

Empowering relationships...



JANUARY 2022

The Redwood Empire Therapist

JANUARY ONLINE MEETING



"Al-Anon Family Groups provide support and recovery addiction for family and friends impacted by a loved one's addiction"

Presented by:

Bob Dalzell, LMFT &

Panel: Chris N., Cindy H., Susan V.

**Friday, January 7th, 2022
Zoom Webinar**

**10:00 AM - 12:00
2 CEUs**

Members of Al-Anon Family Groups who currently attend Al-Anon meetings on a regular basis in Sonoma County will present their experience, strength, and hope, and explain how the tools of the Al-Anon program powerfully and elegantly cross-fertilize their healing and growth in psychotherapy. They belong to Al-Anon because they have "a friend or relative with the problem of Alcoholism" or other addictions, and this has greatly affected their lives. Two of the presenters will share their personal stories of what brought them to Al-Anon, and how Al-Anon recovery program has helped them. These members find that despite the ups and downs of their loved one's addiction they have been able "to find serenity and even happiness whether their loved one is drinking or not". The core tools of the program will be explained, along with tips about referring to Al-Anon.

Our presenters will give us an understanding of what Al-Anon is and what it is not and clearly explain to us the core tools used in the Al-Anon program. By the end of their presentation attendees will understand how Al-Anon can work in tandem with psychotherapy as well as how to find Al-Anon groups. We will also learn helpful tips to people approaching Al-Anon for the first time.

Please Note: Zoom Webinar – Register at recamft.org. Once you have RSVP'd you will receive a link to register for the webinar. You must complete this second step to gain access to the event link.

February 4, 2022 – 10:00-11:30 Zoom

**Using the Body to Regulate Emotion: Perspectives
from Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
Susette Bray, LMFT
1.50CEUs**

April 1, 2022 – 10am Zoom

**Found at Sea: Depth Psychotherapy for Unfathomed
Times
Molly Merson, LMFT**

**Register for all these and other offerings you will find
inside this newsletter and also on our website at
www.recamft.org**

RECAMFT CEU PROVIDER IMIS 57173



Wrapping up 2021 with a BANG!

2021 Acting President's Message Laura Strom

"Your brother is in the ICU on life support. He had 105° temperature spike at his dialysis clinic who called 911. He had some type of seizure and two cardiac events. They had to do CPR and then administer electric shocks three times to restart his heart," my father said to me on Thursday, December 2, 2021 at 6 pm. I called my sister-in-law who emotionally reported my younger brother, who is my only sibling, had sepsis, two seizures from the high fever, and went into cardiac arrest after each seizure.

Struck by the need to be with him as quickly as possible, I packed and left for SFO airport within 30 minutes. Calling my cousin on the phone while driving down, she helped me determine the airline and flight I needed. I called our Past President, Tara D'Orazio and left a tearful message saying I could not introduce RECAMFT's speaker the next day. I can always count on Tara for any emergency that transpires in our organization. She always rises to the occasion with her thoughtful, innovative, calm leadership.

By 10:30 am the next morning I was at my brother's ICU bedside on the East Coast. Unconscious, he had a ventilator tube in his mouth. I did not worry about RECAMFT because I knew Tara, Gina Culver and Lisa Wenninger would handle everything. Which they did. Beautifully. RECAMFT runs like a well-oiled machine because of the superb volunteers we have.

After three days, my brother came off the ventilator, but remained in ICU. Nearly a week later, he was downgraded to the Critical Care Unit. I spent quite a few nights with him while he learned to talk and move again. The first day freed of the ventilator he could not speak at all. The second day he said six words that were difficult to understand. My sister-in-law and I were panicked about this, and imagined the worst. He was discharged on December 16th, two weeks after having died twice, walking slowly, and talking once again.

During my escapade, I missed an important meeting with diversity, equity and inclusion coach, Mariama Boney, and our Racial and Social Justice Committee (RSJC). No problem. They recorded the meeting for me to watch afterwards. Did I mention how well RECAMFT runs? Ms.

