



### Letter from the President



#### "It Is Not Just About Roads...."

The Annual March Flower Show: Deeply Rooted at the Bayside Expo begins for me at 7:00AM on the first day of the event before

the crowds arrive. It is a ritual for me as a gardener and a way to contemplate what road I will pursue not only in my garden, but on other highways as well.

But this year, while I enjoyed the intoxicating scent of the Gardenia, Syringea, and the handsome Phalaenopsis Orchid display, I was most taken with a simple display about the remarkable urban renewal taking place in the city of Boston all around us.

Now that the Zakim/Bunker Hill Bridge and the Central Artery/Tunnel Project is beginning to draw to a close, the focus of the project, according to Chairman Matthew J. Amorello, is "pastoral concerns." He mentions that a magnificent "Greenway" is poised to replace the old elevated Central Artery. You can view "A City in Bloom" (www.masspike.com), a computer-generated virtual tour along the Greenway, showing its magnificence and highlighting its potential! It is an urban renewal project of remarkable proportion that will make Boston a most enviable city.

Over 300 acres of parks and open space will be created when the project is completed. Three parks will be created along the Greenway, the North End, the Wharf District, and Chinatown. It will be stunning and focused on helping people to gather socially in groups and enjoy life.

Once again I began to think about the concept of people working together in groups to build new creative environments of all kinds, and of the roadways and green space of NSGP.

Over the years, we have endeavored to open new roadways for our members and to provide a place where they can feel "deeply rooted" professionally. Encouraging younger clinicians to join NSGP and opening the roadway by giving more people a chance to vote and become clinical members has been a successful change within our bylaws. As we now turn our attentions to the "pastoral concerns" of NSGP, new options for members are emerging. In June we will have feedback from a member survey designed by our Task Force on Professional Development chaired by Scott Rutan. Members have responded to questions about the professional activities they would like to see added to our society to help them deepen their knowledge of group work.

We are considering opening new roadways by evaluating the wisdom of creating a Disaster Outreach Committee as suggested by the Disaster Outreach Task Force chaired by Kathy Ulman. This would require considerable assessment and energy if we go forward in this direction by expanding our borders into the community and offering not only teaching and education, but possibly also direct service.

Our most important task however is to continue to provide opportunities for members to gather together to build new links to one another about the work of group. Toward that end we will once again offer a Special Presentation in the Fall designed by Robert Weber and Pam Enders similar to the November 2003 Zander Event (described in this Newsletter) that everyone indicated they thoroughly enjoyed. Details will soon be available. Our Referral Service chaired by Sandy Houde will soon offer an event to encourage members to share information about the groups they are currently running. On June 11, 12, 13, Kelley Bothe and Geri Reinhardt and the twenty six Conference Committee members will open the doors at the Wellesley College "Greenway" and invite us to join them once again for an intriguing

NSGP Conference: "Why We Do What We Do: Understanding Group Therapists' Choices in the Clinical Moment." Thirteen institutes and twenty seven workshops along with the CGP Course and a Demonstration Group ("Mindfulness Meditation in Group Psychotherapy" with group leader Anne Mahoney and discussants Arnie Cohen and Suzanne Cohen) will be offered (see page 4). We will also feature a two-part Special Presentation, "Violence and Its Aftermath: The Healing

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Dannie Kennedy & Arnie Cohen at AGPA  
More revelry inside...

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The goals of this newsletter are two-fold:

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

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Monday-Friday 9 am to 5 pm

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**Letter from the Editor**

Joe Shay, Ph.D., CGP

Exactly how powerful can groups be? I've got some evidence to share that may be illuminating in this regard. But first some background.

While many of us enjoyed the AGPA annual conference this year, for a number of NSGP members the conference felt more like a family reunion than an educational event. Added to the pleasure of spending relaxed time with friends is the pride of seeing many of our NSGP family in places of responsibility and honor at the national level. In charge of the whole enterprise, for example, were our own Jerry Gans and Sara Emerson, while the Special Institute was facilitated beautifully by the peerless Scott Rutan. Moreover, many institutes, workshops, and open sessions were offered by NSGP members.

And then there was the dinner.

Wherever the AGPA conference is held, NSGP hosts a dinner for members and friends. Last year, the history of NSGP was published following years of painstaking research by the history taskforce. Nowhere in the report, however, was there mention of the dinner. Having been to several now, I understand the secrecy.

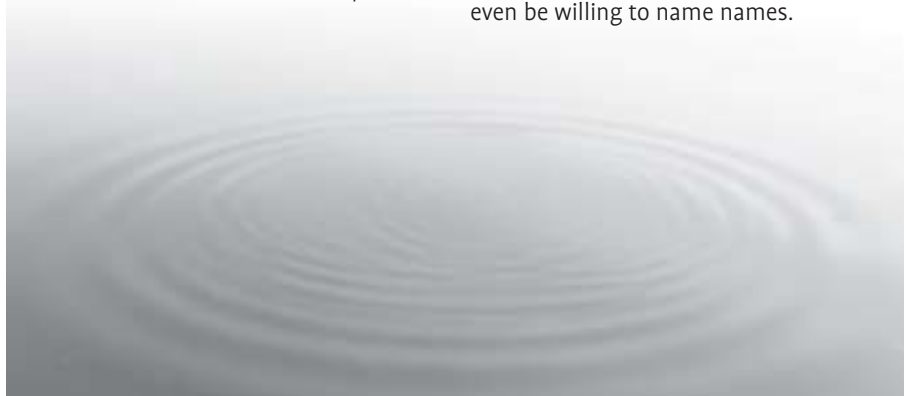
In preparing for a presentation at AGPA, I came across the following quote by Aldous Huxley: *To associate with other like-minded people in small, purposeful groups is for the great majority of men and women a source of profound psychological satisfaction. Exclusiveness will add to the pleasure*

*of being several, but at one; and secrecy will intensify it almost to ecstasy.*

Ecstasy is a bit strong, but the dinner can certainly result in profound psychological satisfaction. In the (secret) history of the dinners—which I am now about to reveal so you share in the secret—there was the moment when a senior NSGP member jumped onto a table (okay, maybe, it was only a chair) to offer a joke that would run Howard Stern entirely off the air; then the time when our colleagues from Ireland held forth with humor that could make one blush even across the ocean; and the dinner which became so off-color some first-timers thought boundaries had been crossed (resulting in an off-humor year to reset the boundary). And then this year (see photo page), the astonishing power of the group reached into the crowd lifting one particular NSGPer to her feet to tell a risqué story—involving sex, the elderly, and insurance—to the delight and wonderment of those present.

