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MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT & AGPA REP

I hope those of you who were able to attend the LGPS Spring conference had a meaningful experience. We received tremendous positive feedback and wish to extend our thanks again to Jeffrey Hudson, M,Ed., LPC, CGP, FAGPA for his willingness to support our Louisiana chapter.

Those of you who know me know that I am the proud mother of an adult son with Down syndrome. For over 20 years the classic movie, 'The Wizard of Oz,' has been a weekly staple in our home. One of the invaluable lessons I've learned is that there is incredible personal empowerment to be found if you

look behind the curtain. To that end I believe transparency is absolutely critical. Once we understand that we have the courage, the brain, and the heart for great change, we are able to step up with confidence.

I was recently on a conference call for the affiliate society of AGPA. This biannual call reminded me of what a diverse group the affiliates are. Some affiliates have dedicated permanent offices, full-time staff, and large budgets to accomplish their goals. Others - such as our group in Louisiana - have limited resources and little to keep their group alive in their geographic area but a handful of passionate

volunteer board members.

The purpose of this Spring call is to jumpstart our meeting in Chicago this June. At this annual meeting, the affiliate presidents or representatives brainstorm ideas ranging from fundraising and sustainability to IT and ethical considerations of our individual nonprofits.

My hope is that this year's meeting will give us direction on some much-needed changes for LGPS. We hope to partner with community resources to ensure a more sustainable financial future for LGPS and to consider changes in the formats and/or locations of our fall and spring

2017 FALL INSTITUTE

October 28
Baton Rouge, LA

Featuring

Dayne Narretta, LCSW, CGP, BCD

On the Subject of

What's All the "Brouhaha" about Systems Centered Groups?
Functional Subgrouping: What it is, what it isn't and how we use it to resolve conflict

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Victory Addiction Recovery

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conferences (which hopefully will allow us to continue forward thinking conference planning). We would also like to review and propose updates for our bylaws, and provide additional training opportunities within our community.

The board has already discussed adding a core skills group training opportunity. With most entry level mental health positions requiring group facilitation, it is unconscionable to me that our state universities provide so little in terms of group training. If we desire quality group experiences in Louisiana and wish to attract more group therapists to obtain their CGP (certified group psychotherapist) designations, local trainings are key. LGPS is in a position to provide such small group learning opportunities.

With such lofty goals, we need your - the membership's - support and "boots on the ground" assistance. Please contact me or one of your board members if you would be willing to join one of the subcommittees or if you can identify a beneficial area of growth for LGPS.

I look forward to serving as your president this year.

Debbie Wray, LCSW, CGP



A Message from an Institute Attendee

Last weekend I attended the Louisiana Group Psychotherapy Conference. I was uncertain going into it. Most of my uncertainty stemmed from a wavering commitment to the social work profession - a commitment six years and thousands of dollars of student loans in the making. I came into LGPS feeling the burden that contemplating a change can sometimes be, especially when change means sacrifice and losing something of yourself. I wasn't sure yet if it was a new direction I needed or just a new vision of the direction I was already going. Either way I wanted LGPS to sway me, and move me one way or the other.

What I was sure of was that I needed to get some continuing education units. In that regard, signing up for the conference was an easy decision. There was the expectation of seeing colleagues and friends from last year, and witnessing people sincerely engaged in group therapy. Secretly there was the hope that the conference would restore my faith and reignite my passion for the work.

The conference stirred something in me, though not what, or in the way I expected. The first feeling I had when I walked into the large room with everyone sitting there was nostalgia. For the people I met last year who were present again, and for the people absent and missing. I suppose no reunion is ever the same, and every reunion is inevitably incomplete. But it was good to be back in the

clutches of people with whom I bared it all, and if not all, then at least as much as I could stand.

What is most special about the Louisiana Group Psychotherapy Conference to me, is that it is the only experience I've had where a group of relative strangers, with many motives, come face to face with each other, intent to really meet each other in ways our modern busy lives of work and relationships, social media and celebrity gossip rarely allow. I think we hope to meet ourselves again at conferences like this and maybe even to meet ourselves for the first time. It is this intent that makes all the difference - and what one gets out of this conference or any conference is proportionate to the work they choose to put in. Such is life.

Sitting in the conference room less than four hours, I somehow found myself staring into the faces of eight people, doing group therapy with them. They were either strangers, or colleagues I felt a intimidated by, or cared a great deal about what they thought of me. Even under these circumstances, with a presenter we just met leading us, and fifty other people sitting outside our small circle watching us, we chose to be vulnerable.

