

Empowering relationships...

MARCH 2019



# The Redwood Empire Therapist

## OUR MARCH MEETING

### **What's Up with Men? An Attempt at a Deeper Understanding and Solution to the Problems Men Create** Joe Petzel, LMFT

Why are so many men creating so many of the world's problems? Can men change? Sure we all see individual men in our practices, and lives change and grow, but why do so many men who seek power act with so little empathy, sensitivity, and compassion? Why do so many men use violence, power, and controlling behaviors? It's clear that many more men than women create these problems. Are men a tragically flawed group, an evolutionary "dead end"?



Join us in a presentation/discussion that attempts to answer those questions and provide tools to help them change these behaviors. By addressing these questions and using these techniques with boys and men, all of us can be part of the solution.

Joe Petzel is a retired LMFT having spent 32 years in private practice. He was the Clinical Director of Family Service Agency, and founded a domestic violence treatment program. He taught at JFK University in the masters of psychology program, and at Sonoma State University. Joe created a CE class on domestic violence treatment which he taught for six years. He is currently enjoying his retirement in Sebastopol, CA.

### **March 1, 2019 - RECAMFT Meeting**

**10:30 – 11:00 social & sign in**

**11:00 – 1:00 meeting**

### **What's Up with Men? An Attempt at a Deeper Understanding and Solution to the Problems Men Create** Joe Petzel, LMFT

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**Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR) Training**  
Dr. Patricia Watson & Dr. Joe Ruzak  
Hyatt Regency, Santa Rosa  
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**April 5, 2019**

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**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**



*Chapter Leadership Conference*

~ Four of your chapter members were privileged to attend the stimulating Chapter Leadership Conference: Tara D’Orazio, president-elect, Kira Kayler, CFO, Erica Thomas, past president and I had the privilege of networking with many members of the various chapters and some of the CAMFT staff.

It impressed me that with Nabil El-Ghoroury, PhD at the helm, combined with a hard-working staff of 22 supporting the many aspects of CAMFT’s mission, we clinicians are being more powerfully represented than ever, in many dimensions. One example is that of the Political Action Committee (PAC) actively lobbying for inclusion of LMFTs as Medicare providers. There are two pieces of legislation currently in the works: HR 3032, which had 73 co-sponsors, and S 1879 with 13 co-sponsors as of the close of 2018. Please contact your senators and representatives and encourage them to support these bills, letting them know why it is essential to add LMFTs and LPCCs! And remember, your financial contributions to PAC will allow them to continue their significant efforts.

Tara offers the following insights from attending: “My biggest take away from the conference was how important it is to shift away from the question of 'how do we attract X kind of person' and instead ask ourselves 'how can we be an organization that

brings value to our profession, acts with integrity, and removes barriers to participation?’ The pre-licensed break out group was really helpful in learning how chapters are collaborating with their members to understand what the pre-licensed providers need and how they can best be served. This was an overarching theme of all the breakout groups and was very encouraging.”

Our keynote speaker DJ Johnson emphasized the importance of affirming and supporting all those of you who volunteer your time. And this little column is one place that I can continue to express my **ongoing gratitude** to each one of you who are volunteering (or have volunteered) your valuable time on behalf RECAMFT and CAMFT.

~ Our chapter received Honorable Mention for the difficult and ambitious work we did on behalf of outreach to our community this past year!



**DOREEN AND KATHRYN LEFF PRESENTING ON HOW TO START A DISASTER RESPONSE COMMITTEE AT YOUR CHAPTER DURING THE CONFERENCE.**

~ Kira Kayler is running for the position of Director At Large for the state CAMFT association. Ballots will soon be sent your way: we hope that you will cast your vote, including for Kira who will then be able to represent our chapter at the state level, and keep us informed of what is taking place as well.

~ Save The Date: On Friday, September 27, Benjamin Caldwell, PsyD will give a presentation on Suicide that will satisfy the continuing education unit requirement for BBS, at the Mary Agatha Furth Center in Windsor: exact times will be announced in the near future.

~ I'm always open to your suggestions on how our chapter can continue to best serve your needs. Please call or text me at 951-347-1837 with your ideas!

Doreen is in Private Practice in Santa Rosa at 951-347-1837

## **RECAMFT TEAM CIRCLE**

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## **2019 Spring Ethics Roundtable Meeting**

**Save the date Friday, 3/22/19 at Noon to 1:30 PM in Santa Rosa. Brown Bag Lunch.**

All RECAMFT members in good standing are invited to attend the Spring Ethics Roundtable discussion. Bring your lunch and cases that have a question that we can discuss from an ethical viewpoint.

We are **not** an ethics review committee. We **are** a case consultation group with a particular interest in ethical questions. Our core members have over 75 years of collective experience as licensed Marriage and Family Therapists.

Sample case discussion may include:

A client asks to conduct therapy in her car at the beach.