Who were these people? Well, there's still some secrecy. But there is a way to find out. Happily, at our June NSGP conference, the conference committee offers not only a superb educational and experiential program, but also several social hours open to everyone. We want all of you to attend the conference and to associate with other like-minded people in small, purposeful groups. As I said in the last Newsletter, community is our goal.

And many of us at the social events might even be willing to name names.



# Why We Do What We Do: Understanding Group Therapists' Choices in the Clinical Moment

23rd Annual Northeastern Society  
for Group Psychotherapy Conference

\* June 11, 12, 13, 2004 \*  
Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA

## Special Presentation

**Violence and Its Aftermath: The Healing Process**

Introduction: Cecil Rice, PhD, CGP, FAGPA

*Early Interventions for Children and Families Exposed to Violence*

Steven Marans, PhD and Stephen Berkowitz, MD

Discussant: Elizabeth L. Shapiro, PhD

*Soldier Girls: The Interplay of Agency, Aggression and Women Warriors  
in Community Reintegration Group Programs*

Martha Bragin, PhD, MSW

Discussant: Anne Alonso, PhD, CGP, DFAGPA

Program Chair: Shoshana Ben-Noam, PsyD, CGP

## Demonstration Group

**Mindfulness Meditation and  
Psychotherapy**

Anne Mahoney, PhD, FCGPA

### Discussants:

Suzanne Cohen, EdD, FAGPA

Arnold Cohen, PhD, CGP

**To Be or Not To be Seen** • *Lost in Translation*  
Gratitude and Forgiveness • **Acting Out**

*Naughty or Nice?* • True Confessions

**The Group as an Object of Desire**

*Laughter and Tears* • Hot Moments

**Consultation for the Group from Hell**

*Random Thoughts* • If Not Us, Then Whom?

**Contagion and Containment** • Shame

*Oh Lord, Won't You Buy Me a Mercedes-Benz?*

Wizard of Oz • **Spirituality** • *Body Awareness*

**Can the Rich and Famous Be Analyzed?**

Moments of Meaning • **Termination** • *Anxiety*

*Why?* • **When the Heart Breaks** • *Meditation*

*Personality Disorders Go to the Movies*

**Omnipotent Child** • Tavistock • *Intimacy*

*Dialogues in the Group* • **Fantasy to 1st Session**

*150 Years of Group Therapy*

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## Letter from the President:

### "It Is Not Just About Roads...."

Process." The Program Chair is Shoshana Ben-Noam. Cecil Rice will introduce guest speakers, Steven Marans, Stephen Berkowitz, Martha Bragin, and Anne Alonso. We also hope you will consider our one and two year Training Program co-chaired by Debra Carmichael and Robert Weber which is now conveniently offered on weekends.

Members who will retire from the "roadway and greenway construction crew" include Pam Enders, Oona Metz, and Scott Rutan from the Board, and Eva Harris as co-chair of the Training Program. Kelley Bothe will end her role in June 2004 as co-chair of the Conference and we welcome Katherine Wenger as co-chair for the June 2005 Conference. Kathy Hubert will also rotate off the Membership Committee as co-chair and we are eager for Charlie Glazier to be joined soon by a new co-chair. Please call me if interested!

It has been my honor and pleasure to be your President over the past two years and to represent you at the AGPA Affiliate Assembly Meetings. It has been like taking on an already wonderful city and working with incredibly talented people to enhance it all the more. Our recent NSGP dinner at the AGPA Conference and Sambuca Restaurant in New York was very relaxing and fun and once again we welcomed our international guests to the table. Many thanks to Charlie Glazier and Lise Motherwell for orchestrating that event and to all members who have volunteered in key roles in NSGP!

In June 2004 we will welcome new Board president Lise Motherwell. She will be a superb project manager and guide us on the new NSGP Roadway and Greenway!

The Board and I always welcome your ideas about building new creative environments within NSGP. We look forward to seeing all the co-chairs at the Board retreat in April. And we hope everyone will join us at the Spring Breakfast Club events and the June Conference. And we'd love it if you also brought along a potential new member!

*Joyce Shields*

Joyce D. Shields APRN, BC, CGP  
President

## June NSGP Conference Preview

### Meditation in Therapy: Identifying & Understanding Clinical Patterns

by Anne Mahoney, Ph.D.

This year, we are delighted to have Anne Mahoney lead the demonstration group at our annual June conference. In the demonstration group, participants will have the opportunity to learn and briefly practice mindfulness meditation, mindfulness reflection, and its application to psychotherapy. Members of the audience will have an opportunity to address questions to Dr. Mahoney following the demonstration group.

Here are some reflections by Dr. Mahoney.

Mindfulness meditation, in conjunction with psychotherapy, is a graceful combination of eastern and western approaches to psychological well being. It offers techniques for clients to observe and interrupt the cycle of thought patterns that negatively impact their health.

Mindfulness meditation or Vipassana is the simple and direct practice of moment-to-moment observation of mind and body through calm and focused awareness. This practice originated in India over 2500 years ago. Today it is associated with the Theravadin School of Buddhism. Cultivating the capacity to be fully present, awake, attentive, and responsive in all aspects of life is the essence of the practice.

Mindfulness meditation involves both mindful awareness and mindful reflection. Mindful awareness is paying attention without judgment, comparison, or evaluation, which allows us to see emotional and behavioral patterns that impact our psychological and physical health. Mindful reflection is the practice of evaluating the benefit and cost of specific thoughts, words, and actions on our psychological and physical health.

The integration of mindfulness meditation with psychotherapy facilitates an increased capacity for clients to tolerate painful emotional material. Awareness without judgment (i.e., mindfulness) allows one to observe painful emotional material without becoming trapped in the feelings and without intensifying the

emotional pain. Furthermore, mindful awareness allows one to experience emotions directly rather than engaging the emotions cognitively. The ability to be experientially present with emotional pain allows individuals to heal from emotional difficulties. The process of being able to heal by feeling the emotion occurs when one is able to remain focused on the emotion rather than the context producing the emotion. This direct, non-judgmental experience of emotion allows it to dissipate. In contrast, cognitive dialogue about emotion, whether as internal self-talk or dialogue with another person, often serves to entrench the painful emotion. This increases the likelihood that the individual will avoid painful feelings in the future. Mindfulness meditation is particularly effective for dealing with unpleasant emotional feelings such as grief, despair, sadness, shame, or rage.

