



Look for Changes and New Developments with 2018 MPA Programs

Jim Windell, M.A.

Michigan Psychological Association members will notice some important changes in the programs sponsored by MPA during 2018. According to Program Committee Chair, Chris Sterling, Psy.D., the programs planned for 2018 year will help members obtain needed CEs while increasing their access to valuable seminars.

"First, there will be a greater ease and access to seminars as an option for MPA seminars," Chris Sterling recently announced. "The MPA board has signed a contract with BIZ to webcast seminars live, and to help create a library of seminars for members to access."

BIZ is the company that may be familiar to some MPA members, as they provide webcasting service to APA and The Trust. A similar format will be in place for members so they can have virtual attendance to obtain certificates for their CEs. "A special benefit will be a shared library with other states that also contract with BIZ," Sterling says, "this will create a library of webinars that MPA members can access through MPA. For a modest program fee, you can select a library seminar from other states or past MPA seminars." Sterling emphasizes that this will be an outstanding opportunity to have many choices of presenters and seminar topics without MPA members having to travel from their home or office.

The second change, Sterling points out, will be that MPA programming will continue to be coordinated with the Michigan Association of Professional Psychologists (MAPP). This will mean that MPA and MAPP will support programming and combine resources. "This should greatly enhance learning opportunities as resources are combined," Sterling says. "In addition, this will expand opportunities to network with others and learn about more resources in the community."

A half-day seminar on February 2, 2018 will be on ethics. Sterling indicates that MPA members will find this seminar helpful in fulfilling the ethics requirement of CEs. Dr. Alan Lewandowski, Ethics Chair for MPA, will present with others and help coordinate this seminar.

Sterling notes that the MPA Spring Convention on April 20, 2018 at the Henry Center in East Lansing will be on the opioid crisis. Citing the alarming statistic that for the second year in the row life expectancy has dropped in the U.S., he said that all indications are this is due to the ongoing opioid crisis. "Because psychologists are needed to help provide response and relief from the devastating impact on the public health of this crisis," Sterling says, "This is a must-attend seminar."

Finally, many psychologists have questions and concerns about providing tele-psychology services. Chris Sterling says that if there is one sure thing regarding this emerging area of provider service, is that nothing is for sure as this mental health service area continues to evolve and develop. "It should be clear to anyone who begins to examine this service," Sterling says, "is that there is much to know and be prepared for beyond having a computer and secure communication." During the summer of 2018, the Program Committee will hold a workshop featuring presenters who will help to answer questions and prepare psychologists for making decisions about being a tele-provider.

To comment on this article, contact Jim Windell at jwind27961@aol.com or Chris Sterling, Psy.D. at Miles702@me.com

Executive Director's Report: Wrapping Up a Successful Year at MPA

LaVone Swanson, Executive Director



The MPA Friday Update has proven to be a very successful way to share current news with MPA membership. A total of 24 email campaigns were sent, equaling a total of 23,811 contacts. We grew the mailing list by 128 with new members signing up for the *Friday Update*. And we discovered that 52% of you open it on a mobile device, while the other 48% prefer to use their desktop. If you have any suggestions for what you would like to see in the *Friday Update*, please feel free to contact me at lavone.swanson@gmail.com.

On February 2, 2018 MPA will be offering a half-day Ethics Seminar presented by Dr. Alan Lewandowski. The seminar will be held at the Henry Center in East Lansing. Watch for details soon on the MPA website as well as in the *Friday Update*.

Last April brought a very successful Annual Meeting when MPA's Annual Awards were presented during lunch. Also awarded was the Dissertation Scholarship from the MPA Foundation.

For 2018, the Program Committee has planned another great day of CE. On April 20, 2018 at the Henry Center, a workshop covering Opioid Addiction and Pain Management will be presented.

Also in the planning is a June CE seminar covering the issue of Tele-Health. Watch for details of this timely topic early in the spring of 2018.

During this past year, we had to say goodbye to a few long-standing Board Members. Stepping down were Dr. Andrew Kronk from the Communications Committee, Dr. Lawrence Perlman, APA Council Representative, and finishing their terms on the Board were Dr. Louis Post and Caitlyn Sorensen-Kowalski.

The November MPA Board meeting is always a special meeting. This is a day-long meeting that includes a regular Board meeting in the morning while in the afternoon is a planning session. This year the Board worked on new goals and objectives for the Operational Plan. The discussion that took place was lively and featured a number of new initiatives to help move the Michigan Psychological Association forward. One of the most exciting will be that MPA will begin to video tape the CE Seminars in order to offer them as a webinar for members and non-members to view so that psychologists can obtain their needed Continuing Education credits. And we also hope in the future to begin to use distance learning as a means to deliver CE as well.

