



## Letter from the President



I'm very happy to report that we've been making solid progress on our goals for 2013 and 2014. Our membership numbers have gradually increased, reversing a several-year decline.

Thanks to the work of the Publicity and Marketing Task Force, we are now on our way to building an improved website and electronic infrastructure, along with a stronger social media presence. The Practice Development Task Force is working on planning new services for members. The Training Program for 2013 started this January, and planning for the June 14-16 Conference (Group Therapy: Face Time in the Age of Facebook) is well underway. The Breakfast Club has identified the events that will be offered in the coming year. It's worth noting that attendance at the excellent Breakfast Club presentation by Dr. Eleanor Counselman on January 13th was substantially greater than was anticipated.

We continue to be blessed by an extraordinarily creative and thoughtful Board, by Susan Wade, our new Office Manager, and by Sara Emerson, our dedicated and highly knowledgeable Past President. All this makes the President's job easier and more comfortable. The Board is also considering modernizing our methods of having general membership meetings, so that we can hold meetings and votes by email and other electronic means as well as at our Annual Meeting. For several reasons, our traditional fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) needs to be changed to the calendar year, and we would like to get that done expeditiously. We are also thinking about turning our current Task Forces (Publicity and Practice Development) into standing Committees—and perhaps re-instituting a CEU Committee to help coordinate the increasing complexity of our relationships with MMS, APA, and NASW.

We sent an opinion survey to our members in December, and in January reported the

results to everyone. According to the survey results, our members are quite pleased with what the Society has been doing. They are interested in strengthening our efforts to inform the public (and insurers) about the healing power of group therapy. A number of members offered to help with this effort as well as with others.

Our next major task, then, is enhancing public awareness and the awareness of the health care community in the Northeast about group psychotherapy and its effectiveness. This will, of course, take time, thought, and effort. We will ask for your help with the task, and will keep you informed about what we are doing.

The member survey also suggested that a few members still think of us as "cliquey." We truly encourage participation by all members on Committees, the Board, and our other activities and initiatives—and we're also eager to support activities beyond the Boston metro area. I invite those of you who are interested in working with us on any of these tasks to contact me, or anyone on the Board.

### A Thought about Insurers and Group Therapy

I attended the NSGP special event on the new CPT codes, organized and sponsored by the Practice Development Task Force. The presentation was well done and very useful. The CPT codes presentation led me to think again about why insurers seem reluctant to take group therapy seriously, and why they reimburse at such low rates for something that works so well. My guess is that insurers are uneasy about methods they see as indirect in respect to diagnosis and symptom reduction—which, to them, makes such methods seem inefficient. Psychodynamically-based individual psychotherapy, for example, is indirect by its nature, and despite ample data regarding its great effectiveness, apparently continues to be viewed with suspicion by some insurers. Group therapy is also indirect, since a group's work during a session may or may not be directly focused on an individual member's problems or symptoms. It is easy—and erroneous—to

assume that group therapy is therefore "watered down" or inefficient care. If I'm right, the tendency among insurers to prefer direct, "mechanical" models of care makes it less likely that we can convince them to reimburse group treatment at a higher rate. That will not prevent us from continuing to work on the problem, however, though we may have to tackle it through better-informed public agencies and a better-informed public.

Please join us in the work to be done.

Peter Gumpert, PhD, CGP  
President, NSGP  
pgumpert@comcast.net

## INSIDE

Page 2 . . . Letter from the Editor

Page 3 . . . Breakfast Club

### AGPA Conference 2013

Page 4 . . . New Orleans: For-Play to Boston 2014 AGPA

Page 5 . . . Not Just Another Goodbye: Farewell to the AGPA Women's SIG Leadership

Page 7 . . . Reflections on AGPA New Orleans

Page 8 . . . Analyze This

Page 10 . . . On Writing, Parallel Process, and Group

Page 11 . . . NSGP 2013 Conference

Page 12 . . . NSGP Special Event

Page 13 . . . Getting to Know... Susan Wade, NSGP Office Manager

Page 14 . . . Cartoon Caption Contest

Page 14 . . . NSGP Foundation Holds Tribute for Anne Alonso

Page 16 . . . CPT Code Workshop

Page 17 . . . NSGP Foundation Retreat

Page 17 . . . NSGP Member Practice Announcements

Page 18 . . . Progress Notes

Back Cover: 2012–2013 Events Calendar

**NSGP Newsletter Committee**

**Editors** Barbara Keezell, LICSW, CGP, FAGPA  
Jennifer McLain, MD, CGP

**Members** Theresa Bullock Cohen, LICSW  
David Goldfinger, PhD, CGP  
Oona Metz, LICSW, CGP  
Joseph Shay, PhD, CGP, FAGPA  
Alan Witkower, EdD, CGP  
Ellen Ziskind, LICSW, CGP

**Photography** Lise Motherwell, PsyD, CGP, FAGPA  
Joseph Shay, PhD, CGP, FAGPA

**Design** K. White  
White Design  
designer\_solution@comcast.net

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.

**NSGP Executive Board**

**President** Peter Gumpert, PhD, CGP  
**Past President** Sara Emerson, LICSW, CGP, FAGPA  
**Secretary** Theresa Bullock Cohen, LICSW  
**Treasurer** Debora Carmichael, PhD, CGP

**Directors** Julie Anderson, PhD, CGP  
Marc Bolduc, LICSW, CADC II, CGP  
Steve Cadwell, PhD  
Joseph Doherty, EdD  
Pamela Enders, PhD, CGP  
Larry Kron, JD, PhD  
Julie Gardner Mandel, PhD  
Oona Metz, LICSW, CGP

**NSGP Committee Chairpersons**

**Audit** TBA  
**Breakfast Club** Joel Krieg, LICSW  
**By-Laws** Lawrence Kron, JD, PhD  
Richard C. Tomb, MD, CGP  
**Conference** Julie Anderson, PhD, CGP  
Scott Reinhardt, PhD, CGP  
**Disaster Response** Kathleen Hubbs Ulman, PhD, CGP, FAGPA  
**Membership** TBA  
**Newsletter** Barbara Keezell, LICSW, CGP, FAGPA  
Jennifer McLain, MD, CGP  
**Nominating** Eleanor Counselman, EdD, CGP, FAGPA  
**Referral Service** TBA  
**Training Program** Joseph Doherty, EdD  
Marsha Vannicelli, PhD, CGP

**NSGP Office (617) 484-4994**

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

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

**PO Box 356  
Belmont, MA 02478-3201**

**(617) 484-4994**

**www.nsgp.com**

**Letter from the Editor**

What a time of change this is.

In our field alone, the ways we are told to define the value of our time have just been altered with billing code changes, and in May of this year, the very definitions of the mental illnesses fundamental to our treatment plans, research, and insurance communications will be revised with the publishing of the DSM-5. Along with the uncertainty immediate to our field, the world continues to shift and evolve as well. There is the need to reinvent ourselves in order to stay apace with the technological advances bursting and infiltrating every corner of our lives, even into our therapeutic spaces. Violence and shootings are becoming more the norm than we could ever have imagined thirty years ago. Our President was re-inaugurated in January, and his speech touched on many pressing topics of change including environmental, gender and sexual orientation equality, and conceptualization of the role of immigrants.

As we move forward into this uncertainty, there were ideas in the Presidential Inauguration speech that will carry me forward through the coming year. The phrase that stuck with me the most was that "our generation's task [is] ... not to settle centuries-long debates ... for ALL time, but it does require us to act in OUR time. We must act, knowing the work will be imperfect." (emphasis mine) He went on to underscore that although our successes may only be partial, our duty is to continue to move the work forward so that those who come decades or centuries after us may also continue to progress.

Other segments of the ceremony also struck a chord. Earlier in the speech, President Obama made a reference to Medicare and Social Security as being "the commitments we make to each other" that strengthen our bonds and build a solid national foundation such that we can then take risks towards greatness in other ways, together, as a country. Later, the poet Richard Blanco read his poem entitled "One," which catalogued, with brilliant imagery and simple words, the ways that all of our differences add to, but do not detract from, the ways that we are the same, one people, in one country and "under one sun and one moon," illuminating our individual stories while uniting and strengthening us through the power of togetherness.

I thought, "They might as well have been talking about group therapy." Think about how many of Yalom's therapeutic factors of groups were evoked in those ideas: universality, installation of hope, altruism, socializing, cohesiveness, existentialism. And of course, we as humans live in groups, thrive on connections, move forward most strongly when we move together. On the listserv this winter, we saw discourse about the financial devaluing of our profession, calls to act, petitions to sign, encouragement harnessing the strength of the whole greater than its parts; and in President Obama's speech, he made a mandate: "You and I ... have the obligation to shape the debates of our time—not only with the votes we cast, but with the voices we lift in defense of our most ancient values and enduring ideals."

*(continued on page 3)*

**Something to Say??**

**Next time, see your words here.**

Write an email sharing your thoughts or opinions with the Editors and your letter may be published in full or part in the Fall 2013 Newsletter. Please send submissions to:

**newsletter@nsgp.com.**

*Note: letters not edited except for space.*

I hear this as both permission and imperative to embrace the uncertainty rather than to shy away from it, and to do so with a clear vision of our hope for the ultimate end product and the courage to act in ways that defend and move us in that direction.