This technique also helps individuals become aware of interpersonal patterns which may no longer be useful. When individuals carry unhealthy interpersonal patterns from their family of origin into current day relationships, the stage is set for developing an unhealthy and self-defeating interpersonal style. Mindful awareness allows individuals to become aware of these patterns. Mindful reflection allows individuals to understand the nature of the pattern and the distressing underlying emotions that interfere with development of healthier interpersonal patterns.



*Dr. Anne Mahoney is a clinical psychologist in private practice in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Her clinical focus includes working with individuals, couples, and groups where issues of shame have limited clients' potential. Her intention is to help clients understand ways in which family of origin dynamics have an impact on their current lives. Anne's approach has been to integrate mindfulness meditation in her clinical practice, which she has done for the past 10 years. Outside her clinical practice, Anne teaches introduction to meditation courses and leads meditation retreats in the Theravadin Buddhist Tradition. She currently facilitates two meditation groups in Calgary.*

## June NSGP Conference Preview

### Special Presentation:

## Violence and its Aftermath: The Healing Process

Friday evening and Saturday afternoon,  
June 11 & 12, 2004

by Cecil Rice, Ph.D.

Somewhere a soft pillow pressed down stifles life, somewhere love stung lashes out and a dark patch forms around an eye. Somewhere an explosion paints the sky blood red and black like a shriek of nature, somewhere planes fly along a planned trajectory, mighty buildings crumble and our friends disappear, somewhere an angry thought rides upon a razor edged tongue and sticks a knife for life in the heart of a child.

Violence takes many forms. Sometimes its visits are brief, but healing may take a lifetime. Sometimes it stays around for years and healing takes longer still. Yet heal we must to place that which is broken within that which is whole and slow the forward gallop of violence across the generations.

We are limited in what we can do to prevent such violence; however, in group therapy we have an important resource for healing following violence. The value of this resource demonstrated itself in New York, Washington, Boston and elsewhere following September 11, 2001 when group therapists led support groups for those who lost loved ones and for those, such as firefighters, who lost comrades and were themselves traumatized by the tasks they undertook. Groups are also a frequent resource for those who have experienced spousal abuse and those adults abused as minors, among others. Many of them sit in our weekly therapy groups.

In this special event, we reflect on the healing process following violence. We examine the healing process for children subjected to violence and on the healing process for women following the trauma of war and civil strife.

To help our reflections we are delighted to have Steven Marans, Ph.D. and Steven Berkowitz, M.D., Yale Child Study Center, and Martha Bragin Ph.D., International Program for Refugee Trauma, as our guests. Drs. Marans and Berkowitz will speak about helping children and also families heal following experiences of violence and Dr. Bragin will speak of healing women warriors in community group programs. Anne Alonso, Ph.D., MGH, will be the discussant for the Saturday afternoon session. The chair for both sessions will be Shoshana Ben-Noam, Psy.D., EGPS.

The Rice Fund, a part of the NSGP Foundation, sponsors this special presentation. The fund dedicates itself to promoting the study of violence and trauma in groups, families and individuals, and to helping reduce their occurrence, and facilitating recovery. The fund will use group theory, research and therapy as a framework for achieving these ends. We consider this presentation a small step toward understanding violence and learning how to help individuals and groups recover from its aftermath.



### The Children's Group Therapy Association Annual Spring Conference

The Theory and Practice  
of Group Treatment  
Children, Adolescents and Parents

Thursday, May 7, 2004, 8:00-5:00  
Holiday Inn Boston-Newton  
399 Grove Street, Newton, MA

*Check CGTA.Net For More Information*

**Keynote Speaker: Steven Gross, LICSW**  
Program Director, The Trauma Center

**Built to Last: Building & Maintaining a  
Robust Child and Adolescent Group  
Program**, Richard Dana, EdD, Oona Metz,  
LICSW, Mary Lou Pierron, Psy D

**Child Play Therapy in Groups for Traumatic  
Bereavement**, Nancy Boyd Webb, DSW

**Privacy, Solitude, and Affiliation:  
Sustaining the Inner Voice of the  
Developing Child**,  
Dicki Johnson Macy, MA, LMHC

**Models & Activities for Middle &  
HS Students**

**Sand Tray Play Therapy  
Play Therapy and EMDR  
Groups with Difficult Kids  
Adolescent Anger Management  
Helping Parents Help Each Other  
Adventure Based Therapy Groups  
Prevention Groups for High Risk Issues  
Adoption: From Childhood into Adulthood**

**Pre-registration:**

**\$ 115.00 Non-members, \$90.00 Members**

*Partial working scholarships: Sandy Houde, LICSW, CGP,  
781-646-2897 or houdesa@aol.com*

**In Collaboration with  
the Northeastern Society for Group  
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Play Therapy Track in conjunction with NER-APT  
The New England Association for Play Therapy

**For more information regarding CEU's,  
the spring conference, or membership,  
please contact Pam O'Callaghan at  
(508)877-3436 or write to:**

**CGTA  
P.O. BOX 521  
Watertown, MA 02472**

# ANalyze This

This question and answer column appears regularly in the Newsletter 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 Joe Shay, Ph.D. through the NSGP office, or via email to [newsletter@nsgp.com](mailto:newsletter@nsgp.com). (Please remember to preserve the confidentiality of any group members described.)

## Dear Analyze This:

I lead a weekly outpatient psychodynamic psychotherapy group with eight young adult members, four men and four women, all between 18 and 32 years old. Four of the group members have been in the group for about six months and four group members have entered in the past month. I am a male therapist with three years experience in group therapy but I've actually never been faced with the kind of

Jack asked, "So, can we get angry in here or not?" I replied, without much conviction in my voice...

angry outbursts that have occurred in this group and I'm unsure how to respond. Here is my situation. Bringing in the final four group members has resulted in both a lot of excitement and a lot of competition, with the emergence of implicit themes including loneliness, adequate "air time," parental abandonment, and favoritism, as well as the risk of being displaced by younger siblings. Occasionally, I attempt to make some of these themes explicit by naming them, although one member, Jack, often scoffs at my attempts.