At termination of a 6 year therapy relationship the client coffee, because the client always felt they could be good friends.

A therapist finds out after seeing a male client for 8 months that her client is dating the therapist's daughter. The therapist does not tell her client this girlfriend is the daughter of the therapist. Therapist runs into her client who is with the therapist's daughter at a department store. The therapist tries to hide, but they see her. The therapist blurts out that the boyfriend is her client.

These are all made up cases which reveal the flavor of the type of things we talk about.

For meeting **location** and to **register** to attend (space is limited) Please contact:

**Reyna Seminara, LMFT**, Ethics Roundtable Chair

[LRS-MFT@att.net](mailto:LRS-MFT@att.net) 707-523-9192 (voicemail)

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## *What You Missed* *By Michael Krikorian*

At our February meeting we had a very interesting and informative presentation on “Working with the Highly Sensitive Person (HSP) in Psychotherapy.” The presentation was from Ivy Griffin, an LMFT from Sacramento. Ivy shared



about how, earlier in her career, she came across the book, *The Highly Sensitive Person*, by Elaine Aron, Ph.D. Ivy found the book to be very helpful as it helped her understand experiences in her own life such as being shy, not friendly enough, easily upset and worn down by being in a classroom and social situations. Ivy explained that HSP's are people that easily feel overwhelmed in life,

and have difficulty in asserting themselves. Specifically, this results from a collection of traits that include being easily overstimulated and emotionally reactive in both a positive and negative way, tending to overthink and analyze, and, as a

result, exhaust themselves. HSP's are easily effected by other people's moods as well as environmental stimuli such as bright lights or noise. Being hungry can make it hard for an HSP to concentrate or feel relaxed. Overthinking leads to HSP's to struggle with questions such as what is the meaning of my life. Am I in the right career?

On the positive side, HSP's can be empathic, analytical, conscientious, kind, creative and intuitive. Ivy reports that research says that 15-20% of the general population has HSP traits and is present equally in both male and females although male socialization results in males more likely to suppress these traits. She states that up to 50% of psychotherapy clients have these traits as they may experience lots of anxiety and depression and feel “broken” as a result of messages from family and society about their sensitivities.

Ivy says that these traits are inborn, not a result of development and are, therefore, not a disorder. Brain research shows HSP's have more brain stimulation in the insula and a heightened response to the emotional state of others.

She went into detail about how to differentiate a person struggling as a result of underlying HSP traits vs. someone struggling as a result of straightforward depression or anxiety or autism.

Ivy explained that helping HSP's starts with “setting the stage,” meaning creating a therapeutic environment that is easier for them. This includes giving them information about what to expect as they meet you, having an office that is uncluttered, and giving the HSP time to settle in and adjust to the environment and situation.

Next, she sees the task is to educate them on the traits of an HSP and learn that it is not a disorder but just a human variation with strengths and challenges. She helps them review their developmental history with this understanding in mind so they can create a new narrative of their life with more empathy for themselves and less shame. This includes reviewing their family life, school and work life for how they were valued verses criticized. She points out to them how in certain cultures such as Canada and China, traits of shyness and sensitivity are seen as more “normal.”

Ivy then teaches her HSP clients how to manage their feelings of overwhelm. This includes recognizing triggers and developing strategies, learning to take breaks, getting enough sleep, rest and nutrition. She teaches meditation practices as well as gratitude exercises to counteract damaged self-worth. Ivy also teaches assertiveness skills to help them speak up for their own needs and boundaries.

Ivy left us with a mantra she teaches her HSP clients. It goes “this is a moment of suffering – suffering is a part of life – may I be kind to myself in this moment – may I give myself the compassion I need.”

Thank you, Ivy, for a very useful presentation on a subject not widely known. Ivy is the director of Thrive Therapy and Counseling in Sacramento. She can be reached at [www.thrivetherapyandcounseling.com](http://www.thrivetherapyandcounseling.com) or (916) 287-3430

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**MARCH ISSUE**

### **RECAMFT HONORS PAST PRESIDENTS**

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Lani Lee	2013
Hal Forman	2012
Elaine Sohler Gayler	2011
Cynthia Halliday	2010
Susan Hartz	2009
Kate Maxwell	2008
Gail Van Buuren	2007
Diana Poulson	2005-2006
Joan Logan	2004
Judith Goleman	2003
Ange Stephens	2002
Christopher Doyle	2001
F. Michael Montgomery	2000
Julie Green	1999
Jan Lowry-Cole	1998
Rhaea Maurel	1997
Paula Hall	1996
Kitty Chelton	1994-1995
Don Scully & Randi Farkas	1993-1994
Hari Meyers	1992-1993
Grace Harris	1991-1992
Richard Alongi	1990-1991
Diana Young	1989
Andrew Leeds	1988
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