



# The Group Therapist Perspective

INTERDISCIPLINARY INSIGHTS FOR GROUP PRACTITIONERS

October/November 2000

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE OCTOBER 2000 By: Jo Christner, Psy.D.



I ended my last message with a motto: "Progress Through Group Strength". This is not only my goal for this Association for this year, but can be seen happening in all kinds of groups. I have been facilitating widow/widower support groups for H.O.P.E. Unit Foundation for the last 8 years. Grieving the death of a spouse can be a terribly painful and lonely journey.

Often, I am asked the question "How will I ever get through this?". One of my favorite quotes is: "We're not primarily put on this earth to see through one another, but to see one another through" (Peter De Vries). The groups are a place where I have seen hundreds of individuals find hope, strength and the ability to heal. I have watched people who are grieving reach out to one another and make a difference. I believe that progress and growth begin with "reaching out". The Officers, Committees and Board Members of GPASC are doing outreach in many ways that are helping us to strengthen and grow.

• Marvin Kaphan, LCSW, Past President, wrote a letter in June 1999 to the Motion Picture Industry Health Plan regarding the importance of groups and the inequality of how their health plan treats group therapy versus individual therapy. They are very interested and have agreed to include him in discussions to initiate change! His "reaching out" may make a difference to all of us in the mental health field who use the modality of groups in our work. Congratulations Marvin!!

• More members have come forward and are offering to volunteer their valuable time and talents. Cele Cooper, LCSW has agreed to chair our Communications Committee. She will be keeping members apprised by email of GPASC news, potential referrals and advising the public and mental health professionals of the many benefits that GPASC has to offer. Joe Cavins, B.S. is our first Student Liaison! He is going to be contacting schools and students with information about how GPASC can benefit and serve as an adjunct to their education, as well as serve as an important professional association in their journey toward becoming a licensed mental health professional. Linda De Villers has become our new Program Developer. She will be staying up to date with the accrediting agencies to assure that GPASC's conferences and educational events are varied, of high quality and offer a variety of approved continuing education credits. Thanks to you all for "reaching out"!

• The newsletter and web site now offer a "Bulletin Board" where members can communicate to each other! It's a great place to give notice of member accomplishments, job postings and referral potentials. It even offers a **free** group listing for members to advise the newsletter audience of groups forming or in progress. The newsletter editor, Dr. Marcia Smith, continues to expand the mailing list to reach a larger and more diverse audience! The Conference Committee is reaching out to local and internet audiences in publicizing the upcoming, exciting 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Gender 2000: The Male – Female Experience. You won't want to miss it!

There is a lot of energy being devoted to this Association's expansion and growth. In order to maintain this energy and invigoration, we ask that you consider joining, volunteering and supporting GPASC. Become an **active** part of the changes. If not now...when? As advocates of group process, become a living example of the change that group strength can bring.

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## Message From The Editor By: Marcia Craig-Smith, Psy.D.

With our new administration in place, GPASC is continuing to evolve into one of the most professional, efficacious, and widely advertised organizations in our industry.

In the first two months of this administration GPASC has nearly doubled its newsletter distribution, expanded its web site's accessibility, created a new role of "student liaison" to increase the appeal of the organization to educational institutions and therapists in training, and increased marketing efforts to reach out and increase our visibility to professionals and consumers.

Whether you desire leadership experience (Board and Committee participation), the opportunity to showcase your work and practice (newsletter, web site, providing workshops), clinical enrichment through the Continuing Education Series (CES), and/or just want to associate yourself with some talented and personable professionals, then GPASC is for you.

