



Mid Atlantic Group Psychotherapy Society

MAGPS News

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Spring 2014

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Psychodrama Returns to St. Elizabeths Hospital by Nancy Hafkin, PhD, CGP, Spring Conference Co-Chair

MAGPS is delighted to welcome Cathy Nugent, LCPC, TEP, as our guest presenter at the upcoming Spring Conference, *Care for the Heart & Soul of the Psychotherapist: Psychodramatic Explorations*. We will meet at St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, DC on Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27, 2014.

Cathy Nugent is a Board-certified Trainer, Educator and Practitioner of Psychodrama, Sociometry, and Group Psychotherapy. A Fellow of the American Society of Group Psychotherapy, Cathy is an adjunct faculty member at Johns Hopkins University where she teaches a course on psychodrama. Cathy has been conducting psychodrama groups for over 30 years, and has a special interest in recovery from trauma, spirituality as a resource for health and wellness, and self-care for helping professionals.

Because the practice of psychotherapy is a demanding art and science and requires the therapist's full attention and presence, clinicians are vulnerable to becoming caught up in the demands of multiple roles and responsibilities. When the ethical imperative for self-care is overlooked, the resources of the therapist can become depleted physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. This Conference aims to use psychodramatic methods to help ensure the quality of life of the therapist and the quality of service to the client. We will assess current levels and patterns of self-care, identify barriers to caring for ourselves, and explore new roles for increased self-compassion and self-care.

The traditional MAGPS structure of plenary, demonstration groups, and small experiential process groups led by experienced group therapists will be used. Psychodrama, a powerful and effective therapeutic method, can also be intimidating and confusing to those not trained in it. Conference participants will have the opportunity to experience psychodramatic action methods and to process their reactions in a comfortable setting. Small group leader biographies and online registration will soon be available on the website.

We are pleased to be returning to St. Elizabeths Hospital, which both psychodrama and many MAGPS leaders and members have called home. We look forward to seeing you there in April.



"We are pleased to be returning to St. Elizabeths Hospital, which both psychodrama and many MAGPS leaders and members have called home."

Care for the Heart and Soul of the Psychotherapist:

Psychodramatic Explorations

Saturday & Sunday,
April 26 & 27, 2014
St Elizabeths Hospital
Washington, DC

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MAGPS News

A Letter from the President, Maryetta Andrews-Sachs, LICSW, CGP, FAGPA



"Few people grow up without being wounded by various groups, be it with family, school, community, work, etc. We carry these within us forever, and either develop true agency and authenticity—or not."

Greetings, I've been thinking about a strong bias that I have. I feel any therapist running a therapy group should have spent serious time in a good group as a member. I vividly recall the dream I had long ago prior to joining a long-term group: I show up to take a swimming lesson. The group therapist is standing by the pool. He says, "Ok, jump in!" I look down, and the pool is filled with sharks! Few people grow up without being wounded by various groups, be it with family, school, community, work, etc. We carry these within us forever, and either develop true agency and authenticity—or not. I know I will spend my life learning to develop "healthy aggression," dealing with the "shark" part of myself and others. Wilfred Bion said, "Today's insight is tomorrow's defense." Consequently, we therapists can be just as well defended, but

more sophisticated about it. The unconscious is the unconscious—always behind the "locked door," as Malcolm Gladwell puts it. I also think of Virginia Satir saying long ago that wherever she went in the world, she ran into the same eight people. So who are your eight people? A controlling mother? A passive father? A school bully? An annoying brother? An intrusive aunt? A cruel cousin? A broken heart? Each will walk into your life and into your office again at some point over the years. Nothing prepared me for this like my extensive time in a group, unable to hide behind my role as a therapist. I encourage you each to seriously consider undertaking this important endeavor if you haven't already done so.

Warmest regards,

Maryetta

Interview with Our Spring Conference Presenter, Cathy Nugent, LCPC, TEP by Eleanor Hoskins, LCSW, CGP, Spring Conference Co-Chair



"I have had enough exposure to psychodrama to recognize it as a compelling way to communicate what may be too difficult to speak and I am excited to learn more over the course of the weekend."

