

**ABSTRACT:**

Over the last thirty years, with resistance on several fronts, the profession of psychotherapy and counselling has been allowing itself to be recuperated by neoliberal agendas: the widening gap between individuation for the monied and assembly-line social adjustment for the many; the diagnosis of poverty and social inequality as mental illness; the regulation, manualisation and market branding of the profession.

From my experience of psychoanalysis and the UKCP since the late '80's, I will argue that we psychotherapists have colluded with varieties of neoliberalism since Thatcher, under the spell of its coercive assertion of 'inevitability', its promise of authorised access to 'the market' and our thirst for social status.

I will suggest that it is time to break out of the spell and put alternative agendas for the future of counselling and psychotherapy into action. I will talk about my own efforts and the work of many others - often on a small-scale and at a local level, inside and outside the consulting room - to promote alternative visions of psychotherapy's contribution to the social good. I will invite similar experiences from the conference.