While we can choose to be vulnerable, what we can't choose is where vulnerability takes us, or what it does to us. In this group I found myself face to face with the little boy I forgot I used to be, and forget I still am sometimes. Then and now I resist him. I try to forget about him out of fear or sadness. But he's there, sitting on a cool gray porch with paint peeling off of it, looking out at a street that contains every possibility. The thought of it

almost brought me to tears. That little boy knew what it meant to be alone. He knew it well. For two years, the Louisiana Group Psychotherapy Conference has given him and me an opportunity to know something other than loneliness – to instead connect (that word we use so often in our careers), be vulnerable and feel alive in a way that is hard to duplicate and harder to explain, but the merits of the choice are there all the same.

It seems circles are a recurring theme at the Louisiana Group Psychotherapy Conference. The circles we sit in as the presenter lectures, the circles we sit in with our small groups as we learn, practice, and perform group therapy all at the same time, and the connected circles that tied the eight of us in the fish bowl to the fifty or so people outside of it, watching us do group therapy. Circles are always appearing and never ending, and I think the reason circles reoccur at LGPS is because the conference is designed to bring everyone into the fold, to the exclusion of no one. That is what I felt most at the LGPS conference last weekend – brought back into the fold, enveloped, held. Circle after circle after circle of love and hope around me.

Anwar Francis, LMSW
alowerfrequency.wordpress.com

Scholarships

SPONSOR A STUDENT

Sponsored by LGPS Member
Donations

LGPS will provide student

applicant(s) with the funds (registration only) to attend the upcoming LGPS institute.

Qualified applicants are those currently in graduate school or medical residency specializing in psychology, psychiatry, clinical social work, or counseling, who show a special interest in group psychotherapy.

How to Apply

Interested applicants should email their current CV with a letter of interest in the scholarship and in group psychotherapy to LGPSnews@gmail.com. Make sure to identify which scholarship you are applying for in your letter.

The number of recipients and available funds will depend on contributions.

We have received more interest than ever this year. Please consider making a donation today to support one of our scholarship funds or to sponsor a student's registration.

For more information or to make a donation, visit our website LGPSonline.org, click "Institutes", then click "Scholarships".

Self-Care

**INSPIRATION & SELF-CARE:
REMEMBER TO TAKE TIME EACH
DAY TO RELAX AND FOCUS ON
SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL**

I recently ran across this post (with tips!) while suggesting another page on Psychology Today to a friend. This article

reminds me that politics can be a source of stress, and they are dominating the news and our social media like never before. We benefit from being mindful of our own stress and needs, and then attending to them. I've attached a summary of the tips from the article to share with you all. Enjoy!

Kevin Credeur, LPC, CGP

Activism and Self-Care

- Journal
- Loving kindness meditation or mindfulness
- Color mandalas - this is a form of meditation
- Create joyful rituals - such rituals can include smiling at strangers, hugging friends when meeting them, or sending kind texts or e-mails
- Each day, engage in at least one activity for pleasure and one for mastery - read books, knit, do crossword puzzles, write a poem, take a bath
- Get out in nature and unplug. When possible, turn off your cell phone off and take a walk or sit in nature.
- Get a good night's sleep
- Eat a balanced diet of organic foods
- Have coffee, tea, or lunch with a close friend
- Engage in daily exercise
- Stay away from negative people

Diana Raab, PhD
Psychology Today
psychologytoday.com/blog/the-empowerment-diary/201701/activism-and-self-care

Financial Outlook

An Update of our Current Financial Situation

In the last edition of our newsletter (Winter 2017, which you can view on our website), the LGPS Board published an article to improve transparency regarding the financial situation of LGPS. Today, we'd like to provide you with an update on that situation.

INCREASING LGPS AWARENESS & INSTITUTE ATTENDANCE

We are making greater efforts to plan ahead and notify our members, mailing list recipients, AGPA, and local universities about our upcoming institutes. Our scholarship applications increased dramatically after our Past President, Kevin Credeur, gave a presentation about LGPS during a class in the LSU counseling program. We plan to give more presentations to graduate students in the future.

INCREASING REGISTRATION COSTS

Below is the plan previously discussed in the last edition of the newsletter to increase registration prices through 2018 for the upcoming spring institutes.

2016 | 2017 | 2018

MEMBER

\$230 | \$260 | \$280

MEMBER: NEW PROFESSIONAL

\$150 | \$175 | \$200

NON-MEMBER

\$300 | \$330 | \$350

NON-MEMBER: NEW PROFESSIONAL

\$195 | \$220 | \$245

STUDENT

\$80 | no change | no change

ONSITE REGISTRATION FEE

\$15 (not enforced) | \$30 (will be enforced) | no change

CANCELATION FEE

\$50 | 50% of registration price | no change

The board was pleased with the increase in early registrations at the 2017 Spring Institute. Nearly everyone registered in advance which allowed for a much smoother sign in process.

The fiscal year of 2017 was a year of profit after our two annual institutes. While the number may be small, (a profit of \$278.02), it is big news for us. In the past, we have lost money after our spring institutes and this is a step in the right direction! It is our hope that we continue to move in this direction and continue to turn a profit each year in order to maintain our commitment to providing needed group psychotherapy continuing education to our members and attendees.

