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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear GSCSW Membership,

It is hard to believe that we have reached the end of our 2018-2019 season. It has been filled with so many wonderful events and accomplishments. Even though GSCSW has established a standard for providing exceptional events, I am continually amazed by the quality of programming that our organization offers and the professional support we provide to our members.

Our Thursday evening, continuing education presenters have shared this information with us: Dr. Brene Brown's *The Daring Way*; Dr. Steven Hayes' *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy*; crisis intervention; treating anxiety with improv; working with our transgender population; a panel discussion; and cultivating happiness and joy. We were fortunate to have Marco Posadas, from Toronto, Canada, present a fascinating psychodynamic talk for our 2018 Diane Davis Lecture. Our 2019 GSCSW Spring Symposium closed our educational season — we were very excited to host Dr. David and Debra Woodsfellow, who presented, *The Essence of Couples Therapy: Changing Fear Cycles to Love Cycles*. The quality of our presentations continue to meet standards of excellence and focus on subject matter that can enhance our

clinical social work skills.

In the fall, I shared the goal of stretching GSCSW boundaries outside of metropolitan Atlanta. I am thrilled to report that GSCSW has been able to grow distant memberships. We held our first-ever, continuing education event in Savannah, co-hosted with CEU Creations, on April 12, 2019. While in Savannah, we also were able to connect with board members from the Clinical Social Work Association of Savannah and a representative from Savannah State University School of Social Work. We are now creating and planning future collaborations. With our new allies in Savannah, we are on our way toward reaching even more Georgia social workers!

While we are planning and continuing the development of our organization, the GSCSW Board has been working hard to create the infrastructure to support this growth. We have been nurturing our community relationships and expanding our committee memberships. Board members have worked to make revision recommendations to our Constitution so that it is a better reflection of our current practices and can provide a sound framework for our future. Please watch your mailbox, Facebook, our listserv and our website for the Board's request for your vote of support for these amendments.

When you come to our continuing education events on Thursday evenings, our Diane Davis Lecture in December and our Spring Symposium in May, it is easy to see the work of some GSCSW committees. But I want to thank *all* Board and committee members for their tireless, behind-the-scenes work that truly makes GSCSW an exceptional professional organization. It is because these dedicated individuals volunteer their time, talents, and thoughtfulness that we have low-cost supervisors, mentors, connections with our local schools of social work, considerate ethics consultations, legislative advocacy, a dynamic professional publication, a Facebook page, listserv interactions, and yes, our fantastic continuing education events!

It is with great appreciation that I want to recognize all of the GSCSW Board Members with whom I have had the pleasure of working and getting to know during the past year. Thank you to Becky Anne, MDiv, LCSW; Allison Sweenie, LCSW, MAC; Michelle Nelson, LCSW, BCD; Barbara Lewison, LCSW; Carla Bauer, LCSW; Kristen Smith, LMSW; Griffin Smith, LMSW; Diane Sitkowski, LCSW; Brenda Romanchik, ACSW, LCSW, CTP; Autumn Collier, LCSW; Dana Lipton, LCSW; Jacey J. Yunker, LCSW, ACTP; Mary Ablett, LCSW; and Natasha Vayner, LMSW, for being the terrific people and conscientious board members that you are. Thank you to Stephanie Barnhart, LCSW, who reviews and approves hundreds of CE applications. And thank you to Trisha Clymore, our administrator, who deserves special recognition as she so thoughtfully helps our organization run like a well-oiled machine. You all truly represent the heart and soul of GSCSW!

As my presidential term comes to a close at the end of June, 2019, I have immense gratitude for having been given the opportunity to be in this role. From a personal standpoint, I have experienced huge personal and professional growth —so much more than I could have imagined when my journey began. Through the years, I have received so much from GSCSW and it has been an honor to give back. As I pass the torch to Becky Anne, MDiv, LCSW, our in-coming GSCSW President, on July 1, 2019, I have only optimism for the future of our organization. I know she will continue the path of excellence that began with those who came before us.

It has been a privilege to be of service.

Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW
President, Georgia Society for Clinical Social Workers

FROM THE EDITOR: Our Warmest Wishes To Our Departing President, Sherri Rawsthorn, LCSW



My favorite memory of Sherri occurred as I began my new Professional Education Co-Chair role during our 2016 Diane Davis Lecture. After arriving at Ridgeview Institute, I parked my vehicle in a temporary unloading area. We unpacked the thoughtfully prepared bags and began to set up. Membership was there to sign in attendees. Our presenter had arrived and was preparing. Check, check. Sherri, our then President-Elect, wandered over to me and said, “Everything appears to be in order.” Whew!

But there was something I had not anticipated —when I attempted to move my vehicle into a parking spot, it would not start! After all of the planning and coordinating, this left me feeling a bit frazzled. I wanted everything to go smoothly, including not having my vehicle towed.

Sherri did not hesitate. She pulled up her vehicle, we popped my hood, and Sherri pulled out her jumper cables. The rest is a hum. That is Sherri. And that is when I knew we would be in good hands.

Sherri has a real talent for leading. It is with much gratitude that we take this space to acknowledge her. The following statements are what some of our GSCSW Board Members have to say about Sherri’s presidency.

Sherri, your patience, kindness, professionalism, warmth and expertise have not gone unnoticed or unappreciated. GSCSW is a very busy and active organization, and you have had so much to keep tabs on! We appreciate you and wish you well as you start your role as Former-President.

Sherri, you have worked tirelessly to advance GSCSW's place at the table with the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists, and to protect the interests of clinical social workers and our clients. Many beyond our membership owe you thanks for this representation. You also brought a personal touch when expressing support and appreciation toward our own board members. We in turn give heartfelt thanks for your dedicated leadership. We wish you well as you pass the baton and then put that energy back into your own life. Thank you, Sherri!

Thank you so much Sherri for your dedication to GSCSW! I am inspired by your consistent care for GSCSW members, board members, and the organization as a whole. You have helped GSCSW to grow in new and exciting ways all while holding onto the spirit of GSCSW. Thank you!

Sherri, it has been a pleasure working with you in your role as President of GSCSW, and prior to that as President-Elect and Chair of our Ethics Committee. You are a thoughtful and considerate leader who addresses challenges with grace and an open mind. From initiating team-building exercises at our annual retreats, to providing resources for ethical decision-making, to collaborating with other professional organizations, and to your efforts at expanding our resources to social workers outside of metropolitan Atlanta, you have been a catalyst for positive change. Your efforts have left an indelible mark on GSCSW and you will be greatly missed!

Sherri, you embody all of how quality leadership should be regarded. You have been democratic in all of your actions; prior to a decision, no matter how big or small, you sought input and buy-in from all who may have been touched by its consequences. You sought a personal relationship to better a professional relationship. With myself, you have often checked in with the personal circumstances I have shared, while always maintaining healthy boundaries. You have been diplomatic and direct. In public spaces, you have conducted yourself with clear and understandable language. I have observed, on many occasions, your delegation of membership conflicts and barriers, and you have been consistent with your direct and assertive communication of rules, while having done your best to make any helpful accommodation available. It has been my absolute privilege to work under your guidance and steady hand. GSCSW will have a powerful legacy to uphold with its future leaders.

May you be happy, Sherri. May your good work continually lift GSCSW. And may you go home and rest, knowing how much we appreciate all that you have done. Sherri, from all of us, thank you so very much and please stay in touch!

Happiness and Seven Senses

By: Franklin Abbott, LCSW

Sharing from a presentation given to the International Conference on the Pursuit of Happiness at Joshi Bedekar College, Thane, Mumbai, India, on January 19, 2019.

