

December 2019

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Director's Column

by Eleanor Howe, Director



In the beginning of our ICP+P study group cycle a year ago, I joined the newly forming group "*A Psychoanalytic Look at Diversity and Trauma through the Lens of Toni Morrison's Novels*." I did this because I seek to find a place in the racial social justice communities and I knew it could be revealing to immerse myself in literature that is embedded in the African American experience. I am Caucasian and middle-aged. Our leader is Gwen Pla, a recently graduated analyst in ICP+P's program. Gwen is African American, and my elder. Gwen's pace is measured, and this helps us take time to arrange our thoughts. By implicit agreement, our group speaks gently with one another. Creating our group norms, we've shared stories each has lived in which race or otherness was a significant factor. Our group has become a place I feel I can ask questions about DC cultural expectations in the African American communities – questions I may have held inside for years sensing that it's better to wait until it's a good time to ask. I cherish this relative safety while I nevertheless take measures not to presume too much. Toni Morrison is an extraordinary writer and we are continually moved by her use of language to develop the internal experience of multiple characters and time periods. Trauma, violence, race, love and fidelity, identity and their intersectionality become real in our imaginations. Each month, we discuss another novel. And so, it was empathic and insightful when, after about our fourth meeting and our fourth novel, out of an unusual silence Gwen queried of our group, "Are you all right?" No, I thought, I was not all right. The cumulative horror was crushing. But this was not my story; this was not my trauma; and I felt I needed to be all right enough to bear witness. So I guessed I was okay while not in any way all right. It helps that we are together in a safe space.

I've been thinking about my holding back questions that intersect with race and otherness. It seems my response to racial trauma leans toward a "freeze." In another person's territory, I can so easily stumble – I might commit a microaggression or engage without notice in empathic failure. Of the many ways of being different, it is especially when I am aware of racial differences with another that I see myself preferring caution over risking a stumble. But too much caution will keep me apart from others. And holding myself apart at a time when something is happening may itself constitute a microaggression.

I can learn to do better than this, up my game. After all, there are other places where I don't hold back. For one, I know I'm responsible for educating myself through reading books, articles, social media postings, attending conferences and workshops, and talking with younger people, who catch me up on what's current in culture. I consciously educate myself *in vivo* as I interact with strangers on the street or in places of business, with acquaintances at the gym and with colleagues and friends. At the gym, where I am racially in the minority, I use my natural love of movement to foster connection, and there is anything but "freeze" for me there. We are all serious about learning the choreography and moving ourselves toward being spot on the beat. We know our bodies look and move differently. Still, we find these moments of shared bliss and sometimes we break

out of our boundaried experience to note them, giving a yip or a smile or glancing knowingly at one another. Surely I can transfer lessons of this acquired freedom into my office work.

In my office, I do not dance. I work with my patients with words, affect, gesture; with engagement, the alchemy of our interpersonal styles; through attunement and the mutual regulation we co-create. There are moments of dysjunction, of misattunement, of dysregulation and disconnection. Especially when a patient is *other* along a diversity parameter, I now have to wonder: How much do our differences send me into caution, to holding back my questions at the risk of being overcautious?

How timely a question. I have the opportunity to bring this edge to the upcoming December 7 ICP+P conference with Anton Hart, PhD, where there will be input from our speaker and shared effort with my peers. In one portion of the conference morning, participants will break into small discussion groups with colleagues. In anticipation, we are instructed:

We would like you to start thinking about clinical moments when racial and other diversities have come up either explicitly or implicitly – or haven't, in spite of the otherness in the room....How easy or difficult was it to address? What did it feel like? What got stirred up for you? For the client?

What I want is to become more and more facile connecting with others who are *other*....more nuanced at identifying the outer edges within which risk is bearable, in which a shared co-constructed experience can be explored. I have no need to hesitate in this domain of my practice. I do have a need to practice addressing otherness in the room, and I need the company of peers I respect to help me learn new skills. I hope you will be one of the peers joining me there.

Upcoming Training + Education

Conference

Engaging Diversity through the Therapist's Being Moved: Radical Openness and the Patient Who is 'Other'

[More Information](#)

Saturday, December 7, 2019, 9:00 am – 12:30 pm (3 CEs)

[Register Here](#)

Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza, Silver Spring, MD



Featuring Anton H. Hart, PhD, FABP

and Fulfills Diversity Credit Requirement

Patient: "I think you might have prejudice against people like me, and you don't understand and don't really care about people like me as much as you do understand and care about your other patients who are more like you."

