Letter from the President



Guy R. Crouteau, LICSW, CGP

Dear NSGP Members,

On July 1, we welcomed our new Board of Directors that were elected in June. Specifically, we welcome Joel Krieg as President-Elect, Catherine Dubois as Board Secretary, and Michael Murray as Member-At-Large. Amanda Neas was appointed by the Board to finish Cindy Berman-Ritcher's term when she resigned in June. Welcome to you all!

A heartfelt thanks goes to those who left the board: Jennifer DeSouza, our Past President, Natasha Khoury as Secretary, and Maddie Freeman and Cindy Berman-Ritcher as Members-At-Large. I and the whole Society thank you for your service and contributions to NSGP.

I would also like to take some space in this letter to introduce to you an idea Joel Krieg has as he takes on the role of President-Elect. Joel eloquently made the case for NSGP to adopt the option of having a co-president to share in the responsibilities of leading the Society. He spoke of his successful leadership as co-chair of the Training Committee where responsibilities were shared and the burden lessened. The advantage of diversity of thought and perspective was also highlighted. After Joel presented

this idea to the board in May, the board unanimously accepted this idea.

I quickly formed an ad-hoc committee to look into the logistics of adopting a co-president into our leadership structure. The committee was made up of Joel, Jenn DeSouza, Amanda Neas, Kurt White, and myself. The committee discussed the advantages and challenges that a co-president might bring and recommendations were made to the language in our by-laws to adopt. In essence:

- The Nomination Committee will continue its responsibility to find a President-Elect.
- If the potential President-Elect wishes to find and run with a co-president, then that individual would be vetted and approved by the Nomination Committee and a ballot with two individuals as Co-Presidents will be put to vote by the Membership. The President-Elect may also choose to run on their own. There is no requirement for Co-President.
- The new by-laws will also have provisions for when one of the co-presidents cannot complete their term and when conflicts arise between the co-presidents. The language in the by-laws clearly states that "The co-presidents shall be jointly and severally responsible for carrying out the duties of their office."

As I've mentioned before, the board has been working on a new set of by-laws based on a model provided to us by AGPA. The board decided to adopt these new by-laws with the revisions necessary to reflect the specifics of NSGP. These changes will reflect changes that have been adopted formally and informally over the past year. These changes include:

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Letter from the Editors



Nadia Khatchadourian, LICSW Maddie Freeman, LICSW

Maddie: Fall is my absolute favorite season. It's my birthday season, it's the perfect temperature for a cozy sweater and a hot latte, and the autumn leaves are beautiful and sentimental. And yet, I have a really hard time with change. Ever since I was a child, any change in plans would throw me for a loop and cause a tantrum. I like predictability and consistency; a clear itinerary; a steady structure.

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Member Spotlight — Alexandra (Sasha) Watkins, EdD, LMHC



Alexandra (Sasha) Watkins, EdD, **LMHC** is an Associate Director of the MBA Student & Academic Services at Harvard Business School in Boston, MA, and an Adjunct Faculty in the Division of Counseling & Psychology at Lesley University. A member of NSGP for over fifteen years, Sasha has served on the Nominating Committee and the Conference Committee and currently co-chairs the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Committee. She has extensive experience leading groups in educational, organizational, and clinical settings, as well as training and teaching. Sasha approaches group work from the identity-based perspective and has personal connections to diverse identity groups. In an hour-long interview, Sasha spoke with Nadia Khatchadourian, NSGPeople co-editor, about her life, both personal and professional. Maddie Freeman, NSGPeople co-editor, acted as scribe.

Nadia: What was your early life like?

Sasha: Growing up in a large, loving family taught me the value of connection at an early age. At the same time, my introversion taught me to appreciate solitude. I was a quiet child who preferred books to noise. I discovered the magic of reading as a toddler, learning to recognize

the alphabet letters before I could speak; I read fluently by age five, so I could often be found curled up in some quiet corner, completely absorbed in the pages of a book. Summers on my grandparents' farm were filled with reading and drawing, while I was carrying on with farm tasks alongside the adults. As the eldest of three children, I enjoyed the novelty of being both independent and needed. Unlike many children today who follow set schedules, my childhood blended unstructured time for daydreaming and discovery with hands-on lessons in responsibility learned by helping with grown-up work—gifts of time and purpose I've carried throughout my life. I strive to bring that sense of nourishing solitude and connection to my work as a psychotherapist.

Nadia: Your current work life incorporates clinical practice, teaching, and managing student and academic services at Harvard Business School...and you just completed your Doctor of Education, no less! How do you manage to juggle all of this, and is there an aspect of your work life that you find particularly energizing?

Sasha: What is energizing for me is using different parts of myself, which is why I do a lot of things. This is the curse of someone who learns fast; we get bored very quickly. In some ways, doing a lot of things is my way of self-preservation, but it also comes with a cost, because I am always working. There is no other way around accomplishing a lot. It's like in any other field; there is a correlation between how much time you put into something and the outcome. So, I am constantly working. When people ask me, 'what did you do for a vacation?' I don't know what to say. I don't really go on vacations...it's been a while.