Fall 2016 Conference

Deposits: \$5,089.51

Withdrawals: \$238.44 (printing and mailing the brochures, Recognition Award, CEU fees, and state fee)

Profit: \$4,851.07

Spring 2017 Conference

Deposits: \$14,950.76

Withdrawals: \$19,523.81 (printing and mailing the brochures, guest speaker fee, guest speaker travel costs, hotel and catering costs)

Loss: \$4,573.05

While some may be unhappy with

the increase in registration fees, it served us well. We are taking it one step further, however, and reconsidering the significant hit we take by hosting at a hotel (and the contract which requires the use of their catering company), a switch that may save us thousands of dollars.

INSTITUTE SPONSORSHIP

With our new Sponsorship and Financial Committees, we hope to improve our relationships with our sponsors – we want sponsors to have more time with you, we want you to learn more about the services they provide, and we want to make this happen in a way that satisfies everyone.

WAYS TO SUPPORT LGPS

- Let us know your thoughts and ideas. What's important to you? What's not? What are you willing to pay for? What's not worth the money? What do you want to see more of? Do you have location ideas for future institutes?
- Send us an email with your thoughts and feedback.
- Fill out our anonymous feedback survey online.
- Write us a note at an institute, or stick a letter in the mail.
- Reserve your hotel room for our Spring Institutes in our room block by the deadline, which will save both you and LGPS money.
- Tell your colleagues and peers about our organization and institutes.
- Make a donation and become a Preservation Member
- Make a donation to one of our Scholarship Funds
- Make a donation to sponsor a student
- Shop Amazon Smile

We want to thank our members, institute attendees, institute sponsors, those who have become

a Preservation Member or donated to our scholarship funds, and those who have provided feedback already regarding the organization. We listen to your feedback and we want to continue to grow as an organization. We need your help and feedback to stay profitable so we can continue to host institutes - we could not, and would not, do this without you.

The LGPS Board

AGPA Statement on Inclusion

A NOTE FROM
ELEANOR F. COUNSELMAN,
ED.D., CGP, L FAGPA,
PRESIDENT OF AGPA

July, 2017

Dear AGPA Members,

AGPA continues to be aware of a worsening climate for many marginalized groups, as well as the concerns some members have expressed about coming to Houston for our 2018 Annual Meeting. In response, the organization has approved the following statement in support of inclusion. As you can see, the statement is signed by the Co-Chairs of the Community Outreach Task Force, the Racial and Ethnic Diversity SIG, the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender SIG, the Houston GPS President (who is also an immediate past chair of the RED SIG) and the Officers of the organization.

We hope this statement reflects

our awareness that AGPA, as well as the larger community in which we live and work, is diverse in many respects. Our goal is to use our considerable knowledge of group dynamics to promote a climate of safety and inclusion for all.

Please know that in addition to distributing this statement to our members, it is also being sent to our full list of contacts of non-member clinicians, agencies, mental health organizations and advocacy groups as well as shared via the organization's social media outlets.

Sincerely,
*Eleanor F. Counselman, Ed.D.,
CGP, L FAGPA
President, American Group
Psychotherapy Association*

Statement on Inclusion

The American Group Psychotherapy Association is a professional association dedicated to the field of group psychotherapy. In light of a worsening climate for women, people of color, immigrants, refugees, LGBTQ individuals, and other marginalized groups, as well as recent legislative action in Texas, the site of our upcoming Annual Meeting, the organization wishes to make the following statement.

We as an organization dedicated to disseminating knowledge of group psychotherapy principles, and with part of our mission being the provision of interventions and outreach to diverse communities nationally and internationally, AGPA draws upon those principles at the core of its organization to respond with alarm and humanitarian concern.

The group principles that define the American Group Psychotherapy Association include promoting dynamics of belonging, protecting the scapegoated, healing the wounds of exclusion, facilitating constructive dialogue, and maintaining physically/emotionally safe environments. These principles apply for all regardless of nationality, ethnicity, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or cultural background. Exercising these principles fosters groups that support healthy communities, reduced conflict/violence and basic human connection.

Clinical and organizational work demonstrates the power of groups to make a difference and foster healing. Community groups, families and individuals are currently suffering from acute stress layered on top of chronic stressors due to misogyny, racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-refugee sentiments, transphobia, and homophobia. From a humanitarian and caregiver perspective, all people deserve relief from their collective suffering. As promoters of group principles, it bears repeating that AGPA wishes to encourage actions that promote dynamics of belonging, protect the scapegoated, heal the wounds of exclusion, facilitate constructive dialogue, and maintain physically/emotionally safe environments, while also encouraging dialogue among those with differing viewpoints.

