Newsletter of the Florida Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

Summer 2007

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Steve Livingston, PhD, LMFT, LMHC

Hello to all as summer has set in. I hope you all enjoyed the July 4th holiday and are surviving the heat. Our fireworks here in Flagler Beach were cancelled due to rain and high winds to the disappointment of the grandchildren. We still enjoyed the company of family, reminding me once again of the importance of family and the work we do.

FAMFT is quite active right now in a variety of areas as we prepare for the next legislative session, prepare to send out the slate of ballots for our upcoming election, start to prepare for next years statewide conference and get ready for our August board meeting. The board will be discussing and beginning to formulate our legislative agenda for this year. Please feel free to contact us through the FAMFT office or any of the Board members to let us know of issues or agendas that you would like us to address. FAMFT has spent the past several years working hard to improve our legislative visibility and credibility as evidenced by the successful enactment of the Baker Act revisions last year. We feel we are now in a position to provide support for legislation favorable to Florida's families and the FAMFT membership. We will let you know more about the 2007-8 legislative agenda in our next newsletter. AAMFT continues to work hard at the national level on the issue of Medicare provider status for LMFT's and it looks like there will be Medicare legislation this year that will open up this possibility. Look out for emails from AAMFT and FAMFT in relation to this issue and please contact your representatives in Washington as you hear from us.

FAMFT will also be sending out election ballots this month for a number of offices. This is a particularly important election as there are several board positions on the ballot in addition to both President and President-Elect opening due to the premature resignations of Dr. Martha Marquez, President-Elect, and myself that I outlined in the last newsletter. We had interest in all positions and we have a list of excellent candidates to present, ensuring the continued quality of the FAMFT Board. Please look for these ballots and take the time to vote.

FAMFT is also preparing for our statewide conference next year. The conference will be held in Ft. Lauderdale on May 16-18, 2008. The Plenary speaker with be Brent Atkinson, PhD, presenting, *Emotional Intelligence in Couples Therapy: Advances from Neurobiology and the Science of Intimate Relationships.* We will also continue to offer a variety of other clinical presentations and research from fellow colleagues. Mark your calendars now and plan to join us in Ft. Lauderdale. Thanks again to all that attended the conference in Orlando and to those who worked so hard to make it a success.

FAMFT will be present at the next 491 Board meeting in August in Ft. Lauderdale and we will provide follow-up information in our next newsletter about any developments on the Registered Interns and private practice issue that surfaced recently. I hope you all enjoy the rest of the summer. Thank you for your continued support and hard work. Continue to do the excellent work that you all do.

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Address Change

To change your address with FAMFT, you must change it at AAMFT. We automatically download their list each quarter.

Please do not send us a change of address, simply go to the AAMFT website at *www.aamft.org*.

Look for the profile link on the first page abd make your changes. AAMFT updates within two days.

FAMFT ELECTIONS COMMITTEE PRESENTS 2008 SLATE

The 2007 Elections Committee is pleased to present the following ballot for 2008. Election ballots will be mailed in thirty days to members along with the Platform Statements of the candidates and the credentials of each candidate nominated.

According to the FAMFT Bylaws, members may nominate other candidates during the next thirty days: *"The Elections Committee shall prepare a slate containing at least two nominees for each position and shall determine the eligibility and willingness .of each nominee to stand for election. Officers may not serve more than two consecutive terms. Additional nominations may be made by petition of five (5) percent of the voting members until thirty (30) days prior to the date ballots are to be mailed at which date nominations shall be closed. The Elections Committee shall have the ballots mailed to and counted by an independent auditor. The candidate who receives the largest number of votes for each office shall be elected."*

Ballots will be mailed to all voting members of FAMFT after the next thirty days, once nominations have closed. If you would like to nominate someone to be a candidate, please send them to the FAMFT office at 2888-1 Mahan Drive, Tallahassee, Florida 32308. Please recall that the reason that both a President Elect and a President Elect-Elect need to be elected is due to the untimely resignations of both Steve Livingston (effective December 31, 2007) and Martha Marquez (effective June 1, 2007).