Those types of questions are very abstract to me. But doing different things and things that interest me is what gives me energy.

"What is energizing for me is using different parts of myself, which is why I do a lot of things."

Nadia: What drew you to group work?

Sasha: As a cultural minority in many contexts, I have a complicated history with groups. With a few exceptions, I have found group experiences to be challenging, despite having very positive experiences in groups when I lived in Tokyo for four years prior to coming to the US. When a palm reader in Japan warned that interpersonal relationships would be difficult for me in the coming year as I prepared to move to Boston for graduate school, I was skeptical since I had felt so connected in Tokyo. However, he proved to be right. For example, the group dynamics class I took after arriving in the US felt so culturally traumatizing that I cried after every meeting, though it did lead to a lasting friendship with the professor, a long-time member of NSGP. This experience highlighted the cultural gap I felt as a new immigrant in American groups. The trauma and isolation of that first group class was sadly amplified by similar experiences in other classes throughout my early days in the US, where I continually found myself misunderstood and marginalized as a cultural minority.

After my difficult group experiences, I swore off participating in groups of any kind. However, a friend convinced me to get involved with NSGP, raving about the wonderful community and people. I helped her

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(continued on page 3)



Member Spotlight (continued from page 2)

with publicizing an upcoming NSGP conference, and as a reward, I was offered free admission to the NSGP annual conference. Though still wary of groups, my curiosity was piqued by the opportunity to learn more about group therapy. Attending the conference opened my eyes—I became engaged by the knowledge shared rather than fixating on my group wariness.

With more training, my interest in groups continued to grow. I started teaching group dynamics courses over a decade ago, which gave me new insights into how small groups function. Though I continued learning at NSGP about small therapeutic groups, I wanted to also understand larger groups—organizations and societies. This motivated me to join the Group Relations organization for its distinctive experiential approach to learning about large group dynamics. Ultimately my fascination with groups spurred me to pursue a doctorate in organizational

"Though group experiences have often been difficult for me, they have also profoundly shaped my personal and professional path."

leadership studies. Though group experiences have often been difficult for me, they have also profoundly shaped my personal and professional path. My wariness has evolved into a motivation to help facilitate healing in groups of all kinds.

Nadia: Hearing about your experience as an immigrant makes me think you must have empathy for when people feel they don't belong.

Sasha: The experience itself does not necessarily guarantee empathy. True empathy requires thoughtful reflection. My personal experiences give me insight but also certain biases I must acknowledge. While they motivate me to help others feel included, I know not everyone will share my perspectives. I aim to provide opportunities for inclusion while recognizing the limits of my own experience in shaping how I view and approach diversity. Genuine empathy requires an openness to others' realities.

Nadia: Can you tell us more about your interest in identity-based group work?

Sasha: As a multiracial person, I've felt like an outsider my entire life. I grew up a minority at home [in Russia], belonging to neither one group nor another. My sense of self became shaped by how others view and categorize me. It wasn't until someone in Tokyo suggested some experiences I had as a young woman were racially linked that I first considered it. At the time, I dismissed the idea, but it planted a seed. Through training and clinical work, I started reflecting more on the role of race and culture in my life, as well as groups. My interest in identity-based group work comes from wanting to help others on similar journeys, drawing from my experiences of feeling marginalized between groups. My training was through a culture-blind, universal lens that provided some insights but skewed many answers to my questions as a minority. I aim to provide a more nuanced perspective.

Nadia: We see your DEI work as integral to this organization. How do you envision that work growing?

Sasha: The DEI work is vital for our organization to keep growing in an inclusive direction. When we started

the DEI Task Force, diversity, equity, and inclusion were not an explicit organizational focus. The racial reckoning of the past few years made it clear—we needed to educate ourselves and our community. But what comes next? My hope is that considering culture, identity, and diverse perspectives just becomes a normal part of our practice, like learning about group developmental stages as we routinely do in our group therapy training.

To keep the work vibrant, I'd like to bring in new voices and pass the baton to fresh leaders while I stay involved. Another priority is bridging generations—we have so many seasoned members with invaluable wisdom alongside younger clinicians bringing new views. There is not enough cross-pollination between these groups. I envision building connections to blend the best of the past and future.

Additionally, I want to create spaces to process institutional trauma that comes from training—an unaddressed need. Overall, my goal is to keep pushing our organization to live up to our ideals of equity and inclusion in concrete ways. It requires continually assessing where we can improve and bringing new perspectives to the work.

"...my goal is to keep pushing our organization to live up to our ideals of equity and inclusion in concrete ways."

Nadia: What are some of your favorite activities?

