

Empowering relationships...

NOVEMBER 2019



# The Redwood Empire Therapist

## OUR NOVEMBER MEETING

### **A Primer on Imago Couples Relationship Therapy Doreen Van Leeuwen, LMFT**

Couples therapy can be exhilarating and exciting when your approach, techniques and abilities enable you to stand apart from the pull to get caught in the couple's plight, and instead assist them in redirecting their behavior in the service of healthy connection.



Couples develop a dance, a sequence of moves, at which they become adept and practiced. It is when those moves cause pain and damage that couples reach out for help, but inevitably they tend to think their partner is the REAL problem, and each wants you to side with them.

Imago Relationship Therapy allows you to come alongside the couple with a structure and a process that steers well clear of placing blame, and instead, accent the strong and healthy aspects of each other.

[Doreen Van Leeuwen](#), LMFT runs a successful private practice in Santa Rosa, CA where she offers mindfulness group therapy, conjoint couples sessions, individual coaching and counseling as well as remote treatment via virtual telehealth. She obtained her Bachelor's from Calvin College, Grand Rapids, and a Master's from Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. Her specialties include Imago Relationship Therapy, Mind-Body Mindfulness Healing, and Critical Incident Debriefing & Disaster Mental Health. Along with earning the Outstanding CAMFT Chapter Leader Award in 2018, she was chosen as the 2019 recipient of the prestigious [CAMFT Mary Riemersma Distinguished Clinical Member Award](#).

#### **November 1st, 2019 – RECAMFT Meeting**

**10:30 – 11:00 social & sign in**  
**11:30 – 1:00 meeting**

#### **A Primer on Imago Couples Relationship Therapy Doreen Van Leeuwen, LMFT**

**ODDFELLOWS TEMPLE/MERCER HALL, 545 PACIFIC AVENUE, SANTA ROSA**

***IF THE PARKING LOT IS FULL, YOU WILL FIND LOCAL LONG TERM  
PARKING ON THE STREETS ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF PACIFIC AVENUE.***

**December 6th, 2019**  
**Compassion and Burnout**  
**Andy Wallace, PhD**

**January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020**  
**Identifying the Effects of Hormones and Metabolism on  
Psychological States throughout the Life Cycle with Jane  
Kennedy, CFNP, MN, MPH**

**1.5 CEUs AVAILABLE – RECAMFT CEU PROVIDER IMIS 57173**  
**Save Time – Pre-Register at [www.recamft.org](http://www.recamft.org)**

**MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO ALL ~ NON-MEMBERS FREE (\$15 FOR CEUS)**

*What Else is in Here This Month?  
Check It Out*

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**President's Message  
Doreen Van Leeuwen, LMFT**



***Climate Change: An  
Invitation and a Call to  
Action***

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 as part of her presentation to RECAMFT, Leslie Davenport, LMFT described how "Climate scientists estimate that 200 million Americans will be touched by significant psychological distress from climate-related events in the upcoming years, and yet little attention is given to how to treat the profound mental health suffering that results from climate change. The U.N. sponsored Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reported that 'The physical and economic destruction (of climate change) surely boggles the mind but what is not being addressed are the human psychological consequences of all this devastation.' " \*

Hardly news for any of us, is it? We are all too aware of the profound suffering happening all around and even within our RECAMFT community, that is, in part, attributable to the impacts of climate change on Sonoma County.

For 30 years, the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has been the world's authority on the science of climate change. For the first time in its history, in a radical departure from the past, the IPCC is acknowledging the relevance of psychological theory to building a more resilient future by including psychologists in the writing of its next assessment report, due out in 2021.

**Climate Change as a Public Health Issue**

"Climate change is understood to be a public health issue because it affects the quality of our water, air, food

supplies, and living spaces in a multitude of key ways," according to Terri Klemm, MSW, LCSW, an associate professor of social work and director of the Bachelor of Social Work program at Centenary University in New Jersey. "Since the year 2000, we've experienced 16 of the hottest 17 years ever recorded. In fact, in every year for the last several years, we've exceeded the previous record for the hottest year in recorded history. It's past the point where we can talk about climate change only as an issue that will impact future generations because we're beginning to feel some of the severe effects of the climate crisis now." \*\*

**RECAMFT Needs a Position Statement**

One of our members approached me recently to ask if CAMFT and/or RECAMFT have a policy statement regarding this issue. Since the answer is "No", I've invited this member to help craft one for RECAMFT. Please be on the look-out for updates on that process.

This is the APA's Position Statement on Mental Health and Climate Change:

"The American Psychiatric Association (APA) recognizes that climate change poses a threat to public health, including mental health. Those with mental health disorders are disproportionately impacted by the consequences of climate change. APA recognizes and commits to support and collaborate with patients, communities, and other healthcare organizations engaged in efforts to mitigate the adverse health and mental health effects of climate change." Authors: Robert J. Ursano, M.D., Chair, APA Committee on Psychiatric Dimensions of Disaster, Joshua C. Morganstein, M.D., Robin Cooper, M.D

### Adding a Global Warming Lens

Taking that a step further, I'd love to see a RECAMFT group evolve that promotes actions we can take to protect and maintain this beautiful island we call Earth. We could read Davenport's book *Emotional Resiliency in the Era of Climate Change: A Clinician's Guide* or Thomas L. Friedman's *Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution — And How It Can Renew America*, which connects global, climate, and social issues and illustrates how we can help address these.