I would like to open with a poem by one of my mentors, the late James Broughton.

Everything is Connected

The egg is in the star
The star is in the thistle
The thistle is in the spider web
And the wind is in the whistle

The milk is in the cloud
The cloud is in the puddle
The puddle is in the bullpen
And the cow is in the cuddle

The sea is in the fish
The fish is chickenhearted
The chicken is in the hen house
And the egg is where you started

When I was asked to speak on happiness, I emailed over one hundred friends and colleagues and asked them how they defined happiness and what made them happy. I was pleasantly surprised when over eighty of them responded. Some sent a few sentences, others made lists, some sent poems, a few said they didn't believe in happiness. Some said they knew happiness when they felt it, but it was hard to define in words.

I noticed lots sensory imagery when my respondents were describing happiness. It seems a little too simple to organize ideas of happiness by the senses, but it is a place to begin where almost everyone can find something to relate to. Let's start with the sense of hearing.

All cultures throughout history have had forms of music. Music does not feed us, clothe us or warm us. It seems to serve no essential purpose, but it is always there. Many people report music as something that brings them happiness whether it is a simple tune or a symphony. One of the professors at Joshi Bedekar College described his happiness in using songs to teach his Japanese students Hindi. Mothers use lullabies to comfort their babies. Couples often have songs they remember from when they met. Nations have anthems. Movies have theme songs that their fans learn by heart. Again, music does not feed us, warm us or clothe us, but rare is the person who doesn't seek music and at times delight in it.

The sense of seeing brings great happiness as well. We say, "I am happy to see you." We enjoy fashion, art, flowers, landscapes, and the starry, starry nights with our eyes. Happiness can come from looking through photographs or watching home videos. Certain images of birds, animals, clouds, trees, rainbows, and waterfalls can make us happy. One friend wrote, "Happiness is a brilliant blue sky and at other times the magic of clouds changing shape." Another friend said, "How I love shadows, how the light appears against a wall, a tree or someone's face." Even colors make us happy. Almost everyone has favorite colors. One of my grandmothers loved pink and planted



Happiness and Seven Senses – Continued

lots of pink flowers. If I bought her a gift and it could come in the color pink, I knew that would add to her happiness.

Touch can bring happiness too. A breeze, a hot shower, a soft bed, and a hug can trigger happy feelings. One friend said, "Happiness for me was the perfect peace and total presence in the moment holding one of my grandchildren when they were babies." My friend Dr. June Dobbs Butts describes this feeling in her poem "Aisha" written when her granddaughter was four months old.

Aisha

When I first met Aisha,
She broke into a smile
Like she'd known me all the while.

When I first kissed Aisha,
Her skin was soft and fine
And her tiny hand touched mine.

When I first held Aisha,
She cooed and cooed to me
In her baby's litany

And when I rocked her back to sleep
I knew a part of me, she'd keep.

One of the professors at Joshi Bedekar College described happiness as receiving a hug from his one-and-a-half-year-old son every day when he returns home from work, and says that experience brings him even more happiness when he thinks about the hugs he received as a child from his parents. Touch is programmed into our human being and we become hungry for touch if too much time passes and there are no hugs. The happiness of touch is not just human to human but can come from being close to a beloved pet. We need only to look at the number of dogs and cats in our world to find proof.

Smell is a source of happiness. Smells can be seasonal. Flowers bloom seasonally. Irises, peonies, roses, jasmine, and lilies all have unique fragrances that are not always available. Some seasons bring rain and the smell of rain. We often use fragrances—whether perfume or incense—to evoke a certain mood. We associate smells with different people, and we are often happy when a certain smell arises. This is especially so with food. The smell of your favorite food being cooked can evoke happiness. The smell of coffee being ground, or tea being steeped can also bring happiness.

Tasting something we love to eat can make us very happy. For me it can be cornbread like my grandmothers made when I was a child or crème brulee which I first tasted on a trip to Paris. When I visited Manish Tyagi's world class restaurant, August 1 Five, in San Francisco, among the many things I sampled that made me happy were Gol Guppa, little puri's with mint-cilantro punch and mango tamarind water that burst in my mouth and brought delight. The great Indian food writer Madhur Jaffrey wrote, "I have always loved to eat well. My mother once informed me that my passion dates back to the hour of my birth when my grandmother wrote the sacred syllable 'Om' on my tongue with a finger dipped in fresh honey."

These five physical senses are some of the ways that can be portals for happiness. But I speak of seven senses.

The sixth sense is sometimes thought of as a psychic sense, but I think of it as empathy, the ability to sense other people and to resonate with them. It is what allows us to feel compassion and connection with others. One of the things that research on happiness shows again and again is that feeling connected to others, be they family or friends, is essential to happiness. Journalist and poet, Nirupana Dutt, captures this feeling in her poem "It Feels Good" which she says was inspired by the song "My Favorite Things" in *The Sound of Music*.

Happiness and Seven Senses — Continued

It Feels Good

It feels good
to get a message
from a long-lost friend
to see pink clouds
lining a day's fatigue

It feels good
to go and meet
once more
a much-remembered city
to hear someone call me
just by half my name

It feels good
to float paper boats
in midday dreams
to watch the scorching
city streets turn into streams

It feels good
to drench in every
shower of the rains

The seventh sense is the sense of Oneness where "one is all, and all is one." It is part of the mysticism of all the great religions, the enlightenment of Buddhism, the zikr of Islam, and the Sat-Chit-Ananda described by Swami Vivekananda —that place where "everything is connected" as in the poem by James Broughton. In all of our lives we suffer trauma and disappointment and at times feel very separate. Maybe it is a loss that has separated us from a loved one. Maybe it is a disillusionment that has separated us from a cherished belief about life or self. In each of these instances we can lose our sense of Oneness. It can seem we have separated from our spirit, our soul, our universal connection. This is a part of life. And when it happens, we are almost always unhappy.

To create our happiness we must reconnect, perhaps initially in small ways: the sound of birdsong, the sight of an old friend, the caress of the breeze, the smell of roses, the taste of a mango. All of these sensory experiences can remind us of happiness. Most important of all is our experience with concern and compassion for others —when another person reaches out and lets us know we are not alone, when we experience the support and nurture of our family, our community, and our friends. Through each other we reconnect with the feeling of Oneness and in that moment our happiness blossoms inside us.

With much appreciation to the friends who responded to my query and to my fellow presenters at the International Conference at Joshi Bedekar College and to the students, faculty, staff and administration who demonstrated through their connection to each other and hospitality to me, how happiness is all about feeling connected.

By Franklin Abbott, LCSW

Franklin Abbott, LCSW, has been in private practice for almost forty years. He is also a writer, a musician, and a community organizer. His blog is www.tenminutemuse.wordpress.com You can find Franklin at www.franklinabbott.com

Considering Financial Literacy in Clinical Social Work

By: Polly Hart, LCSW ; Kelli Tolbert, LMSW; and Kathryn Woerner, LMSW



NOTE: The following article is brought to you by a supervision trio—one supervisor and two supervisees. While introducing all aspects of a professional career, I include writing as an important element on my list. Having early experience writing either for colleagues or clients in a professional context, can support not just that one can write, but that sharing is a valuable part of “being professional”. —Polly Hart, LCSW

Considering Financial Literacy

Supervisees are often known to teach their supervisors much that is new. Having supervised since 1972, I found myself delightfully surprised this past year to literally learn of an area of expertise currently under national discussion in our field about which I hadn't a clue—that of **adding Financial Literacy among the usual skill sets we try to provide our clients**. Suffice it to say that in general, many more social workers serve populations without adequate incomes than work with those who have workable financial resources. And like most skills for living, only a subset of any population would be appropriate for a defined program educating and supporting behavior change in this crucial “quality of life” area—the cherished subject we all refer to as MONEY. A great place to learn was the work setting of supervisees Kathryn Woerner and Kelli Tolbert, both LMSW's in a unique community-based program providing residential and support services to a niche population—lower income women with children who find themselves homeless. Thus, we three set out to learn about this idea: **helping folks consider their behavior related to MONEY**. Here's a brief summary.