Sasha: Things I haven't done before or that I am not good at. The most recent thing I have tried is a judo class, which was motivated by

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This question-and-answer column appears regularly in NSGPeople and addresses complex dilemmas in group therapy. Featured are case vignettes presented by NSGP members, with responses by senior clinicians. If you have a question you would like considered for this column, please submit a case vignette of 400 words or less to Natasha Khoury, LMHC, at newsletter@nsgp.com. Please remember to preserve the confidentiality of any group members described.

Dear Analyze This,

I am a cis White heterosexual female who began working with a cis Black heterosexual male several months ago. He presented to therapy wanting to address concerns regarding his anger. Upon discussions in subsequent sessions, my client expressed he "isn't ready" to consider joining a group after having discussed an online group for Black men, which he expressed some openness in exploring. He describes feeling alienated and, at times, racially ostracized or targeted at work and with online dating. Furthermore, he shared that he mostly dates White women and deliberately does not want to work with a Black clinician, both of which I hope to explore as our work progresses.

In the Fall, I will begin co-leading a new group and I am wondering about the impact on our relatively nascent therapeutic alliance if he decides to join my group. I notice some hesitancy in mentioning the new group to him, which is in part due to the probability he will be the lone Black man in a group, despite extensive community outreach underway for my own group. Furthermore, I want to move at the speed of trust in terms of exploring his readiness to consider group work.

During our most recent session, my client was reflective regarding the "allure" of the "comfort of dating on the other side of the suburbs," as well as frequent emotional pain when he perceives others to be happy with their wives and children. The session started with some of his earliest

memories of being non-verbal and being perceived as "traumatized" by others. He remembers his introduction to mortality when he witnessed a man being killed while on a family trip to his country of birth. He appears hesitant to exit the office before a break for my vacation, and eventually looks up, smiles and says, "Enjoy whatever you're doing."

How do you handle conversations about group referrals with hesitant, more marginalized clients? What are the downsides to referring clients to our own practice? What other wisdom can you offer to best navigate racial inequity in the group therapy world? Sincerely,

Not So Black and White



Dear Not So Black and White.

I applaud your desire to "move at the speed of trust." In response, I am going to talk more about individual work and how we nurture a patient's trust in themselves, and the trust between patient and therapist, as the foundation for joining a group. You ask: "How do you handle conversations about group referrals with hesitant, more marginalized clients?" Concretely, we validate and support hesitancy and anger, which are appropriate responses to trauma and marginalization. But another part of the answer to your question will come from your particular vision of psychotherapy. What I want to offer here is born of my desire to help patients grow into a secure attachment with themselves and

have rich relationships with others. A big chunk of the work is becoming comfortable with our unconscious and developing an open, non-judgmental, compassionate, and curious stance towards ourselves as we learn about what we are anxious about and tend to keep out of awareness.

Regarding the building of trust, the doorknob moment with your patient is rich with opportunity. There's so much there to explore and validate! Therapist: "I want to check something out with you. I was getting a sense that you were feeling some things at the end of our last session, but there wasn't time and space to tease it all out. Do you remember what you were feeling at the time? You seemed torn about leaving. Was that the case for you? You told me to 'enjoy whatever you're doing.' What did you imagine I was going to be doing on my vacation? Did it cross your mind to ask me directly about this? If it did come to mind, what stopped you from asking?" There are many ways to go about this exploration, and these types of questions will elicit conscious and unconscious narratives/projections about who you are in his inner world, and his relationship to you. Or if they don't, that's diagnostic as well. Open, nonjudgmental, curious exploration of his ideas about you and his relationship with you hopefully will build trust between you both and within himself. With the early and significant trauma he has experienced, I imagine he will be revealing himself to you for some time. I think of therapy as "playing the long game."

Regarding the challenges of bringing an individual patient into one of your groups, I refer you to a special edition of the International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 59 (1) 2009, which has several important papers on Combined Individual and Group Psychotherapy. Combined treatment is an issue of risk vs. reward. While it can be very helpful and exciting, (continued on page 5)





Analyze This (continued from page 4)

the combined treatment situation can be quite stimulating and overwhelming, leading to regression for the patient. Each time that I've brought an individual patient into my group where I have overestimated their reflective capacity, it has not gone well. To this end, I place an emphasis on my patient being able to talk about any thoughts and feelings that arise in our work. In the first or second session I explain that we come into this world wired for curiosity and connection, but that the traumas and tribulations of life can blunt our ability for this aliveness. Part of our work here is to invigorate that process. I encourage patients to

"In navigating racial inequity in the therapy world, I start with myself."

share whatever crosses their minds, especially fleeting thoughts, feelings, and body sensations that don't feel related to what's being talked about. Given all he has shared about his dating life, his pain and loneliness about observing others he perceives as happy in committed romantic relationships, and "the "allure" of the "comfort of dating on the other side of the suburbs," it would not be uncommon for him to develop an erotic transference towards you. How comfortable are you exploring these things when they come up, or are hinted at in dreams or in displacement?