In preparing for the upcoming Mid-Atlantic Spring conference, I had the opportunity to interview our presenter, Cathy Nugent, LCPC, TEP. The conference, which will be held at St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, DC, is titled *Care for the Heart and Soul of the Psychotherapist: Psychodramatic Explorations*. Throughout the two-day experience, Cathy will share what she has learned over 30 years of work with individuals and professionals so we may better learn how to understand and care for our own needs. In the interview, Cathy introduces the concepts we will be exploring, and speaks about her journey into the world of psychodrama. I have had enough exposure to psychodrama to recognize it as a compelling way to communicate what may be too difficult to

speak and I am excited to learn more over the course of the weekend. It is especially intriguing for me to think about having the opportunity to explore psychodrama at St. Elizabeths, where pioneers championed these experiential methods in the 1940s, and brought these ideas into our national thinking about mental health.

Thank you, Cathy, for taking time to prepare us for the conference by sharing your thinking with us in the following interview. MAGPS is certainly in for a great experience on April 26 & 27, 2013. We hope you will all come join us.

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(Interview Continued from Page 2)

Eleanor: *Psychodrama may be new to some folks attending the conference. Could you explain something about what psychodrama is specifically? How is psychodrama a unique way of working with groups?*

Cathy: Originated by Jacob L. Moreno, MD (1889-1974), psychodrama is a form of group psychotherapy that uses dramatic enactment to extend the verbal method of therapy. During a psychodrama, the therapist (called *director*) and group members, help one participant (called the *protagonist*), play out his or her story using role-play and a variety of specialized techniques.

A psychodramatic enactment can take many forms. In psychodrama, ordinary reality is expanded into what Moreno called *surplus reality*, where protagonists can do things in the symbolic realm they might not want or be able to do in life. According to psychodramatic theory, these “make believe” actions have a curative effect. This is because all experiences, even symbolic ones, have an impact on the body, mind, emotions, and nervous system.

So, in surplus reality, a man could psychodramatize a goodbye with a deceased parent that did not happen in “real life,” and, in so doing, help complete the mourning process. A woman could speak to her unborn baby of her hopes for the child’s future, relieving some of her worries and establishing a positive frame of mind for her labor and delivery. An elderly man might receive comfort over the death of his wife through a psychodramatic conversation with his beloved dog. And a teenager could speak with her older, wiser self, receiving advice about how to navigate a challenging life situation. The range of psychodramatic enactments is infinite, dependent only on the spontaneity of the director, protagonist, and group members who co-create the scenes.



One way that psychodrama differs from most other therapies is its reliance on bringing body into psychotherapy. Moreno once said, “The body remembers what the mind forgets.” By bringing the body into psychodramatic action, we can open up a rich source of information and a powerful avenue for healing. Current findings in neuroscience have shown that early memories and traumatic experiences are often not accessible to the thinking and language centers of the brain. In addition, some traumatic memories and experiences are not accessible to linguistic processing. So, although verbal psychotherapy supports crucially important functions such as uncovering cognitive schema, improving ego functioning, and working with emotions; sometimes, “talk therapy” alone is not sufficient. With its reliance on movement, gesture, and sensory perception, role-playing can help individuals access, explore, and resolve early attachment wounds and traumatic experiences that might not be resolved through purely verbal methods.

Eleanor: *The theory and writing behind psychodrama practice may not be familiar to everyone attending this weekend. Can you share any works that have contributed to your work with psychodrama process?*

Cathy: I have not found Moreno’s writings particularly easy to read. He was much more a man of action than of writing. Fortunately, there are several writers who have done an excellent job making Moreno’s theory and methods more accessible to contemporary readers. Some of the most well-worn psychodrama books on my shelf include:

Blatner, A. (2000). *Foundations of psychodrama: history, theory, and practice* (4thEd.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Dayton, T. (2005). *The living stage: A step-by-step guide to psychodrama, sociometry, and experiential group therapy*. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc.

Kellerman, P. (1992). *Focus on psychodrama: The therapeutic aspects of psychodrama*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

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MAGPS News

Memories of Our Fall 2013 MAGPS Meeting in Cambridge, Maryland

by Daryl Yoder, MD, Fall Conference Chair



“Steven suggested that true intimacy comes from the ability to learn from the person that we envy, and allow a change to admiration.”