December is the time that I look back over the year and review how MPA performed based on both the MPA Strategic Plan and Operation Plan. And I am happy to report that across all five strategic goals, MPA did very well. Looking at financial projections, MPA should finish in the black for the fourth year in a row. MPA has exceeded the Reserve Policy of maintaining seven months of operating funds, by having almost 10 months of operating funds at this time. Non-dues revenue is growing, as we look for programs that continue to provide additional avenues for MPA membership to save.

On the Membership front, MPA continues to grow, albeit slowly, but we are growing. The MPA renewal rate was an outstanding 86.8% for 2017. Continuing Education programming once again delivered a great year of professional development opportunities. The MPA brand was strengthened last year through the efforts of MPA's Social Media Coordinator. This resulted in an increase in traffic to both MPA's Facebook and Twitter sites. In addition, MPA responded to a number of requests from the media, regarding various psychological issues. I'm very pleased to

say that MPA is in good shape as we move into 2018 led by an outstanding group of very dedicated Board and Committee members.

As always, I welcome your input, questions and concerns about MPA. Feel free to contact me at any time via email at lavone.swanson@gmail.com.

From the Office of the President Giving Thanks at Year's End

Kristin Sheridan, Ph.D., LP
MPA President

As I wrap up my encore presidential year, I want to take this opportunity to give thanks to the many people who have made my tenure easy and pleasurable.

We are so very lucky to have Dr. Jared Skillings coming on as president. Jared has a wide range of knowledge of the issues facing our profession, maintains an extensive professional network, has accumulated a wealth of experience in the management of professional associations, and functions with impeccable ethics.

Dr. Elissa Patterson, our President-Elect, has served on the Insurance Committee and as Insurance Committee Chair, has been a force in the development of the Washtenaw regional group, and is thoughtful, smart and sensible. These are three words I do not use lightly.

Deb Smith, our Treasurer, is a jewel and has done more for MPA and MPA Foundation than there is space for in this column. Cynthia Rodriguez stepped up to be Secretary a year ago. She provides an organized mind and a thoughtful voice. I have done this job - she does it better.

Three of our long-serving members are stepping off the Board. Dr. Larry Perlman has completed his term as APA Council Representative, and I thank him for his service. Also leaving is Dr. Andy Kronk, our Communications Committee Chair. Taking over as Chair will be Dr. Antu Segal, who has most recently managed our social media presence. As we move at less than warp speed into the digital age, I am grateful for our younger professionals who help us to see our way forward - and I am seriously in awe of them. I am especially thankful for Andy, who with his Committee got this whole technology thing going.

The third departure is Dr. Louis Post, who has completed his term as Past-President. Louis, who was formerly Chair of the Insurance Committee, has an incisive mind that I can only envy, a dogged persistence on any task he takes on, and an ability and willingness to work as a team member even when he disagrees. His contributions have been truly invaluable to the organization.

Furthermore, I owe thanks to Dr. Delia Thrasher, who keeps membership in her sights 24/7. Dr. Susan Silk just keeps on serving in whatever capacity we ask; next year as our APA Council Representative. Dr. Ellen Fedon-Keyt has worked her heart out as Diversity Chair and has done a great job. Chris Sterling as Program Chair should have burnt out by now, but apparently benefits from an invisible fireproof coating. Dr. Alan Lewandowski has organized the quiet and extremely competent services of the Ethics Committee and has provided a thoughtful voice on the Board.

The Children and Families Committee has been re-invigorated by Dr. Brittany Barber-Garcia. The same can be said for our formerly dormant Public Education Committee, now in the capable hands of Dr. Todd Favorite. Coming on board to chair our Early Career Professionals Committee is Dr. Julia Craner. And look who's our Graduate Student Rep: our Diversity Poster winner Megan Pejaz-Reitz. My thanks go out to Caitlyn Sorenson-Kowalski, who served in this position during my tenure and kindly found her own replacement.

Dr. Jeff Andert, who heads our Licensing Committee, has also made a huge positive change in our board by introducing and teaching Policy Governance. Dr. Dane Ver Merris has revamped our bylaws and generally served wherever asked. Wise counsel is always provided by Dr. Jo Johnson, our Federal Advocacy Coordinator. Jo is another former President and has been

honored nationally and in the state for her contributions, and she sings! The institutional memory and experience of these three is truly vast.

