



## Letter from the President



### The Next 50 Years

NSGP's 50th year ended with the smashing Anniversary Gala in November, attended by over 100 people. It has

been intriguing to look back in time to examine our origins as well as how we responded to issues that arose. It will be critical to make use of that information as we move forward. As we proceed into the next 50 years, we need to look at where we are and where we envision ourselves by the 100th Anniversary Gala (for those of us that are still around!).

We have before us a period of opportunity. It is my hope that we will feel energized by this prospect of making NSGP even better. Organizations age much the same as do individuals. There are ways we can both get a little saggy around the gills yet still have the benefits of wisdom that come with age. Both also need to make changes, sometimes just to survive, and sometimes in order to thrive.

As a result of recent structural changes made by the Board with respect to how it functions, the Board is now able to devote more time on strategic planning about how we want to look in 10, 20, or 50 years, and what steps we need to take us there. Consequently, there is great energy and excitement on the Board about the possibilities before us. One item we all agree on, though, is our need to support and maintain our nurturance of you, our members, and we are currently looking at additional ways to do that. One possibility we are considering is to offer all members one free consultation a year with a senior NSGP clinician. But we are open to all suggestions you may have so, in that vein,

I invite you to call or email me with any and all ideas you may have about moving NSGP forward. (Please call me at 617-730-9400 or email me at [bakezell@comcast.net](mailto:bakezell@comcast.net).) One of the many benefits of a group is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. With all the talent and creativity within this organization, I have no doubt that we can arrive at achievable ways of maintaining what we do so well while also moving forward to make NSGP even better.

NSGP continues to be in excellent shape in many ways. We are financially secure and we continue to present many successful offerings. By the time you read this newsletter, the very popular Breakfast Club series will have completed another year. Upcoming is another Networking event, arranged by the Referral Service and hosted by Anne Alonso, to be held on Sunday, April 29th. The NSGP Foundation will be holding its Annual Gala on Sunday, May 20th. In addition to having a chance to just schmooze with friends at the Gala, you have the opportunity to support the organization by bidding on all sorts of items. As a result of last year's Gala, I had the privilege of joining a great bunch of NSGP people for the 1st Annual Winter Games Night hosted by Alan Witkower. This was a blast. (Check out the pictures included elsewhere!). Our annual conference will be held June 15th, 16th, and 17th and we have another fabulous lineup for it, thanks to our hardworking conference committee. I hope to see you all there!

I would like to thank so many people for all their contributions. Please see the "Thank You" on page 6 for a listing of their names. NSGP and I are indeed the beneficiaries of all your input and efforts.

**Barbara Keezell, LICSW, BCD, CGP**  
President, NSGP

## Interview

### Cecil Rice Receives 2007 AGPA Affiliate Award

by Debora Carmichael, PhD, CGP

Cecil Rice, PhD, CGP, FAGPA is the recipient of the 2007 AGPA Affiliate Societies Assembly Award. This award acknowledges Cecil's "significant contribution to the growth of NSGP, AGPA and group treatment". Cecil's accomplishments include: Past President of NSGP, President and Co-Founder of the Boston Institute for Psychotherapy, Associate Editor for the International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Co-Founder of the Rice Memorial Fund, Co-Founder of the Boston-Threshold Group, Faculty member of Harvard Medical School,

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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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Messages can be left at the office anytime, and will be answered daily.  
Monday-Friday 9 am to 5 pm

**Letter from the Editor**

As the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan continue, thousands of our soldiers return home with mental illness and physical injuries. For each soldier that dies, 16 are hurt, often with devastating and life-changing injuries, not only for the soldiers but for their families, who must contend with permanently disabled spouses, lost potential income, and partners with mental disorders that wreak havoc on relationships. The Archives of Internal Medicine (March 12, 2007) conducted a study of 103,788 veterans seen in VA facilities from 2001 to 2005. One third (just over 32,000) of those studied received mental health diagnoses. Of those, 52% received a diagnosis of PTSD. The youngest vets (age 18-24) and National Guard or Reserve soldiers are most at risk of developing PTSD or other mental disorders. We have since learned that the best VA hospitals are sub-par and that there is no room to treat the 205,000 soldiers with multiple physical injuries and the 73,000 diagnosed cases of mental disorders.

When Bush addressed the American people in January about the direction of the wars, we expected him to either say he would withdraw our troops or send more in, but as Anna Quindlen wrote in a recent essay for Newsweek (Jan. 8, 2007), no one expected the president to admit he made a mistake or apologize. Few presidents ever have—the exceptions are notable: Lincoln when he doubted Grant's strategy for winning the Civil War; Kennedy after the Bay of Pigs. Apologies are not easy to make, especially by men in power. Expressing regret or remorse or admitting one is wrong has traditionally been considered a sign of weakness according to Deborah Tannen (in the same essay). She says there are four parts to a true apology: admitting fault, expressing

remorse, acknowledging damage, and indicating how it will be repaired. An apology without remorse, acknowledging damage, or saying how it will be repaired is empty. Quindlen writes, "...at times of schism, presidents should mirror our best impulses, not our commonplace ones. And if power means never having to say you're sorry, then the powerful miss the opportunity to truly lead."

This is a time when we, as group therapists, can take on a leadership role. We must advocate for the care of the soldiers who have served in Afghanistan and Iraq and their families. Soldiers who have served should receive not only an apology, but care, and the best care available. I doubt President Bush will say he's sorry (as the majority of the American people feel he should), and I doubt he will show remorse or even acknowledge damage has been done. But he and the government could help to repair the very real damage done to our servicemen and women's bodies, minds, and souls: The VA hospitals must beef up services and staff so they can serve our wounded soldiers. They should provide benefits disbursements in a timely manner, schedule emergency appointments within 24 hours, provide in-patient and out-patient care in clean, state-of-the-art facilities, support the families of returning Veterans, and reduce case backlog. They need to provide mental health care to the thousands suffering PTSD, depression, and anxiety now and in the future.

Perhaps love means never having to say you are sorry, but in war saying you're sorry is not enough.

Lise Motherwell, Co-editor  
NSGP Newsletter

Co-editors Joe and Lise will alternate the Letter from the Editor in this space.

**Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy, Inc.**

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26th Annual Northeastern Society  
for Group Psychotherapy Conference

# LIFE FORCES: HOPE, PASSION, AND SPIRITUALITY IN OUR GROUPS

June 15, 16, 17, 2007  
Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA

## Demonstration Group

### *Working with Spirituality in Group Psychotherapy*

Led by: Bob Weber, PhD, CGP, FAGPA

Discussants: Nancy Kehoe, PhD &  
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author of the History of NSGP and "The Later Stage: The Role of Group Interventions in Coping with the Aftermath of Traumatic Events" an AGPA publication, as well as many other articles and presentations. He writes poetry, runs marathons, golfs, teaches, has a private practice, a wonderful sense of humor and is the devoted husband of Shirley. I sat down with Cecil to discuss this award, and its meaning for him.

**Deb:** *Congratulations on being the recipient of the AGPA Affiliate Societies Assembly Award.*

**Cecil:** Thank you. It's quite an honor but it's funny, all of the accomplishments mentioned were done in groups, that is, with others. I mean I'm happy to accept my part but all of my accomplishments that I can think of happened in groups. For example, Pat Doherty, Kathy Ulman and myself started the annual Northern Ireland Group Psychotherapy Conference. We began discussing this idea in a pub in Coleraine, Northern Ireland. I had been dreaming of a similar idea for some time — I guess as a way of reconnecting and paying back. At the time we met in the pub, the dream was more motivated by the mundane: a reason to return each year to the place we loved and where we all had roots. After writing many letters to various mental health professionals and leaders in Northern Ireland, Scotland, England and the Republic of Ireland, Ramon Kapur, PhD of Threshold, Belfast expressed interest. Others told us it was impossible.

