



Hawaii Association For Play Therapy Newsletter March 31, 2010

HAPT 2010 Annual Conference with Marie Jose-Dhaese



As most of you already know, HAPT has the questionable distinction of having had the 2nd day of its 2010 conference cancelled due to a Tsunami Warning. In pre-conference planning sessions, a natural disaster never made it on the list of anticipated catastrophes. Dr. Marie-Jose Dhaese gave an outstanding presentation on Expressive Play Therapy for the Grieving Child, on the first conference day, February 25th, 2010. Participants were looking forward to her second presentation. It came as a shock to all involved when it appeared that a tsunami could hit Hawaii. Cancelling the conference was delayed as long as possible, but the Pagoda Hotel management eventually made the final decision, when it shut down venue operations.

It is expected that there is a clean up process when a tsunami actually hits, but clean up when it doesn't hit???? Now that is an experience. In the wake of the tsunami that didn't hit, Chairperson Liz Kong, Cheerleader Scott O'Neal, President Nami Dolan, and an assortment of special volunteers were left to pack up. In the weeks that followed, decisions needed to be made about rescheduling the conference or refunding participants. Cheerleader Scott offered the following messages to committee and board members as communication became intense and persistent. Ever avoidant of attention, Scott reluctantly agreed to have his messages shared here.

The first article below is a summation of events. Think of it as Part II of the HAPT Story.





*"Individual commitment to a group effort –
that is what makes a team work,
a company work, a society work, a civilization work."
Vincent Thomas "Vince" Lombardi*

Aloha HAPT Members, Board, Conference Committee, and Volunteers...

It was just 3 short months ago when the question came up and preparations for the HAPT 2010 conference began. At the time we weren't sure if it would even be possible to have a conference – time was short, morale and interest seemed to be low, there was no committee, there was no speaker, the economy was bad, neither organizations nor individuals seemed to have money to attend, and the previous venue was likely fiscally unattainable.

What could possibly be done? There was clearly no way to have a conference!

But then... once a conversation was begun about if it would even be possible...

- ❖ In a week or less...
 - A member stepped forward to be conference chair and the beginnings of a committee started to take shape.
 - A speaker (extraordinaire!) was identified and agreed to come.
 - The first committee meeting was scheduled.

- ❖ Within two weeks...
 - A search began for a new/affordable venue.
 - A member stepped forward to begin designing a new brochure.
 - The process of redesigning old forms and registration materials began.
 - The first committee meeting was held and decisions and timelines were set.
 - A venue was identified and secured.
 - Fees were set that were both very affordable and would allow HAPT to still cover all costs.

- ❖ Within a month...
 - HAPT members were emailed to notify them that there would be a conference and all specifics were laid out.
 - Attendee packet design was set.
 - Brochures and registration materials were finalized.
 - HAPT website was updated with conference information and online registration was available.
 - Flyers and registration information were mailed out to HAPT members and the community.
 - A member volunteered to be vendor chair and contacting vendors was begun.
 - A member volunteered to be publicity chair and began contacting community agencies to publicize the conference.

- ❖ Within two months...
 - The first online registration was received.
 - All conference details were finalized.
 - Speaker presentation and needs were finalized.
 - Preparations were begun for obtaining, collecting, and collating materials for conference participants.
 - The conference agenda and timelines were setup.

- ❖ After the third month...
 - The conference was successfully begun!!
 - The first day there were approximately 130 participants!
 - The venue was excellent ('cept maybe the food...)!
 - The speaker was beyond excellent!
 - Everything was organized and well prepared!
 - Everyone was excited and energized and looking forward to the next day!

And then there was an earthquake in Chile and tsunami warnings in Hawaii.

And there was a decision to postpone and finally cancel the conference.

And there was fear, confusion, sadness, disappointment.

And still...