One final thought about connectedness and change came to me as I observed myself watching the Inauguration alone at home. Craving connection midway through the ceremony, I grabbed my computer, opened a social media site and reached out (via a "status update") to others whom I hoped were at that exact moment also online, having a similar experience and available to join me in it. Within 2 minutes, I had responses from friends in Boston, D.C., and San Diego acknowledging my reactions and sharing their own. Through technology, I was able to immediately shift from oneness to togetherness. In the past, I may have had to wait until dinner table conversation or the next social outing to recreate the moment, perhaps losing something of the connection in the delay. But through this shift from face-to-face to computer screen, did I lose something as well? Our Annual Conference this year will be exploring the cutting edge questions we will have to address as the digital age introduces a new realm to our professional work as well as our patients' personal lives. As the President said in his address, "we possess all the qualities this world without boundaries demands," but it is left to us to be deliberate and thoughtful about how we use those qualities to shape it and how to reestablish a solid foundation on these shifting grounds. I hope we will have the opportunity to do exactly that in June, and I hope to connect with you there.

Jenn McLain, MD, CGP  
Co-Editor, Newsletter

Co-editors Barbara and Jenn  
will alternate the Letter from the  
Editor in this space.

## The Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy

Cordially Invites You to Our 2013-2014

# Breakfast Club

Learn about group therapy and socialize with colleagues at a FREE colloquium series. Each POTLUCK event will take place on designated Sundays from 11 AM to 1:30 PM. Participants may bring guests. Please contribute a breakfast item (quiche, fruit, bagels, pastries, cheese, etc). The host will provide coffee and tea. To sign up for an event or for directions, participants should email [groups@nsgp.com](mailto:groups@nsgp.com) or call Susan Wade at the NSGP office: (617) 484-4994.

### Calendar for 2013-2014

- 4/14/13 **Sexual Addiction and Compulsion**  
Presented by **Judith Silverstein, PhD**  
Hosted by Jim Leone (Belmont, MA)
- 9/22/13 **Marketing Your Private Practice**  
Presented by **Theresa Bullock Cohen, LICSW**  
Hosted by Eleanor Counselman (Belmont, MA)
- 10/20/13 **Field Notes from a Psychodynamic Therapist Leading Divorce Support Groups. Is It "Support" or Is It "Therapy" and What Is The Difference Anyway?**  
Presented by **Oona Metz, LICSW, CGP**  
Hosted by Scott Rutan (Chestnut Hill, MA)
- 12/8/13 **Attachment Style and Living Solo: Group Psychotherapy with Single Adults**  
Presented by **Nancy Goldner, PhD, LICSW, CGP**  
Hosted by Barbara Keezell (Newton, MA)
- 1/12/14 **Spirituality in Groups**  
Presented by **Bob Weber, PhD, CGP**  
Hosted by Geri & Scott Reinhardt (Newton, MA)
- 3/23/14 **What's Grief Got to Do with It: Traveling through Loss with Clients**  
Presented by **Maxine Sushelsky, LMHC**  
Hosted by Julie Anderson (Brookline, MA)
- 4/13/14 **Transitions in Group Leadership**  
Presented by **Joel Krieg, LICSW**  
Hosted by Joyce & Walker Shields (Belmont, MA)

*\*The Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy, Inc. (NSGP) is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. NSGP maintains responsibility for this program and its content. Each program provides a maximum of 1.5 credits.*

*\*NSGP is a National Board for Certified Counselors Approved Continuing Education Provider (ACEP) and may offer NBCC approved clock hours for events that meet NBCC requirements. The ACEP solely is responsible for all aspects of the program. Each activity has been approved for a maximum of 1.5 Category 1 hours for relicensure for Licensed Mental Health Counselors.*

*\*NSGP, Inc. is accredited by the Massachusetts Medical Society to provide continuing medical education for physicians. NSGP designates these educational activities for a maximum of 1.5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)<sup>TM</sup> each.*

*\*For information regarding the status of Continuing Education Credits for social workers and Registered Nurses please call the NSGP office at 617-484-4994.*

*For all disciplines, continuing credit awarded is dependent on participation and participants should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.*



Eleanor Counselman, Debbie Cross, Suzanne Cohen, & others



Andrea Grunblatt & Marilyn Lanza



Robin Good, Chera Finnis, & Oona Metz



Shoshana Ben-Noam, Larry Kron, Debbie Cross, & Lee Stevens



Jenn McLain & Joel Krieg

## New Orleans: For-Play to Boston 2014 AGPA

Sharan L. Schwartzberg, EdD, OTR/L, FAOTA, CGP, FAGPA

Learn, eat, drink, dance, and music to delight the senses. The New Orleans AGPA meeting was Cajun spices, Creole, beignets, and satiation. Over-abundance for every delight and group; deprivation was not apparent! NSGP members were highly represented in the national leadership, from our own Kathy Ulman, as AGPA President, to Board Members Deborah Cross, Sara Emerson, Lise Motherwell, and me. Jerry Gans conducted a Special Institute; Eleanor Counselman ran the show as Institute Co-chair; Libby Shapiro is an Annual Meeting Committee member, and Shoshana Ben-Noam, Sara Emerson, Barbara Keezell, Norm Neiberg, and I were Institute leaders. Open sessions and workshops were run by NSGP members Suzanne Cohen, Eleanor Counselman, David Dybdal, Joel Frost, Larry Kron, Jenn McLain, Scott Rutan, Joe Shay, and Marsha Vannicelli. Karin Hodges concluded her work as Women in Group Psychotherapy SIG co-chair and was presented with both a certificate for her service and a lovely necklace from her co-chair Barbara Cohn. Jenn McLain continues in her role as SIG co-chair of

Mental Health Agencies and Institutional Settings and Peter Gumpert as co-chair of the Organizational Development and Consultation SIG.

An NSGP member I met sharing a taxi to the airport summed the meeting up this way: "I learned a lot. I had fun. I opened up with the skilled Institute leader. Quite unusual for me. And, I am eager for next year." After all of those heartfelt goodbyes in New Orleans, many of us were pleased to see each other in the airport. It was comforting to be sitting with eight other NSGP members in the plane as well as a prospective member, Lee Stevens.

As the experience of the AGPA New Orleans came to an end, we anticipate next year in Boston. We have so much to look forward to as AGPA lands in Boston in 2014. We have the Charles River, the MFA, ICA, Gardner Museum, Museum of Science, and full range of seafood, steakhouses, sushi and food to delight all tastes. Although there were fears of snow fall next year, Marsha Block, the CEO of AGPA, reassured the AGPA attendees that the Copley Plaza Hotel carefully links inside to restaurants, shops, and other attractions, so people could enjoy themselves while still remaining indoors.

I give my thanks to Karin Hodges and Don Wexler for helping me through writing this note.



Deb Carmichael & Marsha Vannicelli



Debbie Cross & Suzanne Cohen



Libby Shapiro & Suzanne Brennan-Nathan



Jerry Gans & Andrea Grunblatt

For me, whether New Orleans or Boston may it be, AGPA brings me together with friends and colleagues from near and as far as Turkey, Israel, and Greece. My New York pals just completing a stint hosting were free! So on to Boston for next year's conference. Give me New England clam chowder and no more gumbo!



## Not Just Another Goodbye: Farewell to the AGPA Women in Group Psychotherapy SIG Leadership

Karin Hodges, PsyD

Saying "hello" when my child entered the world also meant saying "goodbye" to other people and places associated with career. Here, I will reflect on the frequency of "goodbyes" in professional life, as well as due to work-family conflicts, and share about my most recent experiences with transitioning out of my role as AGPA Women in Group Psychotherapy SIG (Special Interest Group) Co-chair.

Endings are a part of life for any new professional. By the time I was eligible for licensure, I had worked in nine different research and clinical settings. I lived in three different homes in two different states while training to become a psychologist. During this time, I attended approximately thirteen institutes. In all, this was twenty-five times to say goodbye.

When I gave birth to my child, I learned quickly that nothing is more important to me than my family. As a result, I reprioritized my time, choosing family over work. This meant more "goodbyes." I stopped attending some conferences, terminated several leadership positions, and declined opportunities to publish or present.

As a psychologist-in-training, I learned over time to give my labor away for free. However, the "bottom line" became more important when my child entered the picture and attention to money and resources became more central. Time with him, daycare and preschool costs and



Sharan Schwartzberg receiving her FAGPA

*Congratulations*  
to **Sharan Schwartzberg, EdD, OTR/L, FAOTA, CGP**, on being awarded the designation of Fellow of the American Group Psychotherapy Association (FAGPA)!!

stability of the home became increasingly important. Nothing has impacted my feelings about career and organizational life more than my entry into motherhood. This meant, for me, a shift in my health status, shift in my time, and reevaluation of my roles in my career. It included paying attention to the ways in which my child responded when I was present, absent, or occupied by work.

Women are highly susceptible to these work-life conflicts. I have met women who left their careers when their child was born; juggling life and career proved to be impossible for them. For some, salaries were not high enough to pay for childcare. For a period of their professional lives, they would actually have to take a monetary loss in order to continue in their careers. Often they felt they could not justify this choice financially—it felt selfish. For others, the time required by employers was more than they could devote as a new mother. Their time was swallowed up by play dates, driving children to and from school, greeting their children at the end of each day, and even ensuring their children were getting adequate sleep and naps. Their time became less their own.