After making plans for our first conference, which took several years, we began with a small daylong conference at Threshold led by Scott Rutan, PhD and we were on our way. This August will be our tenth anniversary. Over those ten years, many of our group therapy colleagues from AGPA and NSGP have come with us to Northern Ireland and people from Northern Ireland have come to visit us at either AGPA or NSGP. We have also produced four papers addressing the impact of the troubles on Northern Ireland and on group therapy patients and therapists in particular, and produced several reports for the NSGP Newsletter. In time, we named ourselves the Boston-Threshold Group. On the States' side, we have added Sara Emerson, LICSW, David Hawkins, MD, and Jeanne Pasternack, MSW, to that list.

**Deb:** *Tell me how you, an Irishman, became a psychologist. You*

*know Freud said the Irish are the only race impervious to psychoanalysis.*

**Cecil:** Well, I started out at The Queens University in Belfast where for one year I majored in geography and I took physics and such. Then I changed to psychology, which became my major. At the same time, I attended Edgehill Theological Seminary in Belfast. I met Shirley as an undergraduate and that was fifty years ago. Fifty years ago, we had our first date. After being ordained as a minister I felt like I needed more training, I needed to know what to say to the families in the parish who were suffering or going through a hard time. I felt ill prepared. I enrolled at the University of London, England, got a graduate degree in Theology. Later, I transferred to Boston University where I worked on my PhD in Psychology. I got a letter one day from the Church, before I had completed my PhD, ordering me back to Ireland to minister there, never mind that I hadn't completed my PhD. I said no, I don't think so. I think I might still be an ordained minister, I don't know, unless they un-ordained me, but I never heard anything about that.

**Deb:** *You resisted authority and said no; decided the powers-that-be were unreasonable and you opposed them, done in true Irish fashion.*

**Cecil:** Yes, well... and when I graduated from BU that's when a bunch of us got together and decided to start the BIP (Boston Institute for Psychotherapy). The number of people who helped start the BIP was quite large. The BIP began because those of us who trained together realized that we could not get any postgraduate training in psychodynamic psychotherapy or psychoanalysis unless we were psychiatrists, so we decided to build our own postgraduate training program, first by training ourselves, then others. We have been in operation for 36 years. Since that early beginning, we have established an adult clinic, the Rice Center for infants and their families, a school based program that meets the needs of school children in the Boston School system, and a variety of professional and public offerings, including the "Psychology Goes to the Movies" series with Lesley University, and the "Psychotherapy and the Arts" program

with the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, among others. In the beginning, a significant number of people lent their names to the BIP, including Scott Rutan, PhD, Jim Smith, PhD, Alan Lurvey, ThD, and Norm Neiberg, PhD.

**Deb:** *Why was it important to you to establish the Rice Memorial Fund and what would you like to see accomplished by it?*

**Cecil:** The Rice Memorial Fund began with a conversation between Walker Shields, MD, Pat Doherty, EdD, Shirley Rice, MBA, and me. We decided to use the gifts donated following the funeral of our daughter, Cathy, and her two boys, Benjamin and Ryan, to begin the fund. Since then, we have arranged for a number of events at the NSGP annual conference and outside, addressing trauma and violence, their impact, and hope of recovery. This June we will present an all day workshop led by Dr. Suzanne Phillips on Group Psychological First Aid as an effective tool for responding to traumatic incidents. I'm really grateful to Mark Sorenson who is Chairing this Fund. He's making sure it thrives.

**Deb:** *What do you think was your most important contribution to NSGP during your presidency?*

**Cecil:** I became the NSGP President in 1982, I believe, and we were \$20,000 in debt. So the first act was to double the membership fees. We only lost one member by doing that. The fees hadn't been raised in years and some reorganizing needed to take place. It's all in the History.

**Deb:** *What was the very first award you ever remember getting?*

**Cecil:** Oh, I got an award for raising the most money for the missions. I was about eight years old. I had so many family members you see; my father's family was so large and I had so many cousins and I got money from them and from friends and neighbors. I was the oldest of all the cousins. I remember that. I also came in second once in a Competition in Verse Speaking. I had to stand up and speak a poem from memory in this competition, which came down to one guy, and me, and this guy went on to be the Episcopal Primate of Ireland. The competition was much divided. The audience gave me first and the judges gave me second. Some

(continued next column)





# Membership Survey 2006

## Summary of Results

Charles Glazier, LICSW and Karsten Kueppenbender, MD

### Summary

In the spring of 2006, the Membership Committee sent out a membership survey with the annual membership invoices to find out from our members what they like about NSGP offerings and what they would like improved. By mid June, 92 members had returned their questionnaires, a robust response rate of 35%!

In summary, the NSGP Newsletter and the Spring Conference were the best liked current offerings. There was marked disinterest in helping to organize these offerings. Two thirds

### Interview with Cecil Rice

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considered it a class struggle. The competition stopped after that.

**Deb:** *What does this award mean to you?*

**Cecil:** It's an opportunity to say thanks on behalf of everyone and to everyone who worked in groups with me. I certainly accept my part and the things I've accomplished but so much of it was done in groups, even the books I've written have been done in groups. The History of Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy was done as a group effort and took many years. The four papers from Northern Ireland were done with others as well. I thank them all.

**Deb:** *What's coming up in the near term that you're looking forward to?*

**Cecil:** The Rice event at the NSGP conference in June. It's an all day workshop on responding to traumatic incidences.

**Deb:** *What would you like to accomplish in the next five years?*

**Cecil:** Reducing my handicap in golf.

**Deb:** *Anything else?*

**Cecil:** Do more writing and less administration. Do more using less energy. It will always be important to me to find ways to apply group dynamics to larger social issues, such as Northern Ireland. Group therapists can contribute to the healing of society as well as individuals.



of respondents considered NSGP membership a great value, a quarter rated membership satisfactory. Potential future offerings that elicited the most interest from potential participants/facilitators were supervision groups (48%/14%) and topic oriented reading groups (42%/6%). The results were reported to the Board of NSGP in January. The high response rate and overall positive rating of NSGP activities are encouraging. The Board took note of the dissatisfaction with the referral service and is considering improvements, including more visible presence of NSGP on the internet, and enhanced web-support of the referral service. The striking absence of member responses that indicate willingness to help with NSGP's most successful institutions, including the Spring Conference and the Newsletter, is in stark contrast to the factually strong support by dozens of members who do prepare these activities, and the high rate of members actively contributing to the organization and offerings of NSGP.

### Results in Detail

#### Assessment of Current Activities and Offerings

The questionnaire assessed how well known and liked current NSGP activities and services are, and asked whether people were interested in helping to organize the activities. Respondents were asked to rate current activities and services as "great" or "need improvement," and "interested" or "not interested" if they never participated, or to indicate lack of awareness by checking of "what's this?".

The best liked current offering is the NSGP newsletter, which 91% of respondents rated great, followed by the close second, the annual Spring Conference, rated great by 86%. However, of the 92 respondents, nobody indicated that s/he was interested in helping to facilitate either conference or newsletter.

36% thought the Breakfast Club was great, and an additional 30% were interested but didn't have a chance to attend. Two respondents would like to help.

The training program was rated great by 42%. 12% of respondents were interested, and 21% were not interested in the training program. One respondent would like to help.