For a conservative cost of \$65.00 per year to be a full member (\$50.00 per year for students) you can't afford *not* to be a member. May I remind you of what you will receive for this modest dues:

- \**FREE* listing on an online searchable database
- \**FREE* personal web page, when you submit your bio
- \**FREE* professional workshops (offering CEUs and MCEPs)
- \**FREE* new group listings in our newsletter "bulletin board" and on the web site
- \**FREE* bimonthly newsletter, highlighting GPASC's events and contributions
- \**FREE* email alerts seeking specific services or groups for your clients
- \*Your photo on the GPASC web site if you are an officer, board member or featured writer in the newsletter.
- \*Discounted rate to GPASC's Annual Conference
- \*Discounted advertising rates in the newsletter
- \*Opportunities to present papers, facilitate workshops, be a featured writer for the newsletter and web site with special recognition.
- \*Enjoy GPASC's networking events and build your referral sources and professional affiliations.

Support yourself by joining GPASC, and support GPASC by sharing your talents and time. *Make your voice count!*

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## Feature Article By Marilyn Stolzman

I am the Executive Director of H.O.P.E. Unit Foundation. H.O.P.E. is a non-profit organization, whose name is an acronym for Hope, Opportunity, Participation, and Education. Its mission is to help people whose lives have been touched by loss. The repercussions of these life changes associated with bereavement and cancer are alleviated through group support, educational input, and the therapeutic processing of feelings and emotions associated with the grieving process. What makes H.O.P.E.'s program unique is its model of graduated groups, distinguished by the months of mourning, which I will expand on in this article.

The weekly bereavement and cancer support groups are facilitated by licensed therapists. They utilize Yalom's stages of group process as outlined in his book entitled, The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy. These stages include the following: First, orientation, hesitant participation, search for meaning and testing. The members look toward the leader for structure. Secondly is conflict crisis and conflict resolution. Thirdly is cohesiveness, common goals, group spirit, cooperation, mutual support and group integration. Increased mutual trust and self-disclosure are noted in this stage.

Each H.O.P.E. bereavement group is mixed in age, with a common theme of loss, for example, Widow/Widower Group, and Family Loss Group. Each group has the opportunity to process the five stages of loss (Shock, Denial, Anger, Depression, and Acceptance) in a manner that is suitable to the individual member.

H.O.P.E. has adopted a model that assigns members to a group according to their month of mourning. Ideally, the model encompasses a 2 year commitment by the individual (Widow/Widower's Group) beginning with the first month of mourning. The mourner graduates from one level to the next according to their month of mourning as well as their progress in the bereavement process. New members starting at more advanced months of mourning are screened and assigned to an appropriate group level.

Each group level has its hallmark features including an array of issues, behaviors, and feelings. The group levels include the following:

**Group One** (0-4 months of mourning): Issues processed are related to early loss, such as shock and denial where members often describe themselves being on "automatic pilot". They are often irritable, impatient, have trouble concentrating and sleeping and cry very easily. Furthermore, they experience memory loss and loss of self-esteem. Typical questions might include, "Will the pain ever go away?", "Will I ever feel better?", "When should I take off my wedding ring, discard their clothes or write thank-you notes?" Another concern is that participants often cannot tolerate staying home alone.

**Group Two** (5-8 months of mourning): The common feeling is one of feeling out of control. They ruminate over why they could not have prevented their spouse's death and they feel awkward in their new roles, taking on new tasks thrust upon them. The new anger merges with the old anger as "Why did they have to die" fuses with "Why did this have to happen to me?" They are now coming out of their shock and denial stage (frozen state) as they "defrost" and the feelings are being experienced with even greater intensity. Many firsts come up such as birthdays, anniversaries and holidays and the anticipation is often much worse than the actual event, as verified by the group. Typical comments or questions might include, "I feel like a fifth wheel when I go out with my *couple* friends", or "My friends do not know what to say to me", or "I find myself breaking down in embarrassing places".

**Group Three** (9-12 months of mourning): The numbness of shock has worn off and the deep dark, sadness pervades their lives. The pain of loss is truly felt, endless memories triggered by seemingly trivial events. Typical questions and concerns begin to evolve around thoughts of their futures, even dating. "How will I know when I am ready?" "Am I forgetting my spouse if I begin dating?" Their future begins to emerge from the changing perceptions of themselves. Other issues might reflect the conflict of going to events of celebration while still mourning and handling discussion or lack of discussion about their spouse. Good days and bad days are more clearly defined. This is clearly a transition time.