In navigating racial inequity in the therapy world, I start with myself. Over the past several years I've worked to learn more about my racial and gender bias, and continue to be taken aback by the depth of my White supremacy, i.e., that there are a plethora of things that I deem as normative—"the right way to do it"—just because it's how I

was raised. I talk more these days with patients about my blind spots and how I might miss the boat in understanding their experience of being in the world. What can be talked about can be faced.

This is a multi-faceted case that I wish I had more space to write about!

Joe DeAngelis, LICSW, CGP

Dear Not So Black and White,

You raise many important questions that bear consideration. Your client is telling you he needs more time establishing trust and a strong working alliance with you before he can consider joining a group that you lead. Once your working alliance develops and you have more of a first-hand sense of his feelings toward you, you can both assess his readiness for group. When that time comes we suggest discussing specific reasons why group therapy can be of help to him. Any misgivings he has will be indications of his interpersonal fears and feelings. Rather than offering reassurance, it is best to explore his fears and understand their sources. He may give you some examples of past experiences in family and social groups. Furthermore, you may want to discuss whether your group is the right fit, or whether you choose to refer him to another group.

As you listen to your client, we suggest you also observe his physical presence—his body language, his facial expressions, how he enters and leaves your office. We hope you are seeing him in person, as we lose a lot of information when we are on the screen. As you sit with him, notice your feelings in your own body, and use them as important information about your client. Your own feelings of comfort and discomfort will give

you a deeper understanding of your client and the relationship.

If he is going to be the only person of color in the group, there needs to be additional commonalities with other members, such as education, economic status, interpersonal issues, relationship status, and gender identity. Additionally, it will be important to name, claim, and locate whiteness in group conversations.

"...it will be important to name, claim, and locate whiteness in group conversations."

How have you prepared to have these conversations in your group? Are you ready to discuss race and White privilege with your group whether your client joins or not? Or to know one's White self as a racialized being? How do you plan to engage coded deracialized language in the group? How do you plan to challenge racial trauma? Conversations with this client about racial issues and the centrality of whiteness in his day-to-day life will be an important part of group preparation. What opportunities have you had to engage him on these very important issues?

You have been very thoughtful about the implications of group for this client. That is the most important first step in the process.

> Suzanne L Cohen, EdD, AGPA Fellow

Hugo Kamya, PhD, LICSW, CGP Professor, Simmons University School of Social Work Member, Diversity Task Force, NSGP 1992-1996

Increasing Clinician Resilience & Decreasing Professional Isolation: A Conversation About the Balint Method Workshop



Julie Anderson, PhD, CGP, NSGP Member



Ann Koplow, LICSW, CGP, NSGP Member

Ann Koplow and Julie Anderson, both longtime members of NSGP and contributors to the organization in innumerable ways, discuss their experience of this NSGP workshop.

Ann: Julie, why did you sign up for the DEI-offered workshop about Balint groups with the excellent facilitator Janice Wagner?

Julie: I signed up for this Saturday workshop in June because it was organized by NSGP's DEI team and I always like their offerings. I had not heard of Balint groups, but I am interested in professional consultations and how they are structured as group experiences. Why did you sign up, Ann?

Ann: I've been very interested in Balint groups since attending a workshop at the 2022 NSGP conference, which has inspired me to offer Balint-like groups to doctors, nurses, and social workers at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. In Balint groups, someone spontaneously presents a challenging case and then steps back and lets the rest of the group "take up the case" by sharing thoughts, feelings, and associations. These groups reduce burnout, freeing up people to connect about challenging clinical relationships and experiences. Also, I was curious about Janice Wagner's perspective about racialized dynamics.

How would you describe the workshop, Julie?

Julie: We were a small circle of five (plus the facilitator Janice) and we ranged widely in experience with Balint groups. Janice oriented us to the origin and theory behind this group consultation model, and invited anyone to present a case. We sat with two cases in the next 90 minutes, both having to do with the "Presenter's" struggles within her professional agency. We listened without interruption for 20 minutes, and then Janice invited us to ask any clarifying questions. As we enjoined

the Presenter with our questions, I found myself awakening with my own associations to the material. The Presenter then turned her chair to "leave" the circle and listen to our discussion non-interactively.

What came alive for me were the metaphors layered into our associations. One Presenter had been advised by a colleague to "stay in your own lane" and I immediately went back to high school when I swam competitively, of course in lanes. The group built on this association, around the protection and constrictions that lanes offer. Another Presenter invoked images of competition, and we talked about sibling rivalries. Both Presenters found these metaphors stimulating and useful.

Ann: What stood out for me was the honesty, humor, vulnerability, creativity, safety, and support for all feelings that came up, and the two Presenters' gratitude for the new perspectives. Also, I was surprised and gratified that Janice invited us to talk about cases where the challenging "other" could be—in addition to a patient/client—a co-worker or a system (which both Presenters took good advantage of). Also, Janice let me sing my song "What's It All About Balint" which is on YouTube: https://www.youtube. com/watch?v=jpf5H-VDnN8

Julie: So Ann, why don't we do more with this Balint technique at NSGP?

