



Psychotherapy E-Newsletter Spring 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Registration for the first VIRTUAL 109th Annual Meeting (June 19 to June 21, 2020) is open until tomorrow, June 9th!

The Psychotherapist Associates Update below provides information on special PA programming at this conference and on recent activities and changes in our committee. We have reports on the 2020 National Meeting and important resources for all our members.

We hope you find this Newsletter informative. Please don't hesitate to reach out with your comments.

Best wishes,

*Padma Desai, LPC, LMHC Editor, Psychotherapist Associates E-Newsletter
Jonathan Kersun, MD, Incoming Chair, Psychotherapist Associates Committee*

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- **Reports on APsaA's 2020 National Meeting**
- **Update on the Psychotherapy Action Network**
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- **Upcoming Town Hall for the Psychoanalytic Community (June 14th)**
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Psychotherapist Associates Committee Update

**Margo P. Goldman, MD
Simone Hoermann, PhD
Co-Chairs, Psychotherapist Associates Committee**

So much has happened since the 2020 National Meeting in February, and we hope that this newsletter finds you and your loved ones healthy and safe. You may already be aware of APsaA's COVID resources, from the APsaA Resource page (<https://apsa.org/coronavirus>) to the COVID-19 Broadcast-only list (*send a blank email to sign up: Covid-19-join@list.apsa.org*). You can send a question to the Task Force by emailing Covid-19-questions@apsa.org or peruse the Webinar "Emergency Conversion to Telemedicine" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZW1LBrtveo>). Furthermore, the Public Advocacy Department sponsored a one-hour town hall meeting April 29, 2020. The focus was legislative development impacting practice: Teletherapy, video therapy, insurance issues, federal and state regulations impacting practice, funding for treatment

providers, Medicare issues, and funding for those working with front line providers during the pandemic. The webinar, open to *all mental health professionals*, was recorded and is available through the APsaA website.

In addition, registration for the VIRTUAL 109th Annual Meeting (June 19 to June 21, 2020) is open until June 9th! Make sure you have a look at the conference programming (<http://www.apsameeting.org>). Psychotherapists Associates is sponsoring the PA Presents Discussion Group (DG), "Who's Your Mommy? Exploring Parental Transference in Therapy."

Looking back, our educational and social programming at the February 2020 National Meeting were very successful:

The DG "Psychotherapist Associates Present: Treatment Interrupted," was co-chaired by Drs. Margo Goldman and Petra Pilgrim and featured Dr. Margaret Tuttle as presenter and Dr. Glenn Gabbard as discussant.

The popular Business of Practice Workshop, "Working with the Concrete and Difficult to Engage Patient.," co-chaired by Drs. Michael Groat and Jonathan Kersun had Victoria Lollo, MD present to discussant Andrea Celenza, PhD.

The 5th Psychotherapy Department Dine Around and the Psychotherapy Department Networking Event were well attended this year, especially by early-career therapists many of whom affiliated with APsaA via the new Psychotherapist Associate Trainees category.

We have some changes to the PA committee leadership to announce: Both Margo Goldman, MD and Simone Hoermann, PhD will be stepping down with the end of our Co-Chair terms after the June meeting. Margo will continue to serve on the PA Committee and Simone will step down from the committee altogether. We are happy to say that Jonathan Kersun, MD is the incoming Committee Chair; we three have been actively engaged to ensure a smooth transition. Thank you to Jonathan Kersun for taking on this leadership role! We are also delighted to welcome 3 new committee members: Denise Zaborowski PhD from Texas, Padma Desai LPC, LMHC from New York, and Margaret Tuttle MD from Massachusetts.

As you are probably aware, the PA Committee will continue to organize educational programs and networking events at APsaA's Meetings, to issue a twice a year E-Newsletter now edited by Padma Desai. We also continue to interface with the Committee on Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Training Programs (COPPTP), APsaA's Membership Committee, Scientific Program Committee, the Psychotherapy Task Force and the Psychotherapy Action Network (PsiAN). For more information on PsiAN, see Linda Michaels' update below.

Please be sure to spread the word about the upcoming virtual meeting and the numerous benefits of PA affiliation including the Psychotherapist Associates Listerv. This is especially crucial for combating professional and personal isolation during the challenging climate of social distancing.