Special events were liked by 43%, and an additional 19% were interested. One respondent would like to help.

67% of the respondents liked the responsiveness of the NSGP office to member questions & requests in general, 43% liked the website. Only 3% thought

the office responsiveness needed improvement. Others responded they were not interested in the office, or didn't answer this question at all. The referral service was less well liked. 40% of the respondents either felt it needed improvement, were not interested or had never heard of the referral service. Counting "no response" as an indication of disinterest, two thirds of the respondents are dissatisfied with the current referral service. 21% thought the referral service was great.

#### Value of Membership

Overall, 68% responded NSGP membership is a "great value," 25% considered it "satisfactory," 7% didn't answer this question. Nobody who bothered to return the questionnaire rated membership "useless."

#### Future Activities

The survey asked if members were interested in the following potential future activities:

1. Trainings aimed at improving my "professionalism" — skills related to succeeding in organizational mental health and hospital settings
2. Support and mentoring to help me develop my "leadership" capacity in NSGP and in professional / career spheres
3. Trainings aimed at improving my ability to conceptualize and start groups
4. Support services aimed at providing support for starting groups
5. Supervisions or consultation groups for group psychotherapy
6. Reading groups to support reading and discussion of a particular topic or theme in group psychotherapy
7. Reading groups to discuss envisioning the future of group psychotherapy

Of these suggested activities supervision groups elicited the most interest from potential participants (48%) and facilitators (14%). Participation in topic oriented reading groups was interesting to 42% of respondents, 6% would facilitate. All other activities generated each 24-29% interest in participation and 3-11% interest in facilitation.

Please address comments to the results of the 2006 membership survey and suggestions for improvements of future surveys to the co-chairs of the NSGP membership committee:

Charles Glazier (charles.glazier@rcn.com)  
Karsten Kueppenbender  
(kkueppenbender@challiance.org)





## A gigantic thank you

*to all the people who helped make the 50th Anniversary Gala possible! Eleanor Counselman, Lise Motherwell, Alan Witkower, Bob Weber, Pamela Enders, Oona Metz, Steve Haut, Marsha Vannicelli, Magdalena Fosse, Kelley Bothe, Deb Carmichael, and Sara Emerson, who helped organize and plan the Gala; Joe Shay, who spent hours putting together an uproarious video presentation; and Scott Rutan, who filled in at the last minute for Cecil Rice to speak about the history of NSGP. Thank you!*

**Barbara Keezell**

## NSGP Holds 50th Anniversary Gala at MIT Faculty Club

by Alan Albert, PsyD

The Party, held at the Faculty Club Dining Hall at MIT on November 5, 2006 started at 7 p.m. sharp and was a total blast. More than a hundred new and familiar faces among the celebrants attended NSGP's 50th Anniversary Gala. A decorative host of balloons was tied to the balustrade welcoming all to the event — which was quite a hoot, by all counts — and all Counts were there, including Countess Alonso and Count Rutan. (Regrets were heard from Cecil Rice, who unfortunately couldn't attend.)

As current NSGP president, Barbara Keezell did a great job coordinating the event and getting the word out, having all Board Members contact many NSGPer personally. This outreach helped everyone feel touched, warmed, and remembered, and contributed to the feeling of a wonderful community event.

Barbara was a gracious host, welcoming all to the party. She received flowers from Eleanor Counselman on behalf of the Society in thanks for her efforts. Scott Rutan gave a brief and compelling review of the fifty-year history of NSGP (which is available for purchase in book form from the office). It was moving to hear Scott speak of his own ambivalent feelings about the organization: pride in such a long and fruitful association with it; and sadness about all the years that have gone by so quickly.

Joe Shay and his assistant cub reporters toured the party scene snapping pics of those coming and going. Joe himself also charmed the crowd with an altogether eye-popping video show of clips and stills of several "then and now" moments in the history of group psychotherapy, displaying the "style" changes that have occurred in the practice of group therapy over the last five decades.

Included were memorable moments of Dr. Alonso in great animation vigorously being "directive," "educational," and, I might add, totally silent, in her earlier history as a group therapist. Then there were several scenes from the old (and wonderful) Bob Newhart Show, a spectacular group "moment" from The Sopranos, along with assorted other clips from god knows what movie(s) on group therapy, with various, I shall say, VIS's (Very Interesting Scenes).

The gathering was quite taken with the spirit, as well as the flesh — as it were — of the whole presentation. All one could do afterward is to head straight for the bar, or at least to the dessert tables.

It was truly a memorable occasion for all of us. I walked among the famous and near-famous, those scarred and less-scarred by the experience of being group therapists over many years. A large percentage of the entire Society membership attended. The food was plentiful and the DJ got "the large group" boogying to a number of good vibrations. Many veered toward the dance floor once the beat was felt fueling the occasion.

And of course, Don Wexler, venerable NSGP elder statesman, presided, offering his sage comments, always a wonderful presence for all of us. Everyone I saw and talked with seemed like they were having a totally excellent time. If there is an NSGP 50 years hence, I hope all those attending the Hundred-years' Gala, will have as good and rewarding a time.



## A History of NSGP

by Cecil A. Rice, PhD

The zeitgeist before our beginning was WWII and its aftermath. Because of the damaging affects of that war on fighting men and women, and the shortage of mental health professionals, psychiatrists often found themselves conscripted to do group therapy without training. Lack of training compelled numbers of them to seek others in the same situation. One of those was Herb Barry our first president. To satisfy his need for collegiality and greater knowledge, he joined the Eastern Group Psychotherapy Society in New York that had started a few years earlier. Soon, he began a society in Boston.

Society members, who were all white, male psychiatrists, met in each other's homes and offices to talk about their work.

Captain Lynn Beals succeeded Herb Barry as president and died several years later from a brain tumor. Beals began the first conference at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Chelsea — it no longer exists. Those conferences ran for about three years, and had up to 300 participants, at which point the society closed them and a forum that met in Beth Israel Hospital replaced them. The Conferences did not return until Scott

Rutan's presidency in the late 1970s. Why they stopped is a source of some controversy that ranges from concerns about disapproval from the establishment of the day (the analysts) to geographical necessity.

The forum reflects another characteristic of the early society, namely, that the early members were academics who also worked in State Hospitals.

Within that sketch are important ingredients of our DNA as a society. The professional zeitgeist of the era was that only psychiatrists practiced psychotherapy. Our early membership reflects this. However, the society in contrast to that zeitgeist was open to including others in its membership and accepted psychologists and social workers. Norm Neiberg, PhD, a psychologist, joined the society early and by 1966 became the society's first psychologist president. Thus, inclusiveness of professions established itself early and continues to this day. While women also joined the society early, the first female president was Anne Alonso, PhD, in 1980 some 25 years later. The first social work president was Sharon Cheeseman, LICSW, in 1986.

There was also a darker side to those early days. Some key figures considered Herb Barry, MD, and Lynn Beal, MD, our first two presidents, the wrong kind of people. They were not part of the powerful analytic culture and therefore did not reflect well on the society. Herb Barry was aware of this and said with some pride that he was not part of the analytic establishment but was more eclectic. For him it was an honor, for others the wrong kind of material. Thus there has been from the beginning a struggle about who really belongs and the right credentials for membership. This is not unique to NSGP but is an ingredient of all groups and societies. What is important is how one addresses this ongoing dilemma.