Elections Committee Slate for 2008

President Elect (2008-2011)
AnnaLynn Schooley, PhD, LMFT

President Elect-Elect (2008-2013)
Mary Hale-Haniff, PhD, LMFT

Board Member (2008-2011)
Maria Gonzalez ***or*** Ruth Burgher-Gore

Secretary (2008-2011)
Monica Burton

The AAMFT is meeting in Long Beach, CA!

Annual Conference of the
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

The 65th Annual AAMFT Conference will be held October 11-14, 2007 at the Long Beach Convention Center. Earn up to 23 hours of continuing education units and network with MFTs from around the world.

For more information visit the AAMFT website at www.aamft.org/LongBeach.asp

Florida Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

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The Florida Family Therapy News, FAMFT's newsletter , a high-quality publication distributed to over 1,200 members. The newsletter is also sent to other interested parties including students, legislators and agencies.

Articles in the newsletter inform members about legislative activities, managed care, local chapters of FAMFT, supervisory workshops, and more.

Distribution

1,500 copies.

Advertising Rates

Full Page 7½" x 10" $300.00
Half Page 7½" x 5" $175.00
Quarter Page 3½" x 5" $90.00
Eighth Page 3½" x 2½" $55.00
Black & White Photo.....$10.00

The Florida Family Therapy News is published four times a year: March, June, September, and December. Deadline for submissions and/or advertisements is the 15th of the month prior to publication. All advertisements must be submitted as camera-ready copy.

The Florida Family Therapy News reserves the right to reject any advertisement or information that does not conform to the overall values and ethics of the profession. Ads must not misrepresent, libel, slander, or compete with FAMFT or AAMFT.

FAMFT is not responsible for the content of ads.

FAMFT ANNOUNCES THE ADDITION OF ALL-NEW HOME STUDY AND ON-LINE COURSE OFFERINGS

We are pleased to announce the addition of 50 plus new online and home study course offerings which can be accessed through our website located at *www.famft.org*. The Florida Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (FAMFT) has teamed up with a nationally recognized and approved CE provider to offer high quality, yet affordable, 24-hour-a-day continuing education programs. We now also offer these programs to all other 491 licensed professionals, psychologists, mental health professionals, drug and alcohol professionals, and Florida nurses. Also included are the Florida required courses for Prevention of Medical Errors (2 CEUs), Domestic Violence (2 CEUs, every 3rd year), and HIV/AIDS (3 CEUs). Coming soon will be the new required Ethics and Boundary Issues course (3 CEUs) which will also be available online through the website.

All proceeds from these offerings will be used to provide further education, supervision, and advocacy for our 1200-plus members at the state and local levels.

For more information, go to *www.famft.org*

Mark your 2008 calendars now!

FAMFT Annual Conference

Fort Lauderdale

MFT STUDENT/NEW PROFESSIONALS NEWS

Naomi "Micky" Waters-Karrick
FAMFT Board Student Representative

With delight this column opens by highlighting Cynthia Grow, winner of the 2007 FAMFT Annual Conference Student Poster Competition.

Cynthia's journey to become a Marriage and Family Therapist began in 1975 when she declared Psychology as her undergraduate major at University of California at Santa Barbara where she graduated in 1977 with her BA degree. From 1977-78 she worked as a testing coordinator for the psychology department at Pepperdine University in Malibu, CA. From 1978-79 Cynthia entered a 2-yr grad program in Community Counseling at Pepperdine but in Spring 1979 she left this program after 26 credit hours felling the need for wider experience in the world and convinced that Family Systems, not provided in Pepperdine program, was the best way to address family and couple stressors

Cynthia then moved from Santa Monica, CA to Atlanta, GA where for many years she pursued an entrepreneurial career through owning and operating four family businesses.