**Group Four** (13 – 24 months): Certain themes emerge at this stage as for many, the second year is more painful than the first. Sadness is revisited and experienced at the deepest level, replacing the initial impact of loss and devastation. There is usually significant growth in a forward movement and people begin to adapt to being alone and redefining who they are. The move toward acceptance (transition, integration and adjustment) has begun, albeit with much trepidation.

The H.O.P.E. program helps people express their feelings in a safe, warm, accepting atmosphere, where people are taught to listen to and support each other, healing each other. We strongly feel that grief shared is grief diminished. For more information about the Bereavement and Cancer Support groups H.O.P.E. has to offer in the Valley and on the Westside, please contact Dr. Stolzman at (818) 788-HOPE (4673). H.O.P.E. is sponsored and supported by Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary as well as participant donations.

Marilyn Stolzman, Ph.D. is a licensed psychotherapist and certified hypnotist, maintaining a private practice in Woodland Hills. Dr. Stolzman has taught psychology classes at Pierce College, Valley Beth Shalom, University of Judaism, California State Northridge and Ryokan College. She has professionally presented at the American Institute of Medical Education in the area of Creative Visualization and for the Creativity and Madness Conference in France, Hong Kong and Singapore. For more information about the Bereavement and Cancer Support groups H.O.P.E. has to offer in the Valley and on the Westside, please contact Dr. Stolzman at (818) 788-HOPE (4673).

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## Member's Bulletin Board

A place for members to list any of the following for FREE:

•Office address and phone changes •Available office space •Job Opportunities •Professional achievements and awards • New therapy groups being formed •Therapy group openings •••All advertising for mental health services must include the practitioner's license number. One 30 word Ad per issue free; \$10 for any part of any additional 10 word increment. Additional Ad (s): \$10 for 30 words: \$10 for any part of any additional 10 word increment.

**Mixed Group:** Wednesday 6 - 7:30 PM high functioning, ages 25-40, dynamic, interactive, interpersonal and life issues of intimacy, relationships, career, balancing life, identity, self-esteem. \$240 per month.  
Contact: Edward Dreyfus, Ph.D., CGP (310) 208-5700 (MFC 4486)

### WANTED:

A conveniently located, large room to hold future Board Meetings and CES in (needs to hold up to about 20 people)  
Contact Dr. Jo Christner  
(310)471-2773

### New Group Forming:

High functioning women, age 40-60, focusing on relationships, career issues and self-fulfillment! Monday 5:30-7:00 p.m.. Jo Christner, Psy.D. (PSY15532), 310-471-2773

### Bereavement Groups:

Widow/Widower Loss Groups in the Valley and Westside.  
Contact Marilyn Stolzman, Ph.D. for details, at the H.O.P.E. Unit Foundation,  
(818) 788-HOPE (4673).

### CONGRATULATIONS!!!

- Joe Cavins – GPASC's first "Student Liaison"
- Cele Cooper – GPASC's new Communications Committee Chair
- Linda De Villers – GPASC's new Program Director

### Looking for a job?

- Job listings are regularly submitted to GPASC. Check out our web site to see if the perfect job for you is listed.
- <http://www.gpasc.org/bulletinboard>.

Kudos to Barbara Zax for being one of the Seminar Moderators for The California Governor's Conference for Women.

### Calendar of Events

- October 8, 2000 **Board Meeting**  
All members welcome.
- November 5, 2000 **Annual Conference**  
(Refer to page 6 for details)
- January 14, 2001 **CES and Board Meeting**  
(Refer to page 9 for details)

**Men's Group:** Tuesday 6 - 7:30 PM high functioning, ages 35-55, dynamic, interactive, interpersonal and life issues of intimacy, relationships, career, balancing life, identity, self-esteem. \$240 per month. Contact: Edward Dreyfus, Ph.D., CGP (310) 208-5700 (MFC 4486)



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# Interested in sex, violence, and relationships?