Another darker side also began early but was not apparent until much later. In the 1990s, one of our very early presidents was found guilty of sexually abusing patients. This discovery led to dark period in our history. In response, we asked him to resign his membership, which he did. However, in the following membership directory (1999-2000) NSGP listed past presidents in alphabetical order and not in terms of their years of service as has always been our practice. A more intriguing discovery was that the first two presidents' names were missing (those

who were the wrong kind), as was the name of the offending past president. They had been disappeared, an attempt it seems to reshape our collective memory and exclude aspects of the underbelly we wanted to forget. Fortunately, we scrapped that eraser shortly thereafter; in part, I like to think, because of this history. The health of any organization rests on its ability to include and integrate the good and the bad.

Another important dynamic in the history of the organization was the tension between conservation and change. It was a tension between wanting to conserve the gains made and keep things the way they are versus a wish to change, improve, and reorganize the society. Although the society drew up its by-laws at the beginning of its life, thus giving the society structure and an identity, the behavior of the membership was very informal and relatively unstructured. As one past president said, it ran like a mom and pop store, which he preferred. However, change was inevitable, and NSGP slowly became a more formal and more complex organization risking a loss of intimacy and camaraderie — of becoming staid, and burdened by process. By contrast, the danger of informality is the development of cronyism and special relationships that may dictate dominant beliefs and lead to membership development based on who one likes. One major period of crisis around this organizational tension, was the time we found ourselves in considerable debt that, among other things, reflected an excess of informality and required a structured response of more careful and organized oversight. That tension never disappears. To be successful, the society needs to accommodate formality and informality, conservation and change, for these tensions are sources of creativity. Looking at our history as a whole, despite these crises, may be even because of them, NSGP has done a very good job integrating conservation and change.

History is important to our society because it helps its members understand what we are, how we got to this place, why we have the struggles we have. It gives reflective space allowing us to note the good and the bad, and to use that knowledge to plan our future. The old struggle of who is in and who is not will continue, one current example of which is our limited ethnic diversity.



## NSGP Networking Event Pot Luck Dinner

*Open to All NSGP Members*

April 29th 2007  
5:00 to 8:00 PM

at the home of

Dr. Anne Alonso, FAGPA  
17 Lakeview Avenue  
Cambridge, MA

Bring your business cards, flyers,  
and other marketing materials for  
our information table.

Discussion 6:15 to 7:30 PM

Please RSVP to Sandy Houde at  
781-646-2897 or  
houdesa@aol.com

Please indicate appetizer, entrée, or  
dessert. Beverages will be provided.

NSGP Group Therapy  
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Game Night 2006 at Alan Witkower's





# 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, PhD through the NSGP office, or via email to newsletter@nsgp.com. (Please remember to preserve the confidentiality of any group members described.)

## Dear Analyze This

Two members of a longstanding psychodynamic group that I have been running for many years have been the catalysts in inciting “political” discussion. The topics raised include the war in Iraq, global warming, and stem cell research, to name a few. While members know the purpose of the group is not to talk politics, I would welcome having “politics” in the room if it would help address group issues of intimacy and differentiation. Being a liberal democrat, I feel pulled into wanting to join in on their political discussions. Trying to do my job, however, I often redirect the discussion, at times, stopping it altogether. In this reluctant authoritarian role, I am chided, with group members rolling their eyes, and making sarcastic statements like, “Oh, but we can’t talk politics in here.”

Liz, one of the catalysts, is a 32 year old successful manager in a research company who is prone to depression and is rigid in her presentation. She is isolated and often spends weekends at home alone. Not surprisingly, her goals in joining the group included “not being scared by people’s unpredictability” and “learning how to be in a relationship.” Liz, who has worked in the federal government, once responded to Joseph, another member, when he questioned the current President’s policies, by provocatively and rather intensely exclaiming, “George Bush is a good man.” This exchange, and others like it, have occurred at the beginning of the group and been quickly left.

Joseph is a married 46 year old part owner of a successful small merchandising business. He struggles with social anxiety and depression and his emotional lability is palpable. His goals in joining the group included being more emotionally intimate with his wife, and in his words, “less of an asshole” and less of a “cold fish like my mother was.” He uses a flat humor to distract and avoid, and often confuses the members by talking in abstractions and using complex, obscure metaphors. His childhood history is notable for run-ins with the law. He recently lost his father to a longstanding illness, and is appreciative to the group and the leader for all that he has learned.

Even when Liz and Joseph are absent from the group, and a political issue of the day is introduced, members still remark, “But we can’t talk about politics,” referencing Liz and Joseph’s feelings. The members then move on to working on interpersonal issues.

Did I press too hard on my position emphasizing that political discussion was a diversion? Is it possible for the members of a well established, psychodynamic therapy group to receive the emotional benefits they want through discussing politics? The elephant and donkey in the room seem to represent something other than political parties that is not getting addressed, and I just do not know what it is.

My intuition tells me that the group would like to talk about the “politics” of relationships, but are afraid of their own capacity for destruction if they are too assertive or passionate about their feelings. I think this dilemma is directing the group away from the “politics” of intimacy every time it comes up, and I am unsure what to do. As Tip O’Neil said, “all politics is local.” I would add, “personal.” I believe there is space for “Elephants” and “Donkeys” in the room, but I am not sure how to use them. I do not believe anything is unspeakable. Help?

## “Politically” Confused

## Dear Politically Confused

Are you getting caught in the content of the political discussion? Or are you worried that it could get too dangerous? (Weren’t we all warned never to discuss religion or politics?) Or are you uncomfortable about group members putting you in the “authoritarian” role you reluctantly assume? But even a “liberal democrat” (me, too) is allowed to take charge of an unwieldy situation — this doesn’t make you an authoritarian dictator.

Why should political discussions be any different than any other topic a group might bring up? If they were talking about the Red Sox (go Sox!) or a tough boss, you would know how to pick up the pertinent thread to weave it back into the here and now and focus on intrapsychic or interpersonal issues. This makes me wonder if it is the topic or their attitude and reaction to you that is the problem.

As you already allude to, “politics” can be a rather juicy topic filled with myriad opportunities for interpretation and exploration. A comment such as “politics makes for strange bed-fellows” comes to mind and, as you suggest, the politics of relationships and concerns with aggression and intimacy all seem relevant to this group. The discussion of politics presents an opportunity, not a diversion per se, or rather not any more of a diversion than a host of other topics members may choose to present.

Here are some thoughts and suggestions: As the great philosopher Yogi Berra once said, “If you don’t know where you’re going, you could end up somewhere else.” So, where are you and your group going? What is the destination, how will you get there, and how will you all know when you get there? (Aren’t these questions both political parties are struggling with these days?)

To answer these questions, I find it helpful to go back to the beginning and remind myself why someone signed up for group therapy in the first place. It’s also useful periodically to engage the group members in this conversation. You may be shocked to discover that people aren’t sure or that their goals have shifted. This is relatively common in long-term therapy, and is something we need to pay attention to so that we don’t lose our way.

For example, Liz hoped that group therapy would help her “learn how to be in a relationship.” She also wished to learn how “not to be scared by people’s unpredictability.” We then have Joseph who wants to become more “emotionally intimate with his wife” and by the way, “less of an asshole.” So does the little



political tête à tête that occurs between Liz and Joseph provide them with an opportunity to explore, understand, and work through their respective concerns?

Is Liz testing out (in a safe place) what it's like to "be in a relationship" with an emotionally labile, unpredictable man? Was her provocative comment about Mr. Bush a brave attempt to assert herself? Can you congratulate her for her willingness to engage Joseph in such a forthright way or was she setting it up so that Joseph would respond with anger, thus proving to her how unpredictable and dangerous relationships are. Are she and Joseph trying to figure out if it's possible for people to hold different opinions and remain in relationship? Is the talk of global warming the closest Joseph can get to the warmth of intimacy—for now? Does he see global warming as frightening and can you help him make the connection to his fears of intimacy?

