



CONTRA COSTA PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION



2011 Winter Newsletter



The President's Message

By Susan O'Grady, Ph.D.

I officially started my tenure as President of our association on January 1, but the gavel was passed at our annual meeting on January 21. At that meeting, as I listened to John Preston, Ph.D. talk about *Managing Resistances in Psychotherapy*, I was again struck by the uniqueness of our profession. He mentioned the incubation chambers of ancient times, when a person in emotional pain, turmoil, or grief would go into a darkened chamber with a Holy Person for three days. The idea being that when one is in despair, healing comes by *being with* the feelings, and allowing the feelings to be present. In our psychotherapy offices we often re-create such a chamber, a container for those feelings to be expressed as we listen deeply. When someone is suffering, the willingness to go into the dark with them as they move through their feelings is a large part of what we do as psychologists.

There is a plethora of wisdom that comes through the ages to guide us. Rumi stated it well:

"Everything you see has its roots in the unseen world. The forms may change, yet the essence remains the same. Every wonderful sight will vanish; every sweet word will fade, But do not be disheartened, The source they come from is eternal, growing, Branching out, giving new life and new joy. Why do you weep? The source is within you and this whole world is springing up from it." — Jelaluddin Rumi

And Carl Jung wrote: *"Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart... Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes."*

In this time of evidence-based therapies, we are often pressured to keep our clients from experiencing painful emotions by suggesting alternative cognitions or practices that will alleviate their discontent. We think about outcomes, often with an imaginary HMO adjuster sitting in the room as we work. I have been fortunate over the years to have a practice that does not rely on insurance panels. But it was not always that way.

When I left California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco to start my private practice, I joined many insurance panels as a PPO provider. That was over twenty years ago. Those were the days when PPOs had just come into being, and they were good to us. We were allowed to charge fees much higher than HMOs and Medicare currently allow psychologists to charge. It was before managed care. It was the time when psychologists fought for hospital admitting privileges and to be allowed membership to psychoanalytic institutes. Both of which we

got only to find out that the times-were-a changing. While we were able to admit patients to inpatient hospitals, we were to learn that reimbursement was unreliable and length of stay shrank to almost nothing. I know because I did get admitting privileges at Walnut Creek Hospital. And then the bottom fell out of the inpatient market. Psychiatric hospitals were closing and many psychiatrists were leaving hospital-based practices as well.

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Psychologists (with the aid of our professional organizations, CPA and APA) waged a battle to gain access to psychoanalytic institutes. Just as we were granted admission to these elite institutes, the demand for long term psychoanalytic therapy was on the wane. Again, the timing was not with us. Cognitive therapy had arrived on the scene with a wham.

There have been many other changes, exciting and innovative. We have learned more about brain function with fMRI. Our understanding of neurobiology is beginning to guide our work. It is easier to expand our knowledge and learn to be better psychologists because we have a wealth of information available to us with a few keystrokes.

These and other numerous developments make our profession a dynamic and growing one. Many psychologists are working for less income than in previous years, but the possibilities for a fulfilling practice continue to grow. The public still needs our help, and increasingly people are asking for it. We will continue to use evidenced-based therapies as we create, in one way or another, the space to be present with our clients to ride the waves of their emotional lives and help them live well and wholeheartedly.

It is an honor to accept the responsibility of the position of President of this association. In doing so, I become the newest link in a chain of dedicated psychologists who have served as president before me, psychologists who have generously given their time, energy and creativity to serve the membership of our organization.

We are a diverse membership. Geographically, we span Contra Costa County from Antioch to Orinda, and from San Ramon to Martinez. We represent a diverse economic area as well, from urban poor to affluent. Our membership ranges in age from newly licensed psychologists to the many old-timers, the group to which I now belong.

Those of you who are also old-timers—and you know who you are—will remember that Dr. Beth Hall created a website for our organization that displayed each member's name, a photo, and a description of their practice. Over the years, that evolved into an Information and Referral webpage, as the website was reconfigured. The I & R became a resource for the public to get referrals and information regarding low fee clinics and other support organizations.

When I became President-elect two years ago, it became apparent that the consumers were not turning to the yellow pages for referral information. While the I & R continued to provide a valuable service to many, it was not being utilized at a volume to justify the expense of the phone service. For many people in our county, doing a Google or a Yahoo search to locate a therapist was the norm. The Membership Survey the board conducted in 2010 showed that most respondents were in favor of eliminating the phone-based structure of the I & R service and switching to a web-only service. I worked with the board to expand the website and create the "Find A Psychologist" tool.