Davenport urges, "Adding a global warming lens to our work is imperative. The systemic roots of the MFT theoretic orientation— which tell us that changing one part of the system influences the entire congruent living system—could not be better suited to addressing the interconnected nature of climate issues. We can be valued partners in the collective effort necessary to drive the personal and social evolution that our planet's condition so urgently requires."\*\*\*

### Climate Change as a Human Problem

Robert Gifford, PhD, a psychologist at the University of Victoria, British Columbia states, "Climate change is a human problem. It's the result of 7.6 billion people making decisions every single day. That right there makes it a psychological problem," he says. And psychology has the tools to address that problem, he adds. "We're the experts on individual behavior, we know about messaging and how to create interventions."\*\*\*\*

"Psychology is about contributing to human well-being— climate change is a significant present and emerging threat to that well-being," says Patricia Winter, PhD, a research social scientist at the U.S. Forest Service's Pacific Southwest Research Station, in Albany, California. "There's a place here for every subspecialty within psychology, if we work together to find it."\*\*\*\*\*

### Resources for Climate Science and Sustainable Living

- The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: [www.climate.gov](http://www.climate.gov) • NASA: <https://climate.nasa.gov/> • Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: [www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch) • Climate Central: [www.climatecentral.org](http://www.climatecentral.org) • Climate Adapt European Adaptation Platform: <http://climate-apapt.eea.eu>
- [Psychology and Climate Change](#) Clayton, S., & Manning, C. (Eds.) Academic Press, 2018
- [Climate Change: What Psychology Can Offer in Terms of Insights and Solutions](#) Van Lange, P.A.M., et al. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 2018

- [Mental Health and Our Changing Climate: Impacts, Implications, and Guidance](#) Clayton, S., et al. APA and ecoAmerica, 2017
- [Beyond the Roots of Human Inaction: Fostering Collective Effort Toward Ecosystem Conservation](#) Amel, E., et al. *Science*, 2017
- <https://www.sustainability-yes.ch/en/> Living Sustainably

\*<https://www.recamft.org/page-1861313> Recording of L. Davenport RECAMFT Presentation

\*\*<https://www.socialworktoday.com/archive/ND17p10.shtml> Climate Change and Public Health: How Social Workers Can Advocate for Environmental Justice By Kate Jackson *Social Work Today* Vol. 17 No. 6 P. 10

\*\*\*<https://www.aamft.org/documents/FTM/JA19.FTM.website.pdf> A New Path By Leslie Davenport Family therapy Magazine July-August 2019 Vol. 18 No. 4 P. 12  
\*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\*\*

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2018/11/cover-climate> Climate change is our call to action By Kirsten Weir November 2018 Vol. 49 No. 10 P. 42

*Doreen Van Leeuwen, LMFT, RECAMFT President, specializes in Imago Relationship Therapy for couples, critical incident debriefing and disaster mental health, and mind-body medicine. She offers virtual visits at doxy.me or in office at 1330 N Dutton AV, Santa Rosa.*

**SURE HOPE YOU WERE NOT ONE OF THE FEW WHO DID NOT MAKE IT THE MANDATED SUICIDE PREVENTION WORKSHOP WITH BEN CALDWELL SEEN HERE BETWEEN TARA D'ORAZIO, PRESIDENT ELECT AND DOREEN VAN LEEUWEN, PRESIDENT**



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## *What You Missed By Patrick Armstrong*

This month’s presenters were Randy Cheek, PsyD, LMFT, Amy Rodney, JD, and Judith F. Sterling, CDFA, CPA. They presented a 1.5-hour version of their 3-hour presentation, “Divorce Options: Helping your Client Navigate the Emotional Impact of Divorce.” Randy, Amy, and Judith are part of the Collaborative Council of the Redwood Empire and The Collaborative Practice Center. The motto of the collaborative is “resolving disputes respectfully.”

Randy gave a short overview of the Collaborative Council of the Redwood Empire. Randy explained how

Collaborative Divorce is a wraparound service of independent professionals that provide an alternative to conventional divorce that allows couples to resolve issues respectfully. Randy described how divorce coaches, attorneys, financial specialists, and other professionals come together to help sort out legal issues, concerns about the children, property and financial questions, and emotional well-being of everyone.

Amy is a Collaborative Divorce Attorney. Amy described



the role of Collaborative attorneys and how they are advisors, rather than adversaries. Amy gave a short overview of the divorce process from legal separation to finalizing with signing of documents. Amy talked about the importance of each partner having adequate and balanced representation during a divorce.

