



MEDIA STATEMENT

THE WPA'S RESPONSE TO POPE FRANCIS' REVELATION THAT HE CONSULTED A PSYCHOANALYST IN THE PAST

Geneva, 18 September 2017 – In his recently published book, *Politics and Society (Politique et société)*, Pope Francis has revealed for the first time, that he sought help from a psychoanalyst when he was younger ‘to clarify a few things’ and that ‘now nothing frightens him’. At the age of 42, decades before he became Pope, he visited a psychoanalyst in Buenos Aires in his native Argentina for six months. He is believed to be the first Pope in history to have visited a psychoanalyst.

Dinesh Bhugra, President of the WPA said: “Pope Francis has set a positive example to people around the world by so openly describing his own mental health problems. Having such a well-recognised global figurehead disclose his own experiences helps to spread awareness and break down stigma around mental health conditions. His revelations will also help challenge the perception among some people that those who seek treatment for mental health conditions are weak, supporting the importance of self-awareness and self-analysis.”

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To arrange an interview with Dinesh Bhugra or another member of the WPA Executive Committee, please contact rita.martins@mandfhealth.com. Visit <http://www.wpanet.org/> or follow us on twitter @wpa_headoffice for further information.