There are many of us who have one foot in each of two worlds—career and motherhood. We manage the turbulence of living at the boundaries of each world. In so doing, our professional connections can become truncated; we no longer have time and energy to do everything

(continued on page 6)



Guests at the NSGP dinner



Shoshana Ben-Noam, Eleanor Counselman, David Griffiths, & Jenn McLain



Lise Motherwell & Bob Steinberg



Kurt White & Jennifer Mank



Ramon Alonso & Dorothy Altman

## AGPA Conference 2013

(continued from page 5)



Robin Good, Chera Finnis, & Oona Metz



Sara Emerson & Ken Jaeger



Larry Kron & Debbie Cross



Folks at the NSGP Dinner



Deb Carmichael telling jokes to the crowd

full-speed ahead. This may be especially true for mothers whose own health status or the health status of their child is compromised and for mothers of multiples.

While I had clarity about what I wanted and needed after giving birth, this process of stepping back from my various organizational roles was new and awkward for me. I credit this awkwardness, in part, to being the product of a working class family. As such, I often naturally feel that I must earn my way and that my value in the world comes from my ability to contribute. After entering motherhood, choosing not to contribute in organizational life felt almost shameful. I felt as if I was not doing what I should or must do to have a place in the organizations of which I was a member. However, there was one "goodbye" that was healing and helpful. I would like to reflect here about the process of stepping away from my position as Women in Group Psychotherapy SIG Co-Chair because this provides an example of a particular ending which was free of any confusion or shame.

Before I considered transitioning out of leadership, my former Co-Chair Barbara Cohn, who playfully refers to herself as the "senior consultant," often noticed the ways in which I was perhaps overly devoted in professional organizations. She seemed to value me and my contributions. She recognized that I had, for years, given more of my time than might be best for me.

When I disclosed that I wanted to end my role and free up more time for myself and my child, Barbara was supportive. Actually, all of the leaders with whom I interacted during this process sent me the unwavering message that I was valued, my work had been appreciated, and I could take a break and re-engage in AGPA leadership when I was available and interested.

Mentors within AGPA gave me confidence that the group-as-a-whole would not be neglected or abandoned if I left my post. I could leave my leadership role satisfied and confident that the SIG will flourish without me. This made me feel comfortable with my choice. The person who I recruited to hold the co-chair position in my place is talented, good-humored, hardworking and ready to lead.

## A Note of Appreciation

to those who sponsored new attendees and young professionals at the NSGP dinner in New Orleans during the AGPA conference—thank you!!!



Menu for NSGP dinner

Our leadership roles can sometimes foster a connection to the work of the group we are leading. I transition out of this role knowing that it fueled a connection in me to other women and women's issues. As I am completing my work on the SIG, I realize that I feel stronger and clearer about women's issues. I feel more compelled to think about women in leadership and to talk about issues of gender which are often swept under the rug. I feel as if I have the confidence and conviction to strike up conversations about gender, power, and dynamics associated with these issues. I credit this openness in me to my experiences as the Women in Group Psychotherapy SIG co-chair. Farewell Women's SIG leadership and hello Women's SIG membership!



## Reflections on AGPA New Orleans

Oona Metz, LICSW, CGP

I am always amazed when I talk to AGPA participants and they begin to recount in great detail their memories of past AGPA meetings: the Institute they attended in 1989 with Anne Alonso, the first time they presented a workshop on projective identification back in 1992, that great plenary address by Scott Rutan in 2009, the award they won in 2010. My memory doesn't work that way. I am pretty sure my first AGPA conference was about 15 years ago, but it could be 12 or 18. I think it was in Boston. I know I've gone most years since then, and that I have been to Washington, NY, Boston, New Orleans and California. I'm pretty sure I didn't go to Chicago or Atlanta. I know I have participated in Institutes with Stewart Aledort, Susan Gannt, and Jo Cunningham Tervalon, but I don't quite remember the name of that nice older man. You know, the one who is slightly balding, very smart, and such a mensch. Or that elegant woman who must be 70 given all of her accomplishments, but looks like she is 60. I know I have led a couple of workshops and look forward to leading my first Institute next year.

What I do remember with some clarity are the feelings I have when I am at AGPA. A mix of excitement and intrigue, envy and awe, competence ("I could have run that workshop") and incompetence ("I'll never be that accomplished"). I get in touch with how far I have come as a therapist and (thankfully) how far there still is to go. I feel nurtured and challenged, open and curious, more self

aware than when I arrived. And by the end, I am physically and emotionally exhausted. Inevitably, I always succumb to more calories and less sleep than I should. I let my life at home slip away as I inhabit the bubble that is AGPA.


And then there are the friends. It is the lasting friendships, year after year, the ones that endure and evolve over time, that are most meaningful to me. These friendships, deep and intense for a week (almost) every year, enrich my life immeasurably. We always express an intention to stay in regular touch, which almost never happens, but, no matter, the connection has been made and it is so easy to pick right back up the next year. I have adopted and been adopted by friends in Colorado and New York, Minnesota and California. My relationships with my Boston friends and colleagues deepen, expand, and evolve at AGPA. A highlight every year is the Boston dinner in which the buttoned-up older generation unbuttons, the delight and camaraderie palpable in the room as we all unwind and celebrate another successful conference, away from our responsibilities at home, free to tell jokes and wine and dine. It has been a luxury and an honor to have trained in Boston where group therapy is rich and rewarding, alive and well, and where some of the most influential and generous grandmothers and grandfathers of group therapy have taught, supervised, and mentored me.

My dear friend Deb and I roomed together this year for the first time. So in sync were we, that despite flying on separate airlines and being scheduled to arrive in New Orleans 5 hours apart from each other, our flights conspired and we arrived 15 minutes apart instead. As we

shared a cab from the airport to the hotel we learned that both of our watches had broken on the flight down. We negotiated the time in New Orleans well, each letting the other know of our plans, often eating together, sometimes going our separate ways. We began and ended each day together, sometimes seeing each other frequently, sometimes very little. We were able to connect, leave, and return over and over again.

People often refer to AGPA as their "home." Home for most of us was not like AGPA. We weren't nurtured and held, challenged, and seen in our homes growing up. We were not able to protest without fear of retaliation. So far, I haven't met anyone there who describes a perfectly happy childhood. Perhaps, then, what we mean when we say AGPA is home is that it is the home we wish we had, the one so many of us have worked to create for our own partners and children, but one we only came to know as adults. I learned and relearned a lot about attachment theory from Phillip Flores, Eleanor Counselman, and David Wallin this week. The notion of the secure base is what I think of when I think about my attachment to AGPA. My ability to feel safely connected, to leave and come back, again and again, year after year, is heartening. And right now, on the plane back to Boston, I am basking in the glow and looking forward to next year, in Boston.





**Dynamic Psychotherapy Group for  
Older Adults**

Together, the group explores  
issues facing members in their  
60's, 70's & 80's.

Relationships, physical health,  
retirement, loss, loneliness &  
the opportunities enjoyed in  
solitude.

**Victoria Roemele, LIC SW**  
Thursdays 730-9pm  
Cambridge (Porter Square)  
617-864-2604  
VRoemele@verizon.net

**Couples and Couples Group Therapy:**

*Articulating expectations, improving communication,  
and resolving disagreements*

*Lawrence Kron, Ph.D.*

545 Concord Ave., Suite 320  
Cambridge MA, 02138

617-448-6237  
[lkron@comcast.net](mailto:lkron@comcast.net)

# 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 Theresa Bullock Cohen, LICSW 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

I lead a small "supervision group" of mental health professionals employed at a large mental health agency. We all have different roles in the agency as we work with individuals living in the community with chronic and severe mental illness. I was asked to lead the group because, at the time, I was the only LICSW with some availability and employees had been asking for supervision that 'counted' toward licensure. For the most part, members had been trained at the graduate level in nursing, social work, or mental health counseling but were doing case management and crisis intervention, not psychotherapy. Several members supervised direct care staff in their various programs. Membership varied between 5-8 men and women in the 25 to 35 age range.

Almost 4 years ago, when the group began, the format was weekly prepared presentations by members on problem cases and situations. Relatively quickly, however, a transformation occurred, seamlessly it seemed to me, in which the group began to look more and more like a psychodynamically oriented process group. Prepared notes were put away, the conference table disappeared and we became a circle. Although events were still brought in from outside, the focus was now "what my reaction meant about me" and how interactions/relationships outside the group resonated with relationships within and vice versa. The central contractual features were complete confidentiality, and no outside

discussion among members of group content or business.