**Want to know more about how to build your practice? Interested in professional advancement? Wish to earn CEU or MCEP credits? Want to enjoy the camaraderie of your colleagues?**

*If you have answered "yes" to one or more of these questions, you must attend the GPASC conference this year. Even if you are not a frequent attendee of conferences, this conference will have something of interest to you.*

## **Gender 2000: The Male-Female Experience**

**Sunday November 5, 2000**

Radisson Hotel Los Angeles Westside

Keynote address: **Walter E. Brackelmanns, M.D.**

Gender paradoxes, patterns, and myths in relationships

### **Workshops**

- ⇒ Taboos, Truth-Telling, And Coming Of Age: How Groups Can Help Girls
- ⇒ Enhancing Women's Sexuality & Relationships In Group Psychotherapy
- ⇒ Using Groups To Help Teenagers Solve Social Conflicts In School
- ⇒ Discovering Intimacy Through Autonomy In Couples Groups
- ⇒ Service Applications Of Domestic Violence
- ⇒ Sex Changes in Group Psychotherapy
- ⇒ Mixed Gender Psychotherapy Groups
- ⇒ Working With Gay Men In Groups
- ⇒ Group Therapy With Lesbians
- ⇒ Therapy Of Men In Groups

Call for brochure detailing information and registration form  
**(323) 960-5143**

Course meets the qualification for 7 hours of continuing education credits for MFT's and LCSW's, as required by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (PCE 528). GPASC is a CPA provider (GRO004). This course has been submitted for approval for 7 MCEP credits for psychologists.

**GPASC**  
**PO Box 491191 Los Angeles CA 90049**  
**(323) 960-5143**  
**FOUNDED 1952**

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY

**Officers**

President.....Jo Christner, Psy.D  
President-Elect.....Ed Dreyfus, Ph.D  
Membership VP..Doris McElwee, MFT  
Treasurer.....Rich Hirschhoff, MFT  
Secretary....Colleen Land, Ph.D (ABD)  
Historian.....Haroldine Moseman, MFT  
Parliamentarian.....Vicki Dauber, MFT

**Executive Board**

Annual Conference..Ed Dreyfus, Ph.D and Herb Goldberg,  
PhD  
Nominations.....Vicki Dauber,  
MFT  
Membership Outreach.....Vicki Dauber,  
MFT  
Program Development.....Linda De Villers, Ph.  
D  
President's Party.....Laura Israel, LCSW  
Past President.....Marvin Kaphan,  
MSW  
CES.....Matthew Seidman, Ph.D  
Newsletter.....Marcia Craig-Smith, Psy.D

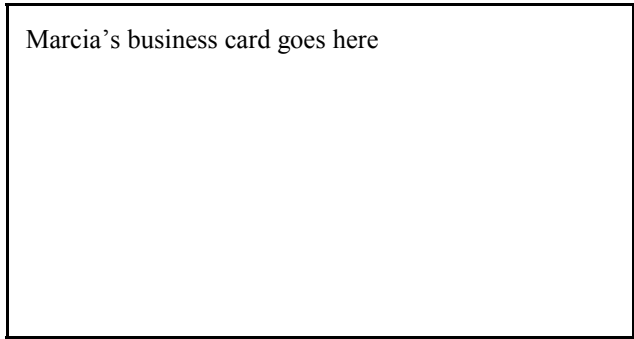
**GPASC web site:**  
**<http://www.gpasc.org>**