Cynthia also has very developed musical and artistic talents. She's been a judge at art shows and of portrait artists. During the 1990's while living in Atlanta, Cynthia participated in European tours with Atlanta Super Choir, performances at the Montreux Jazz Festival and the Barcelona Olympic Games, she has been a back-up singer to various artists such as Celine Dion, Gladyss Knight, Kenny Loggins, and has performed at Carnegie Hall with the Michael O'Neal Singers in 2000.

After 2004 Cynthia returned to her goal of becoming a Marriage and Family Therapist. She obtained a Georgia real estate license to supplement earnings while in grad school and then enrolled in a Community Counseling Masters Program at Mercer University in Atlanta in January 2005. Her parents' doctors recommended a warmer climate for their health, so they all moved to Florida and Cynthia transferred to Stetson University in August 2005.

Cynthia's interests in the field of Marriage and Family Therapy include family systems, family businesses, couples counseling, the GLBT community, depression, and giftedness. She is the Vice President of Stetson University's chapter of Chi Sigma Iota (National Counseling Honor Society). Cynthia has been an active student

(Please see MFT STUDENT NEWS on page 4)

MFT STUDENT NEWS *(from page 3)*

member of the Steering Committee to develop the Stetson Family Institute and Mental Health Center which serves the Counseling Education Department graduate student interns as well as individuals, couples, and families who do not have access to mental health services in Volusia and surrounding counties. Upon an anticipated graduation date from Stetson University in December 2008, Cynthia plans to establish a private practice and apply to a PhD or PsyD program.

Cynthia is a proud mom of a wonderful and gifted daughter, Megan, who has received a congressional appointment to the Air Force Academy and is currently a Presidential Scholar in the Honors Program at Embry-Riddle studying Aeronautical Engineering.

It is with great pleasure that the FAMFT Board congratulates Cynthia Grow, winner of the 2007 FAMFT Annual Conference Student Poster Competition and wishes her the very best in her professional journey.

As the FAMFT Board Student Representative, it was a pleasurable and rewarding experience and opportunity to coordinate the recipients of the 2007 FAMFT Conference Scholarship Award Winners:

Julia Corbin, *Stetson University*

Carolyn M. Robbins, *Barry University*

Pinky Lakhani, *Nova Southeastern University*

Sabrina Metivier, *Barry University*

Holly Cox, *Nova Southeastern University*

Tina Youmans, *St. Thomas University*

Tracy Carson, *University of Central Florida*

Sara Margolis, *Nova Southeastern University*

Cynthia Grow, *Stetson University*

David Gutkin, *Barry University*

Sue Phaneuf, *Palm Beach Atlantic University*

Margie Grebin (New Professional)
Stetson University Alumni

Kathleen Kelly (New Professional)
St. Thomas University Alumni

The 2007 FAMFT Annual Conference at Lake Mary, FL was definitely enhanced by the generous contribution of each of these wonderful and hard-working students and new professionals of tomorrow's Marriage and Family Therapy field. Each one of these individuals is to be commended for professional organization participation at such an early stage in their professional development. Each volunteer reported that their experience was deeply rewarding and gave them a unique view of the profession along with a feeling of making a positive contribution to those already established in the field of marriage and family therapy.

A bond of camaraderie developed as MFT students and new MFT professionals shared their experiences and journeys while working side by side to deliver a wonderful conference to FAMFT members. Although we all came from many places and programs all over Florida we shared a common bond of the love of the systemic approach in working with families, couples, and individuals.

Thanks to all the volunteers who so generously gave their time, effort, and devotion to FAMFT and their fellow members.

A new facet of this year's conference was the Student Forum where the FAMFT Board held an open meeting with MFT students and new professionals. Many wonderful issues were discussed such as the creation of a student column in the FAMFT newsletter, student and new professional offerings at future FAMFT conferences, a possible creation of a Florida MFT student/new professional online list-serve to allow for open communication and sharing of resources for tomorrow's MFT professionals. Many other topics were also discussed with all sharing a voice and positive communication. FAMFT looks forward to taking part in increasing positive resources for its student and new professional members and increasing membership at these levels of professional development.