Therapist: "I do care about you and, even though we are different from each other in some respects, I believe I have understood a lot. Could it be that you might be *experiencing* me this way because of all you have been through?"

In this clinical exchange, the therapist is openly disclosing aspects of her feelings and intentions in a manner that many psychotherapists might, but she is failing to be open—radically open—to the possible truths contained in what her patient is conveying to her.

Every psychotherapist has had the experience of being seen, by the people whom we

are trying to help, in ways that are different from how we see ourselves. Therapeutic dialogues across the borders of diversity can intensify this dynamic. It can be extremely difficult, for example, to have the subjective experience of feeling dedicated and engaged but, in contrast, be experienced by the person we are working with as detached. Or, similarly, we may have the challenging experience of having predominantly benevolent feelings as we strive to be of help, but being experienced, nevertheless, as dangerous or malevolent. Often, as psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapists, we rely on the concepts of projection and transference to emotionally protect ourselves and sustain us, as we attempt to survive and make therapeutic use of the experience of feeling misrecognized.

This workshop offers an introduction to the presenter's concept of "radical openness" as an alternative to a stance of emphasizing transference conceptualization and interpretation. Fleshing out the concept, we will engage in case-based exercises designed to enhance our abilities to listen openly and receptively to communications that we might otherwise be inclined to experience, both intellectually and emotionally, as misplaced or foreign. In short, a stance of radical openness will be shown to seek to receive our patients' strange experiences of us as if they are bound to contain personal truths and insights, for both them and us alike.

At the conclusion of this conference, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss the anxieties associated with engaging issues of diversity, difference and otherness.
2. Recognize and discuss the central roles of curiosity and radical openness as antidotes to cultural ignorance and insensitivity, and be able to cultivate such qualities in themselves and in their patients.
3. Recognize and discuss pitfalls and breakdowns that can occur in diversity-related explorations and find ways to use these in the service of the restoration of open dialogue.
4. Enhance their capacity for receptive engagement in the psychotherapeutic process by implementing a stance of radical openness.

This conference is appropriate for mental health professionals at all levels of experience and offers 3 Diversity CEs.

Conference

Clinical Reflections

Saturday, February 22, 2020, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm (3 CEs)

Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza, Silver Spring, MD

Please join us for a stimulating clinical forum featuring:

Video Communication and Transgenerational Shame in the Mother/Daughter Bond

Shoshana Ringel, PhD

You Oughta Write a Book! Bringing Your Message to a Wider Community

Dana Harron, PsyD

The Visitor: The Challenge to Live While Dying

Martha Blechar Gibbons, PhD, APRN, BC

SAVE THE DATE

More Information is Coming Soon!

Save the Dates

2019-2020 ICP+P Training + Education

- **December 7, 2019, Conference:** "Engaging Diversity through the Therapist's Being Moved: Radical Openness and the Patient Who is 'Other'" with Anton H. Hart, PhD, Silver Spring Civic Building, 9:00am-12:30pm, 3 CEs. Fulfills Diversity credit requirement. [Register Here](#)
- **February 22, 2020, Conference:** Clinical Reflections (previously Scientific Day), Silver Spring Civic Building, 9:00am-12:30pm, 3 CEs. [Coming Soon](#)
- **May 1, 2020, Pre-Conference:** "Misogyny, Hatred and Envy" with Adrienne Harris, PhD
- **May 2, 2020, Conference:** "Gender Fluidity and Gender Fixed: Contemporary Intersectional and Psychoanalytic Models of Gender and Gender Development" with Adrienne Harris, PhD. Georgetown University Conference Center, 9:00 am-5:00 pm.

News + Notes



Gillian Karp is starting her new solo practice in Bethesda and is an ICP+P Fellow this year. Before this solo practice, she was in a group practice and before that, an EAP with the Federal Government. She was posted in Europe for 3 years during her tenure at the EAP and was the sole psychologist for the region. In her new practice, she is accepting new clients and works with adolescents and adults. She enjoys working with young professionals and college students especially around issues of anxiety and is in network with BCBS/CareFirst. Read more about Gillian in her [Psychology Today profile](#).



Deborah Fox recently blogged about debunking the concept of fighting fair in couples therapy. That posting can be accessed here: <https://www.debfox.com/blog/2019/4/9/how-to-fight-fair>.