Many thanks as well to our Executive Director, Lavone Swanson, for his good nature as well as for his competency, to our administrative assistant Holly Mauk for her patience with many demands, to our lobbyist, Sandi Jones, and to our governmental liaison, Dr. Judith Kovach. Both Sandi and Judith have a deep understanding of how legislation works and how change is made. And thanks to Jim Windell, who will edit this column and get the newsletter out.

And to you members who pay your dues, serve on committees, and keep the listserv lively, thank you so very much.

Onward.

To comment on this column, contact Kristin Sheridan, Ph.D. at sheridankm@frontier.com.

ALSO FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS

Book Review of *The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump* by Bandy X. Lee, M.D., M.Div.- St. Martin's Press, 2017.

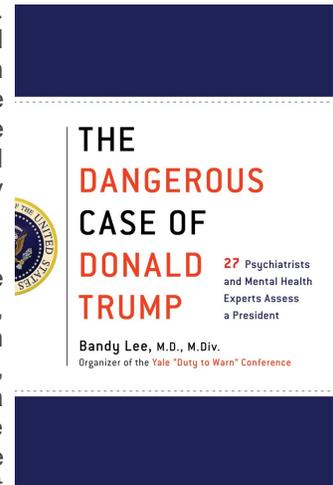
Reviewed Jack P. Haynes, Ph.D.

The challenge of reviewing a book about a contemporary, intense political figure whose actions affect our lives is attempting to fashion the review in such a way that it does not present the writer's own views. So, much of this review will be more fact-based than evaluative in a political sense. Let's see if I can do it.

The book by psychiatrist, Bandy X. Lee is a compilation of 27 essays regarding the psychological functioning of President Donald J. Trump, and closely related issues. About half (12) of the sections are written or co-written by MDs, and most of the remaining essays are written by PhDs or those with related degrees. This reviewer was not familiar with a majority of the writers, but several distinguished and familiar names were among the various authors, including Philip Zimbardo, Robert Jay Lifton, Gail Sheehy, Leonard Glass, James Gilligan, Noam Chomsky, and Tony Schwartz, who authored Trump's book, *The Art of the Deal*.

Topics include normality, trust problems, duty to warn (one premise for the existence of the book, according to the book's editor), narcissism, sociopathy, self-sabotage, cognitive issues, discussion regarding incapacitation, dangerousness, mental illness, leadership, and the Goldwater Rule. Most of the essays were written from a professional perspective, but aimed at a lay audience. Some, like Tony Schwartz's piece, were from a personal perspective -he authored one of Trump's books and spent hundreds of hours in direct daily personal contact with Trump before he was president, watching him, listening to him, interviewing him and listening in on hundreds of conversations. Schwartz's chapter was particularly interesting, direct, and powerful, in part offering Trump's own perspective about his own life, as well as Schwartz's view. I also found particularly interesting and clearly written the chapters by Sheehy regarding trust deficit and by Lifton about a concept he labels malignant normality.

The book has some recurring topics and therefore feels somewhat repetitious and unremitting. Ultimately, questions were more prevalent than answers. If one looks from a political perspective, one may be reinforced either positively or in an avoidant way. I would think that readers from all political perspectives would feel uncomfortable after reading the essays, probably for different and individual reasons. But the nature of our current circumstances seems to include frequent



intractability of views pro and con. Sometimes this seems to involve avoidance of considering the significance of facts. Many, if not most, people are convinced of and entrenched in their views. Our times seem highly polarized and not oriented to encouraging being open-minded. The book raises important and thought-provoking issues, consequently, I found the book worth reading - even if unsettling.

Editor's note: Following this article is a piece on the Goldwater Rule.

You can comment on this article by contacting Jack Haynes at jhaynes254831mi@comcast.net

Does the Goldwater Rule Apply to Psychologists?

Jim Windell, M.A.

With the current administration seeming to govern through the media and the President of the United States communicating whatever he's thinking, thereby creating news on a daily basis, it's tempting for psychologists to ruminate about the mental health and fitness of the President.

Of course, it's one thing to think about the mental stability of a national leader or to express an opinion in the privacy of your home; it's quite another to comment on national leaders, especially the President, or to give a diagnosis of our leaders to the media.

As most psychologists are aware, the American Psychological Association code of ethics prohibits assessing or diagnosing any individual who was not examined in person (APA, 2017). And while the American Psychological Association has no precise ethical rules that forbid speaking about the mental health of a public figure, Section 5.04 should, at least by implication, be applied (APA, 2017). Standard 2.04 (Bases for Scientific and Professional Judgments) also can be considered.

