

A statement from the SPTI Unity Focus Group:

The SPTI Unity Focus Group is a collaborative group of students, graduates and staff who formed to support diversity, equality and inclusion within The Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute and the wider psychotherapy profession.

Our members hold many intersections of identity and as a community we have felt the deep impact of the recent unacceptable violence and rioting in the UK and the increase in racist and Islamophobic expression.

The recent unrest and racist actions taken in our local areas have resulted in our communities feeling unsafe in their daily lives and exacerbating experiences of racialised trauma for those particularly affected and/or targeted. As a diverse community we stand against such violence and disunity.

As therapists we disproportionately support marginalised and underprivileged people. The real-life impact on those we work with, as well as ourselves as professionals and people, have been deep and profound. We would encourage people to lean on their networks for support, to speak among trusted colleagues and to hold space for each other.

We acknowledge that working as a therapist of colour can be a difficult but very rewarding experience. On a daily basis therapists of colour encounter others who make judgements about what they do due to how they present, and they are working to demonstrate it is possible to achieve and succeed no matter your race or creed and wish to inspire others to get into therapy whether it is as therapists or clients.

To be in unity with one another, to be able to offer support to another is to be in contact. Staying in contact exists in many shapes and forms, whether that is being in contact with those who have been personally affected or staying in contact with the discomfort of your own privilege as a white person in this community. We have work to do to protect and keep our spaces safe for everyone.

It is in the spirit of Unity across our distinct perspectives and identities that the group was formed, and we seek at this current moment to share a message of support and an appeal for unity. To be in contact and to stand in solidarity and offer a safe space to all, particularly Black, Brown, Asian and other Global Majority members of our SPTI community.

Members of the Unity group have communicated that they have experienced increased anxiety and stress as a result of the recent unrest, and as we have reached out to others in our community, we know these feelings are shared. Many are also encouraged by glimmers of hope, support and the reenergised anti-racist movement countering the riots.

It is at times like these that we can gain strength from action and advocacy. If anyone in our community would like to contribute towards taking action, advocating or using their position to highlight this issue, then you are welcome to contact the Unity group for support with this. We see and value the contribution you make, and we hold you in mind.

Be the change you want to see in the world, together we can make a difference.

Asha Davies, Anthony Bedward,

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*Members of **The SPTI Unity Focus Group***

Find out more about the work of the group here: <https://www.spti.net/diversity/>

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