International Association for Psychoanalytic Self Psychology chooses one or two papers from each issue of their journal, *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context*, for online discussion by their members. Journal editors Elizabeth Corpt and Annette Richard have selected from the most recent issue ICP+P member Sarah Pillsbury's paper "Mutual Empathy: Imagined Symbol and Realization in the Treatment of Trauma" along with Doris Brothers' discussion of Sarah's paper. Discussion is open for ten days through their listserv.

For your interest, here is the abstract of Sarah Pillsbury's paper:

My work with Laura, the daughter of Holocaust survivors, was challenging, since I am not Jewish. She didn't think I could understand her, as her previous Jewish therapist had. At the beginning of treatment she had difficulty understanding her parents' trauma and its impact on her inner world. She could relate their stories, but kept them at a distance, disavowing their affect and the ever-present specter of death. I could sense her strong

need for connection. However, one day the connection was challenged, when I wore a tiny cross because of my serious concern about a close family member. The cross which was discreetly hidden, accidentally became visible. We managed to work through this empathic disruption, and Laura began gradually to trust, by educating me about Judaism and the Shoah. A deeper sense of connection was made when Laura was especially vulnerable, lying on my couch in a fetal position, legs flaying, and screaming. I risked moving closer to sit beside her on the couch. Her sad, bony hand reached for mine, a hand I associated with her grandmother who died in the death camps. Our lightly holding hands calmed her and marked a crucial moment in the treatment, a turning point that opened the way for her to reach out to me later in a moment of my vulnerability. Empathy comes full circle, engendering mutual empathy between Laura and me, fully capturing the longed for and powerful empathy that I had first experienced between my analyst and me.



For any of you who are interested in contemporary art, Sheila Cahill will be displaying her art at Art Basel Miami in the Red Dot Miami show December 4 to 8. The gallery hosting her paintings is Contemporary Art Projects, USA. This gallery, located in Miami, devotes its efforts to bringing unknown artists (like Sheila) into the wider art world. Wish her luck!

Bulletin Board

Offices

Part-time office space available in downtown Silver Spring. Lovely, sunny office, in a suite with two friendly, established psychotherapists. Large waiting room, kitchen and bathroom in suite. Please contact Leslie Kent at (301)589-8696 or Imariekent@hotmail.com.



Part time sublet in Woodley Park available. Lovely, large furnished office with windows. Includes an on site parking space. This two office therapy suite includes a kitchen, bathroom and waiting room to be shared with another therapist. Close to two metro stops with ample on-street parking for clients.

For more information please contact Peggy Miller at 202-265-5071 or pegmill21@msn.com.



Beautiful DuPont Circle Office Available to Rent in the Corcoran House Building at the corner of 18th and Corcoran Sts. NW, all day Friday + additional half day on Tuesday. Spacious, recently painted and re-decorated, a sunny office, waiting room and private bathroom. Many other amenities available, including wi-fi and fax. Excellent location, 2 blocks from DuPont Circle metro. 2 parking spaces available (1 inside bldg. and 1 outside for patients). If interested, please contact Sarah Pillsbury, PhD by email, pillsburysarah@gmail.com or by telephone at (202) 904-7510. Photos are available. Thank you.



Bethesda Office Space. Interior, furnished office (10' x 9') in attractive suite on the 11th floor of downtown Bethesda office building. Perfect for part-time or beginning practice.

Ten minute walk from Red Line. On street & county parking. Complimentary coffee and tea for patients. Private, insuite restroom for therapists. Wifi and fax/copier, office cleaning included. Available immediately. Contact Jacob Melamed at 301-656-5360 or email jmelamed@jacobimelamedphd.com.



Full-Time Office in Bethesda. Large office sublet with window overlooking trees. Share suite with two other collegial therapists and with waiting room, kitchenette and bathroom. Limited on-site parking; (2) blocks from Metro and county garage. Reasonable rent. **Full-time only.** For more information, contact Jonathan Lebolt at Therapy@Doctor-Jon.com or (240) 507-7696.



Looking to rent an office part-time in Bethesda, Chevy Chase, Connecticut ave. (north of Nebraska Rd) or Friendship Heights. Please contact Brigitte Ladisch. PhD at 301- 651 7592 or brigidladisch@aol.com.



Sunny Office in Falls Church available full-time. Bright, sunny office in Falls Church, available immediately. Spacious office (156 square feet + bay window) in suite with 4 other mental health professionals; shared waiting room, kitchen, and bathroom. Three-story building with plenty of parking. Near East Falls Church metro and intersection of Broad Street and Route 29. Extremely responsive landlords dedicated to excellent upkeep. Reasonable rate of \$810/month. Furniture available for purchase. Please contact Alisa Schreier at alisa.schreier@gmail.com or call (202)215-9202.