In essence, I am encouraging you to assume a playful stance here. Engage their curiosity and instead of re-directing the discussion, embrace it, decode it, help them make the connections, and ask them what it might mean. I sometimes have to remind myself that if someone knew how to interact in a mature, thoughtful, open, forthright way, that person wouldn't need therapy!

If a topic does seem truly diversionary it can be useful to say something like, "How does this discussion help you to (reach your goal) learn how to become more intimate?" By keeping the members' goals highlighted, this kind of intervention can occur more naturally. Over time, members will be able to monitor themselves.

Your group members need your help, so give it to them. That's not being authoritarian; that's being a good group therapist. It's wonderful that your group members feel safe enough with you to be able to chide you, roll their eyes, and offer sarcastic comments. They must know you will not retaliate. However that doesn't mean you can't comment on this behavior. While a transference interpretation might be appropriate, I advise you not to say "Bring 'em on!" or "Mission accomplished!"

Good luck!

*Pamela Enders, PhD, CGP*

### **Dear Politically Confused**

Thank you for bringing up many useful questions in the group vignette you offer. This dilemma is one I also find myself struggling with frequently. We seem to share a belief that what is at the heart of change in the group process is the emotional engagement that takes place between the members in the "here-and-now." How a leader deals with the group's tendency to flee from that opportunity will depend a great deal upon theoretical orientation, experience, and therapeutic style. Since what works for me may not be so useful for you, the best I can offer is how I might approach the situation.

When group members engage in dialogue about "out-of-the-room" content — such as politics — one can be sure that the discussion is serving many functions simultaneously for

each patient. At times and for some patients, it is likely that the discussion is both unwanted and ambivalently clung to as a means of avoiding intimacy. It is also likely that for some members political discourse is a safe way of presenting one's self to the other. For Liz, it seems likely that these discussions reduce the unpredictability in human interactions that she finds so frightening and may serve as a basis for feeling some comfort in the midst of the complexity of the group situation. One could even argue it takes courage in the current political climate to state that "George Bush is a good man" and make an honest presentation of an aspect of one's self that may not be popular in the group. Joseph may find that the potent mix of shame and anxiety that accompanies his social phobia is better managed during these political discussions and that for him just speaking up is a significant feat.

With this in mind, the approach I take is to express genuine appreciation of the aspect of the communication that serves the task at hand. For example, noting how relieving it must be to be able to make contact with another in a way that feels safe. I try to honor how the discussion is expressing a longing for intimacy and encourage members to pay attention to that yearning. After it happens repeatedly, I might say something about how compelling an oasis of comfortable relating can be. I try to be accepting of the complex communication taking place exactly in the way it is unfolding and then encourage

the group to participate in finding out more about it. I find that an attempt to interpret these apparent departures from the group's work is likely to be experienced as an accusation and thereby amplify feelings of anxiety and inadequacy. A "joining" intervention can facilitate the invitation to the group to become curious about other motivations for their discussion and supports member efforts to find closeness with one another.

Another approach I take with an established group that has had experience working in the "here-and-now" is to hit the "pause" button when I notice that the group's involvement in "out-of-group" content is more than fleeting. I ask them to take a second to reflect upon whether at that moment they find talking about these issues to be useful to them for the work they came to do. When I am successful in asking this question with sincere and authentic openness to all possible responses, I have usually received a non-defensive acknowledgement that they know from their own experience that what benefits them most is exploring what is happening in the present. What usually follows is a rather passionate discussion about how they really want to be in the room with each other. In their hearts, they want to be more spontaneous and free, and to be able to bring more of their selves into the relationships in the group. This shift in the dialogue usually reinforces their intentions and makes it easier to call attention to those moments when their actions depart from those intentions.

You mention how in these situations exercising your authority slides over into feeling authoritarian. When this happens to me, I am usually experiencing in the countertransference the impatience that comes when the group frustrates my expectations for how a "good group" functions. As with the group, my actions do not always line up with my intentions and when my impatience makes its appearance I find it useful to comment upon it. Owning up to how I can get hijacked by anxiety about how I am doing so that I am not as accepting as I would like to be often jump-starts further self-disclosure and affective engagement in the group.

*Mark Sorensen, PhD, CGP, FAGPA*



*"...does the little political tete a tete that occurs between Liz and Joseph provide them with an opportunity to explore, understand, and work through their respective concerns?"*

*"I ask them to take a second to reflect upon whether at that moment they find talking about these issues to be useful to them for the work they came to do."*

## The Tavistock Large Group

Special Presentation at the June Conference in Wellesley

By Dannielle Kennedy, PhD, CGP

Observers of group process have long been fascinated by the dynamics of the large group. While such groups are capable of incredible creativity — the Constitutional Convention, or the Bridge at Selma in 1965, for example — they are also capable of astonishing destruction. This year's Special Presentation at the 26th Annual NSGP Conference will be a 3-session series of the Tavistock Large Group, an educational framework designed to study the forces underlying large group behavior. What better way for group therapists to experience and understand the simultaneously intimate and public processes that govern such groups than to be part of one?

In recent years NSGP large group participants have experienced two popular ways to approach the large group, the Foulksian Group Analytic and the Tavistock model. The Foulksian Group Analytic model is a therapeutic one that offers participants the opportunity to make connections and soothe anxieties about the underlying and often hidden conflictual aspects of large group interaction. The Tavistock model, focused on learning, surfaces and publicly tracks threads of connection and disconnection, cooperation and conflict, and the processes by which these positive and negative aspects of human behavior are managed. As you consider participating, please note that this year's event will follow the model of the Tavistock Large Group.

Tavistock large group participants sit in a spiral configuration, something like a nautilus shell, where each cell is unique

yet the distinct identity of each can be lost when the focus is on the whole. No one can see everyone else at once so the seating arrangement simulates the reality of participation in a group too large to comfortably relate face-to-face.

Consultants work to promote insight and learning. Their role is to manage the conditions and provide observations about how the group is behaving. As in real world large groups, no one is identified to lead, provide direction, discussion topics, or therapeutic intervention apart from the members of the group itself.

Learning from experience through personal participation in a community that shares a history and a future is perhaps the most powerful kind of learning available. It is immediate, here-and-now, and carries an emotional intensity that can spark new ways of thinking, behaving, and being. This kind of experience can be demanding and even stressful for those who participate fully. The reward for taking this risk however, can be an awareness of the inner-workings of your organization, the role you play in it, and a deepened understanding of leadership, followership, and how we human beings create our world.

This year's large group consultants will be NSGP member Dannielle Kennedy of Nautilus Consulting Group and her colleague from NYU, Mary McRae. Drs. Kennedy and McRae have extensive experience consulting to large groups in the Tavistock tradition and use adaptations of the large group model in their consultation work with businesses and institutions.

The Tavistock Large Group will meet for three sessions, once each day of the conference. Those who sign up should commit to attending all three meetings. A short debrief and application session will be held after the final meeting.



## Working with Spirituality in Group Psychotherapy

Integrating the Spiritual Dimension into Psychodynamic Group Therapy

By Bob Weber, PhD, CGP, FAGPA

In keeping with tradition, the 2007 NSGP Annual Conference will conclude with the Sunday afternoon Demonstration Group led by Bob Weber, PhD and discussed by Nancy Kehoe, PhD and John McDargh, PhD. However, this year, the focus will be anything but traditional. This demonstration will tread on ground usually avoided in psychological circles, particularly those circles with psychoanalytic or psychodynamic roots: the dimension of spirituality.