**(NEW!!) GPASC email:**  
**[groups@gpasc.org](mailto:groups@gpasc.org)**

**PO Box 491191,**  
**Los Angeles, CA 90049**

**Phone: (323) 960-5143**

**Administrator email :**  
**[tortuejenn@earthlink.net](mailto:tortuejenn@earthlink.net)**



**Membership Information**

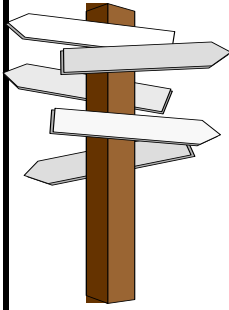
**Full Category \$65/year**

*Clinical licenses including psychiatrists, psychologist, social workers and marriage-family-child counselors.*

**Affiliate Category \$50/year**

*Those with advanced degrees in the behavioral sciences, interns, students in mental health fields, others in allied areas.*

## "Coping with Stress" Workshop



Feeling like you are being pulled in every direction? Stress is hazardous to your health! Marcia Craig-Smith, Psy.D. facilitates with an individualized approach. *Assess YOUR stress level, learn several stress reducing techniques including self-hypnosis, and enjoy a group hypnosis.*

**Saturday, 10/21/00, 9:00am-12:00pm at Santa Monica College.**

Contact SMC for details and to reserve a space at (310) 434-3400 and refer to class #8680.301.  
*A perfect adjunct to ongoing therapy* Marcia Craig-Smith, Psy.D. (PSY15483)

### Advertising Rates and Information

- ◆ All copy should be print ready
- ◆ Ads must be accompanied by a check, made payable to GPASC
- ◆ Member rates apply to current GPASC members only.
- ◆ Send copy and check to: PO Box 491191 Los Angeles CA 90049

Type of Ad	Size	Member Rate	Non-Member Rate
Full page display	7.5" x 9.5"	\$75	\$110
3/4 page display	5.0" x 7.0"	\$60	\$90
1/2 page display	7.5" x 4.75"	\$40	\$60
1/4 page display	4.75" x 4.75"	\$30	\$50
1/8 page display	4.75" x 2.25"	\$20	\$35
1/16 page display	2.5" x 2.25"	\$15	\$30
Business card	3.5" X 2.0"	\$15	\$30
Classified Ads	30 words	\$15	\$25
Flyer Inserts		\$75	\$90

### Welcome New GPASC Members

At our recent Board Meeting the following four members were approved as new members of GPASC:

**James DeSantis, Ph.D. – Full Member**

**William Rolfe, Ph.D., MFT – Full Member**

**Lee Myerhoff, Ph.D. – Full Member**

**Evelyn Pechter, BA – Affiliate Member**

We warmly welcome them into our organization. Congratulations.

Doris McElwee, MFT  
 Membership Vice President

## **GPASC CES** By: **Matthew Seidman, Ph.D.**

You, who weren't at the September 10<sup>th</sup> CES presentation by **Andrea Brandt, Ph.D.** can be angry with yourselves for having missed an interesting and informative program, "Anger Management." Studies have shown that people are angry about 14 or 15 times daily because of unmet expectations. We don't, however, notice each episode, Brandt stated. Anger is a natural and universal emotion, the fight component of the fight/flight response, Brandt continued.

Touching on anger as a pervasive and viable emotion in a person's life, Brandt said that people are conditioned to suppress their anger, which is mostly mismanaged anyway. In fact, anger should last from two to five seconds only. Following that time frame, other factors come into play, such as frustration, hostility, and/or aggression. Of these factors, frustration is the most benign, with hostility, an attitude, being the most destructive.

Citing a 10-year study, Brandt reported that hostility is a proven link to coronary heart disease, showing most evidence of early arteriosclerosis. She stated, however, that there are "gaping holes in research on anger" and that anger is virtually nowhere to be found in the DSM-IV because the National Organization for Women didn't want anger to be looked on as an "excuse" for spousal abuse.