Ann: I'm glad you asked that question, Julie. Mary Barnes and I are going to be offering Balint-like consulting groups for NSGP members very soon!









Welcome to One of Our Newest Members!



Name: Aliza Phillips-Stoll Joined NSGP: May 2023

Graduated from: New School for Social Research, 2013, Ph.D. in Clinical

Psychology

Place of Work: I am in private practice in Newton, MA, where I see adults and couples, and run a group for moms whose own parents were not "good-enough." I am a lecturer in psychology at Harvard Medical School, and I supervise psychology interns and practicum students at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center. When not in the office, I am busy co-parenting three children. In any extra time, I enjoy swimming, kayaking, cooking, seeing plays, and spending time with friends and family.

Special Interests: I am an alum of the Joslin Diabetes Center and still enjoy working with people living with diabetes and other chronic illnesses.

Fun Fact: I have a compost pile that is so robust that it now spontaneously grows us vegetables each year. This year's crop: Tomatoes!

Why I Joined NSGP: I joined NSGP because I began running a group (see above) in my practice in fall of 2022. I absolutely love the work. I am hoping to add another group to my practice (maybe one for people with diabetes?) and am looking to meet other clinicians who consider themselves "groupies."

Member Spotlight (continued from page 3)

attempting to get into better physical shape. I really like practicing judo despite being very bad at it. Another example is my daughter, who is 11, suggesting to do stone carving. I had no interest in working with stones, but we took a day-long workshop together, and, to my surprise, the experience rekindled a "flow-like" kind of enjoyment that I have not felt in a long time.

Nadia: What is the last movie you saw?

Sasha: I've recently been watching a lot of K-dramas (Korean dramas). Despite being of half Korean descent, I previously had little interest in my ancestral culture, and I don't speak Korean. Although I studied several Asian languages and cultures, I never showed much interest in Korean culture, a realization that I've come to attribute to internalized racism

over time. However, as I delved into Korean movies, I found them remarkably illuminating. Many of the characters in these dramas resonated with me and reminded me of my own family. It has gradually become apparent to me that much of what I had previously attributed to other influences may, in fact, have its roots in Korean culture. I've also noticed that my direct communication style, which I initially thought was more Eastern European in nature, shares similarities with Korean communication norms as well.

Nadia: I have to ask—how many languages do you speak?

Sasha: I am fluent in two languages: Russian and English. I have also studied Vietnamese, French, Chinese, and Japanese. Now, I have a keen interest in learning Korean and German, particularly because of the wealth of quality literature available in these languages. I derive great satisfaction from reading books in their original language as it allows me to immerse myself in the cultural context in which the work was created.

Reading a book in its original language is akin to experiencing a work of art in its authentic context. Consider Japanese screens as an example. When you encounter them in a museum, they may strike you as aesthetically pleasing. However, it pales in comparison to the profound impact of visiting a Japanese temple and witnessing these screens in their natural setting, illuminated by the ambient light. It is in this context that their inner essence and beauty truly come to life.







NSGP Foundation Announces Lifetime Achievement Award Winners

The NSGP Foundation board is pleased to announce the 5th annual Lifetime Achievement Award recipients. These awards are presented to those scholars and clinicians who have made significant contributions to the field of group psychotherapy. These highly regarded clinicians have devoted their professional lives to teaching, supervising, publishing books and articles, and engaging in organizational activities that benefit the group therapy community. They are committed to the principles of group work and believe that well-run groups heal. Each year we invite the winners to respond to two questions: "What drew you to group therapy?" and "What does being a group therapist mean to you?"

This year's winners (in alphabetical order) and their responses are:



Lise Motherwell accepting award on behalf of Ramon Alonso

After Ramon Alonso, PhD earned his PhD in Applied Mathematics at Harvard University, he worked at the Harvard Computation Laboratory. Then he joined the MIT Instrumentation Lab to work on the Apollo Mission to send a spacecraft to Mars. The Mars probe would take months to reach its destination. so it would need a computer that consumed no power during the months it took to get there, and once there, the computer would have to wake up. Ramon resolved both issues by designing what could be considered the first computer Read-only Memory (ROM). Later, while working on the Apollo Mission to land on the moon, Ramon figured out how to shrink a computer, which, in those days, was the size of a large room, into a one-cubic-foot area in the space capsule - and in doing so, solved a major problem for the Apollo Mission project. Ramon was

married to Anne Alonso, PhD, CGP, DLFAGPA, a Past President of NSGP and AGPA, a Chairwoman of the Group Foundation, and a soughtafter mentor and supervisor.