During the early months of the group, Jack's behavior was characterized by several disruptive, verbally abusive tirades at me, followed by one or two outbursts toward other group members who defended me. In tonight's group, he insistently requested the floor and then launched into another tirade. He declared, "In order to get better, I think I need to be able to show my anger, my real anger, and stop with all this kid gloves stuff. How can I really deal with my anger if I'm afraid

of getting kicked out of the group just for showing my real feelings? I should be able to yell at the therapist if that's how I feel, and I should be able to tell any of you off if that's my true emotional state. I'm supposed to be real in here, aren't I?"

Liz, a highly intelligent group member who had entered the group recently and had already been challenged in her first week for "taking up a lot of space in group," said, "Jack is absolutely right. It's not fair that men are constrained just because they show their feelings more often through anger. Just because I tend to cry, whether I'm angry or sad or frustrated, no one shuts me down or thinks I'm out of control. I think the therapist is being too controlling, and Jack isn't going to get better because of it."

Another new group member, Annie, a physically small young woman asked, "How can we know what will happen if Jack gets angry?" Jack replied, "I can promise that I would never physically hurt anyone." Mary, a longer term group member who had seen several of Jack's past verbal tirades, including one in which he had yelled vulgarities at the therapist, asked, "Can anyone really guarantee that?" Jack replied, "I can."

There was then a tense minute of silence during which I was unsure what to say, and was feeling intimidated and silenced by the threat of escalation and mutiny in the air. Jack looked directly at me and asked in a stern voice, "So, can we get angry in here or not?" I replied, without much conviction in my voice, I considered this a group issue that needed to be discussed just as we discussed other issues. Jack sneered and the group was essentially silent for the remainder of the session.

I could use some guidance about how much anger is tolerable in a group situation, and how a therapist might best respond to a situation like the one I've described.

## Dear Intimidated by Anger:

Anger is a difficult feeling for most group therapists to deal with therapeutically, especially when, as depicted in this group, the quality of the anger is virulent. The leader's overall responsibility is to help the group evolve norms that encourage its members to feel safe enough to be spontaneous and responsible enough to be appropriate. The leader must also make as much safe space for members who need to express anger as they do for members frightened by the anger.

With that said, the dilemma confronting you is more complicated than it might initially appear. Jack and the group need help in understanding the difference between enacting one's anger vs. working therapeutically on understanding and dealing constructively with it. Some patients feel that because they are paying the therapist they have the right to do whatever they want. Proceeding in this fashion constitutes a perversion of therapy. The therapist who does not understand this distinction or colludes with the patient's misguided idea of what therapy is, leaves the group feeling frightened and unsafe. It is probably too early to tell whether Jack merely wishes to indulge his anger or if he is truly interested in doing psychotherapeutic work in the group. The group itself may not yet understand this distinction and might benefit from your explanation of this point.

One of the major experiences that people sign up for in entering a psychodynamic therapy group is a willingness to let the other group members have an effect on them and to talk openly and honestly about these effects. Notice that there is no mention, in regard to Jack's anger, of any person having an effect on him that is causing him to be angry. Entering a group only to show one's feelings, without any regard for the effect on other people may indicate a troubled person but does not in and of itself qualify one for membership in a psychodynamic group. Perhaps an anger management group would have been a more appropriate first group experience for Jack.

Most group contracts enlist the patient's willingness to put thoughts and feelings into words, not actions. Emotions

## Intimidated by Anger

*“It may well be that Jack violates the group contract because the way he expresses his anger constitutes an action, not an expression of feeling.”*

expressed in certain ways are action equivalents. At least two group members, and at times the entire group, feels frightened and intimidated by Jack’s anger because of its threatening quality. It may well be that Jack violates the group contract be-

cause the way he expresses his anger constitutes an action, not an expression of feeling.

Keeping a few additional concepts in mind will also help you deal with the anger in the group in a therapeutic fashion. Angry expressions may convey feelings or messages other than anger. For example, could Jack be letting the group know that anger is his only reliable attachment? Or could it be that Jack’s anger is his way of hiding, of not letting other people know what is really going on with him? Or might anger substitute for feelings that Jack has more difficulty with such as powerlessness, disappointment, dependency (a good bet here), fear, or guilt? Keep in mind also that people who, like Jack, are filled with scorn and disdain for others are often filled with shame. Phases of group development have a way of highlighting certain issues, and the initial phase of group development often elicits activity—or glaring inactivity—from members with significant dependency issues. These dependency issues may well find expression in angry confrontations.

Notice also that Jack is “helping” the group, whether it realizes it or not, find out many things about you through the way you deals with Jack’s as well as your own anger. If you try your best to help the group work with the pain beneath Jack’s off-putting introduction of himself, and help the group understand the difference between working on one’s problems rather than simply indulging them, the group will have gained confidence in you whether or not Jack turns out to be a viable group member.

**Jerome S. Gans, M.D.**



### **Dear Intimidated by Anger:**

In responding to you, I will limit my comments to the role of projective identification in this clinical situation.

While you don’t provide Jack’s history, we can guess at least one of his parents was rageful and verbally abusive. We can further guess that he felt scared, weak, helpless, and vulnerable in the face of such treatment. In short, he felt the way you currently feel (although perhaps in a more muted fashion) in being the target of Jack’s rage. By recreating his family drama in the group, Jack, in identifying with the aggressor-parent, is getting you to feel and contain what is unacceptable and terrifying to him in an unconscious effort to enable you to understand and help him.

What does he need from you? Feeling so much out of control (and probably having experienced a parent who was out of control) he needs to believe that you are in control of the situation and that you will not retaliate. He’s letting you know that beneath that angry tough guy exterior is a scared little boy who is both afraid to and yearning to connect with you and with the group but who doesn’t have a clue how to do it. Two comments reveal his desire for connection: The first is when he says, “How can I really deal with my anger if I’m afraid of getting kicked out of the group just for showing my real feelings?” And the second is when he directly asks you, “So, can we get angry in here or not?” He’s good at phrasing things in such a way as to put you on the spot and you could comment on that: “You know, Jack, you’re really putting me on the spot here. On the one hand, if I tell you that all of your rage is welcome here, that compromises the sense of safety for the rest of the group and that might drive the rest of the group away, but if I tell you we need to help you find other ways of expressing your anger, you’ll complain that this inhibits you from showing your real feelings. What can we do about this dilemma?” In this way, you are enlisting his help in solving the problem and removing yourself from the role of the ultimate authority. You’re also communicating your desire to work with him on this.