It has been a great pleasure to Co-Chair the PA committee. We look forward to connecting with you during June's virtual meeting, the frequent COVID Town Halls and after our terms end in June. In the upcoming weeks, we will continue working on the leadership transition with Jonathan and the very able APsaA staff, including Debbie Steinke and Bronwyn Zevallos. We are confident Psychotherapist Associates will be in good hands, yielding tremendous potential for psychotherapists' individual growth as well as bolstering psychoanalytic psychotherapy for the future.

Warm regards,

Margo P. Goldman, M.D.
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Simone Hoermann, Ph.D.
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Co-Chairs, Psychotherapist Associates Committee

Reports from the 2020 National Meeting

Discussion Group: APsaA Advocacy on Capitol Hill

I first became involved with APsaA through advocacy to protect patients' privacy and by serving on the Confidentiality and Government Relations and Insurance Committees. I remain interested in APsaA's political activism, and when possible, enjoy attending the semi-annual session about APsaA on Capitol Hill.

I am impressed by the organization's unique ability to garner bipartisan Congressional support for key issues. During the confidentiality debate associated with health care reform proposals in the Clinton Administration, APsaA's lobbying division successfully built a coalition of Democrats, Republicans and Independents. By also forming alliances with other professional organizations, APsaA effectively promoted the inclusion of two privacy-protective features in the otherwise disclosure-permissive HIPAA: 1) The "minimum necessary" provision that strictly limits the mental-health information that may be disclosed to health insurers to process claims; and 2) The "psychotherapy notes provision," that prohibits health insurers from requiring therapists to **disclose separately kept** psychotherapy notes to adjudicate claims.

Several years later, when the Obama Administration revisited health care reform, APsaA effectively supported the inclusion of mental-health coverage as an "essential benefit" in the Affordable Care Act. I believe a crucial component of APsaA's track record is the organization's emphasis on quality patient care and individuals' rights, needs and dignity.

Fast forward to 2020, and epic gun violence remains at the forefront, despite repeated incidents of deaths from mass shootings. The issue is perpetually politicized, with NRA-supported politicians opposing the enactment of Federal gun-control laws. APsaA's concern about this issue has been palpable for years, with symposia on the active shooter, the psychological profile of perpetrators, the traumatic impact of mass shootings on "bystander non-victims," and societal predispositions for this public health epidemic.

At the February 2020 National Meeting, I attended the presentation about preventing gun violence in this country and was pleased to hear APsaA's approach. Past President and Public Advocacy Department Head Mark Smaller and APsaA's lobbyist, Peggy Tighe co-lead the discussion and highlighted the lack of resources available once a potential shooter is identified. They said, "85% of mass shooters have shown signs of trouble way before plans for violence are made, but no one knows what to do" to mitigate risk. They described APsaA's support for HR838 & S265, "Threat Assessment, Prevention and Safety Act(s) of 2019" that would establish criteria for identifying at risk shooters, guidelines for threat assessment and provisions for enabling appropriate mental-health intervention to decrease the possibility of destructive action. The Senate bill's summary states it "directs the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to establish a Joint Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Task Force, which shall provide recommendations to Congress and DHS on the development and implementation of a national strategy for preventing targeted violence through behavioral threat assessment and management. The bill defines 'behavioral threat assessment and management' as the systematic and evidence-based process of (1) identifying individuals whose behavior indicates a capacity for committing acts of violence, (2) investigating and gathering information from multiple sources to assess whether such individuals pose a threat, and (3) the subsequent management of such a threat. DHS shall (1) develop and implement the national strategy and provide information and training services related to it, and (2) award grants to establish community-based units for implementing the national strategy."

The Public Advocacy Department Steering Committee helped draft a revised version of the House Bill in November of 2018. At that time, the bill had 16 cosponsors. Through our lobbying efforts, the bill, as of this writing, now has 180 cosponsors in the house, half Republicans, half Democrats. Though a small mental health organization on the Hill, APsaA has big ambitions, and now, a much louder voice.

Mark and Peggy encouraged attendees to research the bills online and consider

contacting co-sponsors or their own state's Congressional Representatives to advocate for passage. By focusing on the person behind the gun, APsaA's advocacy sidesteps the spark-flying gun-control debate (albeit another key issue), enables bipartisan support for both of these crucial bills, and increases the likelihood of enactment into law. APsaA's advocacy approach utilizes our profession's emphasis on people's struggles, and in doing so, facilitates insightful policy development and change.

