



IMHCA NEWSLETTER

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- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Heidi Lasser
- PUBLIC AWARENESS: Diana Wasser
- NORTH ID REP: Dean Allen
- STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE: Erin Garrison

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Message from the President

Greetings IMHCA members!

Some things we remember forever. When I was in my graduate program, a certain professor taught that 'congruent living' is the foundation for mental health. Her simple statement made quite an impact on me all those years ago. The notion continues to ring true as I work with clients who present with a myriad of mental health conditions and personal issues.

As counselors, we encourage our clients to examine their lives, as well as their thoughts, beliefs, decisions and patterns. We want them to be clear about who they are and what they want for them-

selves. We spur them on to assess their personal values and hope they will commit to working diligently to line up with the vision they have for their future. And so it must be with us.

As we approach a new year and reflect on the last, I hope that we will take inventory of our own lives and ask ourselves some important questions. As counselors, do we strive to establish balance between our personal and professional lives? Do we maintain healthy boundaries with others? Do we apply the same relationship principles in our own lives as we teach in our sessions? Do we challenge our own thinking when we are stuck in our own irrationality?



**IMHCA
President:
Dr. Janet Allen**

We've all learned important things as we move through graduate school and acquire practical experience. Among them is the truism: 'you can't take a client to a place you have never been.'

As we coach and encourage 'congruence' in the lives of our clients, I hope we can be more committed in our efforts to apply the power of 'congruence' in our own personal and professional lives.

Janet O. Allen Ed.D., LCPC
(IMHCA President)

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Senate Health Care Bill Fails to Cover Counselors Under Medicare

The Senate's health care reform bill, unveiled November 18th by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, fails to establish Medicare coverage of licensed professional counselors. This despite the fact that the Senate has twice approved Medicare coverage of counselors, and that Medicare beneficiaries need better access to outpatient mental health service providers.

Senators claim the bill will make major updates to Medicare, but the bill misses an opportunity to bring Medicare's mental health coverage policies up to speed with the practices of private sector health plans, which have covered licensed professional counselors for decades.

The House-passed version of health care reform legislation, H.R. 3962, includes Medicare coverage of state-licensed professional counselors

and state-licensed marriage and family therapists.

IMHCA encourages counselors to contact their Senators to ask them why Medicare coverage of counselors was not included in the health care bill, and to ask them to cosponsor S. 671—the "Seniors Mental Health Access Improvement Act"—to show support for establishing Medicare coverage of counselors. We also encourage counselors to contact their Representative to ask that they cosign the letter being organized by Rep. Bart Gordon, expressing support for maintaining the House-passed counselor Medicare coverage provisions.

In addition, we encourage you to contact fellow counselors from other states, and ask them to contact their legislators, as other states may have an increased ability to get their representatives to sign on the proposal.

Welcome Julie Thompson, IMHCA President Elect



**Julie
Thompson**
President
Elect

As a 2007 graduate, new to the counseling field, I am excited to accept the position as President Elect for the Idaho Mental Health Counseling Association. At the same time I am aware of how much I have to learn, not only from the other participating board members, but also from the professionals that define the mental health practice.

Yes, I am scared!

Having said that, I have been amazed and impressed by the support I have received from the people who make up the IMHCA Board, while easing into this role. They have reaffirmed how much of a difference we as individuals can make in achieving powerful change on behalf of our profession.

I had the incredible opportunity to go to Washington with the IMCHA President, Janet Allen, and received a firsthand account of the power of the professional association's influence to facilitate change. We participated in lobbying efforts on Capitol Hill in hopes of getting additional support to pass legislation that would allow licensed counselors to be added to the Medicare provider list and receive reimbursement. It was phenomenal to be able to contribute my voice, share my own personal experiences as a mental health counselor, and to help lawmakers understand why this legislation needs to be passed.

I appreciate the IMHCA Board's faith that with my willingness to participate, I may have some-

thing to offer in the collective efforts to support and assist other counselors in the field. I am so excited for what this opportunity brings, and I look forward to working with this amazing group of people.

I will be presenting at this year's ICA's conference on the topic of Happiness. As counselors we often assist our clients in exploring tough questions such as, "What needs to happen to achieve happiness?" My presentation explores how happiness is defined, along with looking at obstacles that might get in the way of accomplishing happiness. I look forward to sharing and exploring ways we as counselors respond to these questions in our work and in our own lives.

