

AN OVERVIEW OF CRISIS, DISASTERS AND TERRORISM

Scientists tell us that a major earthquake will be hitting the Bay Area in our lifetime, yet most of us refuse to prepare and learn what to do. Jeffery Michell calls it, "Cultural Denial." "I don't want to talk about it." "There is nothing I can do about it anyway." This false belief endangers many lives.

In our September presentation, Margaret Newport, MFT, our RECAMFT Trauma Response Network Chair will offer an overview of three types of trauma. They are: Crisis, Disaster and Terrorism. She will cover typical stress reactions and forms of treatment. While these terms are inexact, they describe the increasing level of intensity and impact that many people experience. The type of assistance survivors need is quite different from the training most of us have, yet it is very important for recovery. Moreover, preparation and plans for evacuation learned since 911 will be noted.

Margaret attended the Orange Coast College of Nursing, California State University at Fullerton where she graduated with honors, and the Academy of Arts and Humanities (now known as JFK University) where she received an MA in Family Therapy. She has served as the Program Manager at Project COPE from 1982 to 1995. Over the years she has worked with the Department of Mental Health, The American Red Cross, FEMA, Hawkins Bar Fire Department, CISM, and she has done EMT work in Trinity County. Incident Stress Management, Disaster Services, and has extensive training in EMT, first aid, and CPR.

Please do yourselves and your families a favor by coming to hear this timely and important presentation. Margaret will be sharing her own experiences, giving handouts, and will be available to answer your questions.

September 11th RECAMFT Meeting

10:30 - 11:00 social & sign in

11:00 - 1:00 meeting

An Overview of Crisis, Disasters and Terrorism

Margaret Newport, MFT

Odd Fellows Temple/ Mercer Hall, 545 Pacific Avenue, Santa Rosa

IF THE PARKING LOT IS FULL, YOU CAN PARK AT THE J.C. GARAGE ACROSS MENDOCINO AVE. FOR \$3 OR ASK PERMISSION TO PARK AT THE EGGAN AND LANCE MORTUARY. IF YOU DO NOT ASK THE COST OF TOWING IS \$225.

October 9th, 2009

Release Old Traumas Using Sub-Cognitive Therapy

Nancy Burns, MFT

November 13th, 2009

Interpersonal Effects of Personality Disorders

Charles Harris, Ph.D.

December 11th, 2009

Annual Holiday Celebration

Jan Ogren will facilitate our circle conversation

January 8th, 2010

Clinical Application of the Systemic Family Constellation

Work - Brigitte Essl, MD, MA, DC

February 12th, 2010

Couples Counseling: Using the First Session to Create Emotional Safety for Couples Work - Judith Goleman, MFT

President's Message

Susan Hartz, MFT



"Tell me, what is it you plan to do/with your one wild and precious life?" I've been pondering poet Mary Oliver's question (from "The Summer Day"). As I've gotten older, it seems like time has accelerated.

One day it's the first of summer, the next, fall is just around the corner, leaving me wondering where time went.

Time: you can't store it, and most people, including myself, feel like they never have enough of it. Yet what is it I do with my time, the stuff of which life is made? One thing I'm guilty of is trying to schedule too many things into too short a span. Just the other day I was faced with this dilemma: there are three things coming up right in a row that I really really want to do. I mean *really*. They are all equally inviting. Looking at my calendar I could see how I could do two of them with enough space in between to catch my breath and not squeeze my time (and money) too much. And both are important to me. But the third, in between the other two, was so enticing. To make matters worse, I had committed to a friend to do this with her. But when I thought about the reality of the difficult scheduling, I felt like someone was sitting on my chest. Finally after a night of chaotic and disturbing dreams, I ventured to call my friend and tell her I didn't think I could do this, which involved a plane trip and other travel expenses. Her response was instantaneous. "Oh, I'm so glad to hear you say that," she exclaimed, going on to say that after thinking it over she realized it would create a big financial stress for her, but she hadn't wanted to disappoint me! Luckily neither of us had put any money out yet and we agreed to be more honest with each other in the future. This made me realize, yet again, the need to maintain balance in my life. The truth is if I had persisted in trying to do all three things, I would have been so stressed I wouldn't have been fully present for any of them. Making wise choices about how to spend my time (i.e. my life) seems more than ever to be of utmost importance these days.