In mid 2016, just after Donald Trump was nominated as the Republican candidate in Cleveland, American Psychological Association President Susan H. McDaniel wrote a letter in which she stated that psychologists should not offer diagnoses of any living public figure they have not examined personally (McDaniel, 2016). She went on to write that the APA Code of Ethics recommends that psychologists take precautions in any statement made to the media. Statements to the media should be, she emphasized quoting from Section 5.04, "based on their professional knowledge, training or experience in accord with appropriate psychological literature and practice" (APA, 2017). Furthermore, psychologists should not indicate that a professional relationship has been established with people in the public eye - including politicians and presidents (APA, 2017).

In other words, APA President McDaniel was clearly indicating she supported the Goldwater Rule. The so-called Goldwater Rule is an ethics rule established by the American Psychiatric Association in 1973. Section 7, Number 3 was created in response to pejorative comments by mental health professionals about the Republican candidate for president in 1964, Barry Goldwater. The rule prohibits psychiatrists from public comments on the mental health of public figures they have not had examined in person and from whom they have not obtained consent to discuss (American Psychiatric Association, 2010).

The rule came about because of a *Fact Magazine* article in 1964 titled "What Psychiatrists Say About Goldwater." The headline at the beginning of the story was: In a national poll by FACT, 1189 psychiatrists said the Republican candidate was not fit to be President; only 657 said he was" (Borson, 1964, p. 23). Goldwater successfully sued the magazine.

Not much was heard about the Goldwater Rule until 2016 when Donald Trump was nominated to run for President. In July, 2016, a health website reported that the American Psychoanalytic Association told its members that the Goldwater Rule should not prohibit them from publically commenting on Trump or any other public figure. Given this permission and with the continuous controversies swirling around the presidential candidate who was later elected president, many psychoanalysts, psychiatrists and psychologists have gone public with their opinion about President Trump's fitness for office (Begley, 2017).

Dr. Bandy Lee, the author of the book reviewed in this issue, is a professor of psychiatry at Yale Medical School, who views the Trump presidency as an emergency that not only allows but may even require psychiatrists to disregard the Goldwater Rule.

Jeannie Suk Gersen, a professor at Harvard Law School, has expressed the opinion that when psychiatrists and others in the mental health field withhold their expertise from a vital public debate - e.g., the president's fitness to hold the nation's most critical job - perhaps that is no less irresponsible than speaking out in a public forum (Gersen, 2017).

While there will be those mental health professionals who will ignore the Goldwater Rule, the debate and the commentary over the President's fitness will continue to be a hot topic of discussion. Ethical principles, however, constrain most psychologists and psychiatrists from offering a professional opinion to the media.

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To comment on this article, contact Jim Windell at jwind27961@aol.com.

Classified Ad for Prospective Clinicians

BPC, P.C., a well-established clinic in Roseville, MI, is seeking to add to its team of experienced, fully licensed psychologists and social workers trained in evidence-based treatment modalities such as Individual and Conjoint Therapy, CBT, DBT, and Motivational Interviewing.

Practice is COA accredited and provides full range of treatment to all age groups. Offering large referral base and flexible hours with competitive pay. Please submit CVs to bpcpc55@gmail.com or call (586) 773-6020 ext. 31 for information.

NOTES OF A PSYCHOLOGY WATCHER My Catalog for the Great Courses Just Arrived!

Steven J. Ceresnie, Ph.D.

Once a month I eagerly wait for the catalog of the Great Courses. When I open this thick, slick magazine advertising these amazing courses, I am never disappointed.

Recently I noticed on the cover that there were 165 courses on sale at employee pricing - the lowest prices of the year! Savings of up to \$50 on my order! I can hardly wait to see what I can order.

With new courses on CD to take with me, my half-hour commute to work will continue to be an educational adventure.

Here are some of the new courses in the catalog:

- Sewing 101
- The Fundamentals of Travel Photography
- Martial Arts for Your Mind and Body
- Do-It-Yourself Engineering
- Zoology
- History of Christianity II
- Screening 101

However, the following courses are not in the catalog and must be ordered by special request:

1. Sex, lies and audiotapes: American presidents at risk.
2. How to avoid arguing with your GPS.
3. Learning about mirror neurons. (If you order this course, you are cautioned that objects in mirror neurons appear closer than they really are.)
4. How to concede an election defeat: Part I: How to recognize when you've lost.
5. How to concede an election defeat: Part II: How to say "I lost" without feeling like a loser.
6. Introduction to physiognomy: Learn how to determine where people score on the 5-factor model of personality traits by looking at their faces. The advanced course teaches how diagnose people by looking only at their nose and chin.
7. Exploring the foods forbidden on your diet: The joys of illegal foods.
8. Improving self-restraint mechanisms in your frontal lobe. (People who order the CDs for this course are encouraged to have a basic knowledge of brain anatomy, although a degree in medicine is preferred.)
9. Understanding why you always find something within seconds after purchasing a replacement: The unconscious processes of the mind.
10. Treating your own chronic back pain without surgery, medicine, physical exercise, rehabilitation, or psychotherapy. (A flashlight with a red bulb is required.)
11. Exploring the future of psychiatric diagnosis: Reviewing the as yet unpublished Diagnostic and Statistical Manual - 6th Edition to learn more about the 3% of the population that qualifies for no psychiatric diagnosis.
12. How to build a suspension bridge in your backyard without a suspension.
13. Organic chemistry without anxiety. (This course separates future physicians from the homeless population. It will teach you how to identify every known chemical in the universe simply by putting your index fingers in each square of the periodic table. If you don't believe the claims of the instructor, there is a money back guarantee.)

To comment on this article, contact Steve Ceresnie, Ph.D., at sceresnie@aol.com.

2017: A Challenging Year for Disaster Mental Health Professionals

Susan Silk, Ph.D.

It's been a challenging year for mental health. And it's been an especially challenging year for disaster mental health. If you think back over the headlines for 2017 they are fraught with triggers for distress. Politics aside, hurricanes, fires, civil disturbances, sexual harassment, bombings, and mass shootings all occurred this year.

We may overlook the unique contribution we, as psychologists, can make to individuals suddenly impacted by traumatic events, but I experience this impact frequently in my response to disasters.

For instance, when I meet with a hurricane survivor who truly believes she is crazy because of her obsession with weather reports and her hypervigilance about ambient noises, I can authoritatively reassure her that her reactions are a normal reaction to recent events. She believes that the stress that she has experienced has caused her to lose her mind. So now not only is she faced with the loss of all her worldly possessions, but she fears for loss of her sanity. My informed empathy about typical reactions in the aftermath of disaster provides a tangible step in her road to recovery.

This may seem like a farfetched or hyperbolic example, but as a disaster mental health worker I am faced with this scenario all the time. The satisfaction that I achieve in being able to resolve the unsettling situations like this one is the main thing that motivates me to do this work.

First, you sit.

Then, you listen.

Next, you provide (informed) reassurance.

When a survivor begins to tell you her story, you listen as she tells you what happened. In her narrative, she will describe her material losses. But then she'll share what really scares her: memory loss, inability to concentrate, forgetfulness, irritability, impulsivity, clumsiness.

Now I have the opportunity to let her know that her experiences are a normal and temporary reaction to an abnormal traumatic event.

This may seem quite obvious to you or me as mental health professionals. It may seem like common sense to an individual not in the throes of a disaster. But time and again I am overwhelmed by the palpable relief I see in the face of the survivor when I am able to reassure them that their reactions are normal and transient.

This process is called Enhanced Psychological First Aide (PFA). It is the preferred on-site intervention provided by disaster mental health professionals. It makes certain assumptions about the inherent competence and resiliency of individuals. Free PFA training is offered on-line or in person by a number of organizations, including the American Red Cross.

The Disaster Resource Network (DRN), formerly the Disaster Response Network, exists as a resource for MPA members. The DRN provides MPA members with access to materials to educate ourselves about the impact of a variety of traumatic events, opportunities for training and psychoeducational materials to share with clients who may have been impacted by trauma or loss. It is the goal of the DRN to meet the needs of our MPA membership and our Michigan community by providing up-to-date resources on the critical and sensitive subject of trauma.

But the DRN can only be as effective as the information to which we have access. So, I'd like to encourage you to help me improve the DRN.

Contact me at susansilk@ameritech.net or 248-350-9890.

I look forward to working with you.

To comment on this article or to get involved in the DRN, contact Susan Silk, Ph.D. at susansilk@ameritech.net

NOTES OF A PSYCHOLOGY WATCHER

Random Thoughts and Observations

Steven J. Ceresnie, Ph.D.

Fees:

Advice from a senior colleague about when to raise fees for psychotherapy: *When you have gray hair and hemorrhoids - gray hair is for wisdom and hemorrhoids is for the look of concern.*

Youngsters:

I asked an eleven year boy with ADHD what kind of animal he would like to be and why: He said, *I want to be a snake so the teacher could never tell me to sit down.*

The most succinct response I ever heard from an adolescent about why he doesn't want to go to school: *I don't enjoy school because I'm spending a lot of time in a place I don't want to be, doing things I don't want to do.*

Political Polarization:

If a conservative is a liberal mugged by reality then a liberal is a conservative who has been arrested.