Of course, your primary concern must be the overall integrity and safety of the group which, at this time, is severely compromised. The trick is how to ensure the group’s safety without humiliating or retaliating against Jack. The question of what to do with big feelings is one that all group members have so, although it is Jack (and, to a lesser extent, Liz) who is demanding to know the parameters, your response can address the whole group: “Jack raises an important question for the group, i.e., how can people express important feelings that might come up for them in the group? How much is enough? How much is too much? I’d be interested to know what the group thinks about this.”

Another approach might be to pick up on what Liz said and say, “Liz has reminded us that there are a variety of ways people express feelings. She uses tears mostly, whereas Jack uses anger. It’s interesting to consider what might happen if, for example, Liz expressed some of her anger more directly and Jack expressed some of the feelings behind his anger.” Here you are suggesting that Jack’s anger serves as a protection against feelings of fear, sadness, and vulnerability. You are subtly inviting him to explore these other feelings. In a more direct way you could say, “Do you think that anger is an end in itself for you Jack or can we understand it as a way you protect yourself?” To paraphrase Freud, you could say, “With so much anger, the fear can’t be too far behind.” (Freud’s comment was something like: With so much fear, the wish can’t be far behind.)

Although it is important to address Jack directly, you don’t want the group to be all about him (even if he does!). You do need to help the group talk about their fear and perhaps their disappointment in you. You can wonder with them what goes on for them when Jack explodes; what makes it hard for them to respond; what would make it easier for them to respond; what might the group need from you in order to move on; and what might the group be feeling about your leadership thus far.

**Pamela L. Enders, Ph.D., CGP**



*“You are subtly inviting him to explore these other feelings.”*

## The Mind of the Group Therapist:

### Linking Theory and Technique

By Sara Emerson, LICSW, CGP

Kicking off this year's AGPA Annual Conference was a day-long Special Institute by invited presenter Dr. Scott Rutan. Attended by a record number of participants (almost 200!), the presentation was an inspiring and engaging introduction to the five days of the Institute and Conference which followed.

The goal of the Institute was to demonstrate, through the use of film clips and experiential process, different theoretical approaches to group therapy. In the morning, the first video clip shown (which unfortunately developed technical difficulties) was of group therapist Bob Newhart. As Scott pointed out, Newhart was often the first exposure people had to group therapy and the therapist. Then, participants watched videos of two groups, the first led by Dr. Walter Stone and the second by Dr. Anne Alonso. These group therapy tapes set the stage for

Scott's exploration of the ways in which different theoretical perspectives inform the choices the therapist makes, especially how, when, and why one chooses to intervene.

As we watched the tapes, Scott periodically "stopped the action" and commented on the process, highlighting how he saw the leader's stance as reflective of a particular orientation. Walter Stone, who co-authored the classic *Psychodynamic Group Psychotherapy* with



Scott, identifies himself as a self psychologist. He demonstrated a reflective engagement with a hospital group of relatively "unsophisticated" patients. His style was contrasted with that of Anne Alonso, who has an object relations orientation. Her video tape

featured a similar patient population but reflected a markedly different orientation and style. In both instances, though, the leaders adapted their differing styles and interventions in the group, and participants were able to observe mature, cohesive, and highly functional groups.

In the afternoon, Scott led a "fish bowl" demonstration group with volunteers from the audience. Remaining audience members were able to watch Scott skillfully engage the group members, help them form a cohesive group, and develop a culture which encouraged the members to interact with one another. Following the demonstration, Institute participants were invited to discuss what we had observed. This discussion served as another forum to learn about group process and about how theory informs technique.

Throughout the day, Scott regaled us with clinical vignettes and examples from his own experience illustrating his theoretical position and teaching us about group therapy. He engaged us with his rare gift of "entertaining" while imparting a tremendous amount of information about group therapy and the role of the therapist. Participants at the Special Institute were very fortunate to have the opportunity to spend a day with Scott as he skillfully linked theory and technique while exploring numerous facets of group theory and practice.



Bob Weber & Pamela Enders



Mark Sorensen & Marianne Zasa



Eleanor Counselman

### NSGP Foundation Offers Scholarships

The Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy Foundation, Inc. has established a scholarship fund chaired by Arnie Cohen, Ph.D. and Lise Motherwell, Psy.D. This year the Foundation awarded scholarships to several students in the NSGP Training Program. The Foundation is offering limited scholarship monies to students and early career group therapists

interested in attending the Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy conference this June. Applicants should send a statement of need and interest of not more than 200 words to Arnie Cohen or Lise Motherwell, Co-Chairs, NSGP Foundation Scholarship Committee, c/o NSGP Foundation, Inc., 536 Pleasant Street, Belmont, MA 02478 or email your request to Lise Motherwell, Psy.D. at [Motherwell@post.harvard.edu](mailto:Motherwell@post.harvard.edu).



At A Glance

# The NSGP Album

## *NSGP Retreat & AGPA Conference January/February 2004*



Scott Reinhardt & Oona Metz



Meg Sharpe & Don Wexler



Kelley Bothe & David Griffiths



Jim Leone, Barbara Keezell, Eleanor Counselman, & Oona Metz



Cecil Rice, Jennifer Stewart, & Kevin Webb



Charlie Glazier



Jan Vadell & Richard Beck



Kathy Ullman & Barbara Keezell

*Good for the Soul!*

# Group Process as a Path and Destination in Healing: Group Work in Cambodia

by Gretchen Schmelzer, Ph.D.

In a large hotel conference room there are twelve small groups scattered around the room. With the exception of two groups who have chosen to stay in their chairs, most groups have opted to remove their shoes and are sitting on the floor in a circle. Making pantomime motions to remind them to sit close enough so that they can hear each other, my colleagues and I survey the room before we let the groups get down to the hard work they have to do. Like all group leaders we remind ourselves to trust the process, but here we rely on that trust almost entirely because much of the content and nuance is lost on us. The hotel conference room is in Sihanoukville, Cambodia and the groups are speaking in Khmer.

