MAGPS FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER

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Dear Colleagues,

Hello MAGPS Community!

Time has actually flewn by since the wonderfulness Great Spirit Lake of our last newsletter, and we are having our 5th Annual Virtual Conference this year! Our theme is "Transformation: Sustainability and Resilience in Group Psychotherapy" and we are so excited to be able to bring this to you in a virtual environment this year. Our keynote speakers are Dr. Ronald Kellermann and Dr. Michael Maizes, Cohort Leaders are Dr. Ann Dwyer and Dr. Ann Vernon, and we have a wonderful lineup of workshops, panels, and presentations. We are also having our annual business meeting, and we are looking forward to your participation in the discussion around the future of our organization.

Please visit our website for more information, and contact us at info@magps.com with questions. We are also on Facebook and Instagram, and we are on Twitter at @MAGPSGroup.

Warmly,
Ann Dwyer, Chair, Executive Leader

Five Are Honored and Come Home Along Navigating Sustainability and Resilience in Group Psychotherapy Awards at Virtual Conference, Aug. 14-16

Posted on August 7, 2020 by Ann Dwyer

Dear Colleagues, Friends, Fellow Travelers, Lovers, Dreamers, Seekers, Healers, Wounded Healers, Wounded Wounders, Wounded Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healed Healers, Healed Healers, Healed Healers, Healed Healers, Healed

In 1957, a small group headed by Edward Ascher of Baltimore, Maryland started MAGPS. By 1963, an executive board, by-laws, and regular educational meetings were in place. The Society has thrived ever since, fostering the growth and quality of group psychotherapy and providing a space where practitioners of all disciplines can come together for personal and professional development.

Over the years MAGPS has provided intimate retreats; large conferences; a newsletter and website with both organizational news and clinical articles written by members; training programs; a membership directory; scholarships; and leadership training.

MAGPS has hosted three AGPA national meetings, the most recent in February, 2008. MAGPS has entered into training partnerships with other local institutions. MAGPS proudly claims among its membership a large number of leaders in the field of group psychotherapy including those honored with nationally recognized awards such as the prestigious Distinguished Fellow of the American Group Psychotherapy Association award.

Today, MAGPS continues the mission developed by the founders to provide training and education in group psychotherapy. MAGPS remains one of the few affiliated societies that is truly regional, serving and drawing on the talents of group therapists from the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Leadership
A look at the list of past Presidents of MAGPS offers additional measures of our racial and gender history. Here is a decade by decade summary. You can track the details on our website.

Past Presidents (by race and gender):
1960s: Eight people, 7 white men and 1 white woman served as Presidents of MAGPS that first decade.
1970s: Seven people served as Presidents, 6 white men and 1 white woman served.
1980s: Five people served as Presidents, 4 white men and 1 white woman (who also served in the 1960s).
1990s: Five people served as Presidents, 2 men (1 white, 1 "BIPOC" (black, indigenous, people of color) and 3 women (1BIPOC and 2 white).
2000s: Four people served as Presidents, 2 BIPOC men and 2 white women.
2010s: Four people served as Presidents, 1 BIPOC man and 3 white women.
2020s: One President and one President-elect, both white women.

In summary then in its nearly sixty-year history MAGPS has had 34 Presidents (22 men and 12 women). Of the 34 Presidents, 18 (53%)were white men, 4 (12%) were BIPOC (3 men and 1 woman). Twelve of 34 (35%) have been white women.

Twenty-five white men served as Presidents of MAGPS in the first 30 years. Two white women, Beryce MacLennan and Bea Liebenberg were elected during those early decades.

For the first time in the 1990s, a BIPOC man, Tom Wessel, and a BIPOC woman, Nina Brown, served as Presidents of MAGPS. Two more BIPOC men (Reggie Nettles and Farooq Mohyuddin) were elected President between 2000-2019.

Those are the facts based on the website information. What to make of it? We could observe that the most obvious trend is around gender. White women have taken over the leadership of MAGPS from white men. This shift to some extent mirrors the increased participation of women in the psychotherapy professions. Although there is no recorded data on sexual orientation, it is worth noting that, anecdotally at least, nearly all Presidents have identified informally as heterosexual. Reggie Nettles is the exception as he described in his conference on "Multiple Identities" in 2007.

As mentioned above whites were Presidents for the first 40 years of MAGPS history. The 1990s marked the elections of the first BIPOC Presidents. Since 2000 two BIPOC men represented 22% of the total of the nine Presidents. This represents a slight gain over the earlier decades.

Conference Programs (also on the website)
A review of the information describing the history of Spring and Fall conferences sponsored by MAGPS provides another measure of how attentive the organization has been to BIPOC interests. We can consider the identity of the presenters and/or the topical focus of the programs.