Steven Van Wagoner, PhD was our presenter for our fall conference, entitled *The Interplay between Envy, Competition, and Shame: Its Impact on Intimacy in Groups*. Sharan Schwartzberg, EdD, was our invited guest small group leader from Boston.

The delightful setting was the Chesapeake Hyatt, built on the grounds of a former state psychiatric hospital on the Choptank River in Cambridge, Maryland. The weather was clear, and we had beautiful views of the Bay from our breakfast area and guest rooms. The facility staff was very helpful in insuring a positive meeting experience.

Steven Van Wagoner led our discussion of envy, jealousy, and shame. He challenged us to transform contempt of the other to gratitude and admiration of the other, so that we might be able to experience pride instead of envy. Of course, envy that is outside of our awareness can be disastrous. He asked if we might envy our former selves, the body that we used to have, but now have only a part our former physical self. The antidote to shame is exposure, and envy disappears if we receive what we want. Our task as therapists, first for ourselves and then to assist others, is to move from the position of envy of the other person who possesses something we wish, to the position of admiration of the



Steven Van Wagoner, PhD, CGP, FAGPA



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(Memories continued... from Page 4)



Photos courtesy of Paul Timin. Thank you!



other. We have the tendency to hide because envy itself is very shaming, as we tend to ignore our longings. Steven suggested that true intimacy comes from the ability to learn from the person that we envy, and allow a change to admiration.

I particularly appreciated Steven's ability to empathically identify the positive aspects of admiration out of the shaming and humiliating traits of anger, aggression, and contempt. He reminded us of the task of "bridging," or communicating verbally the emotional experiences, when previously there had not been awareness or communication.

Through the use of the fishbowl group, the feelings of envy, competition, and shame came to awareness for the participants, both of the inner and outer circles. The small group process leaders, Trish Cleary, Joan Medway, Margo London, Kathi Scholz, Farooq Mohyuddin, Reginald Nettles, Grace Riddell, Lew Weber, Rose McIntyre, and Sharan Schwartzberg, assisted us in further process our emotional reactions to these processes. I also wish to thank all of the members of the planning committee for the work of conceiving, planning, and helping this meeting to be a great success.

We had 60 participants, with a good number of students from various programs. While the overall size of the group was a bit smaller than other meetings, we had the opportunity to experience and learn about the human traits of envy, competition, and shame.

MAGPS News is

published twice a year.

MAGPS News seeks to promote the objectives of the Mid-Atlantic Group Psychotherapy Society, while also serving as a forum for the exchange of ideas, information, and expressions among MAGPS members.

Do you have something creative to share?

MAGPS News is now accepting announcements, articles, poetry, and artwork.

Submissions:

Karen Eberwein, PsyD
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<http://payments.magps.org>

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Save the Dates:

Saturday, March 29, 2014 • MAGPS Cinemas Series

Brother to Brother • Discussant: Reggie Nettles, PhD, CGP

October 2014 • MAGPS Fall Conference • Cambridge, Maryland

Justin Hecht presents on Jungian Therapy Groups

Surfing the Unconscious

by John Rhead, PhD, CGP



"Now, 51 years later, I suddenly appreciate the metaphor that these musicians were offering in such a compelling way..."

I grew up in Colorado and graduated from high school in 1963, the year that The Beach Boys released their hit album (a vinyl disk about a foot in diameter—I hope some of you remember these), *Surfin' USA*. It seemed slightly odd to be rocking and rolling to a song about surfing when we were so far from any ocean. Then a local Colorado band, The Astronauts, released an album entitled *Surfing with the Astronauts* and we rocked on with them as if we all were all California surfers and knew what things like "Banzai Pipeline" really were and what it meant to be "shooting the curl." Now, 51 years later, I suddenly appreciate the metaphor that these musicians were offering in such a compelling way that it (along with a few pretty girls) made me swirl and gyrate wildly around the dance floor.