Brandt's excellent presentation included identifying goals of anger, as well as ways of dealing with patient anger, both in session and what the client reports of his/her life outside of the session. She discussed various helpful "tools" which can be used in the treatment of some patients, identified as the "exploder" or the "somatosizer" among others. Those attending engaged Brandt in lively discussion during the three-hour session. Her handouts were helpful and made the presentation easy to follow.

You won't stay angry with yourself if you mark your calendar for our next CES presentation, on **Sunday, January 14, 2001**, when **Sietze VanDerHeide, Ph. D.** will speak about **Affect Regulation in the Treatment of Personality Disorders**. Earn MCEP and/or CEU credit. Watch for mailings and check our web site: <http://www.gpasc.org> for location.

### **GPASC Opportunities!**

**Opportunity to become a Board Member, Officer or Committee Member and be a part of the decision-making process that directly affects you and your profession.**

Are you interested in being considered for the position of Parliamentarian or Historian?

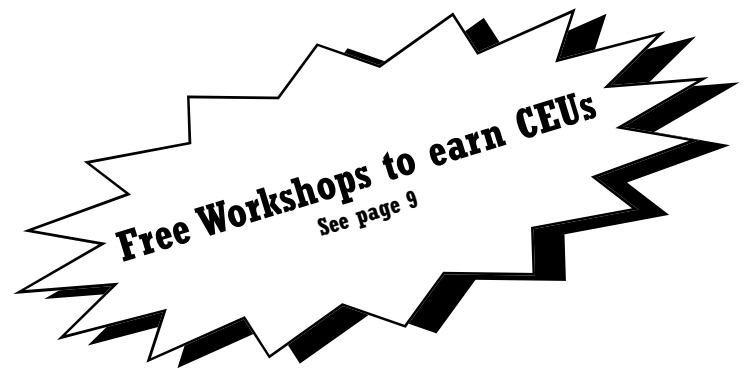
**Historian** : If organizational skills are your forte, and you might be interested in keeping alive the 48 year history of GPASC please contact Vicki Dauber – 323-960-5143

**Parliamentarian** : If you like keeping things "on track" our board meeting is the place for you. If you might have an interest, please contact Vicki Dauber - 323-960-5143

## GPASC

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## CYBER JENN!

My first thought is that I want this column to help you, to be what you want it to be. I am going to open it up to questions. Any computer or internet questions that you have can be submitted via snail mail (USPS) or email ([groups@gpasc.org](mailto:groups@gpasc.org)). There isn't room to answer all questions, it will be at the discretion of the newsletter editor, but we'll do our best. So, get those questions in!

Secondly, I am very excited to share with you that the number of "hits" (people visiting our web site) has increased dramatically! This is very exciting, because this means that people are starting to find us out in cyber space. As our search engine service progresses, we will continue to become more visible and a more well known resource for therapists and the general public.

It is unfortunate that not all members are submitting their bios as this is a terrific benefit included in your membership cost. *Please* take advantage of this benefit and submit your bio today.

**Helpful tip:** The term "Defragmenting" or "Defrag" doesn't mean very much to most people. Hopefully after this, it will! Defrag is something that is very important to your computers health and well-being. I recommend you defrag at least one a month. This helps your computer function at it's optimal level and can increase the speed your computer functions at. Over time, your hard drive becomes fragmented, little "air pockets" get stuck between data and data gets moved around. Defrag cleans this all up. For PC users, go to your "Start Menu", then go to "Programs", then go to "Accessories" and then "System Tools" and then "Disc Defragmenter" Once you open the Defragmenter, it walks you through the steps. Mac users, you'll need a program such as Norton Utilities. (PC users can also use Norton or other such programs) Good luck , and happy defragmenting!

**Helpful online resource:** FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered is a nonprofit web-based resource for women who may be at high risk for breast or ovarian cancer because of family history and/or genetic status. FORCE's web site ([www.facingourrisk.org](http://www.facingourrisk.org)) offers a message board, real-time chat, and a resource page with librarian-selected links to authoritative information.