Our Personal Relationships with Money

A simple fact for any adult in a first world country is that in order to survive you must make money. How much one makes or how they make the money is an individual choice. While watching folks make and spend money, one can surmise or make the assumption that they have an understanding of money. This assumption by therapists matters ([Allgood & Walstad, 2013](#)) but is often mistaken. Anyone can make a budget and it's very easy to tell someone that they must live within their resources. But **start crunching the numbers for a client and patterns and/or behaviors will emerge that even they are not aware of**. This more often than not includes emotional ties to material items, giving the appearance of having it all, a complete lack of understanding their overall financial picture—even their inability to balance a checkbook.

In our social work role, we find ourselves first taking a psycho-educational approach with our clients. **Perhaps we had best begin with our own knowledge on the subject as we address educating our colleagues on what it takes for a member of the working poor to survive**. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition's survey in 2018 of the counties in or surrounding the metropolitan Atlanta area, a person needs to make \$17.27 an hour to rent a one bedroom apartment. Realistically one must make more, because that wage is only based on the rental amount and not based on additional bills, such as utilities, food, transportation, etc.

Two approaches, the use of goal-centered and crisis-centered motivators (Rowley, Lown, & Piercy, 2012), **are known to provide catalysts for change**. Starting with a review of what we have learned about each client and their money, the wage statistics alone encourage clients to begin considering their need for behavior change related to finances. Laying out the client's basic finances in a black and white format and showing them what they are up against is when we see many clients begin the change process. Often this is the first time anyone has taken the time to sit down with them to have a true financial conversation, including personal reflection about their money-related behaviors. This begins to incorporate money management into cognitive behavioral therapy within a framework of behavioral economics.

Behavioral Economics

Behavioral Economics has taken off in the research and business sector but has only skimmed the surface of the clinical social work field. The macro world of human behaviors driving both state and national economies has leveraged large grant and research opportunities, but we have missed the mark at a micro level in our very own clinical offices. It is not uncommon for a client to come to the clinician to work through anxiety, depression, insomnia, or life imbalance within the work place. However, our own field has failed to prepare the clinician for working with the client on their individual financial behavior, or their household behavioral economic structure. **Slowing down with the client, pulling back layers over time of their financial stories, and encouraging their taking charge of money matters, often reveals the inextricable relationship between finances and the symptoms of anxiety and depression**. Using skills already in our clinical repertoire, we have the tools to re-shape how our clients tend to think of money and how they interact with money.

Selecting A Program

Educating oneself with at least one financial program is necessary to determine the content to be taught. Look for a program that

Continued on page 8

Considering Financial Literacy in Clinical Social Work - Continued

resonates with one's own professional values and is simple to use. The Center for Financial Social Work offers such a program. Designed by Reeta Wolfsohm, CMSW, this program offers certification for interested professionals. There are options for support groups, programming, and tool kits. Other faith-based organizations teach Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University. This program gives individuals the opportunity to sit with others who are like-minded and provides group support. The class itself includes a workbook along with a group, online budgeting tools, an app, and a myriad of other learning options. The internet provides many other programs, and a simple search will bring countless financial literacy options.

A Clinical View

Our personal relationship with money begins as early as our toddler years when we learn the value of sharing, how to barter for our favorite toys, how we are valued, and how we interact within the family. These core values continue to develop as we learn about finances—including basic terms such as income, savings, checking accounts, and credit cards. Core values will intersect with behavioral choices throughout the life cycle. **Issues tend to arise when the core value of money hinders personal or career advancement because of behavioral choices made earlier in the individual's life journey.** Such decisions to take on debt for education, to help out a friend when there isn't enough to cover the month's bills, to tithe money, or to 'fill in the blank' may result in eviction, loss of a job, a high car note, not enough food on the table, or another maxed-out credit card. Technology has that bittersweet edge as it has become a wonderful tool to integrate finances, but it also masks our early connection to basic financial and economic value. The tender relationship that we build with this abstract financial entity impacts each and every one of our clients, colleagues, friends and indeed our own lives. In fact, financial matters structure our lives by defining the choices available to us. Amazing that this expertise is so seldom taught at any level in our educational preparation for life.

In conclusion, financial literacy in a clinical setting is more than just beneficial. The clients understanding of needed financial behavior change and the effect that this will have through their life span potentially impacts their overall mental health as well. **Presenting ways to make those changes touches an individual's social, emotional, and physical well-being—including the basics of housing, food, employment, and the opportunity for much needed stability.** While not all clients will choose to take advantage of building their financial literacy, others not only CAN but WILL use it to better their lives.

Therapists can either add financial content to their work or refer to an organized program given by those with appropriate backgrounds. Still others may develop Financial Literacy as a marketable specialty. Knowledge about money can literally help almost everyone.

By Polly Hart, LCSW; Kelli Tolbert, LMSW; and Kathryn Woerner, LMSW

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Polly Hart, LCSW, earned her Master of Social Work at Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana. **Polly is one of GSCSW's original members when our organization was established in 1980. We are so fortunate to have her!** She has 40 years of practice in a family psychiatry clinic setting. Polly enjoys sharing her writing, because the experience adds one more way she can enjoy her career, particularly in her current practice, supervising and teaching. You can find Polly Hart at www.pollyhartlcswsupervision.com

Kelli Tolbert, LMSW, earned her Master of Social Work from Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, Georgia. She has 20-combined years of experience in human services and social work. Kelli holds a certification in life coaching through the International Life Coaching Research Group.

Kathryn Woerner, LMSW, earned her Master of Social Work from Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts. She has transitioned from corporate work to non-profit work as a social worker. Kathryn "is skilled in Motivational Interviewing, CBT, group work, domestic violence safety and recovery, suicide risk analysis, child abuse and welfare issues, and family-centered approach."

Both Kelli Tolbert, LMSW, and Kathryn Woerner, LMSW, work in a residential program for homeless moms and their children. Both will soon be LCSW's. You can find Kelli and Kathryn at thedrakehouse@thedrakehouse.org approach."

Sound Therapy

By: Ephrat Lipton, LCSW, ACSW, BCD, CEDS, and introducing Jonathon Adams, Sonic Yogi™



Wellness is not a “one-size-fits-all”. An abundance of scientific evidence points toward whole-body healing, which may include a combination of traditional treatment and alternative medicine to connect the mind, body and spirit. By treating the whole person instead of the symptoms, we can calm the central nervous system to alleviate stress, utilize effective coping skills and make healthier decisions.

Sound Meditation & Relaxation

I learned about Jonathan Adams from a regular member of Sierra Tucson’s Atlanta Alumni Continuing Care Group, which I facilitate on a weekly basis. Sierra Tucson is a premier residential treatment center in Tucson, Arizona, and many alumni who attend our weekly group credit *Sound Therapy*, also known as *vibrational medicine*, as one of the highlights of their treatment experience. Despite the chaos in their lives and the crises that brought them to Sierra Tucson, **Sound Therapy led them to a state of contemplative meditation, deep relaxation and healing.**

Sometimes, Tibetan singing bowls would even be placed on one’s abdomen or chest when lying down so the vibrations would reverberate throughout his or her body.

I was intrigued.