I read a collection of speeches and writings of Justice Antonin Scalia: *Scalia Speaks: Self-Reflections on Law, Faith, and Life Well Lived* (New York: Crown Forum, 2017). The book was edited by his son Christopher, with a Forward by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. In her Forward, Justice Ginsburg writes: *If our friendship encourages others to appreciate that some very good people have ideas with which we disagree, and that, despite differences, people of good will can pull together for the well-being of institutions we serve, I will be overjoyed, as I am confident Justice Scalia would be.*

Adolescence:

The best one sentence summary of adolescence and early adulthood: *Think about this - adolescence and early adulthood are the times when someone is most likely to kill, be killed, leave home forever, help overthrow a dictator, ethnically cleanse a village, devote themselves to the needy, become addicted, marry outside their group, transform physics, have hideous fashion taste, break their neck recreationally, commit their life to God, mug an old lady, or be convinced that all of history has converged to make this moment the most consequential, the most fraught with peril and promise, the most demanding that they get involved and make a difference.*

Human Nature:

The quote above on adolescence is from Robert Sapolsky's magisterial synthesis of what science tells about ourselves: *Behave: The Biology of Humans at Our Best and Worst* (New York: Penguin Press, 2017).

About his background, Sapolsky says, *I was raised in an Orthodox Jewish household, and I was raised devoutly religious up until age 13 or so. In my adolescent years, one of the defining actions in my life was breaking away from all religious beliefs whatsoever.*

Sapolsky received a B.A. in biological anthropology *summa cum laude* from Harvard University. He then went to Kenya to study the social behaviors of baboons in the wild. He returned to New York to receive his Ph.D. in neuroendocrinology from Rockefeller University.

For twenty-five years, Sapolsky returned every summer to follow the same group of baboons from the late 1970's to the early 1990's. Sapolsky is currently the John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn Professor at Stanford University, holding appointments in Biological Sciences, Neurology and Neurological Sciences, and Neurosurgery.

About the goals of his book Sapolsky writes: *So we have a first intellectual challenge, which is to always think this interdisciplinary way. The second challenge is to make sense of humans as apes, primates, and mammals. Oh, that's right, we're a kind of animal. And it will be a challenge to figure out when we're just like other animals and when we are utterly different.*

Sapolsky surveys an array of numerous topics in an incisive and sometimes humor-injected way: aggression, violence, compassion, empathy, sympathy, competition, cooperation, altruism, envy, and even schadenfruede. For good measure he deals with spite, forgiveness, reconciliation, revenge, reciprocity, and love.

For example, he slowly walks us through the frontal cortex of our brain because he says, *it's the most interesting part of the brain.* He reminds us that a list of the frontal cortex expertise includes *the working memory, executive function (organizing knowledge strategically, and then initiating an action based on an executive decision), gratification, postponement, long-term planning, regulation of emotions, and reining in impulsivity.*

He goes on to group the varied functions of the frontal cortex under a single definition, crucial to every page of his book: *THE FRONTAL CORTEX MAKES YOU DO THE HARDER THING WHEN IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO.*

I urge you to read this dazzling tour of human nature because it's the right thing to do if you want to learn from this wise, funny, and brilliant scientist.

To comment on this article, contact Steve Ceresnie at sceresnie@aol.com.

BOOK REVIEW

Book Review: Borba, Michele. *Unselfie: Why Empathetic Kids Succeed in Our All-About-Me World.* New York: Touchstone (2016).

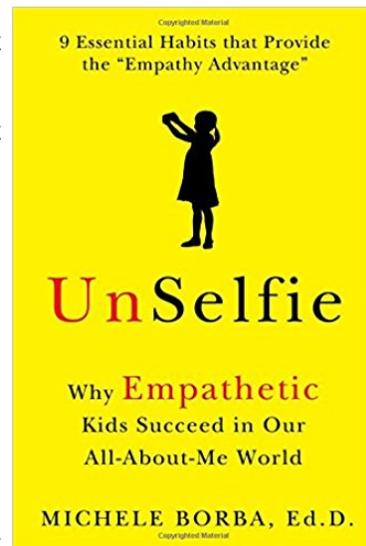
Reviewed by Jim Windell, M.A.

I read Michele Borba's latest book thinking it would be another one of Borba's competently written parenting books that would be helpful to psychologists who work with parents and children. Certainly, I was well aware before opening it up that today's millennials - perhaps rightly so - have been accused of being self-centered and egotistic. And I recognized that bringing up children in a world that is self-absorbed and obsessed with those ubiquitous selfies is undoubtedly challenging for parents who want to raise their kids to be selfless, altruistic, and empathetic.