Speaking of time, I hope you have had a good summer. The workings of the chapter have continued and by now you should have received your new Directory. If you

haven't received it yet let us know. Also, we had a fun and productive retreat day and as a result **need to hear from each of you**. We are considering offering a pro bono service to meet the growing needs of our community. Is this something the majority of our chapter members want and will support? And we need to hear how you feel about CAMFT's stance on marital equality. Is this something we should survey our membership about and convey an opinion to CAMFT? Both would entail some effort and expense and we need to know how you want our time and other resources used. Please send comments to: RECAMFT, P.O.Box 2443, Sebastopol, CA 95473 or e-mail us at therapy@recamft.org and be sure to include your subject in the address. **Let us hear from you**.

As many of you know, Gail Van Buuren, who has given tremendous time and effort to the workings of our chapter, has had to take an extended leave due to the sudden, critical illness of her husband. I am deeply appreciative of the encouragement and help she has been to me and to our chapter. Gail is still going to put together our newsletter, and Lanie Abrams has volunteered to help. Thank you, Lanie. Also, Christine Erickson has stepped down from the Programs Committee, after at least four years. Christine also has been a dedicated and hard-working volunteer, and we owe a depth of gratitude for all she's done. We need some new volunteers. Now's the time!

Susan Hartz is in private practice in Santa Rosa. She can be reached at 538-2011

Ethics Group Meeting

The Ethics Group meets once each in the Fall, Winter, and Spring. Topics for group discussion are generated from our own clinical practices or by an issue that has come up for one of us. For example, we discussed how to create and put in place a Clinical Practice Will, which we all should have.

Our meetings are informative and stimulating and RECAMFT members are invited to attend. No ongoing commitment is required.

Next Meeting –September 18th, 2009

1:00 - 3:00 pm

For more information call Coralia Serafim at 781-0133

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WHAT YOU MISSED

By Debbie Oliver

On June 12, Wendy Wheelwright, MFT, entertained and educated us on the topic of Treating Borderline Personality Disorder: Clinical Techniques. This presentation was a sequel to her September presentation on treating narcissistic and borderline personality disorders. Wendy is Program Director for Progress Sonoma, the crisis-residential unit contracted with County Mental Health. Wendy also has a private practice, and says her quota for Borderline clients is two at a time.

Wendy described four obstacles that may arise in groups and suggested intervention ideas. With the person who is silent, Wendy encourages the therapist to show respect by neither filling the silence nor pushing the client to talk without first examining why s/he is silent. Instead, engage the group on the topic of silence by asking group members to examine their own response to silence.

Although group members may challenge a silent member, they are less likely to challenge the person who monopolizes. Group members may feel that the monopolizer is rude, yet be reluctant to say anything, preferring to leave it up to the therapist. In such cases Wendy suggests a paradoxical intervention wherein the therapist says, "I'm noticing some discomfort in the room, but people aren't talking about it. So I want you [the monopolizer] to talk more." This encourages other members to intervene.

With the person who is sarcastic, Wendy suggests engaging the group on the topic of sarcasm. This prevents colluding with the sarcasm and allows the group to deal with feelings that are being expressed indirectly.

With the person who habitually focuses on others, perhaps through advice giving, Wendy suggests an exercise: have each person give another a piece of advice, have each end the advice giving with "...and what I want from you is...", and then help the group process the experience.

Wendy told us that clients with BPD need to learn four skills in the following order: mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness. A client may need a year of work in *each* of these skill areas. Treatment often attempts to begin

Support for Interns

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with emotion regulation, but will not be successful until the first two are addressed.

Borderline clients are very adept at noticing what is going on with others, but are not practiced in being aware of their own present experience. Wendy helped us practice mindfulness by asking us to notice whatever came into our awareness, without filtering it, just noticing the experience, watching thoughts coming and going, noticing feelings rising and falling, noticing what comes through the senses, and then put words to the experience by saying, "I am aware of...."

