

Empowering relationships...



MARCH 2022

The Redwood Empire Therapist

MARCH ONLINE MEETING



An Apprenticeship with Sorrow

Presented by:

Francis Weller, LMFT

Friday, March 18th, 2022

9:00 AM – 4:30 PM

\$90 CAMFT members, \$45 Pre-licensed

Zoom Webinar

\$125 Non-members

6 CEUs

As therapists, we encounter an extraordinary amount of suffering on an ongoing basis. Those who come to us, ask us to help hold their stories of loss and sorrow, pain, and trauma. Additionally, the wider, collective sorrows of the surrounding world impact us as well. The ongoing pandemic, systemic racism, economic injustice, climate collapse and others, can leave us feeling overwhelmed, vulnerable, and shaken. The ambient field we are living in is saturated with a mixture of anxiety, fear, rage, and grief. The sheer weight of these personal and collective sorrows is enough to crush our hearts. Where do we go with this cumulative weight? Unfortunately, the prevailing cultural conditioning often encourages us to face these circumstances alone.

Grief, however, has always been communal, always been shared and as such, has been part of a sacred process. This day-long seminar offers an opportunity to acknowledge the multiple folds of grief we carry in our lives. Doing so grants us what we require to set down a measure of the grief we carry. Tending these sorrows is essential. To keep our hearts soft and open, we must become fluent in the rites and practices of grief. Each of us must take up an apprenticeship with sorrow and learn the skill of grieving for our sakes and the welfare of all beings.

As therapists we will learn to recognize the multiple sources of grief and its impact on the psyche and be able to identify cultural obstacles to expressing the grief. We will understand the value of grief and the relationship between unresolved grief and depression and/or addiction. We will learn about Weller's Five Gates of Grief and much more including practices and rituals for tending to grief. You do not want to miss this.

Please Note: Zoom Webinar – Register at recamft.org. Once you have RSVP'd you will receive a link to register for the webinar. You must complete this second step to gain access to the event link.

March 19, 2022 10am-12pm

Pre-licensed Collaborative

March 25, 2022 – 12:00-1:30pm

Ethics Roundtable

April 1, 2022 – 10am Zoom

Found at Sea: Depth Psychotherapy for Unfathomed Times

Molly Merson, LMFT

Register for all these and other offerings you will find inside this newsletter and also on our website at

www.recamft.org

RECAMFT CEU PROVIDER IMIS 57173



“Fair Winds and Following Seas”

2022 President’s Message Laura Strom

If you are holding a paper copy of this month’s newsletter in your hand, you have something very special – the very last mailed newsletter you will ever receive from RECAMFT. So many members have opted out of receiving a mailed paper newsletter, we have decided to convert to an electronic format beginning April 1, 2022. This brings me to my next topic, which is our venerable Newsletter Editor, Gail Van Buuren, has decided to retire from her job as the Most Awesome Newsletter Editor Ever in the History of RECAMFT. (sniff!)

Gail Van Buuren is the person who invited me to attend my first RECAMFT Board meeting in January 2013. She told me as a result of my signing up to bring the snacks that month as the new Hospitality Chair, that I was part of the team, and should come to the Board meeting. Neither of us realized where that was going to go.

When she moved to Sonoma County from Monterey in 2006 Gail joined the RECAMFT Board. At her very first meeting, President Diana Poulson asked her to serve as President for the next year and Gail also took over as Newsletter Editor. Gail said the monthly meetings were so small, they sat in a circle of chairs. There was less than \$1000 in the coffers.

As I started attending our Board meetings back in 2013, I eventually volunteered to be President Elect. President Lani Lee was expecting a baby, and going out on maternity leave in June. I took over as Acting President in May 2013 for about six months. Looking back this turned out to be one of the most crucial moments for CAMFT itself. I organized our chapter to write a letter protesting the newly adopted bylaws which eliminated the term “marriage and family therapist” throughout the document, and substituted “mental health professional”.