Not only did I want to meet Jonathan, who is known on Insight Timer and elsewhere as **Sonic Yogi™**, but I wanted to experience firsthand what Sound Therapy was all about as well. He stopped by The Atlanta Center for Wellness (AC4W) to facilitate a session for my two business partners and me. **He carefully unwrapped 12 beautiful Tibetan bowls and a hand-carved Native American flute, and we settled into a comfortable and relaxed position.** When he began playing his instruments, the sounds and tones I experienced were indescribable. I could literally feel them flow through my body—the opening of my heart and mind, combined with a profound sense of calm. Truly, the sound bath evoked an emotional response.

People have found comfort in soothing sounds for centuries, including the sounds of nature, wind chimes and various white noises. Jonathan explained that, for years, people have been using singing bowls to restore health and relieve pain. He shared his own personal struggle with anxiety. As a professional musician, he found a sense of calm in music; however, during bouts of intense anxiety, he found that even his favorite music seemed too difficult to process. As a result, Jonathan conducted research on brain waves and sound waves, and he created his own music program, which is available online at no cost.

After the initial meeting with Jonathan and our Sound Therapy experience, AC4W immediately teamed up with the Sonic Yogi™ to offer **Sound Meditation & Relaxation on the second Sunday of every month from 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.** Because we want everyone in the community to experience the healing properties of Sound Therapy, there is no fee—only a \$20 anonymous donation at the door is suggested to help offset the cost.

What to Expect

When you attend Sound Meditation & Relaxation at Atlanta Center for Wellness, you will enjoy a beautiful, serene space amongst the treetops. We provide BackJack chairs, yoga mats and lumbar chairs for support, as well as dimmed lights and the subtle fragrance of aromatherapy. After a brief introduction, participants are encouraged to close their eyes or find a soft downward gaze. Jonathan begins with a guided meditation and some suggested mantras to direct your busy mind, and then proceeds with Sound Therapy. **There is something therapeutic and powerful about group meditation, as if you are submerged in an ocean of sound waves—or like water in a bath, allowing the sounds to wash over you.**

Vibrational Frequency

It is believed that everything has its own vibrational frequency, which contributes to the healing nature of Sound Therapy. When we feel off, out of sync or out of tune, Sound Therapy helps to balance our energy field and bring it back into harmony. **Sound Therapy boasts multiple physiological benefits that are supported by science; including lower blood pressure, deeper breaths, and a healthy resting heart rate and pulse.** Think of it like a cleansing of your cells. **The sound also elicits emotion, allowing you to experience grief, sadness and pain, as well as joy and gratitude.** The effects of Sound Therapy have been shown to stay with you long after the session is over. I usually feel the benefits for the rest of the day, and there seems to be a cumulative affect when I attend sessions consistently. We

Sound Therapy— Continued

encourage everyone to give this powerful experience a try. Your body, mind and soul will be glad you did.



Jonathan Adams (Sonic Yogi™) Shares His Experiences with Sound Therapy

I (Jonathan) came to Sound Therapy by actually needing it myself. In my late 30's, I found myself experiencing deep anxiety. I had panic attacks before, but this was really a much more intense, mental and physical experience. This all came about after practicing yoga for a couple of years, and shortly after learning to meditate. Physiologically I experienced rapid heart rate, tense muscles, short breathing, and I literally felt like I was dying. The mental aspects of this were also painfully psychedelic, and I felt like I was losing control of my reality. As unpleasant as it all was, it was also a blessing, because it taught me so much about my mind and body. I learned about several helpful tools. Looking back, I can see that in this experience I was releasing years of built-up mental and physical stress.

The first thing I did following this experience was to start reading as many books as I could on neuroscience, psychology, spirituality and anything that had to do with the mind. I was also hoping to come to a more grounded understanding of this experience.

The first book I read was on stress. What caught my attention was a section about how our brainwave states relate to stress, and how those brainwave states are measured in hertz. Well, this peaked my attention, because as a musician I use hertz as a measurement of frequencies all of the time in my music. What I found was that brainwaves are also measured with frequency (just like sound), so our brains are literally creating frequency waves with our thoughts.

Previously in my life, classical music was always my “go to” form of relaxation. I was trained as a classical musician, and later I became a touring musician. I always found classical music to be therapeutic; however, following this deep state of anxiety I was so sensitive to processing “thought”, that even listening to classical music was too intense. My mind was still following the patterns of music, the rhythm, the harmony and melody, and I was experiencing stress. I found that just humming to myself and listening to sounds in nature were very calming. Someone recommended some recordings of “new age” style music that was really based more on tones than musical structure. I found this to be extremely relaxing.

In short, **what I found was that sound —the frequencies themselves —helped me get “out of my head” and relax my whole physical system.** This was an entirely new dimension of music for me, and it inspired me to study and learn more!

There are a number of scientific reasons why sounds and frequency can be beneficial. Here are two important ways. Number one, music is simply “ordered sound”. The left brain is a sort of “pattern recognition software”. This helps us to see patterns and create order. Music is simply frequencies that are ordered into rhythm, harmonies or chords, and melodies. In art (and life), we tend to like this “play” of order, and the tension and resolution we can create. This part of our brain is also closely tied to our survival instinct. We use this part of our mind to learn patterns for survival —from the time we are young, we are adding to this repertoire of “do this” and “don’t do that”. Some of these are truthful and essential, others are not. Often, just the activation of this part of the mind may cause low-level stress

Sound Therapy— Continued

responses. Because of the random nature of Sound Therapy, it can be helpful in allowing this part of the mind to rest and for the listener to simply enjoy the sounds of the frequencies and sounds. This also seems to help access the "right brain", our connection to creativity and a sense of "space".

Secondly, **the oscillations, or rhythms of the various sound waves can calm the mind.** Tibetan bowls, as well as other Sound Therapy instruments, can produce monaural "beats". These are produced by the interaction of various overtones which are more pronounced in Sound Therapy instruments. These gentle musical rhythms also seem to affect our brainwaves. We have four main brainwave states. They are: Beta, Alpha, Theta and Delta. Beta is our normal waking state, Alpha and Theta are more meditative, and Delta is a deep sleep state. Each of these states has its own frequency band. By analogy we could say that this is like the EQ on our stereo. Beta would be like the "treble end" of the EQ, and Delta the "bass", while the meditative states of Alpha and Theta are the "midrange". Listening to these relaxing oscillations produced by Sound Therapy instruments may help us to access these meditative states more easily and consistently.

Sound Therapy seems to help by getting the listener out of the "left brain" and also encouraging meditative brainwave states. Sound Therapy can be like "training wheels" for meditation.

As part of my own healing process, I began to create tracks for myself to relax and then for family and friends. I then began to post them on the internet for free under the name "Sonic Yogi". I looked at this as my chance to hopefully help bring peace to anyone who happened to be experiencing what I had gone through. I also looked at this as a way to serve —with my abilities and with the new knowledge that I had gained from my anxiety experiences. I wasn't sure if anyone would like these seemingly random sounds. **My intention was simply that if Sound Therapy tracks were to be helpful to any others, I would be grateful for that opportunity.** To my surprise, people started listening and downloading these in larger and larger numbers. At first there were a few listens per week, and then there were hundreds, and then there were thousands.... and with almost no promotion of my own. Now, years later, these tracks have been listened to tens of millions of times for free.

I (Jonathon) haven't had any significant anxiety since that experience in 2011. Sound Therapy has been a helpful tool in my healing journey, along with yoga, meditation, and diet.