The overarching question to be addressed is: Does spirituality have a place in group psychotherapy? Until quite recently, it has not been perceived as a legitimate focus of the psychodynamic therapeutic endeavor. Yet, spirituality lies at the heart of our human experience, and, for many of us, clinicians and clients alike, it is a fundamental element in our striving to find meaning, purpose, and healing in our lives.

All of us are aware that there is an increasing interest in the subject of spirituality, whether rooted in traditional religions or faith-based communities and religious practices; the ongoing encounter between Eastern and Western approaches to psychology and spiritual living and practice; or the burgeoning self-help movements and New Age perspectives.

Whatever the spur to this spiritual emergence and interest — our contemporary insecurities and anxieties, the greater difficulty in establishing a clear sense one's self and one's identity, or the breakdown of our traditional bastions of authority and meaning — it behooves group therapists to realize that many of those who come to our groups have questions, crises, and resources that are spiritual in nature as well as psychological. These concerns may not enter the domain of our therapeutic work without our conscious intention to make room for them. If we are not looking for—or exclude looking for—the spiritual dimension, we may overlook an essential aspect of an individual's life and of the group's therapeutic work.

This demonstration group will encourage all participants, the leader, group members, and the audience: (1) to explore the spiritual dimensions in their lives and in the dynamics of their groups; (2) to

**FREE Colloquium Series**

### NSGP Breakfast Club

Sunday, April 1, from 11 am to 1:30 pm

#### ***Therapeutic and Life Transitions: The Group Therapist as Container***

PRESENTED BY **Steve Krugman** and **Marsha Vannicelli**

HOSTED BY Larry Kron & Marsha Vannicelli

The last of this season's programs! Our POT LUCK event is limited to 15 on a first come, first served basis, and will take place on Sunday, April 2, from 11 AM to 1:30 PM. The hostess will provide bagels, coffee, and tea. CEUs are \$10.

**For directions or to sign up, please contact Pamela Dunkle at 617-484-4994 or groups@nsgp.com.**

develop a conceptual and practical basis for working with spirituality in group therapy; and (3) to consider the following questions: (a) the role of spirituality in human development and its relationship to other aspects of our humanity; (b) the relationship between spirituality and religion; and (c) problematic aspects of its incorporation into the therapeutic dialogue.

After a brief overview presentation by the group leader (Bob Weber) to sound the major themes of the afternoon, the group, consisting of volunteer members from the audience, will meet for 45 minutes. At the conclusion of the group demonstration there will be a de-briefing period for the members and the leader. Then, the discussants (Nancy Kehoe and John McDargh) will present their reflections on the group, emphasizing their own perspectives drawn from many years of study and practice in their own professional, personal, and spiritual lives. Finally, the entire audience will be invited to engage with the leader, the discussants, and one another.

Nancy Kehoe is a psychologist and a member of the Religious of the Sacred Heart, a Roman Catholic religious order. For many years she has taught and supervised at the Cambridge Hospital and Harvard Medical School, in addition to publishing on topics that integrate her professional world as a psychologist and her personal life as a spiritually oriented individual. She is well-known for her work running spiritual issues groups for the severely mentally ill. In addition, through her practice, Expanding Horizons, she consults to organizations which want to incorporate the spiritual dimension into their delivery of comprehensive mental health services.

John McDargh is an Associate Professor of Theology at Boston College's Department of Theology. John's academic and clinical work have emphasized an integration of the psychological, religious, and spiritual aspects of life. Among many interests he is well-known for his object-relations approach to understanding people's development of their images of God. In

recognition of his life-long contributions to the field he was given the American Psychological Association's William Biers Award by the Division of Psychology and Religion.

Bob Weber is a committee member of the Initiative on Spirituality and Psychotherapy at the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology. A faculty member of Harvard Medical School's Department of Psychiatry, he is also on the faculty of Massachusetts General Hospital's Center for Psychoanalytic Studies and its Center for Group Therapy. A founding member of Group Solutions Network, Inc., Bob is co-Chair of NSGP's Group Training Program and author of AGPA's CGP Training Manual, Principles of Group Psychotherapy. He is in Private Practice in Cambridge, MA.



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## Garden Party & Silent Auction

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**5:00 — 7:30 pm**



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### Another enjoyable auction success

Dinner and a Play with Walker and Joyce Shields and Suzanne and Carl Cohen acting out the roles in Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream."





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

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

**May 5th, 6th 2007, 8am-5pm  
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**Keynote Speaker: James W. Carron, Ed.D, CGP**  
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**Achieving Social/Emotional Integration**

**Nuts & Bolts of Starting and Running Groups  
Groups in Schools: Challenges and Solutions**

**Action Methods with Adolescents**

**It's Not Just Child's Play: What, Why and  
When We Do Groups**

**Art & Play Therapy in Groups to Help  
Deal With Life Transitions and Trauma**

**Current Trends in Social Skills Intervention**

**High-Functioning Autism, Asperger's,  
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**Facilitating the Therapeutic Alliance and  
Cohesiveness for Adolescent Boys Groups**

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*Partial working scholarships: Sandy Houde, LICSW, CGP,  
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**Circle the Wagons:  
AGPA in Texas**

**by Julie Anderson, PhD, CGP**

**O**n my way home from AGPA's Austin meeting, I bought some "Mexican Jumping Beans" as a souvenir. Their shuffling and restless turnings are cute, and also quite a good representation of my brain as I decompress from the conference. I brought home so many ideas and un-metabolized emotions that I can feel the processing going on at all levels. Let me, then, offer my impressions of several magnificent sessions.

Anne Alonso, PhD, CGP, DFAGPA, coordinated the Special Institute on Monday, entitled "Who's Crazy Here?: The Slippery Slope in the Therapeutic Moment." She invited us to consider the mutuality of any and all craziness we encounter in our offices, and that we're not doing our jobs if our own unconscious isn't entering the fray. After viewing familiar film clips, we broke into small groups in order to create manageable discussions. An unexpected benefit for me of that opening Special Institute exercise was the comfort of converting new faces to familiar ones. New friends became welcome surprises in the halls and workshops and within the shifting social fabric of the week. I felt like I had gained a purchase in an otherwise dauntingly large group.

David Hawkins, MD, CGP, FAGPA, encouraged us in his address "Finding Yourself in the Group" to explore our voice and our agency in the 2-day Institutes that lay ahead, and to "let interruptions take precedence". He powerfully set a tone for each of us to take the risk of interrupting old patterns of fitting in, and to engage instead in opening ourselves to be seen and known by our institute colleagues.

Anna Ornstein, MD, presented "The Social-Psychological Aspects of Traumatic Experiences: Comments on the Healing Process". In this address, she challenged some of our basic understandings about trauma and resilience, suggesting that instead of assuming that a traumatic situation will cause trauma in survivors, we clinicians must listen closely to the individual's experience. Resilience is to be found in the meaning a person makes of his/her experience, and that meaning might come from unusual places. She has been impressed with the power of the peer group for the children who survived Auschwitz; those children grew up to be adults who have made enormous cultural and scientific contributions as part of their meaning-making and growth. "This is my first time at this conference," Dr. Ornstein said, "but I may become a convert." What a boon it would be for us to have her in our ranks, since her experience of holocaust survival

touches the resilience and deepest search for meaning in all of our lives.