Until then, be safe, stay warm, and be happy.

Professional Development Update

As you know, we gave all IMHCA members an opportunity to participate in a survey to better gauge what you need from IMHCA. Part of this survey included questions regarding conference and workshop interests. The results are in and over 61% of you indicated that you would like more conferences and workshops at bigger discounts!

Of the conference choices we supplied, the ones that gained the most interest were:

- Scott Miller "How to Improve the Effectiveness of your Clinical Work by 65% (Without Hardly Trying!)"
- Matt Selekman "Therapeutic Moments that Count: Strength Based Therapy with Difficult Children and Adolescents."
- Clifton Mitchell "Effective Techniques for Working with Highly Resistant Clients - Innovative Ways to Prevent, Avoid, and Resolve Resistance."
- Scott Miller "Supershrinks: Learning From the Field's Most Effective Practitioners."

We also had many other suggested topics from our members of which the most popular were: Self-

Mutilation, Eating Disorders, Creative Therapies, Art, Sand Tray, Play Therapy.

In addition, a few members generously volunteered to present workshops on topics in their area of expertise for free or a minimal fee to members. Thank you to those members! These topics include:

- An Intro to EFT - Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy (coming in March 2010)
- Chronic pain
- ACT
- The Relationship of Ego Development and Narcissistic Vulnerability to Divorce Transition Impasse
- Getting Unstuck: Changing Minds with Creative Approaches

We will be starting to set up these conferences/workshops in the near future to be held starting after the ICA conference in January. Whenever possible, we will try to make them available at various locations in the state, including the north and east.

Stay tuned for more info via e-mail and newsletters to IMHCA members about these conferences!



Heidi Lasser
Professional
Development Chair

IMHCA Membership Update

Lori Farrens

Hello IMHCA members!

I am very pleased to announce the Board has approved funding to assist with increasing and maintaining IMHCA membership! The Membership committee has brainstormed numerous ideas that will hopefully make IMHCA the most sought after professional organization for counselors in Idaho.

I would like to take this opportunity

to solicit additional ideas from our members. We recently completed an online survey, but not all members responded. Therefore, I am officially requesting ideas from YOU!!! As a member, what can your membership committee offer you?

Please email ideas, suggestions, comments, etc. to lfarens@idahomentalhealthcounselor.org. We are completely open to any ideas you have to offer. After all,

we are here for you!!

I am also excited to announce that you will start to see some of the benefits increasing as early as January 2010. We are committed to make some changes and implement ideas that I don't believe IMHCA has done in the past, so it will be very energizing to see what is just around the corner!

Happy Holidays,
Your Membership Committee
Lori Farrens and Steve Moody



Public Policy Update—IDAPA

Eric Pettingill

Everyone who participated in the public comment meeting held by the Department of Health and Welfare throughout the State should pat themselves on the back. As a result of the strong public demonstration, the department has made modifications to the IDAPA rule governing substance abuse treatment facilities. Specifically, they modified the qualified professional standards to allow LPC, LCPC, LMFT and Registered Marriage and Family Therapist Intern or Associate Marriage and Family Therapist to be considered a Qualified Professional if they can verify 1,040 supervised hours of substance abuse treatment experience at a facility that is in a State, Federal, Joint Commission or CARF-approved facility (and other State facilities that are registered or licensed by that State). Or they can hold a certification such as a IBADCC-CADC, IBADCC-ACADC, NACADC, Northwest Indian Alcohol/Drug Specialist Certification-Counselor II or Counselor III or a MAC.

However, the rules governing a student/ISAS/trainee practice are confusing. They require people licensed in our field to show documentation of preparation for the NBCC-MAC, with formal documentation of obtaining 1,040 hours of supervised experience. It appears the meaning is that someone licensed in our field would need to submit documentation of their planned preparation for the NBCC-MAC, and their planned process of obtaining the 1,040

hours of supervised experience.

What can IMHCA members do now?

IMHCA members can continue to contact the department of health and welfare to ask for clarification on the rules governing student/ISAS/trainee IDAPA rules, along with thanking the department for taking our concerns into account.