But as I made my way through Borba's well-written and intelligent book, it was forcing me to consider that it was saying something important about the leadership and role models we see daily in the news media. Michele Borba's book's central theme is that empathy and kindness are extraordinarily important in children and can be taught to them by their parents and other significant adults in their lives. It's not just a temperamental trait that kids either are - or are not - born with.

However, one aspect of teaching kids to be empathetic, to have feelings for others, to be able to take the perspective of others, and to be kind to people is to see it modeled by adults. But the question that kept haunting me as I read this book was: How much of just the opposite is being modeled by leaders and government officials these days? I thought about the incivility, the name calling, the blaming, and, at times, an almost merciless approach to people who have experienced disaster and crises, and the abuse and assault of women by those in positions of authority and power. If children are being exposed to this in the media, doesn't this complicate the job of parents?

While Borba does not address these questions directly, she does lay out in chapter after chapter how parents and teachers have taught children to be less egocentric and more empathetic. In



nearly everyone of the nine chapters, Borba, an educational psychologist and renowned parenting expert, provides practical, hands-on, research-based recommendations that can be used by parents of children from toddlers to teens to help them be the kinds of caring, giving children most parents truly want. And while the book doesn't offer an antidote to non-empathetic models who frequently show up in the media, it does argue that raising empathetic children is more crucial than ever today.

With that, I think most of us, would agree.

To comment on this article, contact Jim Windell at jwind27961@aol.com

PSYCHOLEGAL NOTEBOOK

Maintaining Professional Control

Robert H. Woody, Ph.D., Sc.D., J.D.

Commercial and regulatory financial interests are increasingly influencing or determining professional services. Regrettably, when finance is the controlling rationale, professional standards can sometimes decline. If the funding source (e.g., health insurance) determines the fee paid primarily for cost-savings reasons, there could potentially be detriment to both the service provider and user. For example, if a third-party payment source declares "we will approve only X-number of sessions" or "we will reimburse Y-amount per treatment," there may be an assault on professional judgment of what services are needed or justified.

By professional standards, the service user (client or patient) should be involved in and informed about treatment or intervention planning. This standard promotes the service user's efforts for control-mastery, a theoretical principle that "focuses on changing a client's unconscious and maladaptive beliefs developed in childhood due to thwarted attempts to achieve attachment and safety in the client's family. The client is seen to have an inherent motivation toward health that results in testing those beliefs" (VandenBos, 2015, p. 248).

If the psychologist justifies a treatment program but the payment source, be it insurance or a self-pay service user, chooses a plan that is less desirable by professional standards, the service provider should attempt to improve the choice. Similarly, and applying this example to a decision based primarily on the financial concern of a nonprofessional payment source's placing limits on professionally justified services, professionalism dictates that the psychologist cannot remain silent.

The rationale for action versus inaction should draw on the fact, among other things, that the legal risk remains almost fully with the psychologist. (There have been civil suits about alleged negligence by a third-party treatment source.) Perhaps of greater concern for the psychologist, when a third-party payment source dictates substandard services is the specter of a licensing complaint imposes a risk of a negative administrative outcome that could forever impact the psychologist's career.

In the APA Code of Ethics (2002), there are numerous references to the psychologist's control of decisions and retaining decision-making. Of particular importance, the 2010 Amendments to the Code states: "Standard 1.03 Conflicts Between Ethics and Organizational Demands: If the demands of an organization with which psychologists are affiliated or for whom they are working are in conflict with this Ethics Code, psychologists clarify the nature of the conflict, make known their commitment to the Ethics Code, and take reasonable steps to resolve the conflict consistent with the General Principles and Ethical Standards of the Ethics Code" (see Code with Amendments at apa.org).

When there is a quality-based conflict potentially lessening quality care significantly, there may be a basis for the psychologist's withdrawal from providing professional services. Advocacy for "just say no" has potential usefulness for contradicting less desirable services that do not fulfill relevant and material quality care decisions about treatment or interventions.

[Note: useful insights can potentially be gained by re-reading the Code in search of standards that are relevant to this matter.]

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You Don't Know What You Don't Know: Perspectives from an Early Career Psychologist About the Value of Joining and Staying in MPA

Brittany N. Barber Garcia, Ph.D.
Chair, Committee on Children, Youth, and Families

Hello there!