I opened this column highlighting the first place winner of the 2007 FAMFT Annual Conference Student Poster Competition. Second place winners were Paul Stanford and Andrea Myer of Florida State University. Sabrina Metivier and Danny Gutkin of Barry University placed third.

Plan now to submit a poster and win one of the three prizes. To be eligible to participate next year, students in training programs must be members of AAMFT.

We thank all of you who participated with such excellence in your presentations.

2007 FAMFT Annual Conference STUDENT POSTER COMPETITION: FIRST PLACE

Cynthia Grow was the 2007 Student Poster Competition winner selected by the FAMFT Board at the Annual Conference. Cynthia received a one-year paid AAMFT/FAMFT Student Membership and a waived registration to the 2008 FAMFT Annual Conference in Fort Lauderdale.

The Holy War on the GLBT Human Rights Movement

The war between our dominant US culture and equal rights for the GLBT community cycles between bold national headlines and stony silence. In fact, some waging this Holy War equate granting acceptance and equal rights to the GLBT community with creating a nationwide *Sodom and Gomorrah*. Renowned theologian Dr. Walter Wink (2005) states out of twenty Biblical customs concerning sexual behavior, society today would agree with only four and disagree with sixteen. Wink asks, *"Why do we appeal to proof texts in Scripture in the case of homosexuality alone, when we feel perfectly free to disagree with Scripture regarding most other sexual practices (p.10)?"* He further illuminates the critical distinction between "natural vs. unnatural" sexual behavior in the Biblical debate. Medical and psychiatric experts (Mills, 1998) clearly stipulate: sexual orientation cannot be changed; reparative therapy to alter sexual orientation does not work and may be harmful; the APA's position is, "…not all gays and lesbians [seeking] therapy want to change their sexual orientation. [They] may seek counseling for any of the same reasons as anyone else. In addition, they may seek psychological help to 'come out' or to deal with prejudice, discrimination and violence (p. 4)."

Census 2000 describes "couples" as those who have been together 5+ years: 19.9% of unmarried heterosexual couples raising children have been together for 5+ years compared to 41.1 % of same-sex couples raising children; 96% of all counties in the nation have same-sex couples raising children. Bennett & Gates (2004) found great similarities between the family lives of same-sex and hetero couples with children. Nicholas Ray (2006) states that out of 1.6 million homeless youth/year, 45% identify themselves as lesbian or gay; the primary cause of homeless youth is unresolved family conflict; 50% of gay teens experience negative parental reaction with 26% kicked out of their homes; they are so abused in shelters they prefer the streets, surviving by engaging in risky sexual behavior and/or drugs. Further, the suffering of the *children* of same-sex couples is most often *at the hands of society*, not their parents. Among many distressing inequalities highlighted by Bennett and Gates (2004), there is *no access* for same-sex parents *or their children* to the 1,138 federal marital protections heterosexual married couples and their children enjoy. In addition, the cost of discrimination and inequality for *GLBT seniors* is appalling: the surviving partner has *none* of the legal/financial/emotional protection afforded to heterosexual married couples. Cited are multiple heartbreaking and financially devastating examples of blatant discrimination against the GLBT population simply because they cannot legally marry. The American Heritage Dictionary (2005) includes an abusive or unjust exercise of power as part of the definition of "violence." In "Facing the Myth of Redemptive Violence," Dr. Wink (2006) states, "Violence functions as a god when it becomes what people turn to as a last resort. The Myth is…the original religion of the status quo that legitimizes power and privilege. [Its] core convictions are peace through war, and security through strength, which forms the bedrock [of] domination systems in every society; even those who seek to oppose its oppressive violence do so violently (pp. 3-4)."