The participants in this program are leaders in Cambodia—senators, government ministers, judges, monks, and the heads of non-profits, such as the Red Cross and the National Aids Authority. The goal of the year-long initiative is to build the leadership capacity on the individual and collective level within Cambodia to strengthen their response to HIV/AIDS. My colleagues and I work for the Teleos Leadership Institute in Philadelphia, PA. We have been brought to Cambodia by the United Nations Development Programme and the National AIDS Authority in Cambodia to facilitate three one-week long programs utilizing concepts from emotional intelligence, systems, gestalt, and mind-body frameworks. All of the learning takes place in large and small groups of differing configurations.

We use an emotional intelligence framework which demands that participants explore their emotions as a means of connecting to their passion and their ability to connect to others. For those of you who work with trauma survivors in your groups, you know how difficult it is to connect the survivors back to their emotions in a safe and tolerable way. Cambodia is a country which was devastated by the atrocities and genocide of the

Khmer Rouge. The room is filled with trauma survivors and those who were raised by them. Yet, our mandate is not to focus on trauma, but instead to build capacity in the context of AIDS. During the Pol Pot era, the social fabric of the country was destroyed. People were killed because of their connections to the previous government, to the educated, and to the elite. To stay alive it was imperative that you did not reveal your identity—ever. People were forced to betray neighbors and family to their deaths, so that relationships, the place where humans are meant to find solace and comfort, were instead a place of fear and terror. Not surprisingly, group work is frightening. The idea that a group member can actually state how he is feeling to another group member is a radical act of self-expression—and it breaks the unspoken rules of survival which have been experienced or handed down: “Say nothing,” “Don’t react,” “Hide yourself.” Participation in different configurations of groups alternates across the week to complement learning and modulate emotion.

Without direct access to the language, my colleagues and I have come to understand the group process primarily through parallel process. Each evening, when the program ends, we meet with the group of 12 facilitators who lead the small group discussions. This meeting lasts about an hour and the task is to process the day. Though they are good at what they do, there is not yet the level of sophistication of group process for them to describe in words (even with translation) how the members of their group are progressing. But the combination of our emotional experience of that process group each evening (are they being particularly critical of us? looking for more structure or fighting the structure? interacting with each other or through us?) and some reflection on our own interactions and processes as leaders (are we getting controlling? trying to speed up or slow down? staying connected to or disconnected from each other?) helps us gain some understanding of the group as a whole, and the next steps we need to take—what we should increase, decrease, or pay attention to.

One focus of the past week-long session was the experience of gender in Cambodia.

We asked each participant to do some journal writing on questions such as: what does it mean to be good boys/girls in Cambodia? or, what is a real man/woman in Cambodia? Then each participant wrote their answers on flip charts for the whole room to walk around and see. The room was busy and loud with 120 people looking and reading.

Then we split the large group by gender. The women met upstairs in smaller groups to allow for full participation while the men met downstairs, also in smaller groups. The same-sex groups met for approximately two hours and discussed what it meant to be a man or a woman in Cambodia today. I was with the women. The discussion, which was translated for me, focused on the fears and difficulties of being a woman—having to agree to have sex with superiors at work, being unable to leave violent marriages, and feeling responsible to maintain a reputation of being a good wife/mother. Most women commented that this was the first time they had ever sat in a community of women to share their stories.

From these configurations, four women and four men volunteered to be a “fish bowl” group for the entire community during the afternoon session. The group of eight, plus one empty chair, was set in a circle in the middle of the room, with concentric circles of chairs tightly surrounding the group. The empty chair was open for members of the community to join the discussion if they chose. A young woman began the group by talking about her experience in her marriage—she was in an arranged marriage and her husband was violent. She was told by his family that she could not ask for help and that she could not tell her family about her marital difficulties. She was not permitted to divorce and she didn’t know what to do. She cried as she spoke, in a rare display of outward emotion. She continued talking about how she knew that her husband regularly used mistresses and sex workers and that she feared for her health—he refused to wear a condom to protect her from AIDS and he refused to stop his sexual behavior.

The energy in the room was edgy. This brave woman was breaking her family rule (don’t speak) and the Cambodian rule—don’t speak about your emotional life. One

of the men in the group did what group members do all over the world. He tried to fix it by giving her advice and making most of the problem her fault. Other women in the small group echoed her fears about the use of sex workers by husbands. Another brave voice came forward, this time by a man, talking about his experience of being put in an arranged marriage, his desire to love the woman he was married to, but his difficulty of getting to know this stranger he was forced to live with. Other men followed his comments by talking about how they didn't know how to comfort their wives when they cried. They spoke as husbands, but also as group members, unsure how to tolerate and manage the emotion in the room.

This would have been an intense group in any forum. But this wasn't any forum. This was a community of people trying, for the first time, to explore the emotional world of its members—in a country where such an experience in the past had been fatal. During the Khmer Rouge regime, authorities held large group discussions every night at the work camps. Members were given doctrine and asked to report their previous wrongs or their family or neighbor's wrongs. The next day, many from the community would be missing.

The set-up of our large group discussion is at once the same and not-the-same as their previous experience. This was a leaderless group, surrounded by a community, with the three of us watching to make sure that it remained a safe place. We intervened by nudging stronger members of the community to talk from their experience when we sensed that another voice was needed in the discussion. Our job as the leaders of the experience was to hold the "whole"—to remember to watch the community in addition to the small group and the individual members.

The women gained momentum in their anger at their situation and the relatively new experience of voicing it. The men seemed uncertain. Finally, the man who spoke first, with some anger and blame towards the young woman, told his story. It was an attempt, it seemed, to restate that staying in marriage is important, regardless of difficulty, and that all problems are internal. There was no emotion in his voice as he spoke and none

revealed on his face. He said that he also was in an arranged marriage. During the time of the Khmer Rouge, he, like other men and women, was forced into an arranged marriage by the government and he and his wife had been married since. He stopped talking. My eyes filled with tears at the juxtaposition of his outward presentation and the entirety of his story. His anger at her story was anger at his own, though he was miles from it. Her story of being captive in an abusive situation is also the story of their country—long held captive by an abusive leader. But these are the interpretations that we, as outsiders, make.

Interpretations which we do not share with the group. We do not ignore them, but neither do we speak to them directly. The frequency of the traumatic material in all of the stories has led us to add psychoeducational pieces to our lectures on emotional management and how trauma can affect emotions. It is hard to describe how "undigested" the trauma in Cambodia is but perhaps an example may help: in Phnom Penh, the museum of the "Killing Fields" is a tour through a glass tower of skulls and a walk through the area of mass graves where clothing, teeth, and bones are still coming up through the soil. The trauma of the genocide is literally, and metaphorically, undigested.