As a community of professionals, we take pride in the diversity of our membership and welcome a broad spectrum of clinicians from a variety of racial, ethnic, sexual

and gender identity, and national backgrounds. We also acknowledge a range of opinions among our members, and hold those with the knowledge that communities thrive through a balance of common core beliefs and individual differences. We offer our support to members of all communities who have been marginalized. Please know you have many standing behind you and with you.

You can also access additional trauma information on the AGPA website at <http://www.agpa.org/home/developing-healthy-communities/group-interventions-for-trauma>

This statement approved by the Association was developed by the AGPA Community Outreach Task Force, chaired by Craig Haen and Suzanne Phillips, which is charged with establishing and executing community outreach programs to provide professional assistance to diverse group populations in the aftermath of traumatic events, in collaboration with: AGPA Member Siddharth Shah; the AGPA Racial and Ethnic Diversity SIG, currently tri-chaired by Karen Cone-Uemura, LaTasha Smith and Marcée M. Turner, and recent past Tri-Chair and Houston GPS President Helen Chong, and the AGPA Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender SIG, co-chaired by Rhea Pledger and Elizabeth L. Rosenblatt.

For more information, including a list of the individuals involved in writing this statement, visit AGPA.org, click "Media", and click "Social Issues & Policy Resolutions".

2017 - 2018 Preservation Members

Become a Preservation Member when you donate \$25 or more. We thank you for your contributions!

PLATINUM PRESERVATION MEMBERS
(\$200+)
Capi Landreneau, LCSW, CGP

GOLD PRESERVATION MEMBERS (\$100+)
Michael Cascio, LCSW, BCD, CGP
Kevin Credeur, LPC, CGP
Rachel Dorsa, PLPC, NCC
Melanie Faust, LCSW, CGP
Christopher Garner, PsyD, MSCP, CGP
Sue Jensen, PhD, CGP, FAGPA
Stanley Masinter, LCSW, BCD, CGP
Dayne Narretta, LCSW, CGP, BCD
Maggie Shaver, LCSW
Karen Travis, LCSW-BACS, CGP, BCD, FAGPA

Upcoming Events

2017 FALL INSTITUTE

October 28
Baton Rouge, LA

Featuring
Dayne Narretta, LCSW, CGP, BCD

On the Subject of
What's All the "Brouhaha" about Systems Centered Groups?
Functional Subgrouping: What it is, what it isn't and how we use it to resolve conflict

Workshop Objectives

1. Participants will discriminate the difference between stereotypical subgrouping and functional subgrouping.
2. Participants will learn and practice the skill of functional subgrouping and its effect on attunement.
3. Participants will learn how functional subgrouping manages conflict and helps the group develop by containing the different until the group is ready to take it in.
4. Participants will learn the difference between exploring and explaining.

Workshop Description

Using didactic, experiential, and the opportunity to observe a group, this workshop will give all of us an opportunity to learn through experimentation. We will use Agazarian's Functional Subgrouping and see what we discover (test the theory), including how this skill provides a method that promotes development and reduces our tendency to scapegoat and be scapegoated.

Register Today

For more information or to register online, visit our website LGPSonline.org and click "Institutes".

2018 SPRING INSTITUTE

May 4-5
New Orleans, LA

Featuring
Roger St. Laurent & Peter Taylor

Hotel Reservations

This is the same weekend as Jazz Fest, so please book your hotel rooms in advance! Call 1 (800) 292 0653 to reserve a

room at our special discounted room block rate by 4/3/18. Use code: LGP. You can also book online – visit our website for more information, LGPOnline.org.

The 2017-2018 Board

INFORMATION

We have made some changes in the way we present our board positions to you to help clearly identify the different roles already in place, including the creation of new committees!

We welcome your involvement, feedback, and support!

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

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Debbie Wray, LCSW, CGP
Clinical Social Worker in Private Practice

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IOP Therapist at Townsend and COPE Specialist 1 at OLOL COPE Team

Past President
Kevin Credeur, LPC, CGP
Behavioral Counselor at The Behavioral Wellness Center - BR General and Licensed Professional Counselor in Private Practice

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Melanie Faust, LCSW, CGP
Clinical Social Worker at Woman's Hospital and in Private Practice

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Christopher D. Garner, PsyD, MSCP, CGP
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Institute Committee

Chair

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Chair

Megan Cobb, MSW, LCSW

Members

Rudy Troyer, LCSW
Brandy Klingman, LCSW-BACS

UPCOMING VACANCIES

Treasurer

What's New on our Website

- More user friendly layout
- Quick Clicks section with popular links right on the home page
- Submit a short form to let us know you are interested in becoming an experiential group leader at an upcoming institute
- Online payment for sponsorship
- Photo Gallery
- Plus more!

LGPOnline.org

LGPSnews@gmail.com