*I will admit that the slope always felt a bit slippery given the work associations and connections people had outside the group. More recently, it became even more slippery when one long-term member was promoted and found himself instructing 3 other group members around compliance issues in their regular work roles. For the most part, however, I have seen only good things happen: strong attendance, a maturing group, and good individual work. Lately, though, there seem to be more work emergencies and time off, causing absences from the group and frequently leaving us with different combinations of just two members.*

*Some of my concerns and questions are the following: Has my rather cavalier attitude about ties outside the group revealed a blind spot on my part and a recipe for disaster? It seems (and I'm still very much learning the ropes) my group has the very compositional elements that most groups would like to avoid: members with frequent outside contact, sub-groupings on various levels, and hierarchical relationships within the group. Although I consider the group far from dissolved, I do wonder what challenges I can expect with regard to its survival, its integrity, and how can I best prepare and/or deal with them.*

## Too Close for Comfort

### Dear Too Close for Comfort

Leading a supervision group can be quite challenging as you are finding out. The agency setting and the nature of your relationship to the group members adds to the complexity of your situation. It seems to me that until recently the members had been enjoying the group. This is evidenced by the consistent attendance. However, as you point out,

there have been increasing absences recently which coincide with the shift in focus of the group. I believe that the recurring absences are due to this change in focus.

Supervision groups are a very different animal from therapy groups. In a therapy group, the focus of the work is on helping an individual resolve the personal issues they bring into the group. Regardless of the type of therapy group, this is the focus of the work. In a supervision group, the focus of the work is on patient care. This is a very important distinction as it results in a very different relationship with the people with whom you are working. There are many different styles of supervision, but regardless of your style, it is important to remember that supervision is not the same as therapy. You have a very different arrangement with a supervisee even though at times the work can look the same. In supervision, the focus should remain on patient care.

As a result of the difference in relationship, the contract you make with your supervisee is different from the one you would make with a patient. With a supervisee, your contract needs to be reflective of the work they are doing with their patients. You need to be specific about the nature of the supervision and what it will focus on. If your interest is to focus on transference and countertransference or the parallel process, then the work of the group should be to focus on how the feelings that are coming up in the supervisee are related to the patient and not the relationships in the group. This honors the supervisory contract. It certainly is probable that interpersonal issues between members will come up in the group and may have to be dealt with but that should be secondary to the primary focus of patient care. Once you move into the territory of personal disclosure, the slope becomes slippery and this can get messy very quickly, especially in your type of agency setting. These people need to work together. They rely on each other for their financial well being. Some of the members have evaluative relationships with other members of the group. This has the potential for disaster if the group gets into personal revelation.

*"Has my rather cavalier attitude about ties outside the group revealed a blind spot on my part and a recipe for disaster?"*



When reading your information, it is unclear what your full contract is with these supervisees. I assume you have discussed with them what the goals of the group are. If you haven't, you need to clarify this. The two parts of the agreement you do mention are confidentiality and no outside discussion of group content or group business. I think it is unrealistic to expect these meetings to remain fully confidential or that there will be no discussion of content outside the group. If members are discussing patient care, it is inevitable that this will need to be discussed outside the group.

So the first thing I recommend is rethink your contract. The vagueness of the current contract has led to confusion about what the group is really about as well as to a lack of safety. Is it about presenting case material or is it about the relationships in the room? What did they sign up for? I would encourage you to make the focus of the group much more explicit. Make sure you take into account the agency setting and the dual relationships of your members. I would keep the focus on case presentations (and feelings that arise around the patients). I believe if you clarify the contract and get members to agree, the group can be turned around. I believe the group has become too close for comfort and needs to be cooled down.

Lastly, I would like to point out that it is often easy to blur the boundary between therapy and supervision. But, as we see in this group, that is a slippery slope that can often lead to problems. This group is a good example of the potential pitfalls.

**Arnold Cohen, PhD, CGP, FAGPA**



### **Dear Too Close for Comfort (or All in the Family)**

Given that we all have "work" families, I prefer this title for your dilemma. A good and reasonable goal would be to have a supervision group that is close and comfortable, rather than too close for comfort.

First and foremost, the "transformation" you describe in which your supervision group began to look like a psychodynamically oriented process group speaks to your being able to create an atmosphere of openness as well as safety. Your group has been ongoing for four years. The group obviously experienced your leadership as enabling them to look more closely at their reactions and responses to their work and to each other. This indeed reflects a professional presence which facilitated their experience in the group.

*"In a supervision group, the focus of the work is on patient care. This is a very important distinction."*

The issue and problem is that the "transformation" occurred without clear goals, structure, and agreements. This is critical for maintaining the integrity and safety of the group. The leader of a supervision group has the role of creating an environment in which the potential of the group as a learning space can be realized as fully as possible.

The recent attendance issues and time off that you describe probably have something to do with the change in status of one of the regular members and the group's lack of clarity. It is unclear whether or not this has ever been discussed in the group. My first inclination was to suggest ending this group and beginning a new group with very specific goals, structure, and agreements. This would be an option. Another option would be to re-negotiate the current group agreements and begin again with those individuals who choose to commit to a new group.

Let me go on to address your concerns and questions.

Your central contractual features of confidentiality and no outside discussion among members around group content or business is a good start for re-negotiating a new group agreement. Ties outside the group need not be viewed as undermining group cohesion. There needs to be a clear agreement that all that occurs in the group stays in the group and that violations of this agreement are explored and processed. Such an understanding will promote safety and containment.

Sub-groupings and hierarchical relationships are inevitable in work

settings. The best preparation for dealing with these complex challenges is your attendance to the task of the group. The more clearly you keep your eye on the ball of the group's purpose and goals, the more this will ensure its survival and integrity.

It is important to remember that this is not a therapy group. You are not a therapist but rather a facilitator of group process. In this role, you are not attending to the members as patients or clients, e.g. selecting the members, being aware and knowledgeable about their histories, or concerned with symptoms or character issues. Your main goal and role as the leader is to facilitate the process as it relates to case management or a clinical issue.

If a supervision group explores their own process—this must be articulated and agreed to by the members. Even then, this is challenging. Mental health professionals often feel anxious and vulnerable to a here and now or parallel process in group supervision. It is much easier to focus on the "other," i.e., the case. Again, if the purpose or main task of the group is to explore one's personal or countertransference reaction to a particular case, then this must be clearly explicated and agreed to by the members. I might add here that this focus would necessitate the members having some training and experience. It would also be imperative that the leader be familiar with this method. I refer you to the work of David Altfeld and Eleanor Counselman and Peter Gumpert.

You have an unusually rich opportunity—using your group therapy skills to manage the process—to engage a supervision group that is supportive, nurturing, and safe. Whether the group ends and begins again with new goals, structure, and agreements or re-negotiates its goals, structure, and agreements, it will be an experience that has the potential of being meaningful, deep, and effective.

**Joanne Lipner, LICSW, CGP**



# On Writing, Parallel Process, and Group

Nancy Goldner LICSW, PhD, CGP

A few years ago, I hatched an idea for a self-help book. Early on, I produced a chapter-by-chapter outline and completed a draft of two chapters with two more to write. But, for the last six months, I have been stuck. I am quite frustrated at feeling stuck. My final two chapters remain unwritten even as thoughts about them keep swirling about in my mind.

How to get unstuck? Through an interesting experience of parallel process unfolding between a long term patient and me, I realize the answer may come in utilizing the power of group.

## Parallel Process

Jane (not her real name) is “stuck” with her book project having had many stops and starts. She is an associate professor at a large university. Her difficulty starting to write and complete a book based on her original research was the main reason she sought therapy with me some years ago. This is the “missing piece” from her Curriculum Vitae (CV), the record of her academic accomplishments. The fact of its absence from her CV causes Jane great anguish, even shame, despite her other considerable accomplishments. Jane knows that with a contract to publish her book from an academic publisher, she would be promoted to full professor at a higher salary but she will not put herself forward for promotion without a book contract. As a result, Jane carries a deep sense of inferiority in relation to her academic peers.

In therapy, Jane is becoming aware of what underlies her writing inhibition. At times, this awareness opened up new psychological space for her in which she gets temporarily “unstuck.” However, unblocking and finishing her book still is the main focus of the clinical work Jane and I are doing together.

Something revelatory happened when I put on my own “writer’s hat” a few years ago. I entered into parallel process with Jane. The term parallel process refers to a dynamic that arises when a patient’s particular issue is simultaneously echoed in a therapist’s own subjective experience. Specifically, I began to experience my own “writer’s block,” that universal resistance among writers, and now could say with compelling immediacy, “this is

what being stuck feels like,” this agonizing push and pull that Jane must go through on a daily basis, this paralyzing approach-avoidance conflict.

A clear example from a recent session with Jane shows how parallel process actually unfolded between us. At this session, Jane told me she had been writing a grant application to finance research for a second book she is thinking about doing. As I heard this, I felt critical towards her for not focusing on her current book project even though Jane communicated feeling positive about writing at all. Then, with some encouragement by a colleague, a few days later, I sat down at my computer to write this short article for the NSGP newsletter. I realized that just by writing this article, I felt validated in my capacity to put my words on paper and even enjoyed doing so. In other words, I flexed my heretofore slack “writing muscles,” as it were, just as Jane was doing by writing a grant application, although neither of us was working on our book manuscripts at this point. Just as in physical exercise, I know we will need to repeat our “writing workouts” in a consistent way for our “writing muscles” to keep being developed and strengthened.

Even if both Jane and I remain “stuck” for now, my experience of parallel process has given me a useful tool for increasing my empathy for her writing inhibition and self-compassion for my own. Just as useful for both of us, I had traced the roots of Jane’s “writer’s block” to her expectation of negative criticism from prospective editors and readers, an expectation arising from an introjected disaffirming parental voice from her childhood. In a parallel way, I also hear a disaffirming voice. This gave me new insight into how creativity is thwarted by letting toxic introjects from the past be in control in the here-and-now as Jane and I wrestle with the push and pull of sitting down to write. Through my parallel process with Jane, I have become acutely aware that a fear of being harshly judged holds both of us back from the full flowering of our innate talent and aspirations.