Through Anne, Ramon met and became friends with many therapists in the group world. Always self-effacing, and successful in his own right, Ramon said his life achievement was "having picked the right wife, and survived and flourished under her high octane, not always easy." Ramon supported Anne's career and ambition, and fed her creativity. He supported her passion for group therapy and her dedication to NSGP and AGPA. After Anne's death, Ramon provided seed funding for the NSGP Foundation's first scholarship fund, named The Anne Alonso Scholarship Fund. He created an annuity at AGPA, another beloved organization, to "leave something concrete for AGPA to build on." In his words, "AGPA was most important for Anne, and for me now, keeping her memory alive. For us, this was as close as we could get to taking [AGPA] with us." Also, he and Anne endowed the Anne and Ramon Alonso Plenary, an annual program at AGPA to educate both professionals and the public about group therapy. Ramon remains an integral part of the NSGP and AGPA communities, as friend and as benefactor.



Marian Menkel, LICSW, is a social worker who for the last 37 years has worked in community mental health and the group program at the Brookline Center. She began her therapy career after a short stint as a research assistant at Boston City Hospital, where she found that looking through microscopes was a bad fit. She began volunteering in the social work department and attended Simmons University before returning to Boston City Hospital where she ran short-term support groups. In 1975, she enrolled in the NSGP Training Program and studied and worked with Stanley Kanter, Larry Bader, and Norm Neiberg, among others. In March of 1986, she was hired part-time at the Brookline Center where she built and has maintained one of the most robust and enduring group therapy programs in Boston while juggling family and work responsibilities. Beginning with 10 groups, the Brookline Center doubled its group program, in part because Larry Bader bequeathed his groups



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NSGP Foundation Announces Lifetime Achievement Award Winners (continued from page 8)

to the center when he retired, but largely due to Marian's inspiring leadership, teaching, supervision, and work with clients.

"[At the Brookline Center] there was a need for groups, but no one knew how to run them. The timing was right, for both me and the Center." During the halcyon days of creativity and innovation, "for clinicians who were interested in groups, we were largely left alone by the administration to do what we wanted. I had no grand plans, no secret design. Just a love of groups, good timing, and an intuition for what is needed."



Arnie Cohen, PhD is a licensed psychologist who earned his degree from the Fielding Institute and has been in private practice since 1978. He worked at Massachusetts General Hospital for 15 years, and at the Boston Institute for Psychotherapy for seven years. He has been involved in and dedicated to group work since the late 1970s. He has taught at both AGPA and NSGP, supervised groups at the Center for Group Psychotherapy at Massachusetts General Hospital and at the Boston Institute for Psychotherapy, authored group therapy articles, and has consulted with many mental health agencies on group work. He has been active in governance on both the local and national level as board member of AGPA and the NSGP Foundation, and board member, treasurer, and past-president of NSGP. He

has helped to bring others into governance through mentorship and the nominating committees of AGPA and NSGP. He has encouraged many young clinicians to pursue group therapy training.

"Something that drew me to group therapy was my fascination with how people from diverse backgrounds come together and interact. To see the power of shared experiences and collective healing has been truly transformative for my clients and for me. Watching group members open up, show vulnerability, and find comfort in the understanding and support they receive from each other is something special. These experiences have touched me deeply and inspired me to become a better therapist and a more compassionate person.

Leading a group is like going on a unique adventure. [As group therapists], we get to facilitate discussions, manage conflicts, and create an environment of trust and support. It's an honor to be trusted with the stories and emotions of group members. On a personal level, being a group therapist has had a profound impact on me. I've learned so much from the individuals in my groups—lessons about resilience, compassion, and the different ways people overcome their challenges. Their stories continue to inspire and motivate me."

The NSGP Foundation Board is pleased to honor these three distinguished group therapists.





NSGP is proud and excited to collaborate with The Brookline Center in offering two Observation Groups.

These are two long-running, well-established interpersonal process groups that are led by some of Boston's most veteran group therapists. Observers are invited to sit silently in the room during each session, and then to discuss the group after the members leave.

If you are an **NSGP member**, there is a **50% discount** for these Observation Groups!

Group 1: Led by Amy Matias, Ph.D., LICSW, CGP and Tracy MacNab, PhD, CGP—alternating group leaders in 10-week intervals. **Thursdays 10:00-11:45 am.**

Group 2: Co-led by Joel Krieg, LICSW, CGP and Julie Anderson, PhD, CGP. **Tuesdays 10:15 am-12:00 pm.**

For more information on how to sign up: visit The Brookline Center Website



Progress Notes



Bette Freedson: I am now certified in clinical hypnosis by the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH) and also as an ASCH Approved Consultant.



Jocelyn Litrownik: I'm writing a chapter for social work students, (working title) Social Work and Fertility Access as a Component of Reproductive Justice Using the Socio-Ecological Framework. The chapter is focused on WHO can become a parent. The chapter includes voices from the field via a brief Q & A with an individual working in reproductive justice "on the ground". I welcome any introductions to folks with expertise in fertility.