Now, the Find a Psychologist page on CCPA's website is designed so that each of our members can create a webpage displaying their practice. I encourage all of you to log onto the site and create a profile. This serves to enhance your practice, but more importantly, it lets our entire membership know who takes what form of insurance, who is running groups, and what services are offered by whom. Along with our list-serve, we have a handy way to make referrals to our colleagues. For those of you who have your own website already, you can link it to our site. CCPA's Find-a- Psychologist usually comes up on first or second page of Google searches. Our new Website Chair, Dr. Fran DiDomenicis, has ideas for creating new links in cyberspace.



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Upcoming events: We plan to present a panel discussion with our members who have published books, Andy Pojman, and Ed Abramson, to name two. We are looking for anyone else in the organization who has published to join in this panel. The discussion will highlight their experiences in translating their clinical knowledge into published books. We also will have a presentation by our member, Dr. John Rocios and his partner, Connie Concannon, L.C.S.W., on *Failure to Launch*; examining the growing problem of young adults who have trouble establishing independence. ♦



Membership



Get Your Practice Noticed on the Web!
Join CCPA's "Find a Psychologist"

We have updated the CCPA website so that all licensed psychologists in our membership can have a Web presence on the site. Prospective clients can use a search engine to find psychologists by zip code, insurance, or areas of specialization. CCPA typically turns up in Google searches early, often on the first or second page. If you have a website, you can link it to your practice description.

You simply pay a one-time fee of \$50.00, which can be paid when you renew your membership, or any time before then. After you have paid, log onto CCPA, and using your log-in password, create a listing for your practice. Your listing will describe your areas of practice, give your location and contact information, and include your photo.

Members who have created profiles on the site have been getting referrals, as clients are using the Web more than any other source to find therapists. It is especially useful for our own membership, as we can use it to check the status of group therapy offerings, speaker's bureau, and who in the membership offers specialized services or takes specific insurance such as Medicare, Blue Cross, UBH, etc.

If you have questions, please contact Susan O'Grady, Ph.D. at ogradowellbeing.com, or 925-938-6786

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Membership Fees

Full Member \$100 – Up to February 28th; \$120 – After February 28th
Find-A-Psychologist: \$50 This is a one-time fee for setting up your profile
 Other Categories include New member, Psychological Assistant, Emeritus member, New member

Return completed application plus dues to:

Shendl Tuchman, Psy.D.
 2 Crow Canyon Court
 Suite 200
 San Ramon, CA 94583

Print a membership application from our website (www.cocopsych.org)

Any questions? Contact Dr. Shendl Tuchman @ (510) 595-5525 or dr.tuchman@earthlink.net ♦



CLASP



Colleagues Assistance and Support Program

MISSION OF CLASP

- Provide resources on wellness and prevention that support us as psychologists in maintaining and enhancing our general health and mental well-being throughout the developmental spectrum of our personal and professional lives.
- Destigmatize help seeking and health seeking behaviors and interventions.
- Endeavor to reduce the occurrence, frequency, and severity of stress, distress and/or impairment of California Psychologists through prevention education, early identification, and referral.
- Encourage collegial understanding, support, training, and referral for California Psychologists who are experiencing stress, distress and/or impairment.
- Effective Self-Care enhances our ethical responsibilities to our clients.

CPA CLASP Offers an Information and Referral Service that is monitored by the CPA CLASP Committee and is made up of the CLASP Executive Committee and the CLASP Chapter Chairs. The toll free number (888-262-8293) is confidential and is a resource for psychologists and psychology graduate students across CA who may be seeking a referral for therapy, consultation, workshops, information on self-care and staying well and/or to get support for a colleague in need. ♦



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Listening and Learning From Our Colleagues/ACCA National & CLASP California 2010 Survey Results

By Diane Bridgeman, Ph.D.

Seriously, doctor you don't take care of yourself (43% of psychologists didn't tell anyone about their stress), although most of you do (57%). It even reaches levels of suicide ideology (18% nationally & 9% in California) before psychologists initiate a way to cope with a serious challenge!

The above and following data are the result of a 2010 survey sent to 5,000 psychologists (658 responded) by APA's Advisory Committee on Colleague Assistance (ACCA), in collaboration with CPA's Colleague Assistance and Support Program (CLASP).

Why is it that the field of psychology has doggedly, and effectively waged campaigns, carried out research, fought for parity, developed policy to reduce stigma, and yet 40% of psychologists invoke the "old school" trifecta of shame, guilt or embarrassment as barriers to using a colleague assistance program, or other self-care activities? Yes, convincing the public not to be embarrassed to access mental health care is one thing, but for some psychologists it appears to still be an issue.