The experience of leading this large group discussion is an experience in feeling

helpless and out-of-control and simultaneously holding reverence and awe for the process. I can't speak the language, and even with simultaneous translation I miss a lot of what is said or implied. The Cambodians do not reveal much on their faces, and this has a disconcerting effect, especially when the story is frightening. Because there is a delay in understanding what is being said, often someone in the group has responded or taken the conversation elsewhere before my colleagues or I can intervene. This is where reverence and trust come in.

Somehow, the group holds all of this sorrow, and still returns to engage in the process the next day. Somehow, the individuals are resilient enough to keep talking even when the process is bumpier and less "holding" than I would describe as ideal. In this large group experience is the chance, if we can shepherd the process, of having them experience the healthy opposite of the group leadership that their traumatic history offered. In this group, there exists the ability for individuals to speak their truth to the group, for the group to care for itself, and for group members to trust the leaders to watch out for their safety and remain in the background unless needed. Group process allows for a corrective emotional experience on a group, community, and country level.



### Free Colloquium Series

## **NSGP Breakfast Club**

Learn about group therapy and socialize with other NSGP members at a FREE colloquium series. Each POT LUCK event is limited to 15, on a first come, first serve basis, and takes place on Sunday from 11 AM to 1:30 PM. Participants may bring guests.

Please contribute a breakfast item (quiche, fruit, pastries, cheese, etc.) or bottle of wine. The host will provide bagels, coffee, and tea.

**Spring Meeting: April 25, 2004**

### *Transitions in the Life and the Work of the Group Psychotherapist*

**by Alan Albert**

**To sign up:**

**Please call Pamela Dunkle at the NSGP office, 617-484-4994.**

# Progress Notes

**Progress Notes** features a variety of items that reflect progress for NSGP members or committees. Please let us know ([newsletter@nsgp.com](mailto:newsletter@nsgp.com)) if there's anything you'd like noted, whether an article you've published, a speech you're giving, a notable change in your life.

📌 **Debra Filiurin** was recently appointed District Court Supervisor for the Community Dispute Settlement Center, and, in her other life, recently sang with the Boston Pops Chorus for the 2003 Holiday Season

📌 **Caren E. Glickson** presented a workshop entitled, "Can the Rich and Famous Be Analyzed?" at the 2003 Institute and Conference of the American Academy of Psychotherapists.

📌 **Suzi Naiburg** presented "Reclaiming Karen Horney and Becoming Ourselves in the Practice of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy" at the National Membership Committee on Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work's Conference in New York. She also published "Mentors at the Gate: Editors Talk about Clinical Writing for Journal Publication" in *Clinical Social Work Journal*.

📌 **Jerry Pinsky**, working as a Psychosocial Rehabilitation Fellow at the Bedford VA, has begun a new Competitive Work Therapy group for veterans who want to start their own businesses.

📌 **Alicia Powell** has been selected to lead a new T-group for the Massachusetts General/McLean Hospital Adult Psychiatry Residency training program.

📌 **Scott Rutan** was Featured Presenter at the Washington School of Psychiatry's annual conference on Object Relations Theory and was also the invited leader of this year's AGPA Special Institute, with attendance at this event hitting an all-time high.

📌 **Marian Kaplun Shapiro**, who writes poetry in addition to practicing psychotherapy, has recently won several prizes for her poetry including First Prize for Deconstruction: "I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings," from the Hildegard Festival For the Arts, and Second Prize for "Memorial Service For A Quaker" from Lotus Blooms.

📌 **Marsha Vanicelli** recently began a group for faculty at MSPP and also presented "Leader Issues and Countertransference in Group Therapy with Substance Abusers" at Habit Management in Boston. She will soon

lead "Contemporary Issues in the Treatment of Substance Abusers and Family Members: What's New and What's Not" for the APA Women's Interest Section in Wellesley, and also "Moderation Training for Problem Drinkers" at McLean Hospital.

📌 **Tracy Wallach** has written "Transforming Conflict: A Group Relations Perspective" which will appear in the May issue of *Peace and Conflict Studies*

📌 **NSGP** was represented, as always, by a large number of presenters at the annual AGPA conference in New York.

**If the NSGP has your email address**, you have either just received or will soon receive a questionnaire from the Professional Development Task Force. NSGP is interested to know how we can better serve our members. Please fill out this questionnaire and return it so we can design resources that will be helpful to our membership. (If you do not have email and would like to respond to the questionnaire, please contact the office and you will be provided a paper copy of the questionnaire.)

## NSGP Foundation Activities and Annual Gala

At its annual business meeting in October, the Board voted in a new slate of officers: Kathy Ulman, Ph.D. as Chair, Suzanne Cohen, Ed.D. as Vice Chair, and Walker Shields, M.D. as Secretary Treasurer. Lise Motherwell and Anne Alonso will continue as members-at-large along with Cecil Rice, Rick Tomb, ex officio as Past President of NSGP, and Joyce Shields, ex officio as President of NSGP. They will be joined by Alan Witkower and Sam James, who have agreed to become members-at-large. Miguel Leibovich has resigned from the Board to pursue other interests. We thank him for his work on the Board and his continued interest in supporting its goals.

The NSGP Foundation will once again hold its annual garden party and silent auction May 23rd from 4:30-7:30 PM at Suzanne Cohen's. Please note that students are invited to come as guests of the Foundation. The gala is always a great event, with lots of good food, wine, and fun. Our auction has become a lively annual event, and this year we have yet another wonderful list of contributions to our silent auction including a print by Tabitha Vevers, a Cambridge artist and annual attendee of our gala, dinners at local area restaurants, group therapy books, and weekend retreats. Watch for your invitation and the full list of delectable treats available at the auction! Those

of you who are unable to attend can still contribute to the Foundation. Just send a check to NSGP Foundation, c/o NSGP, PO Box 356, Belmont, MA 02478, or for a brochure and more information contact Pamela Dunkle at 617-484-4994.

The Rice Fund, which was created by Cecil and Shirley Rice to fight domestic, national, and international violence, will sponsor its first Special Presentation at the NSGP Conference in June. The two-part presentation titled, "Violence and Its Aftermath: The Healing Process," will be chaired by Shoshana Ben-Noam. Cecil Rice will introduce guest speakers, Steven Marans, Stephen Berkowitz, Martha Bragin, and Anne Alonso.

