



## Houston Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

### President's Letter

Dear Colleagues,

I am sorry for the long delay in my letter to you. We **ARE** having a February Workshop! The delay was in confirming who was available to be our speaker. I am pleased to announce that we have asked Beryl Kaminsky to speak to us on grief. She will talk to us on its theories and if there is time, will share some new research she has completed around grief. We will meet at the Council on Alcohol and Drugs – Houston and will be in Room B 164. Please join for the networking/social time between 11 and 11:30. Beryl will begin speaking at 11:30.

### TAMFT

It was a very rich experience; three days of great sessions and presenters left me tired, yet inspired as I drove the four and a half hours home on Saturday afternoon. While driving, I came upon a song by Emmylou Harris, called Brand New Dance, that summed up what I took from my three days in Ft. Worth – a person's, a couple's and a families ability to create a new story. I've included a verse and the chorus to explain my point.

*There will always be days  
When it don't seem to pay  
When it just doesn't rhyme  
Well, that's bound to happen  
Some of the time  
Our best days aren't gone  
We don't need to move on  
Well, maybe we should try  
But I don't think you could take it  
And neither could I*

*And anyway...*

*I never would*

*Never could*

*Never will ever kill what's between us*

*So let's try again*

*We'll start a brand new dance*

*Between old friends*

What Monica McGoldrick showed us in her genograms, and in family patterns of behaviors, and what Sue Johnson expanded for us in her talks on a theory of love, the power of attachment, and the importance of emotion, I felt that finding that song on my way home summed up what both presenters were saying – people do have the power to change how they relate to one another, and that attachment is central to all relationships.

Aside from being in sessions, we heard from the Director of AAMFT, Michael Bowers, who reported his support for all Texas MFT's in the TMA case against TSBEMFT, and told us that the firm of Baker Botts was lead counsel in this case for TSBEMFT. He further encouraged everyone to donate to FamilyPAC as a way to help make our case against TMA stronger. At the end of the conference, TAMFT had raised over \$10,000 in PAC funds!

The next business matter of the weekend was to get more clarity on membership; it is understood that HAMFT members still need to be AAMFT/TAMFT members as well. For those who are not AAMFT/TAMFT members and do not want to renew or reinstate their membership with them, will now need to pay a yearly subscription to HAMFT. This amount will need to be voted on, so, please look on our website for updates on this at the end of February to the beginning of March.

While in Ft. Worth, I met many new faces – students and professional alike, who were impressed with HAMFT – our past workshops, our goals for programs, and our meandering draw to students and MFT's new to Texas. So, in support of our growing student members, I would like to ask our clinical, associate, and affiliate members to please refer any individuals, couples, or families to the UHCL Psychological Service Clinic for current students to get practice and exposure to doing therapy in their practicum classes. There does not need to be specific presenting problems with any group– just a desire to come to therapy and to want something different. To get more information, please contact Dr. Ray Pledger at: [pledger@uhcl.edu](mailto:pledger@uhcl.edu) and/or 281-283-3330.

## **HAMFT MEETING UPDATE**

On our website, it lists in several places that we still meet at the United Way; that is incorrect. We now meet, and will continue to meet, at the

**Council on Alcohol and Drugs – Houston**

**303 Jackson Hill**

**Houston, TX 77007**

I will make sure our website is updated with this information.

## **WARM HEARTH**

We supported two students by way of Warm Hearth to go to TAMFT. Here are both student's account of their experiences:

*My Invaluable Visit to Cow Town!*

*The Annual Texas Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Conference*

*By: Laura J. Wildermuth*

*What an informative and FUN conference! Nestled among the workshops I participated in, was the UHCL Alumni Reception and what a wonderful opportunity that was to connect with past graduates of the program! I was able to speak with many of the past graduates and to be further informed on the state of the profession in the Houston Area. This portion of the weekend in Ft. Worth was priceless and made me feel very fortunate to be a part of the legacy that is - The UHCL Family Therapy Program!*

*Additionally, the first workshop I attended presented by Dr. Becky Davenport regarding play therapy both invigorated and confirmed my passion for working with children in the future. As for now, I would like to obtain as much diverse experience with a wide range of populations, however I've always had the passion to ultimately work with children and this particular workshop provided me with a wonderful introduction to play therapy and revived my interest even more.*

*Another extremely helpful and enlightening portion of the workshop was the discussion table at lunch. Simply by chance (as for some reason I was not able to pre-select a topic when registering), I was fortunate enough to spend my lunch with a group that discussed the future of*

*the profession and the details concerning the process from internship, hours required, the licensure exam and process, supervision, as well as being an LMFTA and the challenges that come along with that position and how to manage the stresses of those challenges. As a current second year student, this table was more than applicable to the spot I find myself in currently and what I will face in the very near future.*

*Lastly, being able to meet, "mingle", and hear Dr. Susan Johnson give her talks was amazing. As a student who is currently in practicum with a great supervisor who employs the techniques of Emotionally Focused Therapy in his own practice and passes that knowledge onto his supervisees, I felt incredibly humbled and grateful to hear of these techniques from Dr. Johnson. Throughout my last two semesters of practicum and being able to test some of the methods that accompany EFT, I have found this approach to be very intriguing and an approach that I would, undoubtedly, like to incorporate into my practice of therapy.*

*Thank you to HAMFT for affording me such a wonderful opportunity!!*

*This is Kristina's piece on her experience at TAMFT:*

*Howdy, from Cowtown! The TAMFT conference in Fort Worth was a terrific experience. Hearing Monica McGoldrick speak on genograms and their significance in dealing with loss was a new perspective for me. Before her lecture, I had not put much thought into how you could use loss in the same aspect as culture and gender. In addition, I learned that even after the initial pain of losing a loved one has faded there are still many things that may be embedded in the loss. Secondly, the conference gave me a great opportunity to network with other MFTs including UHCL alumni and even a few HAMFT members. Through the round table luncheon, I was able to learn not only about an interesting field of research but also about one MFT's job developing mental health programs for the military. Overall, the highlight of the conference for me was Sue Johnson's discussion on Saturday. She gave us a vignette of a couple and had us role play a how to work with them using EFT. This was a great opportunity to experience the therapy and practice using it from the creator. Having her give you guidance and positive feedback on your approach was truly a once in life time experience. Thank you for your support in making this trip possible for me.*

*-Kristina Finley*

## ADVERTISING WITH HAMFT

I also wanted to promote and remind our readers about our advertisements! Please make sure and look at what our colleagues are doing out in the community and how they are growing their practice in our newsletter! This is our advertisement policy. Please take a look at it and contact us if you'd like to advertise anything in our newsletter!

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I regret that we still do not have all of programs scheduled for 2009, but know that is the number one agenda item for our board meeting on February 20<sup>th</sup>. We should have more of an idea of what of program line-up will be in March. Please always refer to our newsletter for any questions and alterations in our workshops schedule.

I look forward to seeing you on the 20<sup>th</sup> and at future programs this year!

All My Best,

Dagny Lodowski, MA, LMFT