## Why a Writing Group

So if insight and understanding are not sufficient for us to get unstuck and complete our book projects, what else could be? From many years of leading

and being part of groups, I know that a group experience can counter the toxic introjects that thwart our aspirations and stall our creative process. This happens when a group functions as a good parent to the members, filling in maturational gaps.

For a child to get the best start in life, her parent needs to provide affirmation, approval, structure and direction. Jane and I did not have that best start, so as adults we struggle to unleash our creative potential. We struggle to take ourselves by the hand and say, “now it’s time to write,” just as a good parent would say, “now it’s time to do your homework.” We struggle not to succumb to the disaffirming internalized parental messages as we face the eternal blank page and, instead, to hear an encouraging voice. We struggle not to feel hopeless about getting back to writing and, instead, to engage our sense of mastery.

By joining a writing group, each of us would no longer be alone in our struggle. That is why I risked suggesting it to Jane when we considered ways to support her getting unstuck. Like a good parent, a writing group could provide encouragement and convey hope; I imagine the group members saying, “You can do this.” A group could provide affirmation and approval; I imagine the group members saying, “This is good, needs editing but it’s still good.” A group could provide structure and direction; I imagine the group members saying, “Commit to bringing new material each time we meet.” And a group could express pride in my accomplishment; I imagine the group members saying, “Great job” when I tell them I have completed my manuscript.

Jane did not follow up on my suggestion to find and join a writing group. This fits with Jane’s tendency to isolate, a behavior pattern that no doubt also gets in the way of her getting unstuck. With great trepidation, she did seek feedback from a colleague. We both acknowledge that this took courage on her part. As for me, I am still looking for a “good parent” writing group of my own.





## Group Therapy: Face Time in The Age of Facebook

The theme of this year's conference has to do with the impact of technology and instant communication on the relationships in which we are involved and the work that we do.

In that context, many important questions and concerns arise.

For example, what constitutes the boundary between private information and public exposure when the internet has become a major, if not primary, modality of social connection? Does not our experience and meaning of connectedness change if we can connect 24/7 without ever meeting?

Although Facebook has brought us to a universe in which we can know so much more about each other, do we not wonder if anyone is recognizing the boundaries that exist between people? Perhaps more importantly, does not the very concept of boundaries, need redefinition?

And while we might marvel that Skype has offered clinicians a modality for supervision and training over distance, do we not, should we not, harbor significant concerns and misgivings about such progress?

We hope that the Conference will stimulate ideas about this topic and provide a format to recognize, discuss, and fruitfully help each other to better understand this significant cultural phenomenon. In that regard, both the two-part Special Presentation and the Experience Group have been integrated thematically this year; we urge you to plan to attend all three events.

The Rice Memorial Fund, with its mission to advance knowledge in the area of trauma prevention and treatment, joined to develop and sponsor the Special Presentation.

### Special Presentation

#### ***Social Networking and The Group Self***

Saturday's panelists will explore some of the benefits and ethical and clinical concerns that have arisen as boundaries and conventions of privacy have shifted.

They are:

Lise Motherwell, PhD, PsyD, CGP, FAGPA

Andrew Eig, PhD, ABPP

Richard Billow, PhD, ABPP

Sunday's panelists will describe different projects promoting community and mental health which rely on technological assists.

They are:

Jeffrey Kleinberg, PhD, MPH, ABPP, FAGPA, CGP

Richard Fletcher, PhD

### Demonstration Group

#### ***Group Without Borders: Group Support Across Distance***

The Demonstration group will bring the virtual group into the same space as the real, with group members meeting initially remotely from the leader, and then processing the experience in a face-to-face format. The group will be more like a consultation and training group, however, than a process-oriented therapy group.

The conference brochure is available online at [www.nsgp.com](http://www.nsgp.com) and you can register online.

New to NSGP, I am pleased to introduce my private practice in Cambridge. My practice provides individual, couples, and group psychotherapy for adults. Referrals are welcome.

### **Childhood Trauma Group Now Forming**

I am now accepting referrals for an ongoing childhood trauma group to help men and women understand the impact of early trauma on their current lives and relationships. A second group will be starting this spring. The fee is \$50 per session. The group will meet on Monday evenings in Porter Square, Cambridge.

For more information about my practice, please call or send me an email. Please also visit my web site.

#### **Amy Matias PhD, LICSW**

5 Upland Road, Suite 2, Cambridge MA 02140  
(617) 650-9829 amy@matiascounseling.com  
[www.matiascounseling.com](http://www.matiascounseling.com)

### **Support and Self Care Group for Mothers of Adult Children with Major Mental Illnesses**

This is a support group for women who have grown children with a major mental illness. Having a positive relationship with an adult child with a major mental illness requires great skill and the ability to tolerate distress. These mothers are filled with love and fear, concern and helplessness, an overwhelming desire to help, the wish for a road map and the desire for a crystal ball. With this in mind, this support group will encourage good self care and promote resilience. It will meet on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month from 6:00-7:30 p.m. near Harvard Square. The fee is \$45.

To make a referral, please feel free to contact me at (617) 661-5310 or [deboracarmichael@verizon.net](mailto:deboracarmichael@verizon.net).

I look forward to working with you,  
**Debora Carmichael, PhD, CGP**

### **\*NSGP Special Event\***

## **Psychiatric Medications 101**

Sunday, April 7, 2013

5:00–7:45 pm

The NSGP Training Committee  
invites you to attend an intimate evening with colleagues and presenter

#### **David Dybdal, MD, PhD**

Medical Director of NSGP, a Boston psychiatrist in private practice and a Clinical Instructor in Psychiatry for Harvard Medical School.

The event will be a brief overview of and discussion about psychiatric medications for non-MD's, including general classes of medications, indications for use, side effects, and resources for further exploration.

Hosted by: Steffen Fuller (Newton, MA)

Fees: \$35 for NSGP members  
\$40 for non-NSGP members

Seating is limited to 20 people. Light supper will be served.  
Continuing Education credits will be offered.

Please RSVP to Susan Wade at:  
[groups@nsgp.com](mailto:groups@nsgp.com)

(Directions to be provided prior to event for those registered)

# Getting to Know... Susan Wade, NSGP Office Manager

Jenn McLain, MD, CGP

**T**his February, I sat down with Susan Wade at the NSGP office in Belmont to get to know our organization's newest office manager.

**JM: How long have you been working with us?**

**SW:** Since August.

**JM: What were you doing before?**

**SW:** I used to own a bead store down the road, and I sold it 2 years ago. I still teach beading and sell my own jewelry.

**JM: How did you learn about the opportunity at NSGP?**

**SW:** I was thinking of getting a part-time job. I must have sent out about 100 resumes. [NSGP] just caught my eye. It was a nonprofit organization, and the office is less than 4 minutes from where I live. In my mind, I thought, "This could be the last one I send out" because I had not been getting a lot of responses, and then Deb Carmichael called and we interviewed over the phone.

**JM: How has the transition been, from the creative side to this?**

**SW:** I have done administrative work all my life, but this is the first time I haven't been trained! But everybody has been so helpful and understanding that it makes up for it.

**JM: That sounds a bit intimidating. And I remember Peter [Gumpert] writing about your organizing the office.**

**SW:** Yes, we're slowly working to get it presentable, in the hopes that if someone wants to have a meeting, this is an alternative place they can use. We cleaned up records that have been here since the '50s!

**JM: What's been the most enjoyable thing about the job? The most challenging?**

**SW:** The most challenging has been getting the approvals for the Continuing Education credits. It's nerve-racking! If you don't do it correctly, they'll kick it back. And enjoyable...all the members. Everyone is just so pleasant.

**JM: Tell me some fun facts about yourself outside of work.**

**SW:** I've been married for about 200 years—for 27 years, with 2 grown boys, a dog and a cat. I still live in the town I grew up in, still have my best friends from Junior High. I have been making jewelry, that's a big part of my life, and we were raised to volunteer, so I used to volunteer time at the Watertown Library, and right now I have a friend who is very ill and so several of us are taking turns helping out to allow her to stay in her home.

**JM: How did you get into jewelry making?**

**SW:** I'm actually disabled myself, and I had to have some surgeries and stay in bed after that, and ... a good friend of mine had started beading, and she showed me a particular stitch, and after that it was over. I can't draw a straight line, so I never thought I'd be able to do anything like this. I have severe Rheumatoid Arthritis, and beading they think has actually kept my hands from turning into claws. It takes me longer to do things than other beaders, and I might do it a little differently, but I've also met a lot of handicapped people that I've taught—I taught a blind person one time.

**JM: Do you feel comfortable with my mentioning your disability in the article?**

**SW:** Yes. I want people to know that when you have a sudden sickness or illness, that sometimes there is hope. I mean, your life changes, definitely, but it doesn't have to all be for the worst.