Is it any wonder so few psychologists access their State Colleague Assistance Programs; with 15% of respondents nationally, and 29% in California, even knowing that their State had a Colleague Assistance Program? With such well-developed lack of awareness and prejudices still in place should this be surprising? Early approaches to colleague assistance programs are partially responsible for initiating the stigma given their inception as programs for dysfunctional professionals." The "bad seed" mentality (Schoener & Gonsiorek, 1989) often with punitive consequences, has been very effective in keeping psychologists from seeking support. No wonder many of the early programs went defunct by unwittingly cultivating avoidance and fear, and thus under-utilization.

What Can Be Done to Upright this Misguided Tendency?

Even with wiser, healthier approaches it will take time, trust, creativity and awareness to gain our colleagues respect. The positive news is that such trends have now been in place for over five years in several exemplary states ie; Oregon, California, and North Carolina. California, via its CLASP program, actually has led the way toward an enlightened wellness/preventive approach. Its web site and materials are a model for other state programs. The California orientation has diligently embraced normalizing the challenges that all psychologists experience in their work and personal lives. It also endorses a life span approach providing awareness of the varied stresses at each phase of life from graduate student/early career through the retirement phase. California psychologists are encouraged to use self-assessments, work toward collaboratively maintaining wellness, and encouraged to aspire to not just do well but to "flourish." CLASP supports awareness of early warning signs, healthy self-care at all phases, and has endeavored to make the process of accessing assistance as fully confidential, thoughtful and a sign of wisdom, not a weakness.



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Reasons for Optimism: 2010 Decade of Wise/Healthy & Collaborative Psychologist

Data from the 2010 survey also supports a more optimistic perspective of the mental health of our colleagues. It implies that most seem to “get it” that self-care is necessary and helpful. 94% report they would talk with a colleague as a way to cope with stress, 64% received psychotherapy, 61% offered support to colleagues, while 60% perceive colleagues as flourishing professionally and personally.

Top five stressors identified by the survey:

- 72% attempts to achieve work/life balance
- 68% dealing with insurance/managed care
- 63% concern about patient safety
- 61% family issues
- 59% burnout/compassion fatigue

Most frequently reported coping strategies:

- 96% Maintained work/life balance
- 95% sought support from friends/ peers
- 91% participated in hobbies
- 89% increased exercise
- 88% sought family support

Clearly, it appears that achieving a reasonable work/life balance is the new weapon against stress; similar findings were reported by Stevanovic & Rupert, 2009. Also, not unlike earlier studies (ie, Stevanovic & Rupert, 2004), female psychologists reported reaching out for support significantly more often, using more coping strategies and using them more effectively.

Self-care is our moral imperative according to our professional guild’s ethical code. It need not be one more “thing to do,” nor engender guilt if not fully realized. It does need to be tailored to represent each individual’s meaningful strategy for coping and finding full life/work engagement. Each of us doing our part can finally undo the stigma and turn this decade into that of the “wise & healthy psychologist.”

References

Schoener, G.R. and Gonsiorek, J.C. (1989). Assessment and development of rehabilitation plans for counselors who have sexually exploited their clients. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 67, 227-232.

Stevanovic, P., and Rupert, P.A., (2004). Career-sustaining behaviors, satisfactions, and stresses of professional psychologists. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 41, 301-309.

Stevanovic, P., and Rupert, P.A. (2009). Work-family spillover and life satisfaction among professional psychologists. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 40, 62-68.

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Call Today

We encourage you to reach out for support anywhere along the continuum from wellness to crisis. Be Preventive!

CPA:

1-888-262-8293
<http://www.cpaclasp.org>

CCPA CLASP Representatives:

Barbara Peterson, Ph.D.	925-939-4147
Ellin Sadur, Psy.D.	925-831-0341 x6 ♦



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Ethical and Legal Issues

In addition to problems addressed by CLASP, problems faced by professionals often involve legal and ethical issues. As psychologists, we have resources to use. Be informed about your options!

Both of the most utilized malpractice carriers encourage their subscribers to call and consult if ever they confront legal or ethical questions/problems in their practices. (If your carrier is not listed, call and find out what free consultation services they offer.)

American Psychological Association Insurance Trust - Advocate 800 Number (1-800-477-1200)

American Professional Agency, Inc. - Customer Service (1-800-421-6694)

California Psychological Association members may request a **free personal and confidential consultation** from members of the CPA Ethics Committee. **Call 916-286-7979, ext. 114.** ♦



Contra Costa County Psychological Association 2011 Board of Directors & Committee Chairs

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LIST OF GROUPS



Peer Consultation Groups

Anyone interested in forming peer consultation groups anywhere in the Contra Costa County area may contact sarahewoodphd@yahoo.com.