At this point we should focus on the Federal Health Care Reform Legislation now being conducted. Currently, Medicare does not recognize our profession, only social workers and psychologists. It is vital that the legislation, which is finalized and signed by the President, include a provision that allows reimbursement for our profession by Medicare, and recognizes us as equal with the social work and psychology professions. Federal health care law and policy shapes every aspect of mental health care practice. Hence, our future as a recognized discipline is critically tied to Professional Counselors being recognized by Medicare.

What can we do as members to make this happen? Inform your federal congressman and senators of the critical role we fill in the mental health care system. Focus on our strengths, philosophy as a discipline, how we can assist in bringing down mental health care costs rather than driving them up, and any other aspect you believe may be helpful in convincing them to support and recognize our profession across the State.



Book Review: **The Velveteen Principles**—A Guide to Becoming Real

Julie Thompson

Authenticity is said to be one of the keys to Happiness. Toni Taiten-D'Antonio's book, *The Velveteen Principles, A Guide to Becoming Real*, is a beautifully written response to the classic children's book *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams. She offers up twelve principles that explore how the reader can employ simple intrinsic characteristics, such as courage, empathy and honesty, for the purpose of living a more authentic life.

In response to the Rabbit's

question, "What is REAL?" the Skin horse explains, "It doesn't happen all at once. You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen to people who break easily, or have sharp edges or who have to be carefully kept. Generally by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But those things don't matter at all; because once you are real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't under-

stand."

This is just one example of how the author so magnificently brings to light the simple wisdom of the characters initially brought to life in Williams' children's book.

This is a great book for the individual who is tired of investing in glitzy eye catching package and wants something with more substance. This book offers keys to living a more "REAL" and connected life. I can't imagine who wouldn't have something to gain by reading this book.



Ethics Update

Hello from the world of Ethics! This Fall the sessions have gone very well. We do listen to your suggestions and we do indeed read the evaluations. So I have listened and I have heard. I agree with many of you that I tend to put too much information into one session. It becomes cumbersome to take in and digest...so we are going to simplify! That makes it better for you and a lot easier on me. We are planning to begin repeating our subjects this Spring. We will start with Confidentiality. This remains the number one complaint to the licensing bureau and many of you have requested an update.

Some have asked for more topics specific to school counseling or to agency counseling. As this is the Idaho Mental Health Counselor's Association we try very hard to choose topics that are timely and applicable to the most counselors all across the board. We work hard to focus on topics that would apply to all counselors regardless of their setting. So sometimes we discuss things that seem to leave some counselors out. It is not our intention. And if there is a topic that most people want to hear about that is where we try to go first.

We have a new member on the Ethics committee and we plan to use her talents to the utmost. I would like to introduce to you Jill Sprague who has a practice in Emmett. She has graciously agreed to help out with the many activities for which the Ethics Committee is responsible. She

will be monitoring the licensing bureau's website for the complaints and the disposition of those complaints. She may on occasion write the curriculum for us too. We are grateful for her help and welcome her with open arms.

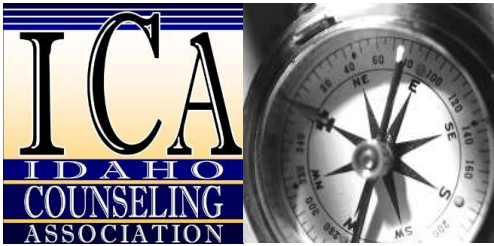
Several people have asked why we don't have more presentations in the Bonners Ferry/Sandpoint area. We have had some wonderful presenters give their time and energy in the past. It is to be expected that they don't always have time to give us for Ethics. If we had more people who would volunteer their time to present for us we would gladly offer training no matter where they are. What does that look like? Well, you come to one training session that will **yield up to 5 Ethics Credits for you**. You then present that topic in a three hour block of time to your own neighborhood so to speak. You are reimbursed for expenses for printing and travel for training. We would ask that you secure a place to present the topic (preferably a donation of space for free as we do have a limited budget). If we have enough places in the Northern part of the state I will come up there to train you.

It's a very rewarding experience. Those who have presented in the past four years have, for the most part, looked forward to doing it again. We would not be able to offer this to our membership and to all counselors across the state without the dedication of our presenters. Thank you!