**JM: I imagine you must have watched a lot of movies during your recoveries as well. Do you have a favorite movie genre?**

**SW:** Horror. My husband won't watch them, he thinks it's strange, but my sons and I watch them together.

**JM: What's the best piece of information or advice you've picked up in life so far?**

**SW:** Don't give up.

**JM: Being in Boston, I have to ask about your favorite sports team?**

**SW:** My favorites are the Bruins and the Red Sox. The Patriots I like because my godchild's older sister was a cheerleader for them until last year.

**JM: NSGP members have been known to enjoy telling jokes at times. Do you have a favorite joke?**

**SW:** I love them! I can't think of any now, but I like silly, silly jokes.

**JM: Is there any experience with a group in your life that stands out to you?**

**SW:** My friends from Junior High, there's like 5 or 6 of us, and we know we are unique in that we are all still very close, our kids are close, we are all still in the town we grew up in, and our families have histories in Watertown. We've just been so close and supportive of each other.

**JM: Has having that group of people in your life made a difference, allowed you to do something you wouldn't have done otherwise?**

**SW:** It makes you feel accepted. I know that no matter what I do, they'll be there for me and I will be there for them. When I first got sick, I was in a wheelchair and my children were little, and my friends were there to pick them up from preschool so that my husband could continue to work.

**JM: Anything else you'd like our membership to know about you?**

**SW:** If they have any questions about anything, feel free to call me. Many people here already have my cell phone number. They can always call me.

**JM: Any no-call hours?**

**SW:** No, actually. If I'm busy, I have no problem not answering my phone. [laughs] I'm not a slave to my cell phone.



## Caption This!

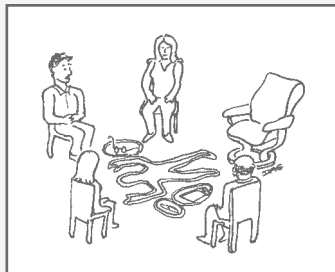
Please submit a caption for this cartoon to [newsletter@nsgp.com](mailto:newsletter@nsgp.com).  
The winning entries will be announced in the next issue.



Drawn by David Goldfinger

## Winners for the Fall, 2012 cartoon

Selected by the Cartoon Committee  
(Ellen Ziskind, Alan Witkower, & Oona Metz)



### Fourth runner up:

"I thought he welcomed ALL feelings, including murderous rage." —Lise Motherwell

### Third runner up:

"I heard that group can be scary, but this is *really* scary." —Bet MacArthur

### Second runner up:

"Wow! We should rethink the 'words can never hurt you' thing." —George Dominiak

### First runner up:

"Just like Joe, always wanting to be the center of attention." —Marian Menkel

### The winning caption:

"Wow! That interpretation really fell flat!" —Steve Haut

## NSGP Foundation Holds Tribute for Anne Alonso

**A**nne Alonso was an inspirational leader who shared her passion for group with countless trainees and colleagues. A stalwart believer in the power of groups to heal, Anne was a generous and gifted teacher, supervisor, and mentor. To mark the 5th anniversary of her death and to pay homage to her group work, the NSGP Foundation held a tribute to Anne on November 11, 2012 at the home of Pat Doherty. We asked several colleagues to comment on Anne's work and her impact on them.

From **Jerry Gans**:

Anne was a wonderful mentor and looking back, I can identify a number of traits that made her mentoring so successful: generosity, authenticity, integrity, honesty, warmth, and compassion. Anne had a marvelous ability to get people involved, to inspire them and, most amazingly, to help them realize abilities they did not know they possessed, and to accomplish things they never thought possible.

As an example, Anne was instrumental in my writing journal articles, providing sound advice, encouragement, and constructive criticism. There is no doubt in my mind that my writing and publishing success would not have been possible without Anne's confidence in me and her ongoing guidance and support. In addition, I have been inspired to give back, to collaborate on several papers with younger authors, mentoring them in turn. I am one of a large number of present-day mentors for whom Anne provided primary mentoring.

It is not only what Anne did, but also the way she did it that inspired so many people to realize the best in them. Anne worked very hard, took courageous stands on important and controversial issues, and followed through on responsibilities she had assumed. Anne played the cards she was dealt and never whined: instead she persevered with a sense of determination, optimism, and creativity.

A portrait of Anne would not be complete without noting that with all Anne's brilliance, creativity, and achievement, she was a lot of fun, she was playful, and she loved a good laugh.

(continued on page 15)

**NSGP Foundation Holds Tribute for Anne Alonso**

(continued from page 14)

From **Priscilla Kauff**:

Anne had a natural talent for forming and maintaining connections. She urged me out of a semi-retirement from AGPA after my children were born, inviting me to come to Atlanta and participate with her on a panel. She encouraged me throughout the writing of a chapter on psychoanalytic group psychotherapy for her book with Hillel Swiller that was being stalled by illness in my family. She invited me to join the faculty at the Center for Psychoanalytic Studies, and while driving to Harvard every three weeks wasn't always easy, it was always fun and worthwhile.

In the spring of 2006, Anne invited me to go to the Shanghai Mental Health Center. Our mission to teach analytic therapy morphed almost immediately into a full-scale introduction to analytic group psychotherapy for which our Chinese colleagues were enthusiastically hungry. Many of that original group are now the leaders of group therapy in Shanghai and elsewhere in China. This is exactly what Anne and I hoped for during and long after our visit. She would have been thrilled to see how our work evolved.

I miss Anne at AGPA because our time always included crazy shopping trips and dinners with close friends that were zany and warm and nourishing (if somewhat tipsy). I miss her on the phone and e-mail, sharing news of our families, gossip, and sometimes even profound thoughts. I wish I could still do that with her but I will do it inside for as long as I can.

From **Scott Rutan**:

I met Anne in the early 1970's and was fortunate enough to be able to call her my friend and my colleague from then until her untimely death in 2007. We worked together, led an observed group together, wrote together, had offices side-by-side, taught together, and played together all those years.

When we first met, Anne had only her Master's Degree, and it was not even in psychology. It was earned at Harvard's School of Education. That was a source of considerable embarrassment to her at the time, whereas for me, I found it a measure of her enormous abilities that in the 1970's and 1980's in the male-dominated, physician-dominated world of the Massachusetts General Hospital Department of Psychiatry, Anne was perhaps the most sought after teacher in the department.



**Pat Doherty, Ramon Alonso, & Lise Motherwell**



**Priscilla Kauff & Jerry Gans**

Anne was a born teacher. She would expend boundless energy in her teaching. In fact, she would expend boundless energy in most anything that attracted her passion. Everything she touched, she impacted in a major way. Some examples would include The Massachusetts General Department of Psychiatry, The Boston Institute for Psychotherapy, The Fielding Institute, The Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy, and the American Group Psychotherapy Association. She served as President of the latter two.

*Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,  
For the lesson thou hast taught!  
Thus at the flaming forge of life  
Our fortunes must be wrought;  
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped  
Each burning deed and thought.*

—The last stanza of Longfellow's  
*The Village Blacksmith.*

From **Libby Shapiro**:

Those of you who know that I worked closely with Anne at MGH for 20 years might assume that I would write about Anne at work. No, I want to write about Anne's eggplant. I don't know if this dish has a name—I doubt it—probably just some dish she learned to make early on and perfected over the years, but it might just be the most delicious dish I've ever eaten. I can get all choked up thinking about Anne's eggplant and I think it's because it encapsulates everything I loved about her.

When Anne hosted and fed us, she did it with such effortless grace.

Anne always made me feel like there was nowhere else she'd rather be than where she was, sharing her culinary delights, sharing a laugh, sharing her wisdom.

Although Anne became comfortable financially and was internationally renowned, she was never fussy, pretentious, or showy in any way. Her eggplant was emblematic of her truthfulness to her roots and to herself.

I loved the way Anne howled when I told her about my then five year old son's love of her lobster bisque, steak, and eggplant. The next time I was over for dinner, she made the eggplant dish and made sure to cook enough leftovers for him. I miss Anne's grace, her generosity, genuineness, thoughtfulness, and her hearty sense of humor. There was so much more I wanted to share, so much more I had to learn and so much more I wanted to give. Anne lived her life with such passion that I, probably all of you, and certainly all the eggplants in the world will never be the same without her.



### **Scholarship Fund to Honor Anne Alonso**

So many of us were fortunate to benefit from Anne's gifts as a teacher, mentor, friend, and supervisor that we want to "pay it forward." At Anne's tribute, we initiated an NSGP Foundation scholarship fund in her honor to support group therapy training, a passion of hers. We have already raised \$5,000. If we raise \$20,000 by December 2013 we will further honor her by naming the fund after her. This fall, donors to the scholarship fund were eligible to win two theater tickets donated by the Merrimack Repertory Theater and Steve Cadwell was the lucky winner!

*Please send your own generous contributions to: NSGP Foundation, P.O. Box 356, Belmont, MA 02478. Please put "Scholarship Fund" in the memo field. You can also donate online by going to <http://nsgpf.org/pathways.aspx> and selecting the Scholarship Fund.*

# CPT Code Workshop

Carolyn Stone, EdD, CGP

Late one Sunday afternoon in January, about a dozen NSGP members gathered at the home of Peter Gumpert and Sue Silveira to learn about the new CPT codes. The workshop was sponsored by the NSGP Practice Development Task Force and Oona Metz had invited the speaker, Dave Wisholek, from Streamline Health Care Solutions. Dave offered a treasure trove of useful information, not just about the new codes, but also about coding in general and how to document one's work. Dave's business does billing for many mental health practices and individual practitioners. He had done a great deal of research with insurance companies trying to find out what they require in documentation and what they are likely to pay for the new codes. It was clear to us that Dave knows the ropes and he knows where the risks lie.