Gail was on my speed dial, as I kept calling her to discuss next steps. Eventually, she helped me organize the incoming data from an online petition started to recall some or all of the CAMFT Board members for making this momentous change to the bylaws without fully disclosing it the members. We were successful in this

endeavor when the Board rescinded its new bylaws at the September 2013 meeting. Extremely well organized by this point, the SaveCAMFT petition group was unstoppable. Eventually, I became CAMFT’s President (2015-16), all the while with Gail’s wisdom and counsel in the background. CAMFT has literally been shaped by the friendship that Gail extended to me a decade ago.

Even though Gail is retiring as our Newsletter Editor, she’s still on my speed dial. I definitely won’t stop calling her. She is one of the wisest people I have the good fortune of knowing and calling my friend.

The RECAMFT Board changed my life in the most unexpected ways imaginable. It could change yours, too. Join us for a meeting soon. All members are always welcome, the second Friday monthly, 9-11 am. Next month’s newsletter will arrive in your email.

With all the thanks and gratitude we can muster for our 2007 past president, Gail Van Buuren, and her sixteen years calmly guiding our ship through some very choppy, unsettled waters, while providing us a professional newsletter to keep us updated and in the know. Gail, may you have fair winds and following seas...

With a deep sigh and a heart filled with love,

Laura Strom, PsyD, LMFT
RECAMFT President

RECAMFT seeks speaker/presenter applications for Sept. 2022-June 2023.

Due by April 30, 2022

Submit or complete an application (include all requested items) at

www.recamft.org/presentation-application

If you know someone or want to apply, please submit your application to us at

www.RECAMFTprograms@gmail.com

RECAMFT TEAM CIRCLE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Laura Strom 707-889-9168

President Elect: Gina Culver 707-331-7130

Past President: Tara D'Orazio 707-992-5008

Secretary: Victoria Rohrer 707-509-8031

CFO: Acting CFO: Kira Kayler 415-854-9408

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

Director-at-Large: Annette Seibel 707-537-3090

Director-at-Large: Reyna Seminara 707-523-9192

Director-at-Large: Emily Larkin 707-329-4261

Director-at-Large: Bob Casanova 707-544-7000

Director-at-Large: Jean Hayes 415-897-1648

COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERS

CEU Chair: Joanne Consigliari

Community Outreach: Debra Melmon

Crisis Response & D.A.L.: Vacant

Ethics: L. Reyna Seminara 523-9192

Expert Consultant for Disruptive Events: Doreen Van Leeuwen 951-347-1837

Hospitality Chair: Vacant

Membership: Tara D'Orazio 707-992-5008

Newsletter Editor: Gail Van Buuren 707-494-4198

Pre-licensed Chair: Jessica Heaney 4jessicarose@gmail.com

Programs: Denise Safont, Chair 707-998-5974
Michael Krikorian 707- 579-0838

Racial & Social Justice Committee Co-Chairs:

Katharina Kienboeck 707-347-6546,

Linda Block 310-871-8795

Therapy Group Inserts: Renee Owen 415-453-8117

Website and Technology: Laura Strom 707-889-9168

STAFF

Video Production & Administrative Consultant:

Lisa Wenninger therapy@recamft.org

JOIN RECAMFTS LISTSERV

*It's easy. Just send your email request to
join the RECAMFT listserv to:*

therapy@recamft.org

*Once your RECAMFT membership is
confirmed, address emails to the group
to recamft@groups.io*

What You Missed *Michael Krikorian*

We had a very informative presentation in February on "Using the Body to Regulate Emotions: Perspectives from DBT" by Suzette Bray, MFT. Suzette runs Village Counseling and Wellness in Burbank, California, and has had extensive training in Dialectical Behavior Therapy. In her presentation, she tried to answer the question of what to do when you have a client with a high level of emotional dysregulation and reactivity.

Suzette states that about 15% of the population has what she calls a "biological vulnerability to emotions." She describes this as a person who has 1) a high sensitivity to emotions, 2) a high reactivity to emotions, 3) a slow return to baseline when aroused, and 4) a difficulty successfully regulating their emotions. She explained that when we get triggered into our survival mode of fight, flight or freeze (all reactions to fear), our limbic system takes over and our prefrontal cortex (learning and thinking) powers down. The body takes charge. A variation on this is when we get triggered into feeling shame. When we get triggered into this limbically aroused state, common therapeutic approaches are usually ineffective. For instance, cognitive restructuring approached (e.g. CBT) or insight approaches are not effective because they require thinking which is not reliably available to an emotionally dysregulated person.