In 1989 MAGPS sponsored a conference titled "Race, Ethnicity and Class" presented by [first name not available] Adams. This looks to be the first conference to focus on race—and the only such event in the first 40 years of MAGPS.

Between 2000 and 2020 MAGPS organized 40 conferences—39 after the Spring 2020 conference had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. Thirty-five conferences (90%) were directed by white presenters and focused on topics related to MAGPS' mission of educating and training group psychotherapists.

Only four conferences were presented by BIPOC professionals and/or focused on matters of racial identity in the past 20 years. In 2006 Nina Brown, the one BIPOC female President of MAGPS, directed a conference on her academic and professional interest in pathological narcissism. In 2007 Reggie Nettles, a BIPOC male President of MAGPS, presented on "Multiple Identities." In 2018, Alexis Abernathy, a BIPOC leader in AGPA, directed a conference on "Spirituality and Transcendence." Our 2020 Fall conference will be directed by Aziza Belcher-Platt, a BIPOC woman, and will focus on racial matters (details of this conference are in this newsletter.)

Cinema Series
The MAGPS Cinema Series has brought members and friends together since 2012 to share insights about group psychotherapy as portrayed in films from around the world. The Cinema Series has been nimbly responsive to social justice issues for years. Beginning in 2016 the MAGPS board encouraged the selection of films that would illuminate issues of race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation which seemed under political attack in the U.S and globally. Cinema Series participants benefitted from here and now discussions of the material featured in "Get Out" and "Moonlight" in addition to movies reflecting cultural and racial justice issues, like "The Cats of Mirikitani, " "The Band's Visit," "Avalanche" (an Iranian film), "The Square," (social media promoting the Arab Spring), "No Place on Earth," (Ukrainian Jews living in a cage hiding from the Nazis), and gay issues: "Brother to Brother," "The Celluloid Closet," and "Bear Cub."

Anti-Racism Task Force
In February 2020, the MAGPS Board met for our Spring meeting. One of the items on the agenda was to create an Anti-Racism Task Force (ATRF) to address systemic racism in the mental health field, as well as in our own organization. In the mental health community, and more specifically within our organization, individuals who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) have sustained significant injuries as a result of implicit bias, racism, and other related behaviors that perpetuate systemic oppression, both consciously and unconsciously. We felt strongly that we must take a hard look at our organization.

The Board voted unanimously to support the efforts of the Task Force, and agreed that the first action item would be to write a mission statement for the website. The mission statement follows:

The mission of the Anti-Racism Task Force is to provide recommendations to the MAGPS Board to address systemic racism in our organization and the mental health field as a whole. Our task is to use education, dialogue, outreach, and personal growth accountability to be a voice for change within our group therapy community.

ATRF co-chairs Alison Howard, Shemika Brooks , Christopher Ray and Liz Marsh have moved quickly over the summer of 2020 to provide MAGPS members (as well as others from the wider community) with opportunities to participate in BIPOC and white caucus groups. They also facilitated a Roundtable discussion in September on the topic "The History of Racism in the Field of Mental Health AND What to do About It."

Our Scorecard?
You can decide. MAGPS is leaning in to examine systemic racism in our organization and the mental health field. Somehow MAGPS must do this while not ignoring unfinished tensions around other inequalities such as gender, class, ageism and other differences. MAGPS is energized. AND we have lots of room for personal growth and organizational change.

Advertisements from Our Community Members

Ongoing Process Oriented Therapy Groups for Therapists

Several openings in weekly therapy groups that are exclusively for therapists. These groups offer a rare opportunity to engage with other relationally oriented therapists who value authentic interpersonal connections and here-and-now processing. Groups consistently offer the deep emotional support and direct engagement similar to what many of you have experienced through process groups at MAGPS, AAP, WSP, AGPA institutes, etc. The emphasis is full awareness and expression of our lived experience as we encounter and process with each other. We work to build interpersonal safety by respectfully speaking our truth and by tending to boundaries, damaged feelings and misuse of power, resulting in greater vulnerability, intimacy, healing and growth - the alchemy of group therapy.

DETAILS:
1. Groups are ONLY FOR THERAPISTS, coed, novice through seasoned. Limit 8.
2. Groups are all currently via Zoom teletherapy
3. Groups meet weekly for 75 minutes.
4. sliding scale available for new practitioners, grad students, and agency employees. Diversity is promoted.

Please call/email with questions or to discuss further.
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Thank you for taking the time to read our bi-yearly newsletter.
Please let us know what you think by emailing Rebecca Abell, PsyD, CGP at **newsletter@magps.org**.

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