I'm a part of a weekly discussion group reviewing The Holmes Commission on Racial Equality in American Psychoanalysis with ~20 colleagues. In June, I participated in McLean's Trauma Informed Systems Change training and recommend their work wholeheartedly! I'm enjoying running an ongoing group for trauma survivors and I am thrilled to be co-facilitating an online group for male identified survivors this fall with Dr. Adam Gladstone. Lastly, I've been accepted to begin a One-Year Fellowship at MIP or BPSI for Fall 2024.



Bet MacArthur, MSW LICSW, of Cambridge, a member of NSGP's DEI discussion group, spent three weeks in Colorado in June 2023 as lead archivist for the artistic and intellectual property estate of Method actor Dennis Weaver, who died in 2006 at age 81. As a film and pop culture historian specializing in representations of disability in film and TV, in the 1990's, Ms. MacArthur had documented the history of Weaver's creation of network television's most beloved disabled character, in television's greatest drama series, the "adult Western" Gunsmoke (1955-1975). Weaver, a dancer and Olympic-level decathlete, won the Supporting Actor Emmy for his embodiment of the hero's lame sidekick and was the only star from that iconic series to depart (after nine years) to lead an even bigger career in movies and television, for 40 more years. Weaver was also a global leader in addressing human disregard for our environment and its accelerating degradation, and was an innovative pioneer in founding programs to feed the hungry, which to this day feed over 100,000 people every week in Los Angeles.



Joe DeAngelis: After playing acoustic guitar for many years, I'm getting a kick out of playing electric guitar and singing in a practice band, The Recovery, through the Real School of Music in Burlington. I'm on the left in this YouTube video.https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= dG4VqD52B8



Ellen Waldorf of eWaldorf
Mediation in Newton has become
an associate of the Reflective
Practice Institute, an organization
dedicated to bringing supervisiontype groups to professionals who
mediate all kinds of disputes.





Progress Notes (continued from page 10)



Big news from **Geri** and **Scott Reinhardt**: They have relocated from Newton, where they lived and worked for many years, to the harborside town of Marion, Massachusetts. They will continue their full-time online practices from their new, very old home, and will continue their active involvement with their professional home, NSGP.



Maddie Freeman, LICSW: I may have just had the busiest year of my life! It was filled with exciting personal and professional milestones, including but not limited to: moving out of the city (and taking the commuter rail in, twice a week), getting closer and closer to my CGP requirements through my ongoing young adult process group, and traveling to beautiful Ireland for the first time. I continue to enjoy working on this newsletter with my partner-inediting, Nadia.



Kurt L. White, LICSW, CGP, **AGPA-F** is in transition to a new role as Vice President of Community Partnerships at the Brattleboro Retreat, after 18 years in other roles. He looks forward to expanding community partnerships, helping to build new programs, and taking on roles in communication and development. He will continue some clinical work. He is teaching "Advanced Group" and "Knowing, Not Knowing, and Muddling Through" at Smith College School for Social Work, in his 14th year as adjunct professor.

In April, he presented as the guest at the Annual Meeting of the VT Addiction Professionals Assn, "Substance use and meaning making: "Tuning in, tuning out, or turning it up?" In June and July, he completed an intensive training on MDMA assisted psychotherapy from MAPS, the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Science.

In November, he will present a talk "Breakthrough?: Psychedelic psychotherapies, interventional psychiatry, and other new and prospective treatments for mental health challenges" to the NAMI VT Annual Conference in Burlington, VT. Also in November, he will present on Ethics for a Vermont Psychological Association/Brattleboro Retreat conference.



Annie Weiss: New Groups, Old Groups. This spring, I finished up a 12-year stint co-leading the Observation Group at the Brookline Community Mental Health Center, first with Scott Rutan, and then with Tracy MacNab. This group has been a weekly highlight of my professional life, and I have cherished the opportunity to teach, explore with, and most significantly learn from all of the curious, engaged, insightful therapists who have observed the group over the years. I have loved this gig! I will continue in my role as Group Consultant at the Brookline Center. I am thrilled that Amy Matias will be taking over and bringing her skill and warmth to the endeavor.

I continue to lead three general interpersonal psychotherapy groups, and three online process-oriented training groups for clinicians. This fall, I will start a new in-person process group for clinicians in my new Newton Center office.

I am also really excited about a new venture: in May I will be co-leading a mindfulness/IFS retreat in the Azores focusing on leadership development — https://www.minuvida.com/innerleader.html

Happy Fall, Everyone!





NSGPeople Together



Lise Motherwell and Suzanne Cohen



Alan Witkower and Barbara Keezelll



Sara Emerson and Arnie Cohen



Oona Metz, Amy Matias, Annie Weiss, Joel Krieg, and friend at the NSGPF Gala



Natasha Khoury, Maddie Freeman, and Nadia Khatchadourian celebrate Issue 6 over a delicious dinner.



Amanda Neas and William Sharp



Scott Garvin and Joel Krieg



Joe Shay's Poker Party: Oona Metz, Barbara Keezell, Mary Kiely, Marushka Glissen, and Tracy MacNab



Ted Powers and Libby Shapiro





Want to talk to an expert about your group, for free?