I'm still new to most of you here, so I thought I'd introduce myself a bit to help you get to know me and to share some of the things that shape my perspective as an early career psychologist (ECP) in Michigan:

1. I am a native Michigander. My parents are both from the east side of the state, but I was born and raised just outside of Grand Rapids - the same place where I now live and work.
2. I have known and have been telling others that I wanted to be a child psychologist since I was eight years old! I also wanted to be a pediatrician, dance teacher, and a family lawyer for a while, but always came back to psychology.
3. This profession doesn't make it easy to get involved. Even though I said I wanted to be a psychologist, I didn't know much about it and struggled to find a psychologist who could introduce me to the field. And then when I did (in college), I almost abandoned psychology completely because of one bad Intro to Psych course and an experience at an APA Convention that made me question if psychologists were really "my people."
4. I pressed on, though, convinced that this was the field for me. When I found pediatric pain psychology during a graduate school practicum and found a mentor who was a true gift, I knew I was right. I'd found my passion.
5. I'm still pretty-newly licensed. After getting my PhD in Counseling Psychology from Marquette University in 2011, and completing my fellowship at Boston Children's Hospital in 2013, I became a fully-licensed psychologist in Michigan in 2014, right before I started my first (and current) job at the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital.

Perhaps as you read the above, it seems that it should have come natural for me to join the Michigan Psychological Association. But I can tell you, it did not. You see, I didn't know what I didn't know.

Even though I am from Michigan, have known forever that I wanted to be a psychologist, and practice psychology in this state, it did not occur to me to join MPA. I completed all of my undergraduate education, graduate work (with the exception of my pre-doctoral internship at the

Children's Hospital of Michigan), and post-graduate training outside of the state. So although I was familiar with the concept of state psychological associations, I had never joined one, because I knew I wouldn't be staying there. So, when I got here, I did not really know what state associations did. I didn't know what I didn't know.

I have been a student and now full member of APA since college, seeing obvious benefit in being connected to our national leadership in the field. It was not clear to me, however, how joining MPA would benefit me or my profession - because I didn't know what I didn't know.

When I began my first job, I became aware of MPA and even once asked a colleague about it. The impression I received was that MPA was "out of date," mostly represented the interests of private practice providers, and did not benefit "us." I believed the colleague because, again, I didn't know what I didn't know.

My point is - it should have been obvious for me to join MPA, but it was not.

I am not deferring responsibility; I should have looked into MPA more on my own, but I didn't. As a new psychologist trying to build a clinical practice, initiate research, and create a new program - and being a busy new wife and mother, too - joining MPA just kept getting pushed further and further down the list.

In fact, it was not until I was asked to serve on the board of MPA as the chair of the Committee on Children, Youth, and Families that I began to learn what I didn't know.

So now, as someone who is still new at this, but more "in the know" than I was before, please allow me to briefly share with you what I have learned that makes MPA valuable to me.

I learned that MPA actively and energetically advocates to protect my practice and the title and scope of practice of all psychologists at the state level (which is more contested in this state than I ever would have thought).

I learned that psychologists in general do not necessarily have a strong history of banding together to advocate for policy needs, insurance agreements, and practice rights as compared to other health care professionals; and I learned that MPA has been diligently working for years to change this and support psychologists and our needs.

I learned that in the past year MPA has been successful in enacting continuing education regulations for psychologists and bringing psychologists in line with other health care professions in the state. MPA is also aiming to be on the forefront of providing affordable and easily accessible continuing education credits to psychologists in Michigan.

I learned that mentorship is critical at every level of education and training, including when you are fully licensed but still new to the profession. Building a community of psychologists who can support you is critical for those of us who are newly licensed, and MPA is a great place to start. As I've begun to build my community and look for mentors in more areas than I ever thought I'd need as a psychologist (Advocacy? Insurance? Policy?), I learned that my colleagues in MPA are happy to serve in these roles.

Perhaps most important for ECPs, I learned that active membership within MPA is probably the best way to increase my (read "our") comfort levels with advocacy and legislative issues pertinent to Michigan psychologists. This is necessary because I certainly was not trained (maybe you were, but I wasn't) in how to do this!

Finally, I learned it is critical that early career psychologists be invited to participate in governance at the earliest opportunity. Leadership positions are hard to come by for ECPs, but are critical for us to learn what state, regional, and national organizations do.

So, thank you to MPA and to the Board for giving me this opportunity to begin learning what I didn't know and showing me the value of our state's psychological association. I look forward to continuing to learn and serve and am grateful for the opportunity to help move this important and vital association forward.

To comment on this article, contact Brittany Barber Garcia, Ph.D. at Brittany.BarberGarcia@HelenDeVosChildrens.org

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