- ❖ HAPT board, committee, and volunteers members stepped up to immediately email and phone attendees to spread the word and make sure people didn't risk safety to come to the conference site.
- ❖ People were on-site to assist attendees who didn't get the word and who did show up at the hotel.
- ❖ There was excellent communication between the board, committee, the speaker, and the hotel to make sure everything was taken care of as much as possible.
- ❖ Offers were made to house off-island attendees in case this was needed.
- ❖ Not one complaint was received about the cancellation – instead attendees only had words of support, appreciation, and gratitude.
- ❖ And when it came time to clean up the hotel and close out the conference, members and friends were again there to help out – with their hearts, positive spirits, and laughter.

At the end of it all, as I look back on this whole process and time, at the energy and love each individual has spent on it, I feel nothing but amazement and appreciation for each of you and everything you gave to this conference. It is due to each and every one of your efforts that this years conference was as much of a success as it was – and have no doubt, this was nothing short of a MAJOR success and accomplishment!

As a group we put together a conference to be proud of, that attendees were not only able to learn from but also felt “taken care of, cherished, and re-energized” (told to me by one attendee). When the odds were against us and it looked like there was no way for this to happen, people came forward and made it happen – not out of a sense of obligation or desire for personal advantage – but out of a love of what we do and the communities we serve.

And that's what makes HAPT special... That's what makes each of you special... And that's what everyone feels when they attend HAPT functions.

And for all the above, I thank you all. As always, though this year I suppose I can't say it was "all a piece of cake", being involved with this organization and having the opportunity to work with each of you on this was worth it and I look forward to HAPT's next venture..!

Aloha..!

Scott O'Neal



aka: HAPT's (grateful) Conference Cheerleader

** The above message was sent out by email following the conference.

As time progressed and decisions were still pending and spirits were flagging, Scott offered more of his thoughts. He would have kept them to himself if he had known they would appear here. Please don't mention that you read them in the newsletter. For some recipients his message brought a giggle. For others, it brought a sigh of relief. There was a label to be attached to the process. It was grief. Once again Scott wrote:

"Gee... what are those "stages of grief" again?"

Denial – We can still have the conference... maybe on Sunday? Or having her come back on Friday?

Anger –Why did this happen? It isn't fair!

Bargaining – If not this week, maybe later? May? Sept? Next year? Doing it for free??

Depression – All that hard work, for nothing!!

Acceptance – Well... we did have a good conference, and everyone was happy, and it just isn't working out to do it again... so, guess that's it..! We start planning for the next event now!"

So, as we listen to our marching orders and move on . . . we say thanks to a very special group of people, the conference volunteers. They cannot all be named because we would end up leaving someone out. People simply pitched in. Carla Sharp not only secured Marie-Jose as a speaker, but hosted her in her home as well. Sue Bergman

popped up everywhere and was a devoted bag lady, scavenging for materials. Then there was Pat Yuen who keeps on saying she is retired, but is unconvincing, and worked to get an auction table ready then dismantled. Friends of members stayed to help with evaluation forms, and packing up. So you see, the list is quite long. We are grateful.

On behalf of the organization, a heartfelt **Mahalo** is sent out to Liz and Scott, who led the way. Without them, there would have been no conference.

REFUNDS:

Refunds will be issued for the 2nd day of the 12th HAPT Conference; Expressive Arts for the Grieving Child by Dr. Marie-Jose Dhaese which was cancelled due to a tsunami warning that day. Some participants have expressed an interest in donating their refunds to the Hawaii Association for Play Therapy organization. For those of you who are interested in doing so please contact John Mascaro, treasurer, at treasurer@hawaiiplaytherapy.net Donations will be tax deductible.

HAPT 2010 Conference Committee hard at work...