Instead of using interventions that unlikely to be effective because they depend on marshaling part of the brain that has been bypassed, Suzette uses a DBT approach. First, she said, it is useful to validate the clients feelings and thoughts as understandable and valid. Then, if the client is not in an immediate crisis, she teaches them "slow and steady" DBT skills to put into practice every day. These include treating any current physical illness, do balanced eating, avoid mood-altering substances, get balanced sleep and do regular exercise. Next, she teaches them what she calls "picking up speed" DBT skills. These include changing posture (deliberately positioning the body in an open, willing body position) and changing facial expression towards a slight smile as these moves trigger the brain to act as

though this is how you feel. Another skill is soothing your own body by gently touching your cheeks or upper chest area. She described having couples face each other and relax and touch index finger tips together while closing their eyes. Additionally, she would teach the client to downgrade the emotional arousal when talking about an event by distracting the mind by sitting on an exercise ball and bouncing, or standing on one leg or "float your tongue in your mouth" so it does not touch your teeth or palate.

Next, Suzette described "turbocharged" DBT skills used to directly impact emotional arousal. These include taking the client through a deep muscle relaxation exercise and teaching them how to do it themselves and practice it daily. Another skill is called Paced Breathing which is teaching the client to breath in a particular way. This means to breath deeply into the belly at a slow pace of inhaling for 5 seconds and deep exhaling at a slower 7 seconds. Another approach is to use intense exercise for at least 20 minutes to re-regulate the body into a less emotional state. She says this useful for reducing anger, agitation and rumination. A client needs to check with the doctor before doing this to make sure they are up to it medically.

Finally, she talked about engaging the "mammalian dive reflex" to help a person make a rapid shift in their nervous system to a different arousal state. This can be done by immersing one's face in a basin of cold water up to the temples for 15 to 30 seconds. An alternative is to place a zip bag of ice water across the eyes and top of the cheeks and hold one's breath. The "dive" response will kick in and the heart rate will slow down, blood will shunt away from non-essential organs to send to the heart and brain. This effect will last anywhere from 5 to 20 minutes. It is good to have another relaxations skill ready to go when that resides.

Thank you, Suzette, for the very informative presentation today. More information on Suzette can be found at www.villagecounselingandwellness.com. Suzette also has a recently written book available titled Your Emotions and You: Strategies and Exercises to Understand and Manage Emotions.



Michael Krikorian has been a practicing MFT seeing individuals and couples in Santa Rosa for over 40 years. More information on him can be found at www.krikorianmft.com

men
Men Evolving Non-Violently

**Helping Men
Have Healthy Relationships**

- * Motivated men working together to learn new skills and change their behavior
- * Weekly low-cost groups meet on Monday or Wednesday eve on Zoom, then in Petaluma or Sebastopol when we can safely meet in person
- * Helpline support

**HelpLine & Info - 707-528-2636
www.sonomacountymen.org**

From the Therapist's Chair ~ Indigenous Populations Addiction Recovery Work



**by Gina Culver, LMFT
2022 RECAMFT President Elect**

I recently watched a training for my agency's annual cultural humility requirement entitled *Cultural Humility Series, Part VII: Four Directions of Diversity - Honoring Differences* (<https://www.naadac.org/cultural-humility-honoring-differences-webinar>) presented by Don Coyhis of the Turtle Clan of the Mohican Nation. The focus of this presentation was on addiction recovery of Indigenous populations, otherwise known as First Nations.

For me, it felt like parts of me fell into place through this learning; that how I react or respond to events that happened or are currently happening makes a lot more sense now.

There was a lot of great information in the presentation and I emphatically encourage anyone interested in recovery or working with Indigenous populations to watch this webinar, as well as any of the other seven webinars in this series.

