information and ideas, dietary and lifestyle advice, the actual treatment, preparation time, referrals, following up, etc.

Client Management

How do you get clients on board and set up your relationship/expectations?

- What is the outcome you want from first contact with your first contact with clients? Naava advised managing contact with clients outside the consultation room carefully so that your free time is not eaten up. 'I've got 5 minutes, so I'll just move to a quiet room so that I can give you my undivided attention.'
- Have clear conversations so that clients understand the commitment to treatment that will yield results and the partnership between practitioner and client.
- What behaviours in clients do you find irritating?
Use an alter ego/virtual assistant/alternative name to communicate expected practice guidelines to clients. Gives a distance so that it is the practice and not you personally setting boundaries. E.g. persistent lateness, frequent cancellations.
- Explore ways to say 'No' in a supportive way e.g. by giving alternatives.
- Streamline payments to save time. Naava uses BACS for same day payments. If clients choose to pay later then it is with Paypal with an additional £6 Paypal charge. Consider card machine.

Break – a fine spread of sandwiches, nibbles and fruit went down very well!

Masterminding Exercise

A simple exercise but one that the four of us in our group found really beneficial.

In groups of four:

One person had 6 minutes to talk about an issue with which they were grappling.

The three listeners in the group then took it in turns and had 6 minutes each to respond, ask questions, explore, give feedback, insights and support.

We then switched so that each person presented their issue and received feedback from the other three.

The mantra

It is easy. It is simple. It is fun!

Thank you, Naava, and everyone on the ACT steering committee and Regional Group who put time and energy into organising such a useful and inspiring event. Feedback has been excellent.

Meeting notes by Philippa Summers