Looking forward to another great year.
Dana Hunt Unruh, Ethics Chair



Dana Hunt-Unruh
Ethics Chair

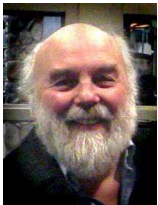


ICA Conference Highlights

The annual Idaho Counseling Association conference will be occurring Wednesday, January 20th through Saturday, January 23rd at the Double Tree Riverside in Boise.

Early Bird Registration Fees (through December 18):

ICA Member \$135 (student/retired \$95)
 Non-member \$195 (student/retired \$125)



**Keynote Speaker: Les Greenberg—
 Emotion Focused Therapy
 Saturday, January 23rd**

Friday EFT workshop (fee \$95).
 Friday Lunch with Les (Fee \$15).

Preconference Events (Wed-Thu):

- **Issues and Strategies in Counseling American Indians.** 8 CEU hours, including 1.5 hours of ethics. Fee: \$95

- **Adlerian Concepts in Individual and Family Counseling.** 8 CEUs, including 1.5 hours of ethics. Fee: \$95
- **Reshaping our Approach to the Treatment of Eating Disorders.** 8 CEUs available including 1.5 hours of ethics. Fee: \$95
- **Clinical Supervision Training.** This workshop meets the education requirements for a registered clinical supervisor in the State of Idaho. Occurs Wednesday 1/20 and Thursday 1/21, 8-5 PM. Fee: \$135. 15 CEUs available, including 1.5 hours of ethics.



IMHCA Distinguished Speaker, President Elect, Julie Thompson. Julie will be speaking on the topic of Happiness on Friday, January 22nd AT 5:00 pm.

IMHCA annual member meeting will occur directly after Julie's Presentation at: **6:00 PM on Friday, January 22nd**

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!!

IMHCA CLASSIFIEDS

If you have information regarding available office space, services, positions, CEU opportunities, conferences or public policy issues, just click on the "member postings" link on our website: www.idahomentalhealthcounselor.org and complete the form. Your information will be shared with all IMHCA members through our listserv, website and in our Quarterly Newsletter!

It's Time - a group for women

It s a known fact that women need women. We connect at the soul level. There is a greater chance to be understood, to support and encourage, be supported and encouraged, and strengthen because of this bond. This group is about bringing together women who may be experiencing similar struggles and are ready to embrace change, learn about themselves, and recreate a new authentic person. Start date is November 11th. Work shop will be held from 11:30 to 1:00 during lunch Throughout the six week workshop we will be discussing the following topics: Getting to know your soul secrets, Managing Life Stress, Embracing change, Reclaiming you, Living your Values, Building a Life According to You. LOCATION: Cathedral of the Rockies - 717 N. 11th St., Boise Idaho. COST: \$110 for the entire workshop. CONTACT PERSON: Karin Watson. PHONE: 208-412-1555. EMAIL: journey-4life@live.com

IDAHO FRIENDS OF JUNG

The Intuitive Factor: A Jungian Perspective Susan Ozimkiewicz, MA NCC LPC December 11th, 7-9 PM, Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6200 Garrett Street, Garden City. This will be a Jungian perspective on the importance of the fourth psychological function, intuition. Often times when your feelings, senses, and thinking are blocked, or "when you are in an absolute fix, an intuition can show you the hole through which you can escape...or wherever you are confronted with vital issues you cannot master by rules or logic." -- C.G. JUNG. Please visit the new website at www.idahofriendsofjung.org for more information

The Intuitive Factor Workshop

Susan Ozimkiewicz, MA NCC LPC. December 12th, 10 AM - 1 PM. Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. 6200 Garrett Street, Garden City An experiential workshop to discover how to use your own intuitive factor as a personal transformational tool in your daily environment. Learn to recognize and use new possibilities which arise in the mind and can be perceived through symbol, image, and metaphor, and interpreted in the light of your own experience. Share in community and refreshments -- Fair Trade coffee, juice, wine, cheese and crackers. \$5 - \$15 donations are accepted but everyone is welcome! The mini workshop is also by donation. Please visit the new website at www.idahofriendsofjung.org for more information