By Ephrat Lipton, LCSW, ACSW, BCD, CEDS, and Jonathan Adams, Sonic Yogi™

Resources

Adams, J. (2014, March). Ted Talk. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2itMEkdh6g>

Free downloads are available on Jonathan Adam's website at: <http://sonicyogi.com>

A 10-day course covering the science of Sound Therapy along with daily meditations via the iPhone app "Insight Timer". This course is available thru the app, and it will be available in a web format soon. <https://insighttimer.com/sonicyogi>

Group Sound Therapy sessions, lead by Jonathan Adams, are available at the Atlanta Center for Wellness on the second Sunday of every month from 1:30pm to 2:30pm.

A Special Note to Jonathan Adams: You are extraordinarily generous —a musician, researcher, self-taught healer, mental health advocate, uplifting community member, and much more. On behalf of GSCSW and our greater community as a whole, we thank you so very much for your generous sharing.

Ephrat Lipton, LCSW, ACSW, BCD, CEDS, is a Co-founder and Managing Partner at Atlanta Center for Wellness (AC4W), a mental health practice comprised of more than 30 independent clinicians who have been sharing resources, ideas, and wisdom with one another since it opened in June of 2017. AC4W uses a holistic and integrative approach with a multidisciplinary team of professionals who specialize in individual, group, couples and family therapy across the lifespan. You can find Ephrat Lipton, LCSW, ACSW, BCD, CEDS, at www.atlantacenterforwellness.com

Nature's Role in Healing, Restoration, and Immunity

By: Patrick Bryant, LCSW, NBCCH



If you're like me, in that you love to be in nature, and you find any opportunity to feel alive among natural landscapes, you have likely noticed the sensation that comes from being deep in a forest, or atop a mountain peak. As humans, in general, but especially as clinicians, it's important for us to find healthy ways to feel grounded; slowing the fast pace of the ever-moving world around us, so that we have a moment to experience our lives.

It was a cool, crisp morning in Georgia's unpredictable, yet beautiful autumn season when I first experienced this connection with nature, and in a way I had never before experienced. As the sun's rays began to find their way through the tightly sewn canopy of trees —gently kissed with hues of reds, yellows, and oranges—I welcomed the glimpse of warmth that would hopefully follow soon. Though I dressed appropriately, the shade still brought a temporary shiver from time to time. The more slowly and attentively I moved through the trees, the more my attention became less focused on the temperature —my occasional awareness of how cold I was feeling—and more focused on the sensation of time's absence. I was mindful of my experience, in the truest sense of the word. **My attention was intentionally and purposefully focused on the present moment and my connection with what was in front of me—what I was touching or what I was feeling.** In this case, most of **my sensual processing was related to the many shades of green and brown from the trees, the gentle sway of leaves and flowers with each breath of wind, the dynamic shade of blue above and the many textures of the ground below my feet.**

I wonder how many people have actually experienced this sensation; a full body embrace of the present moment that is not concerned with time, because time doesn't actually matter in that moment. With this experience, comes a certain degree of calm and relaxation. For those who meditate regularly, this sensation may be familiar. For others, if you've had the pleasure of truly being at peace, even if for just a moment—with no worries, no obligations, no expectations, and no judgments; just being—that's what I'm describing.

What is this curious experience I'm describing? It's called Shinrin-Yoku, literally translated from its Japanese origin to mean "taking in the forest atmosphere", or forest bathing. Notice the above description has no mention of soap or sponges! There is no actual bathing taking place, and everyone is fully clothed. This *forest bathing*, or more descriptively referred to as *Forest Therapy*, is a mindfully attuned walk through natural areas, like being beneath the robust canopy of living trees, during which restorative and preventative healing takes place.

Throughout a session of Forest Therapy, participants are invited to experience the forest and themselves in the forest, in various ways. There are prompts and methods for engaging in each practice, but there is no right or wrong way to do this. The word "invited" is intentional. In Shinrin-Yoku, there are no commands or definitive directives. One is simply invited to engage in the upcoming experience, which is described by the guide. This methodology can be compared to the invitations of Trauma Sensitive Yoga, in which participants are also invited, rather than told to get that form or pose just right. There is a trained and certified guide in Shinrin-Yoku, who explains the practices in which one may choose to experience nature, but the intention is to foster an environment of choice and self-determination, while connecting with nature. By removing the distractions of judgment and shame one may experience from making the "wrong" choice or doing the task incorrectly, the premise is to invite people to engage with the natural environment in a way that fosters attunement to the present moment.

This experience of paying attention on purpose to how we are connected through energy—how people, animals, plants, all living organisms, are interconnected on an energetic plane—is not a new idea. There is no doubt that, by now, we have all been introduced to the term *mindfulness*. It has become a bit of a buzz word over recent decades. Its origins are derived from Buddhist teachings in the Noble Eightfold Path. In the 1970s, Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn introduced this concept to Western medicine in a measurable and effective modality called Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). Since that time, various approaches to mindfulness have aided clinicians in guiding clients toward healthier living, self-acceptance, and a grounded conceptualization and experience of the present moment.

Alan Watts (1915-1973), British-American philosopher, Buddhist teacher, author and speaker, supports mindfulness in open challenges to limiting and dated ways of thinking: "that which is outside of me is not me, and therefore has nothing to do with me". Watts taught that all things are a consequence of the state of the universe at the time during which it was created. In other words, this experience is happening right now, and is temporary. Our choices are influenced by our present experience. If our thoughts are somewhere other than the present, our reactions to them may be less effective for navigating what is actually happening right now. **Practices like Shinrin-Yoku help us reconnect with the present through an intentional awareness of our mind and body in the present moment.**

As my journey of forest bathing continued, I was invited to engage in practices like closing my eyes and reopening them, as if I'm seeing the world for the first time; taking a mindful walk along a wooded trail; feeling the texture of items found in the forest; and even talking to a tree. Yes, you read that correctly—I talked to a tree! And believe it or not, this experience was incredible.

Nature's Role in Healing, Restoration, and Immunity – Continued

On the surface, simply challenging my own embarrassment of talking aloud to a tree, allowed me to overcome my shame narrative of what people may think if they were to see or hear me engaging in such a ritual. Below the surface, this experience went much deeper. The premise behind talking to a tree is that trees are often very old, and that they hold a great deal of wisdom. By talking aloud to the tree, we hear ourselves in an area that is otherwise silent. **We have the opportunity to sit with our experience, without the risk of actually being shamed or judged.** Any shame, judgment, etc. becomes our own, and we have the opportunity to notice it for what it is.

On an even deeper level, we tap into the energy of the tree and listen. Similar to meditation, I was aware of my thoughts, accepted them as they were, and gently brought my attention back to the tree. Unlike meditation, this is an actual conversation. I was speaking aloud, stating thoughts, asking questions—all while being very intentional. The silence in the absence of my talking was where I was most able to connect with what was actually happening.

To wrap up the experience, the group gathered in a central location—a clearing in the wooded park—read a proverb, wrote our intentions and/or experience as a result of the day's practice, and shared hot tea in a circle. We then exchanged salutations and went on our respective ways feeling restored, energized, grateful, and very present.

For my fellow science-minded colleagues out there, skepticism may be taking root. Strolling through the forest, though pleasant and even cathartic, couldn't possibly have scientific data to support actual measurable healing. Well, here is where we calm the judgment and allow curiosity to illuminate information. **While being in the forest, we absorb bioactive gases called terpenes—which are emitted from trees, bushes, leaves, and herbs—through our skin and lungs. Being exposed to these terpenes triggers a boost in our body's immune system. Studies have shown that terpenes offer anti-inflammatory qualities, as well as neuroprotective activities (Li, 2010). They even assist in lowering our cortisol levels, thereby aiding in stress-reduction.** One study showed that being in a forest for just one day can boost our immune system for up to seven days, because our body increases the production of what is called natural killer cells, which defend against chronic diseases like cancer (Li, et al, 2007). This study went on to show that spending two to three days in the forest elevated levels of natural killer cells for up to 30 days (Li, et al, 2007). Your best chance at absorbing these terpenes is in late spring to early summer. What a great time to be outside! Have you ever noticed feeling really good while walking in nature after an enriching rainfall? Well, terpenes are known to be at an increased level when the air is moist.