And Peter Irons, PhD, ("The Supreme Court: A Study in Small Group Processes") gave a stunning review of the group dynamics of the Supreme Court over the course of its 217 year history. He noted it has been characterized in different ways: "happy and harmonious, or 9 scorpions in a bottle." His research revealed the people, the temperaments, prejudices and personalities enrobed in the highest court of the land. "All of us struggle with issues of prejudice and preferences, but very few of us have the power to change the laws and social behavior of this nation."

In the fluid large group that was AGPA's annual meeting, groups of all sizes happened in all parts of the hotel, with shifting themes and powerful forces. This review captures only a few moments of my experience. The man in the gift shop said "they'll jump for six months" (meaning of course the jumping beans). I have a feeling my brain will be jumping for a lot longer.



## A Slippery Slope, Indeed, Dr. Alonso

### Swimming in the Paranoid and Depressive Positions

by Karin Hodges, MS

On the first day of the 2007 AGPA Meeting, in a Special Institute Presentation entitled "Who's Crazy Here?: The Slippery Slope in the Therapeutic Moment," Drs. Anne Alonso, David Dybdal, and Chike Nwankwo invited participants into a process where we were given an opportunity to reflect upon our vulnerabilities as therapists. We were encouraged to think about the potential therapeutic and counter-therapeutic aspects involved as we are joining patients. Sitting in the institute experience, I questioned instances when I might have been sliding across the boundary between therapist and co-patient. I felt invited to acknowledge my "crazy" fantasies and to learn how to keep from enacting them. I recognized how multiple roles and boundary issues can increase the chance that the therapist might take such a slide. As a trainee, in the midst of a stressful internship year, and experiencing transferences in relation to institutions, supervisors, and peers, I not only saw the slippery slope in the therapeutic moment with patients. I also perceived the slippery slope during my personal experience at the conference itself.

Thinking about my AGPA experience over the last four years, and all that it has entailed, I associate to a time when I was a child junior lifeguard, I recall running out into the ocean and diving in and out of the waves as I was racing to the buoy and back. My friends and I pushed each other to go faster, deeper into the water. As I passed the break of the waves, I began to feel the coldness and vastness of the ocean. I became aware of the immensity of the ocean and all of the risks inherent in the experience of being in the ocean. This year at the meeting, I was acutely aware of the risks embedded in the meeting experience.

The intensity and stress of my internship year, combined with the stimulating nature of the AGPA meeting, and also expectations that I placed on myself as a presenter, all merged into a riptide that pushed me into a regressed state at the meeting. Although I was able to access professional opportunities and I "performed" well as a faculty member at the meeting, the increased stress that I carried with me to Austin compromised my ability to harvest the resources available to me at the meeting.

Stressed, tired, and feeling depleted, I became very aware of my own neediness at the meeting. During the open session I chaired and the workshop I co-presented, the material hit home and I had to monitor myself, cognizant that I wanted to invite dialogue and bring my true self to the endeavor, while also remaining in the leader role. For me, it was a slippery slope between leader and participant.

While writing my speech for the Saturday luncheon, I became aware of themes that emerged and realized that I was swimming in the paranoid-schizoid position. I stopped writing quite suddenly and said to colleagues and mentors, "My gosh! I am really paranoid right now!" After sharing what I had written, one person said, "Well, yes, but the talk is still quite good!" Others laughed with me and said, "Go for it! Put it all in there!" Of course, still in a paranoid stance, I thought, "Now this is a great way to get killed in this organization!" As I began to integrate positive and negative feelings about the meeting experience, and about my training experiences, in general, I was able to grieve losses, losses that were from a much earlier time than this meeting, of course.

What did I learn? Although we can make professional strides at AGPA during our more challenging training years, we need to be careful about our choices, especially if we are feeling overworked or fatigued.

On the other hand, if one is going to be cycling between the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions — the AGPA meeting is not a bad place to have that experience. People there know exactly what to do with aggression, fear, and grief.

Still, it is one thing to go as a participant, but it is another thing entirely to go as a leader. Just as we might want to call in sick rather than seeing patients when we are unable to treat patients effectively, I learned that I should think carefully about when I am able to lead.

Looking towards the NSGP meeting this summer, I will come as a participant, ready to swim, and I think I might bring a boogie board.



# 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.

📌 **Alan Albert** gave a poetry reading from his manuscript *Time on Earth* at Porter Square Books in Cambridge in February. He also was invited to attend an advanced poetry workshop at the 3rd Annual Palm Beach Poetry Festival. In addition, he presented at the MIT Center For Work, Family, and Personal Life on "Preparing for Fatherhood."

📌 **Shoshana Ben-Noam** received the prestigious 2007 Affiliate Assembly Award of AGPA.

📌 **Jennifer Bryan** published a children's book, *The Different Dragon* which is a beautifully illustrated tale featuring a five year old boy and one of his moms telling a bedtime story. The adventure involves a cat, a boat, a dragon and an unlikely ending. (Rumor has it that **Oona Metz's** daughter has a signed copy in her crib!)

📌 **Deborah Cole** became a grandmother to the delightful baby, Ella Caroline.

📌 **Eleanor Counselman** published "Combining Individual and Couple Therapy: Is it Always a Bad Idea?" in the recent issue of *Group*. She also co-taught the six hour group therapy supervision course at the 2007 AGPA Annual Meeting.

📌 **Debra Filiurin** has recently been invited to join the faculty of Massachusetts Continuing Legal Education for Family Law Mediation.

📌 **Magdalena J. Fosse** became director of the Transitions Program at Two Brattle Center in July 2006. She also opened her private practice in Cambridge specializing in health psychology/behavioral medicine issues as well as focusing on couples treatment.

📌 **Jerry Gans** now has his second grandchild. Mira Isabel was born on February 15, has reddish blond hair and blue eyes, and, from Jerry's unbiased perspective, is absolutely beautiful. In addition to this, Jerry has a busy job as well. He was the invited guest speaker for the Southwest Group Psychotherapy's Annual Conference and 50th Anniversary Celebration held in Houston; made three presentations; published "The Concept-Laden Prescription" in the recent edition of *Psychiatric Times*; and had the lead article in *Voices*, entitled "My Abiding Therapeutic Core: Its Emergence Over Time."

📌 **Helen Hwang** presented at the outpatient psychiatry clinical case conference at the Cambridge Health Alliance and then returned to consult on a trauma related case presented by a psychology intern.

📌 **Lawrence Kron** is giving a workshop in Dedham on Sunday, April 22, 2007 for ALS patients, family members and other caregivers.

📌 **Lise Motherwell** will become president of the NSGP Foundation starting at its annual business meeting in October.

📌 **John Moynihan** is teaching group therapy at the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work and has begun analytic training at MIP where he will study the impact on transference, countertransference, and boundary issues in an analytic relationship when an analyst is in concurrent group therapy with the analyst.

📌 **Cecil Rice** was honored with the 2007 Affiliate Assembly Award of AGPA (see interview starting page 1).

📌 **Scott Rutan**, Walter Stone, and **Joe Shay** have authored the fourth edition of *Psychodynamic Group Psychotherapy* which will appear this summer. Scott is also giving the keynote address at the 10th Anniversary of the Boston-Threshold Conference in Belfast this summer. The address is entitled, "Has the World Gone Mad?"

📌 **Helene Satz** moved to Hawaii last August, and now lives in Kailua, a town on the island of Oahu. In addition to regular boogie boarding, Helene has been teaching reading at a local elementary school, a totally new experience for her. The school Helene teaches at is a Title One school where 'no child is left behind.' Helene now holds a psychology license in Hawaii, in addition to her Massachusetts license. Helene writes that she misses her colleagues on the mainland and looks forward to seeing everyone at the June Conference!