Suppose you never learned that when something bad happens, it will eventually go away. Distress tolerance exercises help clients learn to accept reality without necessarily liking the situation. Wendy asked some of us to tell the group one thing that is not ok that is happening to us this week; members did so by stating, "I'm not okay with...and I have to live with it." Wendy helped us practice emotion regulation by having some of us think of the person who is dearest to us and then talk about three different ways we feel about that person. The point of this exercise is to develop awareness that we can feel different ways at the same time, and, done as a group exercise, this can also build awareness that others feelings may be different from our own.

The exercise Wendy presented as an example of an interpersonal effectiveness learning technique uses cognitive modification to challenge beliefs that may make it difficult for clients to make requests or say no when doing so would be appropriate. Wendy gave us a list of "myths" such as "I can't stand it if someone gets upset with me," or, "If I make a request, this will show I'm a weak person." The client is asked to practice arguing against these myths.

Thank you, Wendy, for a useful and informative presentation!

Debbie Oliver, MFT, sees adults, teens and couples at her office in Santa Rosa. She is especially interested in grief and loss, trauma and anxiety disorders. She may be reached at 522-0475.

INTERN GREETINGS

By Karen Nemrow

Welcome back and welcome to our new members! Congratulations to those of you who recently graduated, and especially to those exhausted and ecstatic newly licensed MFTs!! You are an inspiration to the rest of us and give us hope as we go through the hours process. It is hard to believe that our summer is almost over. I hope you were able to find some time to rest, relax and enjoy family and friends, even if just for a few days. Are you looking for a study partner? Would you like to form a consultation group? Are you looking for an unpaid internship or know of one? I encourage you to use the Intern Bulletin Board for these postings. It's free! Our first drop-in meeting will be Friday, September 12th at 9:30 followed by the general chapter meeting. I hope to see you there! It would be great to get some feedback about the intern group. Is there interest in continuing with this format? Are there other ideas? Let me know! You can contact me at: karebnem@comcast.net or by phone at: 765-4999. See you in September.
Karen

Intern Bulletin Board

STUDY GROUP?

I am looking for a study group and or partner for the Clinical Vignette exam. Please contact me at dlmiller@sonic.net if you are interested.

June 5150

The September 5150 is a session being offered by Gail Michelle. Gail brings to her Somatic Bodywork and Coaching sessions over thirty years experience in holistic health and healing, meditation and spiritual inquiry. Through her compassion and intuitive sensing, she guides her clients in deepening into a felt sense of who they are and what they intrinsically care about. The role of the Somatic Bodyworker is one of facilitation and collaboration, coaching, teaching, and listening. The client is encouraged to become an active partner during

the session. Somatics views the body itself as highly intelligent and promotes the experience of the truly integrated mind/body/spirit nature of humans. Gail was educated in the somatic discourses at Strozzi Institute in Petaluma by Richard Strozzi-Heckler (www.strozziinstitute.com), co-founder of the Lomi Psychotherapy Clinic in Santa Rosa. Her work appeals to therapists, busy executives, entrepreneurs, emerging leaders as well as those in life questions and transitions. Gail can be reached at: grammaj@sonic.net or 707.217.3596.

The 5150 Raffle is held every month at the RECAMFT general meeting. All attendees are eligible to win. Winners please contact the person donating the service within 6 weeks. Feel free to pass the prize to someone else if you are not able to take advantage of the offering. If anyone has ideas about people who might be interested in donating future 5150 prizes, please contact Jan Lowry-Cole at 542-7987. Enjoy! (For winners of the raffle, please give Jan feedback about the service you receive.

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707.526.5800

5 Tips for Banishing Licensing Exam Anxiety: For pre-licensed individuals and clinical supervisors

By Miranda Palmer

Licensing exams have triggered anxiety in pre-licensed individuals since their inception. While eustress can be beneficial, a high level of anxiety will often lead to avoidance, more anxiety, fear, and an inability to access one's clinical knowledge and experience. Here are 5 tips for pre-licensed individuals and their clinical supervisors to banish those high levels of anxiety!