The NSGP Consultation Benefit is free to all members in good standing of **NSGP**. It entitles you to one hour of free consultation per calendar year with an expert in group psychotherapy.

Topics are as varied as our practices and now include the many challenges of online groups. The only topics that are not appropriate are emergency situations. Consults can be by video, phone, or face-to-face.

Email Jenn DeSouza, LICSW at jenniferdesouzalicsw@gmail.com and she will facilitate and ensure a time-sensitive consultation with one of our experts.

"Over my 15-year history with NSGP I have added fuel to my groups by taking advantage of NSGP's annual 'consultation benefit.' I have done so on 10 separate occasions—typically right after the first of a new year. It has been an amazing opportunity for direct access to some of the organization's most experienced and talented leaders.

So when the new year strikes Along with 'Auld Lang Syne' My thoughts leap forward It's Consultation Time.

As a frequent consumer of the benefit, my heartfelt appreciation for the consultants who volunteer their valuable time and the wonderful NSGP members who have taken on the role throughout the years of matching consultants to those members who have requested the assistance."



Howie Schnairsohn





Share the Connection!

Invite a colleague, co-worker, or other clinician to join **NSGP!**

Learn more at our website.

Classifieds

If you are interested in submitting a Classified for the next issue of NSGPeople, please contact us at newsletter@nsqp.com.

OFFICE SUBLET: West Concord office space available for part-time renters in a 3-office suite with waiting room and parking. Contact Amanda at **781-960-4117.**

DBT AND CBT GROUPS: DBT Skills Training Groups and Social Anxiety Groups for College Students (ages 18-22) and Young Adults (ages 22-30). Contact Jackie Wolfman at drwolfman@villagepsych.com.

OFFICE SUBLET: Small-ish office with river view in suite with waiting room, bathroom and kitchenette in beautiful Back Bay building. Close to T. Call **617-571-7179.**

OFFICE SHARE: Large beautiful office with river view two weeks out of every month in beautiful Back Bay building. Shared parking. Call **617-571-7179.**



NSGPeople Masthead

Co-Chairs Madeline Freeman, LICSW Nadia Khatchadourian, LICSW

Members Natasha Khoury, LMHC

Headshots Various

NSGPeople Newsletter

Design K. White

designer_solution@comcast.net

The goals of NSGPeople are two-fold:

- To promote the objectives of the Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy, an affiliate of the American Group Psychotherapy Association.
- To be an online forum for the exchange of ideas and information among members.

NSGP Executive Board

President: Guy R. Croteau, LICSW, CGP President-Elect: Joel Krieg, LICSW, CGP Secretary: Catherine Dubois, PsyD Treasurer: William Sharp, PsyaD, CGP

Directors Vanessa Gamble, PsyD, CGP

Anaïs Lugo-Guercio, OT Michael Murray, LMHC, MEd Amanda Neas, LICSW

NSGP Committee Chairpersons

Audit Open

Diversity, Equity

& Inclusion Mary Alicia Barnes, OTD

Alexandra (Sasha) Watkins,

EdD, LMHC

Membership Jennifer DeSouza, LICSW, CGP

William Sharp, PsyaD, CGP

Newsletter Madeline Freeman, LICSW

Nadia Khatchadourian, LICSW

Nominating Steffen Fuller, PhD, CGP

Practice

Development Oona Metz, LICSW, CGP,

FAGPA

Barbara Schmitz, LMHC

Scholarship Oona Metz, LICSW, CGP,

FAGPA

Theresa Bullock Cohen, LICSW,

CGP, BCC

Training

Program Annie Weiss, LICSW, CGP,

FAGPA

Letter from the President (continued from page 1)

- Language that adopts a co-president.
- Changes to the membership classes that better reflect reality and membership renewal dates to fall on the anniversary of NSGP membership rather than all memberships renewing in June.
- Changes to the committee structures in keeping with broader definitions rather than specifying each individual committee.

These changes better reflect our Society and how it operates, as well as simplify the language. The details and specifics of operational functions will now live in a new Policy and Procedures document that will be maintained by the Board of Directors. These two documents together improve our ability to meet AGPA requirements of documentation.

Look for a ballot proposal to adopt these new by-laws in the coming weeks.

Warmly,

Guy R. Croteau LICSW, CGP NSGP President



Letter from the Editors (continued from page 1)

However, with the changing NSGP, the malleability of the organization has been crucial. It's been really moving to see the behind-the-scenes brainstorming, collaboration, changing of the by-laws, and collective accepting of—and embracing—the new reality.

We hope you enjoy this issue, which gives you a taste (maybe with a hint of pumpkin spice!) of the ways in which NSGP is listening to the feedback, both spoken and unspoken, and changing its mold accordingly. Fall inevitably comes each year, representing loss, change, and getting ready for new growth. I am excited to embrace this NSGP season of transformation.