Surfing involves paddling hard through the waves and away from the safety of the shore to get to a place where the water is deeper and one can wait and watch for a big wave coming in. When such a wave is spotted, one must paddle furiously toward the shore at just the perfect time and angle to be able to catch it. If successful in joining the wave, one can carefully stand up on the surfboard and ride it jubilantly. Its enormous power, which can be destructive and even fatal if one fails to remain in alignment with it, carries one to the shore. The message from The Beach Boys and The Astronauts finally became clear to me recently. A treasured peer group meeting of psychotherapists/friends was using all their skill to try to get me to see how a piece of my unconscious was impeding my work in a group I co-lead. After the peer group I was struggling to understand what they were telling me, or see what they were trying to help me see, when a memory of a photograph came to mind.

The photograph was of a large wave rolling toward the beach where two children were making sand castles. Within the wave was, for those who took a careful look, the clear outline of a shark. Merging this image with my efforts to catch a glimpse of the part of my unconscious that my friends and colleagues in the peer group were trying to help me see, I saw something I had not seen before. I saw that the ocean represents the collective unconscious (an Eastern mystic might call it the Tao, while a western scientist/physician might call it the One Mind*). Any wave that I am able to successfully catch and ride is a piece of my personal destiny or calling as it temporarily emerges from the collective unconscious and offers me a ride, and the sharks in the water are pieces of my personal unconscious. I now appreciate how important it is to notice that: (1) while waiting for a wave I am always floating in and supported by the ocean, even when between waves, (2) catching and riding a wave requires my careful intention and attention, for which the reward is my being given great exhilaration and direction for my life but also has an attendant danger of being "caught in the swirl," and (3) it is important to have good friends with sharp eyes to warn me about the sharks I cannot see.

The biggest hit on The Beach Boys' *Surfin' USA* was a song entitled "Surfin' Safari." The three lines I most vividly remember from that song catch the spirit of psychotherapy and of life for me:

"Let's go surfin' now

Everybody's learnin' how

Come on a safari with me!"

* Dossey, L. (2013) *One Mind: How Our Individual Mind is Part of a Greater Consciousness and Why It Matters*. Carlsbad, CA: Hay House.

whispers

whispers in the wind
can be heard if you stop to listen

quiet your internal roar
and make room for the sounds of the other

see what flourishes
when we welcome differences as they emerge

move beyond your assumptions
to let light in

walk together with curiosity and interest

by rose mcintyre

GROUP ON GROUPS:

A Weekly Group Supervision for Group Clinicians

An experiential and process-oriented model focusing on intrapsychic,
interpersonal, & systems processes.

Tuesdays, 12:15 - 1:30 PM

Upper NW Washington, DC



Mary Dluhy, MSW, LICSW, CGP, FAGPA
Leader/Supervisor

Mary Dluhy has been leading groups for 35 years and is a Fellow of the American Group Psychotherapy Association, a member of the Mid Atlantic Group Society, and a longstanding faculty member and former Chair of the Washington School of Psychiatry's National Group Psychotherapy Institute.

For further information, call Mary Dluhy at 202-363-9400 or email marydgroup@aol.com.



**MAGPS congratulates
Farooq Mohyuddin,
MAGPS Past
President, on his
election to the AGPA
Board of Directors.**

**We also offer our
appreciation to MAGPS
member Reginald
Nettles, continuing
AGPA Board Member.**

MAGPS AT AGPA

Staying connected in Boston...

Process Group Experience Sections

Process Group Experience Section for Senior Therapists
Instructor: Barry Wepman, PhD, CGP, LFAGPA

Specific Interest Sections

EXCITEMENT AND SHAME IN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY
Stewart Aledort, MD, CGP, FAGPA

FROM TURBULENCE TO CONNECTION: MANAGING ENVY, COMPETITION, AND SHAME IN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY
Steven Van Wagoner, PhD, CGP, FAGPA

HEALING FROM GROUP INFLICTED NARCISSISTIC INJURIES CAUSED BY MICROAGGRESSIONS
Nina Brown, EdD, LPC, NCC, FAGPA

INTERSECTING MINORITY IDENTITIES IN GROUPS: SEXUAL ORIENTATION, ETHNICITY, AND PHYSICAL DISABILITY
Reginald Nettles, PhD, CGP