Mr. Coyhis talked about the history of substance use as related to the historical/intergenerational trauma that the Indigenous populations experienced: the diversity medicine wheel; the seen and unseen worlds and how they intersect; “inside every creature is the innate knowledge [blueprint] of how it is to conduct itself. They know what to do . . . they do it naturally!”; “communities of color.”

Mr. Coyhis explained how communities of color not only applies to Indigenous populations, but also to other communities of color as well and to the idea of “seventh generation.” [Thinking about how what we do now will affect others seven generations on. Ed.]

One of my biggest “aha moments” was that trauma is in the DNA. This is such a shift in thinking for me personally to understand why responses/reactions to trauma that I’ve witnessed in myself, in my family and with clients appears to be “genetic” or “hereditary,” is that it actually IS! Mind blown.

The other “aha moment” was Mr. Coyhis saying that we must “overcome the belief that only Native people can help Native people.” He said that people in recovery can help others in recovery. This, to me, is healing and bridges the gaps between us.

I want to leave you with Mr. Coyhis’ poem (one he found on a copier one day at work): “‘Build a better world,’ said God, and I answered, ‘How? The world is such a vast place and so complicated now. And I am small and useless – there is nothing I can do.’ But God in all His wisdom said, ‘Just build a better YOU.’”

With humble gratitude from your President Elect,

Gina Culver

Gina Culver, LMFT #126029 is a newly licensed MFT that works at Lifeworks of Sonoma County as a Program Director and Clinician. Gina is an ongoing contributor to the RECAMFT newsletter and can be reached at RECAMFTpresidentelect@gmail.com.

Considering a residential treatment or outdoor program?

Collaborating with referring professionals, we are nationally respected educational consultants who specialize in providing recommendations for students with special needs of an emotional, behavioral or psychological nature. We travel extensively throughout the year and have personally toured over two hundred schools and programs. As Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, we credit our clinical training and experience in deepening our understanding of a student’s needs.

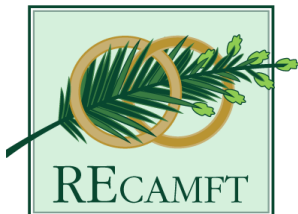
CASANOVA & TORAL
Therapeutic Placement and Educational Consulting

Bob Casanova, PsyD, LMFT
License: LMFT 37137

Rosa Toral, LMFT
License: LMFT 47169

1260 North Dutton Ave., Suite 185
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
707-544-7000
www.casanovatoral.com

Empowering relationships...



**Redwood Empire Chapter of California Association
of Marriage and Family Therapists**
is a California BBS CEU provider: License #57173
RECAMFT.org - PO Box 2732 – Santa Rosa, CA 95405
E-mail: therapy@recamft.org Web: www.recamft.org

MARCH ISSUE

NEWSLETTER COSTS & DEADLINES

Line ads and announcements:

Members - \$5 per line
Non-members - \$12 per line

Display ads: Full page - 7.5" x 9.75" = \$200
(Wide x Long) Half page - 3.5" x 9.5" = \$110
Quarter page - 3.5" x 4.5" = \$60
Eighth page – 3.5" x 2" = \$35

10% discount for 5 month ad Commitment
20% discount for 10 month ad commitment

Deadlines:

Articles (500 words max) - 15th of the month
Advertisements - 15th of the month

For more information call or email:

707 583-1607 or therapy@recamft.org

Or submit ad to website at

www.recamft.org

NEWSLETTER DISCLAIMERS

The opinions and points of view in the articles contained herein do not necessarily reflect that of the Board of Directors of RECAMFT or of CAMFT. Authors' contact information is included. Submitted articles may be edited and are published at our discretion depending on space and relevance to our readers' professional interests.

RECAMFT HONORS PAST PRESIDENTS

Laura Strom, Acting President	2021
Tara D;Orazio	2020
Doreen Van Leeuwen	2019
Erica Thomas	2018
Reyna Seminara	2017
Bob Dalzell	2016
Kris Spangler	2015
Laura Strom	2014
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
Carleita Schwartz	1987
Christine Bucholz	1986
Thomas Hedlund	1982-1985
Rick Mawson	1980-1982