Now of course, Forest Therapy is no replacement for psychotherapy or medicine. It likely won't cure depression, anxiety, or cancer. However, it can significantly reduce the levels of stress we carry on a regular basis and boost immune functioning, both of which allow us to improve daily functioning. In my practice, **I have invited many clients to add Shinrin-Yoku as a supplement to therapy.** At the very least, getting outside into green spaces is a frequent recommendation of mine, even if this practice doesn't involve an experienced Shinrin-Yoku guide. My clients have noted improved feelings and boosts of energy after taking a walk outside during work breaks.

Atlanta is known as the City of Trees. We are fortunate to have a variety of green spaces throughout the metropolitan area. One doesn't necessarily have to drive to a rural area or find a park to reap the benefits of being among trees and plants. **A little greenery and natural sunlight can go a long way in doing well for your mind and body.** Whenever possible, bring some live foliage with potted plants into your office space and common areas. Additionally, you may consider opening the blinds a little to allow natural light into the space.

Interested in experiencing Shinrin-Yoku from a trained and certified guide? Robin Hancock of Renewal by Nature was the Certified Forest Therapy Guide with whom I shared my experience. She is located in Decatur, Georgia, and offers individual and group experiences. Her website is listed under *Resources* below.

References

- Li, Q. (2010). Effect of forest bathing trips on human immune function. *Environmental Health and Preventative Medicine*. 15(1), 9 -17. Retrieved February 29, 2019 from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2793341>
- Li, Q., Morimoto, K., Nakadai, A., et al. (2007). Forest bathing enhances natural killer activity and expression of anti-cancer proteins. *International Journal of Immunopathological Pharmacology*, 2(2), 3-8.

Resources

www.renewal-by-nature.com

Patrick Bryant is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Psychotherapist in private practice. He is the owner and director of The Peaceful Place in Decatur, Georgia, where he provides psychotherapy, clinical supervision, workshops, retreats for self-care and general wellness, and leads trainings for the mindful navigation of stress in the workplace. In private practice, Patrick's emphasis lies in helping teens and adults healthfully navigate powerful emotions, stress, anxiety, and the effects of trauma. Patrick has a special interest in helping teen and adult men foster a healthy relationship with masculinity. You can find Patrick Bryant, LCSW, NBCCH, at www.thepeacefulplacellc.com

The In-Between Space: Exploring a Client's Relationship with Alcohol

By: Alyce E. Wellons, LCSW



“The man takes a drink. The drink takes a drink. The drink takes the man.” ~Proverb

As a psychotherapist in private practice with extensive training and specialization in addiction and recovery, there are a few questions I get asked all the time. One of the top questions is this: *How do I know when my drinking is a real problem?*

I know many clinicians spend hours talking with clients about their drinking. Having clinical conversations with clients about their relationships with alcohol can be a rich and illuminating part of therapy, often shedding light on underlying thoughts, feelings, and dynamics. For

someone to be diagnosed with alcoholism, they have to meet some very serious criteria, and alcohol abuse can look a lot like alcoholism. Our clients can have a lot of the same consequences when they abuse alcohol that they might have if they are an alcoholic. Often times, especially in certain developmental stages (think ages 18-25), it is very hard to distinguish problem drinking versus alcoholism. It is important to be thorough in assessing. This article is not a strict teaching on DSM criteria and diagnosis, but rather a discussion on how to talk about the *in-between places* with clients.

New studies report there is no amount of alcohol consumption that is safe for overall health (Fullman, 2018). Of course, there is a lot of debate around this, especially those who like to cite the benefits of “moderate drinking”. Truthfully, I would bet the farm that those who drink moderately, who feel justified in doing so, and who want to argue about it, may not actually be drinking moderately at all. Alcohol has a way of blurring the facts and measurements. The recommendation is not that we start drinking alcohol as a health benefit. The recommendation is this: *IF* we drink, do it moderately.

With all that being said, finding space to talk with clients outside of diagnosis and labels can be very important —illuminating and freeing to both clinician and client. In my psychotherapy practice, the main, old-school criteria I use to help someone explore if they are crossing the line are **The Three C's**:

1. Loss of Control
2. Compulsivity
3. Consequences

Loss of Control: When our clients drink, they can't control how much they drink, the thoughts they are having and their behaviors.

Compulsivity: The best description of compulsivity is the experience of drinking despite the fact that clients don't want to do so, despite the negative consequences, and/or despite the fact that something important is on the line. They do it anyway. They rationalize and justify their drinking because they feel they have to have that drink.

Consequences: Where have our clients experienced consequences from their drinking? Have they had consequences to their financial, legal, professional, familial, marital, physical, emotional, moral, or spiritual life? Where has drinking affected their life? Have them make a list.

How do we respond as clinicians if a client wants to deal with their drinking but isn't ready to quit? Ask them to stop drinking for 90 days. Have them choose to get clean and healthy, eat well, exercise, rest, educate themselves, remain in therapy, learn triggers and underlying issues, awaken spirituality, and get inspired. Then, see where they are after 90 days.

An important part of treatment is helping our client become educated. Provide psychoeducational materials and encourage them to read about all the signs and symptoms of alcohol abuse and alcoholism. Recommend that clients explore meetings, such as: 12 Step, Smart Recovery, Refuge Recovery, and Yoga for the 2 Steps. Clients can even download the step work and start using those worksheets to see if they connect with any of it. Speaker meetings are great places to hear other people's stories. Hearing how others have explored their relationships with alcohol can be helpful. Other recommended supports for treatment include these: podcasts, articles, memoirs, work books, and daily inspirational readings—one classic is “One Day at a Time” found in AA.

This time away from alcohol creates some space to explore the client's history and relationship with alcohol. Have your client review their family history, as well. It makes room to consider underlying issues, stories, and the pain that often accompanies the need to

The In-Between Space: Exploring a Client's Relationship with Alcohol — Continued

numb, escape, or check out. Insight leads to illumination and therapy becomes deeper and richer.

Can some people return to “normal” drinking? The answer is yes. (My old school, substance abuse colleagues are turning over in their graves, as this was and continues to be a big “NO - NO”).

And that's where the truth reveals itself.

Either a client will return to normal drinking and be more educated on their relationship with alcohol, or they won't. If they don't and their drinking continues to progress with more serious consequences —then the cucumber may have turned into a pickle, the drink has taken the man, and it is time for the gold standard diagnosis and a higher level of intervention/treatment.

Because, at the end of the day, it has to be the client's call.