Behind the Scenes

You might be wondering why there has been such emphasis in recent newsletters on the organization process behind the scenes. It is because as organizations mature, issues of transparency, accessibility and relevance become more challenging. HAPT Board Members, current and past, are aware of the variables involved in keeping HAPT stable and vibrant, while furthering growth, and staying true to the HAPT mission. When first started, the organization was made up of a small group of individuals with a vision. Communication was likely much easier. The organization has grown to over a 100 members. Over 100 diverse members. The organization has now existed in good economic times, and bad economic times. Where the training needs of members may have been more homogeneous at the start, the training needs are now varied. New members need basic skills, and seasoned members want to be enlightened and re-energized. An organization needs money to operate. Do you hide the piggy bank until it is full, or do you bust it open, and spend the contents, hoping for a better day? An organization needs buy in from the membership. Do the same members continue to do the work for the whole? What works at one point doesn't work at another. At the same time, new and different is not necessarily better. *No one decision is simple at this point.*

As the organization continues to mature, your ideas become increasingly important. In order to assist with good communication, we have technology to help us. Please join our HAPT Yahoo Discussion Group or stay in touch via membership e-mail. There is no substitute for direct contact, so feel free to attend Board Meetings the second Wednesday of every month if a particular subject is of interest.

Looking for Play Therapy Supervisors? Looking for Play Therapy Supervisors?

Hawaii Registered Play Therapy Supervisors

Members who are interested in receiving their credentials in play therapy (i.e., Registered Play Therapist), and/or those seeking counsel regarding those sometimes sticky complex cases, here's your opportunity! Below is an updated list of your friendly neighborhood Registered Play Therapist Supervisors who are extending their offers:

Carla Sharp, APRN, RPT-S, STA/ISST - Offers individual supervision by appointment and has held group supervision once a month for 13 years. Currently, group supervision is open to anyone and meets on the first Saturday of each month from 9am to 12pm at her office at 315 Uluniu Street, Kailua, #207. Attendees bring play therapy material and/or videos of their session for support and feedback. She has also created a Play Therapy Training Package which allows one to purchase 100 hours of training and 35 hours of supervision at a discounted rate. You can email her for more information at carla@carlsharp.com.

Teresa Shigemasa LMHC, RPT-S - Behavioral Health Specialist at Sunset Beach Elementary School on the North Shore. Please contact through email: tshigema21@yahoo.com Expertise is in the use of Play Therapy to address a host of diagnostic issues within the educational model. Willing to travel to a more central location for interested members.

Margaret Bubon Smith, MA, MFT, RPT-S – Currently the Director of Healthy Start at Child and Family Service on Kauai. Experience with foster care, child abuse, and preschool age children. She can be contacted at mgtbubon@hawaiiantel.net or via phone: 808-332-5200.

Anita Trubitt, LCSW, RPT-S – Private Practice with specialty in divorce/paternity cases where custody and visitation are issues. Supervision or consultation available. Contact through email: trubitt@hawaii.rr.com or by phone: 808-261-2524.

Laura Williams LCSW, RPT-S - Works for CFS in Waimea on the Big Island of Hawaii. Contact: 808-895-0989. Expertise is in attachment and children with autism.

Elizabeth Kong, MA, LSC, LMFT, RPT-S - Currently works as a School Counselor in East Honolulu. Experience working with children with school related issues, anxiety disorders and selective mutism as well as children with physical challenges and families with substance abuse issues and loss. She can be contacted by email at Midget95127@yahoo.com. Available for individual supervision.

More News

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOMED: As always, we welcome contributions to the newsletter: review of play therapy literature tips or techniques you have found helpful; resources; upcoming trainings related to play therapy; letters to the editor, etc Please contact the new Member-at-Large member-at-large@hawaiiplaytherapy.net.

REMINDERS:

If you received this edition of the newsletter by regular mail and prefer to receive it by email, please send your name and email address to member-at-large@hawaiiplaytherapy.net. To ensure that you receive all HAPT news in a timely manner, please inform us of any name or address changes. Mahalo!

To those of you who received this newsletter via email and do not wish to receive future email from HAPT, please type “Remove Me” in the subject line and return the email. As a reminder, past editions of our newsletters are available for viewing at our website: www.hawaiiplaytherapy.net.

CONTACTING HAPT:

Please visit us on our website at www.hawaiiplaytherapy.net. We can also be reached by writing to P.O. Box 176, Pearl City, HI 96782, or emailing members of the HAPT Board of Directors.

HAPT Board Members 2009-2010

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