# The Art of Possibility: A Group Model for Personal and Professional Transformation

with Rosamund Zander & Benjamin Zander

**An NSGP Special Presentation Event & Concert**



By Robert L. Weber, Ph.D.

On Sunday, November 23, 2003, a special event and concert with Rosamund and Benjamin Zander were held on the Harvard Campus. The day began with a morning presentation and demonstration by Rosamund Zander based on the book she co-authored with her husband, *The Art of Possibility: Transforming Personal and Professional Life*, (Harvard Business School Press, 2000). The

book is a synthesis of her work on the relationship and leadership practices of her conductor-husband. Ms. Zander is an executive coach and family systems therapist who has worked on developing models for effective leadership, relationship, and action, and a theory of development that promotes creativity as an essential human capacity. Ms. Zander works with organizations from a systemic perspective to move “downward spiral thinking” into a mind-set of possibility. She has designed programs for corporations as well as government agencies, and has conducted workshops in a variety of settings, including the Aspen Institute, the British Civil Service, Public Radio, and the World Economic Forum.

The morning ended with Rosamund’s husband, Benjamin, offering his own perspectives on the art of possibility as he realizes it through his role as conductor-leader of the Boston Philharmonic, an orchestra he founded twenty-five years ago. He has also been a Professor at the New England Conservatory of Music for thirty-five years and Artistic Director of a school for gifted children. A charismatic

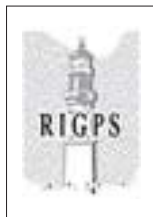
speaker to many organizations on the subject of leadership, creativity, and passion, he has also conducted musicians throughout the world, most recently conducting Mahler’s Resurrection Symphony at Carnegie Hall. He is currently recording all of Mahler’s Symphonies for EMI, and his recording of Mahler’s 9th with London’s leading orchestra was nominated for a Grammy. The United Nations’ International Council for Caring Communities selected Mr. Zander as recipient of the “Caring Citizen of the Humanities” award.

In the afternoon, the participants of the event joined others attending the Boston Philharmonic’s all-Mahler Concert at Sanders Theater to hear *Kindertotenlieder* (Songs on the Death of Children); *Das Irdische Leben* (Earthly Life); and Symphony No. 4 in G major. Prior to the concert, during Mr. Zander’s traditional forty-five minute pre-concert lecture, all were introduced to the three works during a skillful, passionate, and enthusiastic presentation that included Mr. Zander’s playing of the compositional themes of each piece and their development. His lecture was also replete with biographical details of Mahler that brought the music to life and enriched the ensuing concert.



## The Rhode Island Column

Daniel Even, MDiv, MSW



### 90853 Action Alert to NSGP and RIGPS Members

Rhode Island needs the help of its northern neighbors. In its renewed efforts to place the issue of Medicare based group reimbursement formulas on the agenda at AGPA, RIGPS is seeking support from NSGP. RIGPS’s attempts to get AGPA’s attention to the 90853 coding problem failed in 1994 and again in 1997. Group by Design’s initiatives, supported by RIGPS, obtained adjustments to the formula at the local level in 1992 and again in 1994. These adjustments held until 2001. Now the major insurer in RI is refusing to honor the adjustments. Group therapists in private

practice who opt out of insurance contracts may have little interest in resource-based relative scale (RBRVS). However the scale is devastating to the infrastructure of group in Rhode Island and probably elsewhere.

RIGPS President, David Kahn, MD, will be taking the 90853 matter to the AGPA Assembly this spring. NSGP support of RI’s proposals would be extremely valuable.

Dr. Kahn is also a member of the 90853 Task Force (90853TF). The task force seeks to address the issue of the 90853 code from a broader community base. Coordinated by Daniel Even, MDiv, MSW, 90853TF has a strategy which seeks to integrate the local and national efforts to correct the 90853 formula coding problem.

Any NSGP or RIGPS members who have experience working with RBRVS or the issue of the 90853 national Medicare formula for group are urged to contact Daniel Even [daniel@groupbydesing.com](mailto:daniel@groupbydesing.com). NSGP and

RIGPS members and officers can expect follow-up contact regarding this alert prior to the Affiliate Assembly Meeting.

### April 2 Conference on Post Traumatic Stress (PTS).

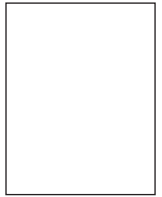
The presentation of a “fresh approach” to understanding PTS is anticipated as we go to press. Donald Wexler, MD, William Mark, M.Div., and Caralee Rada, Psy.D., will be at Butler Hospital’s Ray Hall at 12:30 to share their didactic and experiential offering with RIGPS.

One NSGP member can make use of the Belle Evans First President’s Pass to join the gathering free of charge. Contact Daniel Even [daniel@groupbydesign.com](mailto:daniel@groupbydesign.com) about the pass. All NSGP members get the RIGPS member rate of \$45. Contact Candice Burnett, LICSW at 508-226-2037 for more details including RIGPS membership applications.





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the newsletter

spring 2004

N S G P

Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy

## Why We Do What We Do:

**UNDERSTANDING GROUP THERAPISTS'  
 CHOICES IN THE CLINICAL MOMENT**

NSGP's 23rd annual conference  
 includes something for everyone!

June 11, 12, & 13, 2004

### 2004 NSGP Events Calendar

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Mar. 28, 2004          | <b>NSGP Breakfast Club</b><br>"Peer Supervision Groups: Members in Search of a Leader OR Leaders in Search of a Member" by Eleanor Counselman  |
| Apr. 25, 2004          | <b>NSGP Breakfast Club</b><br>"Transitions in the Life and the Work of the Group Psychotherapist" by Alan Albert   |
| June 11, 12 & 13, 2004 | <b>Why We Do What We Do:</b><br><b>Understanding Group Therapists' Choices in the Clinical Moment</b><br>23rd Annual Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy Conference<br>Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA |
|                        | Special Presentation:<br><b>Violence and Its Aftermath: The Healing Process</b>  |
|                        | Demonstration Group<br><b>Mindfulness Meditation in Group Psychotherapy</b>  |
|                        | Certificate of Group Psychotherapy Program   |
|                        | Institutes and Workshops   |

For more information or to sign up call Pamela Dunkle at 617-484-4994.