

Dear Colleague:

APsaA's Covid-19 Advisory Team is delighted to invite your participation in our Pen Pal Project, a new initiative that can hopefully make the distressingly long haul of this global pandemic a bit easier to bear.

Many have told us, and we agree, that spending most, if not all, of our professional lives on screens has drained some of the fun out of our work. Since the problem of too much screen time can't be addressed with more screen time, we decided on an "analog" venture. So, if you too are getting professionally run down by conducting sessions, classes, meetings, and supervisions online, perhaps you'll entertain the idea of joining APsaA's Pen Pal Project. Of course, if you find yourself smirking dismissively at the prospect of a pen pal then this is not for you. But what if you are already hatching fantasies about writing longhand with your favorite pen on crisp linen paper, or of receiving a hand-written letter from a far away colleague whose epistolary company you enjoy? Or if you feel cheered at the thought of getting to know and support a colleague, and take heart in being known and supported by them? Then you might be just the kind of person we are looking for. You can even think of this as an analog for meeting colleagues at the winter meetings or a conference in "before times," and as a placeholder for when we will meet again.

Here's how it works: Register at <https://forms.gle/XvGQPaK7z1ptAxNZ8> by November 15, 2020. You will receive a randomly selected name and address of your new pen pal. Your name will also be randomly assigned to someone else. Send a note, a postcard, a drawing, an actual letter. Be creative! Then, start checking your mailbox for a handwritten envelope from a new friend. There are only two rules: 1) you must approach this project with joy, and 2) all communications must be via the post office. No email! No exceptions!

Of course, we are aware that the extended psychoanalytic community often enough includes complicated relationships. We have designed the project to avoid matches in the same city, state, adjacent states, or within institutes and societies. If your match happens to involve a complication or conflict of any kind, simply let us know that you will need to receive a new match, and we will re-match you and anyone involved. No questions asked.

If interested, please go to <https://forms.gle/XvGQPaK7z1ptAxNZ8> to sign up.

Please feel free to share this with other interested colleagues or groups, both those affiliated and not affiliated with APsaA, if you think they might be interested.

See you offline,
Brenda Bauer and Todd Essig for the APsaA Covid-19 Advisory Team