Dave provided handouts that included a cross walk linking the old codes to the new ones, explained the different time ranges in the codes, and offered information about coding and billing. For instance, did you know that if a client is late enough that he is not there for at

least 38 minutes, you cannot bill for a full individual session (90834)? You are supposed to down code to the shorter 90832 (16-37 minutes). What happens to your compensation? Dave says that some practitioners bill clients for the portion of the session they missed or a late fee. Interesting. Perhaps I need to amend my practice agreement.

Other interesting tidbits came up around billing for couples and family therapy. Many of us have long known that insurances do not cover treatment for a relationship. But it is still a common practice to bill and code couples therapy as family therapy and assign one member of the couple as the identified patient. According to Dave, insurances are clamping down on this practice. Dave cautioned us that if we do bill insurance for couples' therapy that our notes need to reflect that the purpose of the treatment is to treat the identified client's diagnosis under one of three conditions:

1. there is a need to observe the client's interactions with family;
2. there is a need to assess the family's capability to manage the patient or to assist the family in managing the client; or

3. the client is comatose or uncommunicative due to a mental disorder.

Dave believes that insurance companies will be doing more audits and taking back money if the services are not properly documented. This news caused some attendees to consider no longer billing insurance for couples work.

As a child therapist, I have always used the interactive codes, and I went into the meeting thinking that I could no longer do that. I was encouraged by the very specific criteria that Dave provided. He explained how to set up the claim form to bill for interactive complexity as well as how to document it so that we are prepared if audited. In this case the therapist bills two services for the client at the same time, for instance, individual psychotherapy *and* the interactive code. The note for the interactive code should specify which of four possible conditions for the interactive code were met:

1. managing maladaptive communication (high anxiety, high reactivity, repeated questions or disagreement;

*(continued on page 17)*

## NSGP Referral Service

Looking for a Group?

[www.nsgp.com](http://www.nsgp.com)  
(617) 484-4994

Group Psychotherapy offers a rich alternative or adjunct to individual psychotherapy providing clients with an interpersonal experience for healing and growth.

### NEW OFFERING

**ADVERTISE YOUR PRACTICE, GROUPS or OFFICE SPACE in the next NSGP NEWSLETTER!**

**NSGP members can now purchase advertisement space.**

All ads (except classifieds which can be text) **MUST** meet these requirements or will be returned for revision:

- 1) Submitted as a high resolution PDF\* with fonts embedded in the file.
- 2) Must be 300dpi at 100% size, black & white only.

*\*The PDFs should be ready to print directly from the file without need for further processing.*

\$20 -Small Classified ad (25 words max)  
\$50 -Business Card: 3.5"w x 2"h  
\$100 - 1/4 pg vert: 3.5"w x 5"h  
\$200 - 1/2 pg horizontal 7.125"w x 5"h or  
1/2 pg vertical 3.5"w x 10"h

**Questions? See details above or call the NSGP office at (617) 484-4994.**

*The ads will not be edited for accuracy. NSGP does not endorse these groups.*



### CPT Code Workshop

(continued from page 16)

2. caregivers' emotions or behaviors that interfere with caregivers' ability to understand and assist in the treatment plan;
3. evidence of abuse or neglect with report to state agency; or
4. use of play equipment, physical devices, or interpretation in order to communicate with the provider.

For instance, I would note that I met with a 6 year old child who is unable to clearly verbalize his concerns, and we used doll house play to help him do so. Dave did caution us that frequent use of the interactive codes might trigger an audit; thus, good documentation is important.

The hour went on with more specific yet often disheartening information. According to Dave, there have been rumors that insurance companies may

decrease their reimbursement for group psychotherapy even further. We were surprised. It seems to us that group offers an effective and affordable mode of treatment. Evidently that message has not gotten through. Insurers believe that groups are for psycho-education, not treatment. As a result they do not want to pay for them. There were murmurs around the table as people considered no longer billing insurance for group.

We were grateful for the useful information, though we were concerned about the state of insurance reimbursement. All the same it is good to know where you stand. This was a useful and timely workshop.



## CLASSIFIEDS

Space available in newly refurbished and redecorated Cambridge office overlooking Fresh Pond. Office is in well appointed 5-office suite with kitchen and large waiting room, easy parking and elevator. Available up to six days a week, 7 AM to 2 PM. Call Larry Kron 617-448-6237.

Ongoing women's group in Medford, ages 35-55. Focus on personal work relationships, self-worth, assertiveness, anxiety. Accept BC/BS, Aetna, Tufts, selfpay. Call Beth Gingerich 781-396-2540

### Rivkah Lapidus, PhD, LMHC, CGP

North Charles Inc  
Substance Abuse Outreach Coordinator  
IMPACT clinician  
617-661-0405 North Charles  
617-666-2110 (mobile, office, and studio)

## NSGP Foundation Retreat



Alan Witkower & Barbara Keezell



Peter Gumpert, Tracy Tibbetts,  
Walker Shields, & Kelley Bothe



Sara Emerson & Lise Motherwell

## Who Ya Gonna Call?

You are picking up your office after your group at the end of the day. You're a little troubled. Something feels amiss and has felt that way for a few weeks. Your attempts to address the dynamic have fallen flat, and you worry because some members are beginning to talk about what else they could do on Wednesday night. Yikes! Even your consultation group is stymied, or maybe you don't have that resource.

## Who Ya Gonna Call?

Worry not. You're a member of NSGP, right? And NSGP is here to help with the

## Consultation Benefit.

Here's how you set up a consult. Call or e-mail Carolyn Stone ([info@drcarolynstone.com](mailto:info@drcarolynstone.com) or 617-630-1523). Carolyn or someone on the committee finds out what your concern is and contacts two or three senior people in NSGP who have agreed to offer one free hour of consultation per year. She gets back to you with the names and you set up a time (in person or on the phone) with one of the consultants.

That's right. All members of NSGP are entitled to one free hour of consultation about group psychotherapy per calendar year. What a deal!

*The Consultation Benefit cannot be used to address an emergency situation. It is not available to students as they have consultation built into their programs.*

# 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, or a notable change in your life.

**Shoshana Ben-Noam** conducted a workshop entitled: "Benefits and Limitations of Therapist's Self-Disclosure in Group" at EGPS in New York City in November. In February, she also presented "Healing in The Wake of Superstorm Sandy" to the Training Institute of Mental Health in New York City and led a two-day Institute on the topic "Mother-Daughter Interaction through The Group's Hall of Mirrors" at the Annual AGPA Conference in New Orleans.

**Eleanor Counselman** recently completed the Core Skills Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) Training (Level 2) and is working towards certification as an EFT couples therapist. She also had an article called "Treating the Older Couple" published in the Fall 2012 *EGPS Newsletter*, and an article on peer supervision groups in press with the *Psychotherapy Networker*.

**Joe Doherty** writes that he is changing the focus of his practice from doing forensic work to working with adult males. He is also moving his practice from Cambridge to Davis Square, Somerville where he has been told he will be the oldest person there, given that 27 year olds are considered to be "grandparents!"

**Sara Emerson** is teaching Group Therapy at BC GSSW this semester. She writes, "it is a rewarding and challenging experience, but exciting to teach about and spread the 'group' word." In addition, she led an Institute for clinicians with 10+ years of experience at the AGPA conference in New Orleans in February.

**Pamela Enders** recently received the AGPA Affiliate Assembly Award for contributions to NSGP. She presented a 3-hour workshop "Enhance Your Professional Profile and Build Your Clinical Practice Using The Power of Social Media/Social Networking" at the annual conference of the Maine Psychological Association in November 2012. Spurred on by the success of that event plus other similar workshops, Pamela has started a coaching business to help psychotherapists learn how to implement social media to build their practices. On another note, Pam continues to work on her book—*The Mentally Tough Lawyer: Keep Your Cool, Think on Your Feet and Win*. In October, she gave a workshop to the New York City Bar on work-life balance and stress management and gave a similar talk to the Women's Bar Association in December. Additionally, Pamela, along with her colleague Bill Jawitz, is producing a series of podcasts for the American Law Institute Continuing Legal Education Group.

**Congratulations**  
to **Pamela Enders, PhD, CGP**,  
who was awarded the AGPA  
Affiliate Assembly Award for  
her contributions to the  
Northeastern Society for Group  
Psychotherapy!

In November **Bette Freedson** presented an all-day training workshop at the Sweetser Training Institute in Saco, Maine, entitled, "Reach Them While They Dream/Deep Relaxation, Visualization and Didactics Can Combine to Teach Emotional and Social Skills to Kids." In December, she presented a short course at the Milton H. Erickson Foundation's 2012 Brief Therapy Conference, entitled, "Brief Therapy with Single Mothers/The Transformational Alchemy of Metaphor." In April, she will present another workshop at the Sweetser Training Institute, "Enhance Your Practice and Your Clients' Lives with Group Work," and is looking forward to the publishing in 2014 of her almost-finished book, entitled *Soul Mothers' Wisdom/Seven Insights for the Single Mother*.

