



### Who we are and who we serve

BAATN is the UK's largest independent organisation to specialise in working psychologically, informed by an understanding of intersectionality, with people who identify as Black, African, South Asian and Caribbean. Our primary focus and area of expertise is to support people from these heritages. However, we are open to other people of colour who are also affected by prejudice due to the colour of their skin and global white power.



[www.baatn.org.uk](http://www.baatn.org.uk)

Registered in England | Registration No. 7298445

Certified member of Social Enterprise UK

# The Black, African and Asian Therapy Network

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## Therapist Directory

BAATN has an online directory of therapists who are self-selected, experienced and qualified. They represent a range of different theoretical orientations and specialisms and are experienced in working with the distinctive African, Caribbean and South Asian experience.

## How Therapy can help?

There are many myths about counselling, one of which is that it's a sign of weakness. Nothing could be further from the truth. Therapy is about empowering people to live better lives without judgement. Therapists provide you with a supportive, non-judgemental and confidential environment in which to explore any emotional distress or difficulties you may be experiencing, or any loss of direction and purpose. The therapist can perceive the difficulties from your point of view and can help you to see things more clearly. Therapy is a way of enabling choice or change or reducing confusion.

## Aims and goals

One of the primary aims of BAATN is to address the inequality of access to appropriate psychological services for Black, African, South Asian and Caribbean people, which is a well-recognised reality<sup>1</sup>. We acknowledge the enormity of this task; therefore, we actively seek partnerships with white majority therapy and training organisations that recognise racism, and the importance of undoing the impact of racism, as an essential part of being mentally healthy. We also seek to work in partnership with other minority groups who experience global and institutional oppression.

Our overall goal is the individual and collective processing of our inner experiences for the benefit of our communities and to give a voice to a 'Black empathic approach'<sup>2</sup> in therapy and therapy education. As a body, we seek to influence the integration of this approach into mainstream psychotherapy training, literature and practice. We also encourage other organisations to work with us and support our work.

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## Our membership

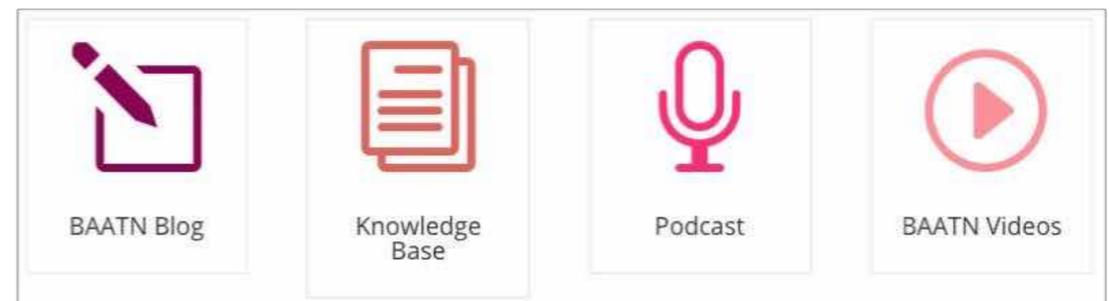
BAATN's membership is made up mostly of counsellors, psychotherapists and psychologists of Black, African, South Asian and Caribbean and people of colour heritages of various theoretical orientations but there are also many members of BAATN who do not come from these heritages and are interested in being allies and supporting us in our aims.

## Student mentoring

Training to become a therapist presents significant emotional challenges and given that therapy is predominantly a 'white profession' help is not always at hand to non-white trainees. BAATN provides a mentoring programme called 'Each One Teach One' to address this problem. The programme gives students confidence in knowing that they can be part of, what is traditionally a white middle-class profession, and support them with the many ethical, spiritual, personal beliefs and value systems that can be overlooked when one is from a minority.

## Library of free website resources

The BAATN website has a wealth of information on the internal psychological world from a UK Black, African, South Asian and Caribbean perspective. There are podcasts as well as a knowledge-base of research and articles along with the BAATN Blog and video presentations.



## Our events

BAATN offers healing and learning spaces for therapist and others in the helping professions. There are events specifically for those of Black, African, South Asian and Caribbean heritages and there are events for therapists of all heritages. BAATN also offers healing and learning spaces for members of the public who want to benefit from the knowledge and expertise of the network and who want to engage proactively and consciously in their psychological lives.

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Not for profit

BAATN is a Social Enterprise, which means that all profits are reinvested. BAATN is run mostly by volunteers and survives through membership fees, donations and crowdfunding.

The BAATN leadership team

The Leadership Team are a group of ten experienced and influential practitioners in the field of Psychotherapy, Counselling and self-development. They bring their considerable expertise and insight into supporting and steering BAATN towards its aims and objectives and to make things happen.



Brief history of BAATN



After qualifying as a psychotherapist, founder Eugene Ellis, received many requests from the public for either a black or Asian therapist that they could see for counselling. At that time, he personally knew a handful of black or Asian therapists that he could refer to so set about looking for the directory he imagined would be there - somewhere. After an extensive search he found that there was no such directory. In 2003 Eugene bid for funding from an organisation that supports social entrepreneurs and created the 'Black and Asian Therapists Online Directory'. Through advertising and word of mouth Eugene invited Black, African, South Asian and Caribbean therapists to join the directory so that they could be more easily found. Over time this directory spurred meet ups and gatherings to inspire and support each other in our collective development. In 2006 BAATN had its first annual conference and in 2010 BAATN was registered as a not-for-profit company. Today BAATN has almost 250 therapists in its directory and over 2000 therapy practitioners on its mailing list.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> “Healthcare providers need relevant training and support in developing effective communication strategies to deliver individually tailored and culturally sensitive care. Improved engagement with people from BME backgrounds in the development and delivery of culturally appropriate mental health services could facilitate better understanding of mental health conditions and improve access”

Perceived barriers to accessing mental health services among black and minority ethnic (BME) communities. British Medical Journal (BMJ) 2016 – Volume 6, Issue 11

Mental Health Foundation – Mental health statistics: black, Asian and minority ethnic groups – A summary of the research to date

<sup>2</sup> Dr Isha McKenzie-Mavinga has coined the term “A black empathic approach” (Mavinga 2009). She talks about this approach as understanding and paying attention to the emotions evoked by racism. Drawing on the humanistic concept of empathy, offering a response that specifically and sensitively relates to a client’s racial and cultural experiences as they express them and as the therapist intuitively recognises them. ‘A black empathic approach’ points us towards a connection to feelings about difference and sameness, and a shared understanding of racism.