Chronic Medical Illness Support Group

Location: Lafayette, near BART - Wheelchair Accessible
 Meeting Day: Thursdays
 Meeting Time: 3:30-5:00
 Group Leader: Ann Steiner, Ph.D., MFT
 Phone Number: (925) 962-0060
 Email: DrSteiner@DrSteiner.com

Women in Sobriety

Meeting Day: Wednesday's
 Group Leader: Sara E. Fisher, Ph.D.
 Phone Number: (925) 256-8280
 Email: saraefisherphd.com

Relationship - Focused Psychotherapy Group

Location: Lafayette
 Meeting Day: Wednesday's
 Meeting Time: 5:00 – 6:30pm
 Group Leader: Ann Steiner, Ph.D., MFT
 Phone Number: (925) 962-0060
 Email: DrSteiner@DrSteiner.com



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Therapy Group for Therapists

Location: Lafayette, near BART - Wheelchair Accessible
 Meeting Day: Thursday's
 Meeting Time: 9:00 – 10:30am (may change in July, 2009)
 Group Leader: Ann Steiner, Ph.D., MFT
 Phone Number: (925) 962-0060
 Email: DrSteiner@DrSteiner.com

A Healthy Divorce/Separation Group

Meeting Day: Monday's
 Meeting Time: 6:00 – 8:30pm
 Group Leader: Ann Steiner, Ph.D., MFT
 Phone Number: 510-201-3435
 Email: dr.tuchman@earthlink.net

Consultation Group for Licensed Psychotherapists

Meeting Day: Thursday's, twice monthly
 Meeting Time: 10:30am – 12:15pm
 Group Leader: Ann Steiner, Ph.D., MFT
 Phone Number: (925) 962-0060
 Email: DrSteiner@DrSteiner.com

Breakthrough Weight Loss and Maintenance Group

Meeting Day: Wednesday's
 Meeting Time: 6:00- 7:30pm
 Group Leader: Candia Smith, DMH
 Phone Number: (925) 254-7823
 Email: candia.smith@comcast.net

Men' s Group

Meeting Day: Monday's
 Meeting Time: 7:30 -9:00pm
 Group Leader: Bruce H. Feingold, Ph.D.
 Phone Number: (925) 945-1315

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Class

Group Leader: Susan O'Grady, Ph.D.
 Phone Number: 925-938-6786



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CPA Report



Member benefits: Regarding the health plan offered through CPA – HealthNet will have another open enrollment period, in March, for people wanting to switch from a Blue Cross/Blue Shield plan. This benefit will help people avoid premium increases from Blues that are in the works.

There will also be a reduced fee for new members during the beginning of the year. Non-CPA members of chapters will get a letter letting them know they are members for free for 6 months. Later they will get a letter offering renewal at new a member rate of \$129 for remainder of year and to join 1 division for free for year. So if someone joins chapter and they can get free and reduced membership in CPA, since non-dual members will get free membership in CPA for half year.

The MCEP, the mandatory CE reporting agency, will be disbanded in 2013. At that time psychologists will be responsible for maintaining our individual records of CE and be subject to random audits. This will also represent an income loss for CPA which had the contract from Board of Psychology to run MCEP.

There will be a number of legislative priorities for year: This will include protection of licensing since the Board of Psychology which would otherwise sunset in 2013. Additionally CPA will push to have input on recommendations for psychologist positions on the Board. Scope of practice issues will involve fighting bills to limit psychologists' ability to testify in court (one bill would limit "non-scientific" theories in court, another would remove quasi-judicial immunity for court appointed psychologists). There will also be attention to attempts regarding expansion of scope of other disciplines, like MFT's and the establishment of Alcohol Drug Counselors. A mental health parity bill will move forward; state parity can apply to smaller employers that would not be addressed in federal legislation. CPA will consider working with State Insurance Commissioner to have him obtain authority to oversee insurance premiums. Last year CPA backed the bill to limit "approved" schools in CA which have lower accreditation and limited reciprocity for practice; bill did not pass and will be reintroduced. Also, the helmet bill for child ski/snow boarding will be reintroduced as a stand alone bill.◇



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CCPA's Calendar of Events....SAVE THE DATE!

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March 29

Topic: Failure to Launch

John Rochios, Ph.D., Connie Concannon Ph.D.

6:30-8:30 Dinner/Presentation

Location: TBA

May/June

Authors Roundtable

6:30-8:30 Dinner/Presentation

Date and Location: TBA

September

Topic: Collaborative Assessment

Caroline Purves, Ph.D.

4 hour seminar

Location, Date and Time: TBA

RSVP to: Dr. Alissa Scanlin

3468 Mt Diablo Blvd, Ste. B203, Lafayette, CA 94549

PHONE: (925) 283-3902

EMAIL: drscanlin@pacbell.net

Include your Name, Address, License#, Phone and Email

(All event locations are wheelchair accessible. Please let me know if you need any special accommodations.)