Boney praised the work our RSJC has done on designing goals for RECAMFT in our quest to become a community of anti-racist therapists.

In its great foresight, the RECAMFT Board voted to continue holding meetings via Zoom through summer 2022. That was before the Omicron coronavirus variant hit. I am so grateful we have a Board of Directors that is insightful, and considerate of our health and safety at every turn.

It's hard to say what 2022 will hold for our nation and world, but in the immediate little community of RECAMFT members, we have some great speakers lined up through June. As CAMFT members we have an

election. **Let's get Tara V. D'Orazio elected as CAMFT's next President Elect, and Victoria Rohrer as a Director at Large.**

Please visit Tara's new campaign website: **TaraVDOrazio.com** to learn more about her vision for CAMFT in the era of wildfire disasters driven by climate change. *Photo of Tara is by In Her Image Photography, Petaluma, CA.*



As 2021 ends, I am grateful for many things, but especially that our wildfire threat lifted with the October rains, for our prescient RECAMFT Board of Directors, for Tara and Victoria being willing to fill vital roles in CAMFT's leadership, and that I still have a brother. I also feel gratitude for being part of this RECAMFT community which has been so supportive to me and others over the years. What a privilege it is to call myself a member of Redwood Empire CAMFT!

See you in 2022
Laura Strom, PsyD, LMFT
RECAMFT's 2021 Acting President,
President Elect for 2022

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therapy@recamft.org

*Once your RECAMFT membership is
confirmed, address emails to the group
to recamft@groups.io*

In Case You Missed It

Gina Culver

On December 3rd, Joel Fay PsyD presented on Cultural Competency: Working with First Responders. He shared his personal experiences of being in the military and a law enforcement officer before becoming a therapist for first responders. He shared the uniqueness of working with this population such as the built-up traumas of all that they see, worrying about losing their job if it is known they are in therapy, or the uniqueness of being a first responder in a civilian world.

Dr Fay explained that within the different organizations of first responders (EMTs, firefighters, police, etc.) the cultures are both similar and different. He further explained that a lot of first responders “refuse to seek treatment” due to treatment stigma or “fear that it’s seen as a personal weakness.” Some theories about the first responder culture that Dr Fay shared were the Emergency Responder Paradox (“we are all victims of our own success”), Golden Handcuffs (“want to retire but can’t until age 57”), PTSD (“posttraumatic stress injury” versus PTSD), Usta syndrome (“I used to. . .”), and Al Benner’s 3-legged stool (“experience, knowledge, self-disclosure”). He also shared some first responder statistics from bluehelp.org and a couple of other resources.

Dr Fay works with both first responders and training therapists to work with first responders through First Responders Support Network (frsn.org). He shared what the retreat does to help first responders. Dr Fay explained that a quote that sums up first responder work is “stress doesn’t kill you, trauma does.” He shared several barriers of accessing therapy such as stigma, concerns about confidentiality, etc. He reported that “informal conversation,” being able to hold what is shared without reacting, and “normalizing when possible” are all helpful therapy tools when working with this population.

One thing that this population, especially law enforcement officers, don’t want to be called is a “hero” as they see it as their job and “don’t want to be pointed out as ‘better than’ someone else.” Another issue that sometimes faces first responders, especially those on workers compensation, is betrayal and what that may look like as well as how to help them move through it. Something that really stood out to me was when Dr Fay talked about the “Omnipotence Curse”: “If I could’ve

gotten there sooner, I could have..." For me, that is a mindset that I have fallen into also, not only as a former first responder myself, but even as a therapist. For us, it's when a client completes a suicide, at least in my experience thus far, though I have also had that thought with clients for other various reasons.

A big thanks to Dr Joel Fay for this enlightening and enriching discussion on working with first responders! Happy New Year and a prosperous 2022 to one and all.