Tarakeshwar et al. (2006) name studies outlining the importance of "spiritual transformation" (distinguished from "religion") as part of healthy coping and lists spiritual qualities that form the foundation of mental health. Of special interest is how a "safe" group atmosphere allowed expression of negative emotion toward rejection and lack of compassion by organized religion; until then participants had not found a safe place to vent their struggles. Tarakeshwar, et al., (2005) describe multiple studies recognizing the importance of spirituality in handling daily stressors, especially with HIV/AIDS. Herein lies the rub: the importance of spirituality for this population-at-risk is intensified by this double bind: the very thing the GLBT population needs to cope with widespread discrimination and persecution is the very thing that is denied in almost every US church and religion—love, acceptance, and a "safe" place to express themselves.

Ruzek et al., (2007) offer Psychological First Aid: eight core actions for the GLBT community traumatized by society. Myers et al., (2003) describe five best practices specific to HIV education. Buki et al. (2005) outline therapeutic recommendations for persons-with-aids and caregivers. A strong therapeutic foundation from which to address relationship issues is provided by the five stages of the "Integrative Model" (Long and Young, 2007). De Sève and Tjong (2005) state in their poignant documentary that in 2004: twelve states had constitutional amendments on the ballot that would define and limit marriage

(Please see FIRST PLACE on page 6)

FIRST PLACE *(from page 5)*

to a man and woman; Massachusetts passed a constitutional amendment against equal marriage; the California Supreme Court nullified 4,037 marriages licensed in San Francisco; and Virginia passed a law nullifying private contracts made within a same-sex couple. Our Constitution states, "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal." Studies from Hart Research and American Viewpoint (2003) indicate that 64% of Americans support equal rights for same-sex couples. A 2003 Gallup Poll found 63% support giving same-sex couples the same legal rights as married heterosexual couples. The Human Rights Campaign actively seeks justice for the GLBT population; however, the above research begs soul-searching about why those in power continue to persecute GLBT American citizens by denying full constitutional rights. In the final analysis, those of us who have dedicated ourselves to the mental health of humanity must find it within ourselves to speak up and take peaceful, decisive action against this Holy War on the American GLBT Community, thereby allowing the lightness of human decency, compassion, and justice to outweigh the heavy hand of violence, power, selective religious bigotry, judgment, and fear.

© Cynthia Grow, 2007.

To receive the complete research paper, please e-mail cmgrow@comcast.net with "Send Paper" in the subject line. To receive only the poster presentation, put "Send Poster" in the subject line. Both may be circulated with the stipulation that both remain unchanged.

Classified Ads

Would you like to place a classified ad in the newsletter? Rates for classified ads are $11 per line (three line minimum). There is a 10% discount for FAMFT members. Ads will be grouped by: office space, supervision, trainings, general announcements.

Submit to: *famft@famft.org*. Deadlines are the 15th of the month prior to publication which is in March, June, September, and December.

The FAMFT Board of Directors congratulates the winners of the 2007 Student Poster Competition held at the Annual Conference in Orlando

First Place
Cynthia Grow
Stetson University

Second Place
Paul Stanford and Andrea Myer
Florida State University

Third Place
Sabrina Metivier and Danny Gutkin
Barry University

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2007 FAMFT Annual Conference
STUDENT POSTER COMPETITION: SECOND PLACE

Common Factors in Training Therpists' Views of Therapeutic Change: An Exploratory Study

Paul Stanford, MS
Andrea S. Meyer, MS
Melissa Bolen, MS
Raquel Delevi, MA

This study examines how training therapists conceptualize therapeutic change and whether common factors (CF) are evident in their views of change. Previous outcome studies indicate no meaningful differences among the broader therapy models (Lambert & Bergin, 1994) as well as MFT specific models (Shadish et al., 1995). CF may be essential in how change occurs in the therapeutic process (Sprenkle & Blow, 2004). In addition, some CF may be unique to the MFT field, such as expanded direct treatment system, expanded therapeutic alliance, and a relational conceptualization (Sprenkle & Blow). Despite the influence that CF may have on change, therapeutic models remain a clear focus in MFT training (COAMFTE, 2002). Although some argue that CF fail to provide a clear direction for trainees (Sexton & Alexander, 2002), this study asserts that CF are already influential in trainees' theory of change. The current study investigates the presence of CF in trainees views of change as well as whether gender of trainee, type of training program, years of experience, and exposure to CF influence training therapists' views of therapeutic change.