MAGPS Member Conference Programs: One-Day Courses

NEAR AND DISTANT TRAUMA: THE EFFICACY OF GROUP RESPONSES FOR SURVIVORS AND CAREGIVERS
Suzanne Phillips, PsyD, ABPP, CGP, FAGPA & Siddharth Ashvin Shah, MD, MPH

Workshops, Open Sessions, & SIG's

A PLAY READING TO ILLUSTRATE PRINCIPLES OF DYNAMIC GROUP THERAPY
Robert Schulte, MSW, CGP, FAGPA, Chair;
Kavita Avula, PsyD; Eleanor Counselman, EdD, CGP, LFAGPA; Connor Dale, MA, RDT; John Dluhy, MD, CGP, FAGPA; Barbara Keezell, MSW, CGP, FAGPA; Elisabeth Marsh, MSW; Yavar Moghimi, MD; Rosemary Segalla, PhD, CGP; Rob Williams, MSW, CGP

Workshops, Open Sessions, & SIG's continued

THERAPY IS GOING TO THE DOGS: ANIMAL-ASSISTED GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY
Lorraine Wodiska, PhD, ABPP, CGP

BOSTON AND SURVIVING IN THE LONG RUN
Siddharth Ashvin Shah, MD, MPH

ON TRAINING GROUP THERAPISTS IN CHINA
Ruthellen Josselson, PhD, ABPP, Chair; Diana Edwards, Dip, BSc; Melyn Leszcz, MD, FRCPC, CGP, DFAGPA; Winnie Fei Ying Xiao, MA; Yong Xu, MD

LONGING FOR HOME: THE GROUP AS A HEALING HOME FOR ITS MEMBERS
Myrna Frank, PhD, CGP

ARE YOU READY FOR THE SILVER: CREATING GROUPS FOR AGING ADULTS
Venus Masselam, PhD, LMFT, CGP

MEDICATION GROUPS-A DIFFERENT ANIMAL?
David Brook, MD, CGP, LFAGPA; Farooq Mohyuddin, MD, CGP; Sid Siahpush, MD, PhD

THE HOLE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM: USING METAPHORS TO EXPLORE MASCULINITIES IN A MEN'S GROUP
Jonathan Stillerman, PhD, CGP

LOUIS R. ORMONT LECTURE — ETHICS AND THE UNCONSCIOUS: THE SYMPTOM AS A TURBULENT CONNECTOR
Macario Giraldo, PhD, CGP

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP: THE INTERFACE OF PSYCHIATRY & GROUP THERAPY
George Saiger, MD

It was great to see you!

(Interview Continued from Page 3)

All three are excellent; however, I usually tell students if they can purchase only one book to get the one by Tian Dayton. It is very readable with an excellent integration of theory and practice. It is also very practical. Dayton provides step-by-step instructions for a number of psychodramatic action structures that can be used as described or modified for application with different populations and settings.

Eleanor: *How did you become interested in this type of work? Was there a particular experience that led you to focus on it? What has kept you interested in it over the years?*

Cathy: Growing up, I had a passionate interest in music and theatre. As an adolescent and young adult, I studied classical singing and opera, and I was involved in experimental theatre. At the same time that I loved music and theatre, I also had a strong interest in psychology. Like many of my generation, I was influenced by the human potential movement of the 1970s. I pursued various avenues to facilitate my healing from a difficult childhood, increase my self-knowledge, and promote my personal and spiritual development.

Although I had heard of psychodrama, I didn't know what it actually was. Still, I found the idea of bringing together psychotherapy and drama intriguing, and I had a strong sense it would appeal to me. So, in my late 20's, I took a psychodrama course at Johns Hopkins University with Rene Clay, who was the staff psychodramatist at Spring Grove Hospital at the time. During the weekend course, I was the protagonist in my first psychodrama. I was so taken by the power, truth, and beauty of that drama that I jumped in with both feet and have never looked back. For me, psychodrama continues to be a magical combination of psychology and art that approaches the truth of what it means to be human more closely than any other psychotherapeutic method with which I am familiar.