By Alyce Wellons, LCSW

Reference

Fullman, N. (2018). Alcohol use and burden for 195 countries and territories, 1990-2016: A systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2016. *The Lancet*, 392(10152), 1015-1035. Retrieved 2019 from [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(18\)31310-2/fulltext#%20](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)31310-2/fulltext#%20)

Alyce Wellons has been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in Georgia since 1999. She has maintained a private psychotherapy, supervision, and consultation practice for over 17 years in the Virginia Highlands area of Atlanta, Georgia. Alyce sees individuals and couples for short- or long-term psychotherapy. Her approach focuses on interpersonal theory, neurobiology, mindfulness-based education, and body-based techniques for the treatment of stress, anxiety, depression, attachment and relationship issues, addiction/recovery/relapse, dissociation, trauma, and other mental health issues. She has specialized training in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction and LifeForce Yoga. Alyce believes that using respectful humor and laughter can be one of the most wonderful and connecting aspects of life, especially when navigating some of the difficult passages we face along the way. You can find Alyce Wellons, LCSW, at www.alycewellons.com

CHEWY BITS: The Wisdom We Would Impart to Our Younger, Social Worker Selves If We Had a Time Machine

I'd say...Follow your gut and trust yourself —Follow up, no matter what. — Michelle Pintado, LMSW, CADC-II, CSSW

This field is so varied, and the need is great, be open to opportunities that may not fit your "plan". This is how you discover new talents and strengths. Oh, and stop overthinking everything, relax. — Kim Peery, LMSW

My advice would be that I am not here to solve and/or fix all the problems but merely to bring hope in the process. Hope is enough sometimes, and to be grateful for hope. — Amy McWilliams, LMSW

Self-care also means NOT putting off what you can do today. Treat your future self well by discovering the habit of "getter done". — Tiffany T. Conyers, LCSW

Do not neglect yourself. Make professional and personal growth a priority. You do not win prizes for not taking time for yourself, but it can impact your ability to care for your clients and loved ones. — Helen Suero, LCSW

CHEWY BITS: The Wisdom We Would Impart to Our Younger, Social Worker Selves If We Had a Time Machine — Continued

I wish that I knew that you have time to make the differences you want to make in the world. It is easy to get caught up in getting the first ideal job, but if I could reassure myself that each experience that I got is part of a larger meaningful fabric, I may have felt a little more comfortable in each step of the path. Slow down, connect and enjoy each piece. — Tara Arnold, PhD, LCSW

First, get certified in something useful which can help your confidence instead of my trying to piece things together, trying to do the right thing. I was told to find quality supervision, but I did not know what to look for. I wish I had sought out better supervision in the beginning. — Kelli Tolbert, LMSW

Identify your goals and identify your budget to reach those goals. Immediately identify two or three individuals for supervision and start tracking your work hours toward supervision, the time goes by so quickly. — Kathy Woerner, LMSW

Every now and then stop to consider: 1. Am I a believer in the work I do given all the choices I could make? 2. Does the content of the work fit my personality and what I enjoy doing? 3. Have I sought several old-timers to evaluate questions I might have about my career as a whole? And 4. Have I considered an independent way to practice doing what I like to do? — Polly Hart, LCSW

Heal thyself. We can only take people as far along as we have gone. — Christine Leeds, LCSW

Don't let your first job define your career —Social work is very broad and just because the first one isn't a fit doesn't mean there aren't 50 options that will fit. — Diane Sitowski, LCSW

There will be some people who love you but are not capable of loving you the way you need them to... This doesn't make you or them any less, just different. Love yourself in all the ways you need others to, and do not unto yourself any hurtful things that others have done to you. — Tia Thomas, LCSW, CHT

Don't wait until you want to become fully credentialed. Start supervision early. Wellness and having a mentor are very important. — Lisa Guest, LPC, LMSW, CASAC

Listen deeply underneath what your client is saying —Pay attention to the inflection in their voice and their body language, and stay present with them. Also, though you may be new to practicing therapy, don't be afraid to try things, admit to your clients when you've made a mistake, and be sure to ask questions of those "more seasoned" than you are. We've all been there on the learning curve so be patient with yourself and your confidence will build, and most of all, be gentle with yourself! — Allyn St. Lifer, M.Ed., LCSW, CPCC

You do not have to know it all. Being is a lot richer and more healing than knowing. You are doing fine! — Alyce E. Wellons, LCSW

Take a deep breath and believe in yourself. You are just getting started, and yet you already have what you need to make a difference. I want to affirm your compassion, your energy to care and to keep learning and growing, and the solid base of knowledge that is already rooted in you. — Karen Tantillo, LCSW

Be yourself! Being genuine is that part that others can connect with and that is where the work with others begins. — Neitcha Thomsen, LCSW

Focus more on the work you can do and less on all the work the world needs us to do. You are one person. Do what you can with what you have and be okay with that. —Jacey J. Yunker, LCSW, ACTP

Committee Happenings

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

GSCSW is continually grateful to Barbara Lewison, LCSW, and committee members who have done so much for GSCSW's Legislative Committee. They work diligently behind the scenes — keeping track of important facts and details, emailing legislative alerts, attending important meetings, and collaborating with others in the community. We thank you, Barbara, for leading such an important committee!

Legislative Committee Members:

Barbara Lewis, LCSW (Chair)

Julie Justus, LMSW

Eliza Segell, LMSW

Donna Parrish, PhD, MSW

legislative@gscsw.org

LMSW COMMITTEE

Our LMSW Committee and Mentorship Committee co-hosted the spring jobs panel *Tips on Starting a Private Practice* on March 11, 2019. It went very well, and we are most grateful to our mentors —Ephrat Lipton, ACSW, LCSW, BCD, CEDS; Brenda Romanchik, ACSW, LCSW, CTP; Lori Albert-Walker, LCSW; and Autumn Collier, LCSW, —for having shared much valuable information. Thank you!

The LMSW Committee is eager to have members join! As a committee member you can help plan events —in particular our spring salon events. You can also speak to MSW students about the benefits of joining GSCSW when trying to complete the licensure process at social work programs in the metropolitan Atlanta area. **Becoming a member is not only a valuable way to network, but it can improve your communication, leadership, organizational and creative skills.** If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact me at lmsw@gscsw.org.

Kristin Smith, LMSW, LMSW Committee Chair

LMSW Committee Members

Kristin Smith, LMSW (Chair)

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMITTEE

The Social Media and Public Relations Committee is in charge of managing the social media aspects of GSCSW. We manage the GSCSW Facebook group and member requests to join Facebook.

I'd like to recognize and thank Trisha Clymore, GSCSW's Administrator, and Allison Sweenie, LCSW, MAC, GSCSW's Secretary, for their tremendous helpfulness in updating our Facebook.

We would love for people to join our Social Media and Public Relations Committee, as we continue to find innovative ways to promote GSCSW and to keep our existing members engaged with us via multiple, social media platforms. We look forward to building and expanding our committee. If you are interested in joining this committee, you can contact us at socialmedia@gscsw.org

Natasha Vayner, LMSW, Social Media and Public Relations Chair

Social Media and Public Relations Committee Members:

Natasha Vayner, LMSW (Chair)

Committee Happenings

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Sometimes situations arise in clinical practice that give rise to ethical concerns and leave even seasoned social workers in doubt as to the best course of action. Sometimes two or more ethical principles are in conflict and whatever decision we make, something will be compromised: an obvious example, confidentiality vs. duty to protect or warn. Other times, we just don't know what to do in a new situation that pushes our clinical boundaries of somehow feels wrong. Resolving ethical dilemmas often requires navigating the gray areas where our code of ethics, law, personal principles and client behaviors intersect. These can be lonely and disturbing places to be, but you don't have to sit there alone. Consultation can be a key element of ethical decision-making, for new and seasoned social workers alike, both to expand our perspectives and to gain support.

Your Ethics Committee encourages you to seek supervision or peer consultation when faced with these dilemmas and invites your ethical inquiries to the committee: Submit your questions to ethics@gscsw.org and we'll explore the relevant ethical, regulatory, and legal guidelines and implications and formulate an opinion. The committee has addressed a variety of interesting inquiries, in areas including boundaries and dual relationships, client determination, confidentiality, challenging agency practices, working within our competencies, and more. **We invite others who are interested in the exploration of ethical dilemmas and challenging questions to consider joining us. It is an enriching experience.**

Carla Bauer, LCSW, Ethics Committee Chair

ethics@gscsw.org

Ethics Committee Members:

Carla Bauer, LCSW (Chair)

Carol Finkelstein, LCSW

Phyllis Rosen, LCSW

Corinne Warrenner, PhD, LMSW

MEMBERSHIP

We are pleased to share our current membership count at 373. One of our goals is to increase membership enlistment. If you know of anyone who might be interested in joining GSCSW, send them our way!