**Caren Glickson** was recently licensed in Florida (in addition to previously-held NY and CT licenses), where she is conducting intensive couples therapy at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach. She also obtained Board Certification in Group Psychotherapy from the ABPP in Sept 2012! She credits Skype supervision with **Cecil Rice** for helping her review everything she knows about group therapy immediately before the oral exam in Chicago, and hopes to bring analytic group therapy to Miami.

**Barbara Keezell** led a two-day Institute at AGPA in New Orleans entitled "Projective Identification and Countertransference." She was also appointed to serve as Co-Chair, along with **Theresa Bullock Cohen**, for the Local Hosting Arrangements Task Force for AGPA's 2014 conference, which will be held in Boston.

**Lawrence Kron** led a series of group counseling sessions for ALS staff at the Leonard Florence Center in Chelsea, MA. He also presented a workshop on the topic "Money and the Group Therapist's Countertransference" at the AGPA conference in New Orleans in February.

**Joanne Lipner** will be co-leading an experiential workshop with Katherine Morrell at the New England Society for Modern Group Studies Annual Workshop in Bar Harbor, Maine in July. The title is "The Cowardly Lion, The Tin Man, The Scarecrow, and Dorothy: The Group and the Search for the Missing Pieces."

**Jenn McLain** received her CGP this winter from the National Registry of Certified Group Therapists. She ran a half-day workshop at the AGPA Annual Conference in February exploring the concept of "labels" in group therapy, and is looking forward to honeymooning in Southeast Asia this spring. On another celebratory personal note, her flag football team won their division's Superbowl championship for the second year in a row!

**Oona Metz** is happy to be starting a fourth group this winter. She is looking forward to attending AGPA in New Orleans this year and leading a two-day Institute at AGPA next year. In the fall, she hosted an NSGP Practice Development Task Force Event at her new house featuring **Pamela Enders**, who engaged members on the topic of web marketing.

📌 **Lise Motherwell** and **Joseph Shay** are editing a 2nd Edition of *Complex Dilemmas in Group Therapy: Pathways to Resolution*. It will contain two new chapters and many new dilemmas, and is expected to be published in 2014.

📌 **David Poles** has begun an Executive Coaching service in the field of addictions.

📌 **Betsy Ross** is looking forward to running another "Divorce and Renewal" weekend in Connecticut this spring.

📌 **Scott Rutan** will be the featured speaker at the Carolinas Group Psychotherapy Society in Durham, NC in April, on "Intimacy in Group Psychotherapy: Connecting, Interpreting and Confronting." Later in the month, he will also be the featured speaker, on the topic of "Belonging as a Healing Factor in Group Psychotherapy," to the Austin Group Psychotherapy Society in Austin, TX.

📌 **Daniel Schacht** enjoyed teaching a course on the clinical skills of family therapy for the Boston University School of Social Work this winter. Immersing himself further into the identity of suburban dweller, he is also trying to learn how to play golf.

📌 **Sharan Schwartzberg** co-chaired the open session "Manualization: The Gold Road to Group Therapy Practice" at the AGPA Annual meeting March 1st with Bernhard Strauss. She was also a Psychodynamic Process Group Experience Institute Leader at that meeting, and was awarded Fellow American Group Psychotherapy Association (FAGPA) there. In addition, Sharan gave the Keynote Address: "Groups in Occupational Therapy—What for and How?" and led a workshop, "Process Group Experience: The Functional Group Model," for the Israeli Society of Occupational Therapy and Israeli Association of Group Psychotherapy at Tel Aviv University, Israel in February. Finally, she was an invited speaker to the Graduate Program in Occupational Therapy at the Tokyo Metropolitan University in Tokyo last November.

📌 **Marian Shapiro** was thrilled—and amazed—this past Fall to be nominated for the Pushcart Prize for a poem, "Finding You," that was published in the *Journal of Modern Poetry*. She writes, "It was such an honor. I went to the event, a reading and award ceremony, in Chicago, being there and back in less than 24 hours. But it was worth it."

📌 **William Sharp** is happy to have leased new private practice space in Brookline for group, couples, and individual work.

📌 **Joe Shay** presented "I Shoulda Been a Librarian: The Perils of Group Therapy (and the Joys)" at the MGH Center for Group Psychotherapy Fall Dinner. In addition, he was the featured speaker at the Annual Conference of the Northern California Group Psychotherapy Society where he presented "Projective Identification Goes to the Movies." Joe also presented "Betrayal in Relationships: Infidelity and Couples Therapy" to the PCFINE second year class and kicked off the annual PCFINE Faculty Dinner with a talk entitled, "I Thought It Would Be Easier Than This: The Perils of Couples Therapy." In February, he chaired a panel "Mapping Theory to Technique: Where the Model Meets the Method" at the AGPA Annual Conference in New Orleans. Finally, Joe reviewed *The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Group Psychotherapy* in the latest issue of IJGP.

📌 **Carolyn Stone** gave a talk to parents of children at the Riverbend School in Natick in January. Her topic was "Tired of Nagging? Ways to Increase Cooperation in Your Family."

📌 **Maxine Sushelsky** is participating in the Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association training program to become a Certified LMHC Supervisor.

📌 **Marsha Vannicelli** presented a workshop with Jeffrey Mendell at the annual meeting of AGPA entitled "Endings: the Bitter and the Sweet." She has also been asked to write an overview chapter on group therapy and substance for the second edition of the book *Complex Dilemmas in Group Therapy* by **Joe Shay** and **Lise Motherwell**.

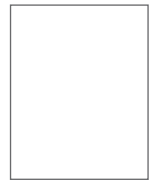
📌 Last fall, **Bob Weber** led a seven session reading/discussion group for the Xaverian Brothers' retirement community in Danvers, MA entitled "Pilgrimage into the Last Third of Life: 7 Gateways to Spiritual Growth." In January, he traveled to Mepkin Abbey, a Trappist monastery in South Carolina, to co-lead the inaugural workshop and retreat for the Contemplative Aging Group, an initiative of the monks at the monastery to serve baby boomers and beyond in their spiritual journeys.

📌 **Kurt White** is excited to be taking on new responsibilities as Director of Ambulatory Services at the Brattleboro Retreat hospital in Brattleboro, VT. His new position will involve overseeing outpatient mental health and addiction services, intensive outpatient and partial hospitalization services including the uniformed service workers program. He is likewise excited about the upcoming opening of a behavioral chronic pain management program, where all interventions will be group based. He will continue his direct clinical work and teaching responsibilities.

📌 **Ellen Ziskind** co-edited a book called *Internal Family Systems Therapy: New Dimensions* published by Routledge in February.



**Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy, Inc.**  
 PO Box 356  
 Belmont, MA 02478-3201  
 (617) 484-4994  
 www.nsgp.com



## Group Therapy: Face Time in The Age of Facebook

NSGP's 32nd Annual Conference!  
 June 14, 15 & 16, 2013

### 2013-2014 NSGP Events Calendar

Apr. 7, 2013	<b>SPECIAL EVENT:          Psychiatric Medications 101</b> David Dybdal, MD, PhD
Apr. 14, 2013	<b>Breakfast Club</b> 11-1:30 — with Judith Silverstein, PhD <i>Sexual Addiction and Compulsion</i> Hosted by Jim Leone—Belmont
June 14-16, 2013	<b>Register Early! Register Online!</b> <b>Group Therapy: Face Time in The Age of Facebook</b> 32nd Annual Northeastern Society for Group Psychotherapy Conference
Sept. 22, 2013	<b>Breakfast Club</b> 11-1:30 — with Theresa Bullock Cohen, LICSW <i>Marketing Your Private Practice</i> Hosted by Eleanor Counselman—Belmont
Oct. 20, 2013	<b>Breakfast Club</b> 11-1:30 — with Oona Metz, LICSW, CGP <i>Field Notes from a Psychodynamic Therapist Leading Divorce Support Groups. Is it "Support" or Is It "Therapy" and What Is the Difference Anyway?</i> Hosted by Scott Rutan—Chestnut Hill
Dec. 8, 2013	<b>Breakfast Club</b> 11-1:30 — with Nancy Goldner, PhD, LICSW, CGP <i>Attachment Style and Living Solo: Group Psychotherapy with Single Adults</i> Hosted by Barbara Keezell—Newton
Jan. 12, 2014	<b>Breakfast Club</b> 11-1:30 — with Bob Weber, PhD, CGP <i>Spirituality in Groups</i> Hosted by Geri & Scott Reinhardt—Newton
Mar. 3-8, 2014	<b>AGPA in BOSTON!</b> <i>Stay Tuned for further information!</i>
Mar. 23, 2014	<b>Breakfast Club</b> 11-1:30 — with Maxine Sushelsky, LMHC <i>What's Grief Got to Do with It: Traveling through Loss with Clients</i> Hosted by Julie Anderson—Brookline
Apr. 13, 2014	<b>Breakfast Club</b> 11-1:30 — with Joel Krieg, LICSW <i>Transitions in Group Leadership</i> Hosted by Joyce & Walker Shields—Belmont

For more information or to sign up, please contact the office at 617-484-4994 or [groups@nsgp.com](mailto:groups@nsgp.com).