Judith is a Certified Divorce Financial Analyst. Judith explained the role of the financial specialist is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the couple’s current financial situation. Judith explained the financial specialist then educates and provides guidance to the couple to help them make short-term and long-term financial decisions. Judith described how financial analysts work with both partners as their “financial neutral,” rather than adversarial.



Randy is a Certified Divorce Coach. Randy described the role of Divorce Coaches as therapists trained in Collaborative Divorce who help clients (couples and children) manage the strain of their changing relationship, improve their communication skills, and set goals for today and the future. Randy described the collaborative approach Divorce Coaches take working and how it differs from traditional therapy.



Randy Cheek, PsyD, LMFT, has a private practice in Petaluma and focuses primarily on divorce, [www.randycheek.com](http://www.randycheek.com). Judith F. Sterling, CDFA, CPA focuses primarily on divorce and her practice is in Santa Rosa, [www.sterlingcdfa.com](http://www.sterlingcdfa.com). Amy is a partner at the law firm of Conner, Lawrence, Rodney, Olhiser and Barrett, LLP, [www.clob.com](http://www.clob.com).





This original 3 CEU unit course emphasizes the unique strategies and skills integrated to provide practical, skills-based therapy to Non-Paternal Events, people discovering falsified or misled biological parentage, unraveling family secrets.

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**January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 8:45am-12pm**

**Webinar \$100.00**

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Jodi Klugman-Rabb, MS, LMFT, LPC in private practice utilizes expertise garnered from 15 years in EMDR, family systems, and grief modalities as well as discovering her own DNA revelation that spurred her to pioneer Parental Identity Discovery™ to help the mental health community treat this unique constellation of needs.

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- 1. History of NPE
  - a. Definition
  - b. Categories of NPE
  - c. Influence of adoption steps
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  - a. Working with EMDR flash
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The course meets requirements for 3 CEUs for LMFT, LPC, LEP & LCSW as required by California Association of Marriage & Family Therapists.

*Jodi Klugman-Rabb, MS, LMFT, LPC is approved by the California Association of Marriage & Family Therapists (CEU provider 60295) (American Psychological Association pending) to sponsor continuing education for LMFT, LCSW, LEP, LPC. and maintains responsibility for this program/course & its content. There is no commercial support or known conflict of interest.*



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## TEXT MESSAGES REVEAL SO MUCH

**Gail Van Buuren, LMFT**

I had a client who complained about unhappy interactions with grown offspring. I had a sense that there were communication problems on the client's part but heard only earnest claims of no responsibility. They were just sweet sometimes and attacking and mean at other times. Finally, one day the client showed me a series of text exchanges and, at last, I had a clear picture of the problem and we could finally get to work on communication skills and triggers that set off problems.



I have come to understand that viewing or being read shared text exchanges is like having the parties in the office with me. Because of the spontaneous nature of text messages (people just blurt out whatever comes to mind and send it off), we are offered insights into the relationship in real time. I find myself with lots of grist for the mill in session.

Although it can be very enlightening for us, at the same time, it is important to be open and curious rather than saying something like, "No wonder they are reacting so defensively to such an attacking text! Can you hear the sarcasm in your response?" Of course, none of us would do such a thing, but we do need to measure our responses. Working with texts helps us identify our clients' triggers and defenses and gives us an opportunity to help with communication skills and boundaries and a lot more. Again, be very careful not to shame. It is easy to do here.

Text message exchanges are a whole new and rich source of working as a family therapist because our clients bring their relationship partners to therapy right there on their phones. I encourage my clients to pull up their exchanges in session so we can work with them. When they just tell me what happened, they edit in their heads. The texts are the raw material. One last note, it is good to remind them that confidentiality applies to texts as well as emails and include that in your informed consent.

*Gail Van Buuren has a private practice in Sebastopol and can be reached at 707-494-4198 [gailbvtherapy.com](http://gailbvtherapy.com)*

## Integrating Somatic Psychotherapy and EMDR

**Nov 8-11, 2019 Orange County**

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## Ethics Roundtable Un-sticks Several Sticky Cases!

Several RECAMFT members met for the September Ethics Roundtable meeting at the Oddfellows Hall in the comfortable living room setting of the Oddfellows' board room. We discussed a number of clinical cases with ethical queries brought to the meeting by the members. The atmosphere was amiable, helpful and respectful. Participants contributed during a brief check-in about how their day was going and whether they had a case to talk about or not. The bulk of the meeting was devoted to case consultation and we ended with a brief feedback comment from each member. Consensus was that the consultation was rich, deep and clinically stimulating.

Please register at [www.RECAMFT.org](http://www.RECAMFT.org) for our next meeting on Friday, November 15, 2019 in order to be included in our Ethics Roundtable consultation.

Reyna Seminara, LMFT  
RECAMFT Ethics Roundtable Chair  
RECAMFT President 2017  
[RECAMFTethics@gmail.com](mailto:RECAMFTethics@gmail.com) or 707-523-919



TABLE CENTERPIECES



LAURA STROM, BEN CALDWELL AND BOB CASANOVA



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FOLLOWING ARE A FEW PHOTOS FROM THE SUICIDE WORKSHOP



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