Our Membership Committee attends most GSCSW events. We are the friendly faces signing you in, and often times we are responsible for ensuring you have beverages to drink and food to eat. We also seek new membership enlistment at events.

Our reaching out to students and clinical social workers in Savannah, Georgia, has been an extraordinarily fruitful endeavor. GSCSW is now looking forward to several future partnerships and growth opportunities. Membership anticipates that Dr. Adrian Anderson, a Savannah State University faculty, will spotlight the many benefits of GSCSW membership to their students. Thank you, Dr. Adrian Anderson! Additionally, GSCSW also looks forward to a new partnership with the Clinical Social Work Association of Savannah (CSWAS). We are incredibly excited about all of the benefits that will soon be available to our members and clinical social workers in Georgia as a result of this collaboration!

Membership Committee welcomes new committee members! Feel free to contact us should you want to learn more or wish to join our committee.

Griffin Smith, LMSW, Membership Chair

membership@gscsw.org

Membership Committee Members:

Griffin Smith, LMSW (Chair) (hoping to have his LCSW in June)

Christopher Uptain, LMSW (also hoping to have his LCSW in June)

Molly Kosar, LMSW

Christi Humphrey, LMSW

Vivian Daniel, LCSW

Committee Happenings

LOW-COST SUPERVISION

Thank you to our many, generous, low-cost supervisors who lift and support us in our journey to become more seasoned. You can contact our Low-Cost Supervision Committee Chair, Mary Ablett, LCSW, at supervision@gscsw.org who will assist you in finding a “supervision match” based on your clinical interest and need.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

What a fantastic time we had!

We were excited to have had the following presentations and we thank these presenters: Murray Dabby, LCSW, presented *Creative Treatment Approaches for the Social Anxiety Epidemic* in January; Irene Celcer, MA, LCSW, presented *Clinical Work with the Transgender Population* in February; and Jacey J. Yunker, LCSW, ACTP, presented *Cultivating Happiness and Joy* in April.

We held our March panel *Inner Life of a Therapist*, and it was a huge success. We thank our panelists: Tricia Anbinder, LCSW; Patrick Bryant, LCSW, NBCCH; Sharman Colosetti, PhD, LCSW; Jesse Harris Bathrick, MA, LMFT; and Paul Olander, JD, LCSW, NBCCH, CCTP, RRT-P, TIH, for their participation, vulnerability and expertise!

Our 2019 Spring Symposium wrapped up our Professional Education season on Friday, April 26, 2019. We were thrilled to have had Dr. David and Deborah Woodsfellow present on *The Essence of Couples Therapy: Changing Fear Cycles to Love Cycles*. Thank you, Dr. David and Deborah Woodsfellow! This Spring Symposium took place at the WellStar Development Center in Atlanta.

Additionally, we would like to thank Meredith de Saint-Albin, MA, LCSW, for her presentation on *Take an ACTIVE Role: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy*, in November of 2018, as we meant to do so in our 2018 Fall – Winter, Clinical Page issue.

As the 2018-2019 Season comes to an end, Brenda and I are so appreciative of our Professional Education Committee Members for their hard work in making these Professional Education events possible. We could not have done it without their creativity, professional knowledge and commitment to GSCSW!

We are looking forward to seeing you in the 2019-2020 Season. The Professional Education Committee has been busy planning for next season—which has been nearly completed! Keep your eyes open this summer for GSCSW's postcard with educational and other committee events pertaining to the 2019-2020 season.

Please reach out to professionaled@gscsw.org with any questions, comments, concerns or if you would like to join the committee!

Diane Sitkowski, LCSW, and Brenda Romanchik, ACSW, LCSW, CTP

Professional Education Co-Chairs professionaled@gscsw.org

Professional Education Committee Members

Diane Sitkowski, LCSW (Chair)

Brenda Romanchik, ACSW, LCSW, CTP (Chair)

Michelle Pintado, LMSW, CADC-II, CSSW

Sharman Colosetti, PhD, LCSW

Hannah Sievers, LMSW

Katie Leikam, LCSW

Christi Humphrey, LCSW

Lisa Ehlers, LCSW

Antoinette Thornton, LCSW

Jacob Sobel, LMSW

Sojin Varghese, MSW

Committee Happenings

MENTORSHIP

The Mentorship Committee is comprised of a diverse group of seasoned LCSW's. We provide mentoring and guidance to GSCSW members in a group setting. The Mentorship Committee continues to serve GSCSW members seeking guidance in their career and in the field of social work. And Mentorship is hoping to bring back "one-to-one" mentoring!

Mentorship meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 5:45 p.m. before the GSCSW CE events, and usually at Hillside Hospital in the Monroe Building. Whether you are a recent graduate or a LCSW looking to branch into a different area of social work, we welcome you to come be amongst your social work peers! During the Mentorship meetings, one can expect to be: connected with peers; informed about potential employers and the different areas of employment in the field of social work; and learn about licensure requirements per the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists (without subjective interpretation). The meetings are led by seasoned LCSW's looking to help and grow social work professionals.

Our Mentorship Committee and the LMSW Committee co-hosted the spring jobs panel *Tips on Starting a Private Practice* on March 11, 2019. The panelists were able to share their journeys as social workers that led to their current roles. The panel consisted of experienced social workers in a variety of settings—including private practice, academia, school, and hospital. We would like to thank these individuals for their participation, sharing and expertise: Ephrat Lipton, ACSW, LCSW, BCD, CEDS; Brenda Romanchik, ACSW, LCSW, CTP; Lori Albert-Walker, LCSW; and Autumn Collier, LCSW.

We are excited about the addition of Paul Olander, LCSW, JD, NBCCH, CCTP, TIH-P, RRT-P, to the Mentorship Committee. He will bring a wealth of knowledge as a seasoned social worker and former attorney. Welcome, Paul!

Danna and I would like to thank the Mentorship Committee for their hard work and expertise. We appreciate the time they have volunteered and the positive difference each of them has made toward the committee and GSCSW. We would like to offer a special thank you to Sonny Magill, LCSW, for his time served. Sonny has been a longtime committee member and will be retiring his service from the committee to focus on other obligations. We appreciate the dedication and wisdom Sonny has shared with the committee and mentees.

The Mentorship Committee is currently seeking additional members. There is a lot of great work to be done, and we welcome more hands on the deck. We meet bimonthly, and we lead the mentorship groups monthly. Additionally, we host special events such as the jobs panel. We are looking for individuals who would be interested in providing one-on-one mentorship as well. If you are an experienced LCSW and would like to volunteer your time to the Mentorship Committee, please email us at mentor@gscsw.org.

Do you have any questions? We'd love to hear from you!

Autumn Collier, LCSW, and Danna Lipton, LCSW

Mentorship Committee Co-Chairs

mentor@gscsw.org

Mentorship Committee Members:

Danna Lipton, LCSW (Chair)

Autumn Collier, LCSW (Chair)

Sonny Magill, LCSW

Phyllis Glass, LCSW

Tara Arnold, PhD, LCSW, CEDS-S

Ephrat Lipton, ACSW, LCSW, BCD, CEDS

Paul Olander, LCSW, JD, NBCCH, CCTP, TIH-P, RRT-P