RECAMFT's New Scholarships are a Great Way to Memorialize the Wards, and Benefit Our Profession

RECAMFT's Board of Directors created a new scholarship program to honor the legacy of Joe and Pam Ward who were both our Administrative Consultants over the last decade, and contributed so much to our chapter's growth. A donation to the Joe and Pamela Ward Memorial RECAMFT Scholarship will benefit pre-licensed and newly licensed members. The Board voted to match 50% of the first member funding drive to set up 3 years of scholarships.

Members are encouraged to make a fully tax-deductible donation to honor the work of the Wards and provide monies for up-and-coming new clinicians in our profession. The program has allotted 100% of the money to benefit recipients. The first funding drive is for a total of \$10,500 which will fund the first three years of scholarships at \$3500 annually.

Each year two (2) pre-licensed and one (1) newly licensed member can enter to win a \$1000 scholarship to help them in their goal to become a licensed clinician. The scholarships include a year of RECAMFT membership, too. An additional five grants of \$100 are available to pre-licensed members to help defray the cost of CAMFT membership (with proof of payment to CAMFT). There is a lifetime maximum of two scholarships, and preference will be given to historically resilient and underrepresented groups (BIPOC, living with disabilities, LGBTQ+, elders, etc.). The new RECAMFT Scholarship Committee will review the applications to choose the winners.

We will accept applications from January 1 to April 30th annually. Winners will be chosen in May, and approved at the June Board meeting. Funds will be distributed in July. Winners will be acknowledged at the September speaker meeting, and a newsletter article will inform the members who won.

To find out more, including how to apply for a scholarship or donate to this doubly worthy cause, please visit <https://recamft.org/Scholarship> located under the "About Us" tab.



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RSJC EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

"Systemic Racism Explained" a four minute video by Act.Tv on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YrHIQIO_bdQ

Me & White Supremacy by Layla F Saad

How to Be an Anti-Racist by Ibram X. Kendi

Raising White Kids: Bringing up children in a racially unjust America by Jennifer Harvey

White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo

My Grandmother's Hands by Resmaa Menakem

Between the World and Me by Ta-Nahisi Coates

Race, Politics, and Pedagogy Education in a Time of Crisis by Henry A. Giroux

13th, free on YouTube courtesy of Netflix. A must see to grasp how slavery exists today.

Coded Bias on Netflix. A documentary on racial and gender bias in AI and facial recognition software

"Racism is Real"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTcSVQJ2h8g>

Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pM-HpZQWKT4>

Miss Representation full documentary on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/3syOGI2nbbs>

Positive Images <https://www.posimages.org/>

support, advocacy and education to Sonoma County's LGBTQIA+ community

Thoughts for a Curious Time

Passed on by Gail Van Buuren

Today I received a holiday greeting from my dear friend and colleague, Jennifer Allen, who lives in Big Sur, CA and practices in Carmel. We met in a psychotherapists'



psychotherapy group some 25 years ago or so and have been close friends ever since. She is an artist, an author, and a seeker of deeper wisdom. When I read this part of her letter, I knew right away I wanted to share it with you. She said sure, so here it is.

What a curious time we are living in! A pandemic, partisan polarization, climate change, discrimination, etc., etc. We could throw our hands up in despair or we could accept the invitations for change.

- *The pandemic: An invitation to finally get that we are all connected. A choice based on the collective's good, is a choice for our own good. Otherwise, we shoot ourselves in the foot.*
- *Partisan polarization: An invitation to get how anything can become politicized and see the trap of "othering" this tricky polarization creates. It challenges us to listen/see/relate from the "field beyond right-doing and wrong-doing" (Rumi).*
- *Climate change: An invitation to get what "forgetting" has cost us and to remember (with humility) our innate dependence and undeniable connectivity to the intricate web of life on our home planet. The remembering=behavior changes=policy changes.*
- *Discrimination: An invitation to get how the many forms of this stem from fear, are insidious, and, ultimately, weaken the whole. An invitation to be ok with being uncomfortable in the name of "justice for all."*

I just couldn't launch into a personal letter without acknowledging the greater currents we are all swimming in – together.

Jennifer Allen, LMFT, Art Therapist and so much more.

Empowering relationships...



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JANUARY ISSUE

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