Participants were recruited by emailing program directors from all COAMFTE approved Master's and Doctoral level programs in the United States. Program directors were directed to forward the consent form and online survey link to MFT students in their program. The final number of participants used in analyses included 60 students, with a mean age of 32. The majority of participants were female (75%) and in a Master's level program (60%). Although 50% of students had some exposure to CF, only 3 (5%) students had enrolled in a CF class.

In the online survey, trainees were asked to list and rank their top five aspects of bringing about client change in therapy. Open coding of responses led to seven codes. The frequency and percentage of each code were as follows: therapeutic relationship (107, 35.66%), model/technique (88, 29.33%), client/extratherapeutic (56, 18.66%), insufficient information (36, 12.00%), hope (7, 2.33%), MFT specific (3, 1.00%), Extraneous (3, 1.00%).

After secondary coding, responses were assigned values relative to trainees' ranking to create weighted values and percentages: therapeutic relationship (361, 44.73%), model/technique (224, 27.75%), client/extratherapeutic (188, 23.22%), hope (23, 2.85%), MFT specific (7, 0.86%), Extraneous (4, 0.45%). Interrater agreement between coders was 77.3% (232 of 300 responses). Results found that both Master's (43.83%) and doctoral (45.40%) students view therapeutic relationship as the most important factor in creating change in the therapy room, but Masters students were more likely to report model/technique (33.33%) than doctoral students (21.47%). Experienced therapists (2+ years experience) were more likely to rank hope as an important factor than novice therapists (4.60%, 0.80% respectively). Women were more likely to emphasize client/extratherapeutic (24.12%) and hope factors (3.22%) than men (20.21%, 1.60%) while men rated model/technique higher (men=32.45%, women=26.68%). Students with previous exposure to CF were less likely to rank model/technique as important (16.06% vs. 37.91% for non-CF). MFT specific CF were rarely mentioned, both in frequency (1%) and in weighted importance (0.86%).

The current study focused on exploring how CF were evident within training MFT therapists. Results from this study provide evidence that CF are influential for trainees, and that beliefs about CF and therapeutic change may differ depending on the level of training, years of experience, gender, and exposure to CF. The results may indicate that increased exposure to CF in MFT training, in conjunction with continued instruction on specific models, might benefit novice therapists. In addition, MFT specific concepts might be underemphasized in current MFT programs. Lastly, future research in the area of CF is needed to objectively clarify CF terms.

Citations

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2007 Fall Workshop Schedule

September 14 **The Secret: A Multilevel Approach to Marriage and Family Therapy,**

6 CEs, presented by D. Ray Bardill, PhD, Former Dean of the FSU College of Social Work and Former President of AAMFT

November 9 **An Overview of Mind Body Medicine**

2 CEs, presented by Leo Rotan, PhD, LMFT, Associate Director for Behavioral Medicine at the Tallahassee Family Practice Residency Program.

For more information and registration forms go to *www.tamftonline.com*

CHAPTER UPDATE

NEFAMFT, Jacksonville
Nicole Story, EdS, LMFT, LMHC
President

Located off JTB/I-95 in Jacksonville, we meet monthly on the 3rd Friday of the month, September through May.

We provide lunch free to all attendees with CEUs available for the presentation that day. Our most recent presentations include:

January: *Treating Suicidal Adolescents: Considering Family Structure and Role Assignment,* presented by Steve Livingston, PhD;

February: *Solution-Focused Therapy: The Work of Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg,* presented by Dan Schultz, LCSW, LMFT;

November: *Quickies: A Brief Approach to Sexual Desire Discrepancies Sexuality and Family Therapy,* presented by Shelley Green, PhD;

December: Holiday Gala at the ocean-front Pelican Path B & B, Jacksonville Beach.
Anyone interested in receiving our e-newsletter may forward their e-mail address to *nstory@nefamft.ofg*.

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