📌 **Sharan Schwartzberg** has been appointed Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry in the Tufts University School of Medicine Department of Psychiatry.

📌 **Marian Kaplun Shapiro** began sending out her poetry six years ago, and in the seas of rejection letters, had about 75 islands of acceptances, with some thrilling first and other prizes. Her full-length book, *Players In The Dream, Dreamers In The Play*, is making landfall any minute now (via Plain View Press). Her psychotherapy practice, including hypnosis, has expanded to include work with creative artists of all persuasions around their art, their process, their stuck places.

📌 **Walker Shields** published "Dream Interpretation, Affect, and the Theory of Neuronal Group Selection: Freud, Winnicott, Bion, and Modell" in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*.

📌 **Bob Weber** taught "Searching for Gratitude and Forgiveness in Psychotherapy," a day-long course at MSPP as part of the school's ongoing development of a curriculum integrating psychotherapy and spirituality. He also presented "Conflict and Deficit in Group Therapy" at Two Brattle Center, "Group Therapy" at grand rounds at Harvard University Health Services, and "Supervision" at the Cambridge Health Alliance's "Giving and Getting Peer Supervision" course.

📌 **Annie Weiss** has been teaching group therapy to graduate students at Boston College, and to post-graduate fellows at the Boston Institute for Psychotherapy.



## Referral Service Update

The Referral Service is looking forward to connecting with members at the spring Networking Event, April 29th, at the home of Dr. Anne Alonso in Cambridge. (See ad elsewhere in Newsletter.) This pot luck dinner is an opportunity to share marketing information about groups you are leading as well as to develop ideas for enhancing marketing strategies and goals.

The Referral Service itself is working on the goal of developing marketing materials to promote NSGP group web listings to participants at the NSGP Conference in June. Additionally, the committee is delighted to welcome two new members, Barbara Stokes and Carolyn Stone.

We look forward to seeing you at the April 29th Pot Luck Dinner!



## The Rhode Island Column

The NSGP committee in Rhode Island  
Daniel Even, MDiv, MSW

### Former RIGPS Members Get Boost from NSGP

Word from Barbara Keezell that NSGP was extending temporary courtesy memberships to former RIGPS members provided a much needed boost to beleaguered group advocates in the ocean state. A newly formed NSGP ad hoc committee will be charged with maintaining a Providence connection to the regional resources of NSGP.

An immediate goal for the committee will be to promote the June conference which will be available to former RIGPS members at NSGP member rates. A second goal will be to develop a Group Colloquium series in Providence.

The NSGP committee in Rhode Island will also serve as a subcommittee of the newly forming Providence Center for Group Studies (PCGS). Friday, April 25th marks the official kick off for PCGS. A 4:30pm open house at Group by Design will be followed by movies and dinner. *Group Works* (the movie) and vintage footage of Anne Alonso, PhD. will be among the highlights of the evening. Dinner will follow at the Red Stripe in Wayland Square.

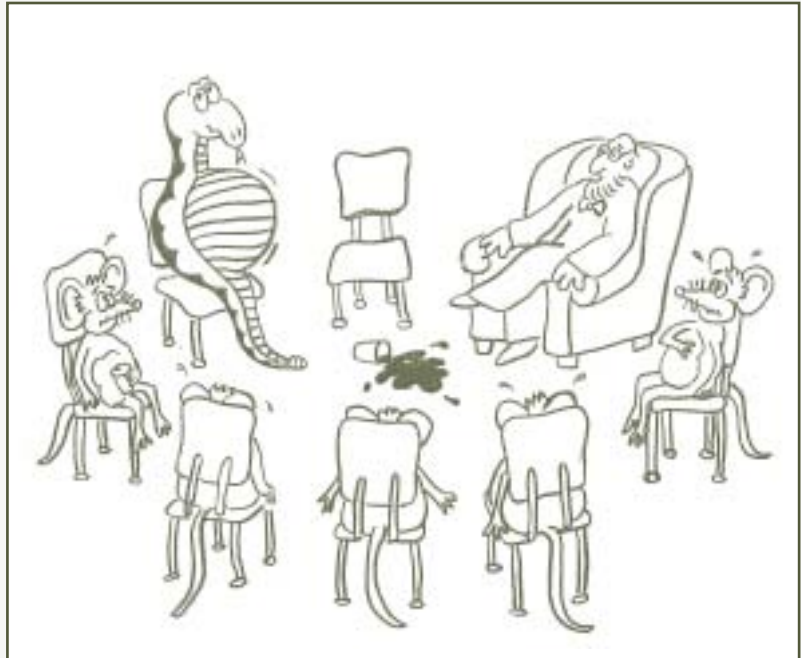
For more information contact Dan Even at [daniel@groupbydesign](mailto:daniel@groupbydesign) or 401.454.2890



## Caption This!

Please submit a caption for this cartoon to [newsletter@nsgp.com](mailto:newsletter@nsgp.com)

The leading entries will be submitted for your vote in the next issue. The winning entries for the previous cartoon below will be announced as well.



Drawn by David Goldfinger

## VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE CAPTION

These captions were submitted for the cartoon in the last issue.

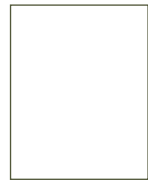
Please vote for any two of these captions in the order of your preference. Email your vote to [newsletter@nsgp.com](mailto:newsletter@nsgp.com) and the winner(s) will be announced in the next issue.

1. "Welcome to the first meeting of the group for men concerned about their size."
2. "I hearby convene the meeting of social phobics."
3. "Hee hee hee. I changed the time of the group but I can still charge them!"
4. "I'm not sure this suicide prevention program is working."
5. "Let me continue telling you about my relationship with my mother."
6. "So about that fee increase..."
7. "Perhaps introducing the sock puppets last week was premature."





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the newsletter spring 2007

## **Life Forces:** Hope, Passion, and Spirituality in our Groups

NSGP's 26th annual conference!  
 June 15, 16, & 17, 2007

### **2007 NSGP Events Calendar**

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| April 1, 2007          | <b>Breakfast Club</b> 11 AM — with Steve Krugman and Marcia Vannicelli<br><b>Therapeutic and Life Transitions: The Group Therapist as Container</b><br>Hosted by Larry Kron (see ad on page 10)                               |
| April 29, 2007         | <b>NSGP Networking Event: Potluck Dinner</b><br>5 pm to 8 pm (see Ad, page 7, and article on page 15)   |
| May 20, 2007           | <b>Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy<br/>     Foundation Annual Spring Fundraising Gala</b><br>Garden Party and Silent Auction 5 pm to 7:30 pm Call for tickets: 617-484-4994                                      |
| June 15, 16 & 17, 2007 | <b>Register Now!</b><br><b>Life Forces: Hope, Passion, and Spirituality in our Groups</b><br>25th Annual Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy Conference<br>Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA (see articles on page 4) |
|                        | Special Presentation: <b>The Tavistock Large Group</b><br>Consultants: Danielle Kennedy, PhD, CGP & Mary McRae, EdD   |
|                        | Demonstration Group<br><b>Working with Spirituality in Group Psychotherapy</b><br>Led by: Bob Weber, PhD, CGP, FAGPA  |
|                        | Certificate of Group Psychotherapy Program  |
|                        | Institutes and Workshops  |

For more information or to sign up, please contact Pamela Dunkle  
 at 617-484-4994 or groups@nsgp.com.

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