Groups

Case Consultation Group Openings

This group has been ongoing for several years, and has developed a style of working that is warm, collegial, curious, and thoughtful. Not only do members have the chance to learn from the group leaders, but it is expected that each member brings additional perspectives to the ongoing dialog and process of the group making it a meaningful relational and dynamic endeavor. At this point, the group is eager to incorporate new members.

The group works from a broadly psychodynamic standpoint. Cherian Verghese has expertise in self psychology and relational theory and practice, as well as contemporary racial and cultural issues. Barbara Wayne has taught British object relations theories, especially Fairbairn, Winnicott, and Klein, as applied to both individual and couple psychotherapy.

Especially interested in developing the therapist's use of the self as an instrument of assessment and engagement. Accordingly, group members present cases on a rotating basis, and also serve as consultants to one another. The group process is used to illuminate the psychology of client, therapist, and their jointly created relationship, and also to clarify the therapeutic process itself.

The group meets weekly on Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. at 5225 Wisconsin Ave., Suite 310, in Friendship Heights (across from the Jenifer St. entrance to the Friendship Heights Metro Station), Washington, DC 20015. The fee is \$85 per session. If you or someone else you know may be interested, please contact - Barbara (202) 363-0185 or Cherian (202) 296-2822.



Daytime Men's Group forming for men of all ages to start in late January. Relational approach; leader is Certified Group Psychotherapist with many years of experience collaborating with individual therapists. The group will meet weekly and focus on improving relationships with self and others (partners, family, friends, colleagues) and issues in mens' lives, including recovery from childhood trauma for some members. Tuesdays at 12 pm beginning January 28. Bethesda office near Metro and county garage. Sliding fee scale. For more information, contact (or have client contact) Jonathan Lebolt at Therapy@Doctor-Jon.com or (240) 507-7696.



Openings in Group for Men Who Survived Sexual Trauma

Joanne Zucchetto and Cornelia Tietke have openings in their group for men who survived sexual trauma. It is an open-ended, psychodynamic process group that meets Tuesdays from 5:00 to 6:30 PM in Friendship Heights, DC. The fee is \$100/session.

Previous members have commented that this group is one of the only places they can be honest and real about their abuse. The group creates space that allows members to become curious about their experiences, let go of shame, and embrace self-understanding and compassion.

If you would like to learn more about the group, please call Cornelia at 202-271-5673 or call Joanne at 410-507-2569.



Remove Barriers to Love ~ A 12 week experiential group.

Angie Snyder, PsyD is accepting members for a group targeted to single women who are seeking to deepen their capacity for happy, healthy love. Beginning January 2020, the group will meet on Tuesday evenings in Dupont Circle from 6:30 - 7:45 pm. This group is designed to help people develop *insight* into unconscious barriers related to the impact of early attachments on adult relationships. Members are also encouraged to take responsibility for new behaviors that align with their goal of healthy love. In addition, there will be psychoeducation and processing for *working through* of the subsequent and inevitable grief that comes with such change. All of this will occur within the context of a group infused with possibility and connectedness.

Angie looks forward to collaborating with you about any patient you believe to be a good fit. You or a prospective group member may contact her at (202) 549-7310, Drangelamsnyder@gmail.com or www.drangelasnyder.com.



Space available in an interpersonal process group of high functioning, creative professionals. The age range is from 30 - 57 at present. This group meets on Tuesday evenings from 7 - 8:20 pm. Most clients are in concurrent, individual psychotherapy with me or a referring therapist. Several therapists have self-referred themselves to the group at various times. Group members are motivated to increase their relational capacity within and outside the group with significant others. In the safety of the group, members learn to present their feelings in more vulnerable and authentic ways which help them learn what brings others closer to them and what pushes others away. Such expression leads to healing and personal growth. I'd be happy to talk with you in more detail if you have questions about whether this group might fit your or your client's needs. ~ Tybe Diamond, MSW, BCD | O: 202.966.1381 | M:202. 213. 9871 | <http://www.tybediamond.com> | 4707 Connecticut Ave., NW, Ste.205, Washington, DC 20008.

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We love hearing from you!

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Nancy Der, ICP+P Administrator, at administrator@icpeast.org

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