Eleanor: *As helping professionals, self-care is a necessary and very personal part of the work we do. Is there a reason that you find psychodrama to be an effective technique for addressing issues around self-care?*

Cathy: I truly believe it is an ethical imperative that we find balance between work and play, service and self-care. Psychodrama integrates so many different elements—mind, body, emotions, spirit (Moreno developed an entire philosophy and theology underlying psychodrama), art and science, individual and group—in unusual, creative, and often profoundly inspiring ways. To me, by its very nature, psychodrama is an excellent way to work with issues of balance and integration.

Many aspects of Moreno's theory are inherently hopeful and strength-based. Moreno rejected notions of determinism, focusing instead on the creative spark within each of us that enables us to rewrite our stories and reinvent ourselves in the here and now. For these and many other reasons, I see psychodrama as a very effective way to explore issues of self-compassion and self-care.

Eleanor: *In your introductory writing about this weekend, you discuss difficulties that confront us all in balancing self-care with our work with others. Are there particular things that we can do to prepare for working together this way and to take care of ourselves during the weekend?*



(Continued on Page 11)

(Interview Continued from Page 10)

Cathy: The basics, those things at the bottom of Maslow's hierarchy, are always where I start in my own life and in my recommendations for others. Adequate rest, good nutrition, and physical exercise are the building blocks of self-care. In addition, it is crucial to have positive connections with others. So, for a long weekend like the one coming up, I would recommend bringing bottled water and healthy snacks, getting enough sleep each night, and having supportive people with whom to process anything that might come up over the course of the conference. When away from home, I sometimes have difficulty maintaining my usual exercise routine, but I find I can usually take time for a brief yoga practice over the course of even the most demanding workshop.

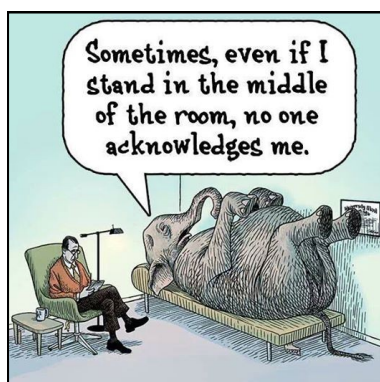
Eleanor: *Can you share with us what you are hoping for the weekend to bring to you? What would you like the conference attendees to take away from the experience?*

Cathy: First, let me say I am honored to have been invited. And I am excited by the possibilities. Despite its long history, psychodrama is not well known in many psychotherapeutic circles, and it hasn't always had the best reputation. It is unfortunate that some individuals not properly trained have conducted their own brand of psychodrama, and the method has sometimes been caricatured by people screaming and hitting each other with encounter bats. And in recent popular culture, the term *psychodrama* has been appropriated to refer to any intense, emotionally fraught situation. So, one goal for me is to offer an experience of psychodrama within its appropriate context and, if possible, to demonstrate the power of psychodrama as a method both of expression and of containment, to show the range of what the method can accomplish.

I am also very excited by the possibilities for cross-learning and collaboration between MAGPS and MAC-ASGPP (the Mid-Atlantic Chapter, American Society of Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama). I have been very interested in learning about different ways of facilitating groups. In recent years, I have enjoyed attending the American Group Psychotherapy Association conferences, where I've been exposed to many skillful group leaders. So I am excited by the prospect of sharing psychodrama with the MAGPS membership and having MAPGS members teach psychodramatists about the kind of group therapy they do.

At the Spring Conference, some psychodramatists from MAC have volunteered their time to lead small groups. I think the focus on psychodrama at this conference and the involvement of MAC members represents a wonderful first step in bringing the two local group psychotherapy associations together. I have great hopes for future collaborative projects that will enable the two associations to contribute to each other's learning and organizational mission and spread the word about the value and effectiveness of group work.

Also, I am hoping the MAGPS membership and other conference participants will be inspired to greater levels of self-care. I hope participants will leave with a feeling of restoration and a renewed sense of balance and connection in their professional and personal lives.



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BROTHER TO BROTHER

Saturday, March 29, 2014

Discussant: Reginald Nettles, PhD, CGP

6014 28th Street, North Arlington, VA

Light dinner served at 5:45 • Movie from 6:30 - 9:30

For more info or to RSVP:

<http://magps.wordpress.com/>