1. Talk about licensing exams, the earlier the better! Knowledge and preparation can go a long way toward banishing anxiety. Think of exams as termination of therapy. We talk to therapy clients about termination from the beginning of treatment, not on the last day. Why not bring up the end point with interns at the beginning- not to increase anxiety- but to manage it!
2. Ask (and answer) questions about licensing exams. Many pre-licensed people carry around worries and

misconceptions about licensing exams. Talking about these issues helps a supervisor to dispel common misconceptions and to confront worries. Often, worries may be related to an area of clinical practice that a pre-licensed person feels unqualified. What a great opportunity to identify a place for growth and have a teaching moment!

3. Know what is covered on the licensing exams. As clinicians in training, and as clinical supervisors we all have strengths and blind spots. The California Board of Behavioral Sciences goes to great lengths to spell out everything that could be included on the licensing exams. Use this list as a blind spot and strength detector- and banish anxiety about exams at the same time!

4. Talk about anxiety. Everyone deals with anxiety at different points in their life. Teaching pre-licensed individuals skills to manage anxiety (or identifying the need for a clinical level of treatment) is essential to the teaching of pre-licensed individuals. A test-taker cannot access stored material during a test when experiencing high levels of anxiety. Neither can a pre-licensed professional respond to crisis situations effectively if they do not have a plan for anxiety management. The same skills interns learn for managing anxiety during sessions can be translated to managing anxiety during the test.

5. Know what your resources are! The testing process is an incredibly personal journey. Understanding the options available allows the test-taker to evaluate the plan that is best suited for them. What worked for the clinical supervisor, or a friend may not be the right plan for another. Understanding the many different ways in which someone can successfully pass exams on the first try can open pre-licensed persons up to finding their perfect path and the joy that comes with walking on that path!

I hope these tips help you to banish the fear and excessive anxiety that can keep the next generation from successfully navigating licensing exams. Happy talking, studying, and passing!

Miranda Palmer is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Modesto, CA. She provides consultation for pre-licensed individuals to help them "love the whole process from graduate school to licensure as a MFT." She has a free monthly newsletter for pre-licensed individuals and a free online study group for exams with over 600 members at <http://mftguide.com>. Give her a call today at (209) 602-1513 for a free 15 minute consultation to get our questions about the licensure process answered today!

Corrections For 2009 Directory

Katherine Kirk
621 Cherry Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
www.KatherineKirkMFT.com
707-569-4812
Handicap Access: Yes
Areas of Focus: Transpersonal, Anxiety/phobias, Art therapy, Sandtray, Children

Barbara Davis's email is: barbaradavistherapist@comcast.net

BJ Brown, MFT Areas of Focus includes: Children
Email: bjbrownmft@yahoo.com

Gina Crozier, MFT 42922
707-695-3207
625 Cherry Street, Santa Rosa, CA 95404
Areas of Focus: Adolescents, Children, Coaching, Parenting, Women's Issues
Email: ginacrozier@sonomafamilycounseling.com
Website: www.sonomafamilycounseling.com
Has handicap Access

Lisa Wolper, LCSW 12890
707-524-8864
825 College Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95404
Areas of Focus: Abuse, Anxiety/Phobias, Depression, Gay/Lesbian, Loss & Grief
Email: lisajwolper@therapy-net.com
Has Handicap Access

Mari Stefonetti, MFT 41891
707-762-3660
7 Fourth St. Suite 1A, Petaluma, CA 94952
Areas of Focus: Abuse, Addictions, Children, Personality Disorders, Sand tray Therapy
Email: mstefonetti@comcast.net

Christina Trimble, MFT 44919
707-484-1918
411 East Street, Healdsburg, 95448
Areas of Focus: Children, Couples, Families, Parenting, School Issues
ctrimble2@yahoo.com

Jeanne Vattuone, MFC 18987
707-322-3843
865 Third Street, Santa Rosa, CA 95404
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September Issue

There is a \$5.00 fee at RECAMFT speaker meetings for non-members.