Margo Goldman, MD
Co-Chair, Psychotherapist Associates Committee

Discussion Group: Business of Practice Workshop: Working with the Concrete and Difficult to Engage Patient

I had the privilege of presenting at the American Psychoanalytic Association's 2020 National Meeting in New York City this February. I started attending the conference during my first year of training in the Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Program at the PCOP. I never imagined actually presenting a case of my own there, especially while still in training! Jonathan Kersun, MD, who was my supervisor at Temple University during my Psychiatry Residency, asked if I would be interested. I was both excited to be given this opportunity as well as intimidated since this was my first time presenting at a conference. The topic of the discussion group was Working with the Concrete and Difficult to Engage Patient. I thought that it would be fruitful to present my case as I was invested in this patient but struggled to understand what exactly was happening in our work together since it felt like little was being said.

The patient I presented dropped out of treatment in November. There was a shift in our frame for two months due to personal scheduling conflicts which required remote and less frequent sessions. I was reluctant to present a case that felt like a failed treatment due to termination in this way. I wondered if my lack of experience prevented me from adequately lowering the resistance and from keeping the patient in treatment. The audience shared many valuable insights and a lively discussion opened up around engaging a somewhat concrete patient. I was reassured that experience is not always the answer. I learned a valuable lesson that day; the importance of meeting a patient where they are.

Victoria Lollo, MD
lollovictoria@gmail.com

Update on The Psychotherapy Action Network (PsiAN)

New Advisors: Meiram Bendat and Glen Gabbard have agreed to become Advisors to PsiAN! Our Advisory Board now includes Nancy McWilliams, Jonathan Shedler, Mark Solms, Todd Essig and Enrico Gnaulati.

PsiAN Conference

We were lucky to squeeze in our conference in December 2019, before our world changed. Our 3-day conference, *Advancing Psychotherapy for the Next Generation: Rehumanizing Mental Health Policy and Practice*, was sold out and, by all measures, a great success. Presenters included Jonathan Shedler, Bill Meyer, Enrico Gnaulati, Todd Essig, Farhad Dalal, Susan Lazar, and Meiram Bendat. The arc of the conference traversed the value of therapies of depth, insight and relationship; the many threats to these therapies; and then the galvanizing actions we can take to defend them. By all accounts, the conference was a powerful and meaningful experience for all involved.

Telementalhealth Advocacy

During this complicated time of COVID-19, PsiAN has been active in leading advocacy efforts at state and national levels to secure insurance coverage for tele-therapy. Here's what we've done:

- We launched a petition, [Full and Fair Coverage for Telementalhealth](#), which now has over 44,500 signatures – and you can still sign it yourself
- Our survey form is capturing instances of insurance denials and restrictions, including

costly carve-outs for technology platforms. If you or your patients have experienced any insurance problems with your tele-therapy sessions, let us know: [Form: Record insurance denials or restrictions](#)

· We wrote a letter to Congress and the Department of Labor asking for parity coverage of tele-therapy, plus phone sessions for Medicare patients. This letter gained the support of all major mental health organizations nationwide, include APsaA, both APAs, NASW, NAMI, DBSA, etc. Due to this strong showing of support, the letter went out under the Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG) letterhead, which will help ensure it influences national policy.

Publications

In March, Aeon published this article by Linda Michaels, *Therapy that Sticks*, <https://aeon.co/essays/why-depth-therapy-is-more-enduring-than-a-quick-fix-of-cbt>. She outlines the benefits, effectiveness and evidence base of depth therapy, and describes the cultural, financial and political forces that have been pushing depth therapy out of the public narrative. PsiAN hopes to build on her article and perspectives to help change that narrative, and bring 'therapy that sticks' back into the conversation of mental health treatments that work.

Join us!

This is just a small summary of what PsiAN's been up to. We need your help and support! For more info or get involved in PsiAN, please feel free to reach out to me.

We'd be honored to have you as a member! **Membership is FREE** for individuals and organizations, and you and your affiliated organizations, institutes, associations, etc, can join here: <https://psian.org/join-us/>.

Linda Michaels, PsyD MBA
Co-Chair Psychotherapy Action Network
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Upcoming Events:



Registration for APsaA's VIRTUAL Annual Meeting, June 19-21, is open through tomorrow, Tuesday, June 9th. [Click here to register.](#)

Look out for our special programming:

- Psychotherapists Associates is sponsoring the PA Presents Discussion Group (DG), **"Who's Your Mommy? Exploring Parental Transference in Therapy."** (Saturday, June 20, 2020 3:00 - 5:00 P.M. EDT)

APsaA Town Hall - Sunday, June 14th at 7 PM ET [Addressing Internalized Racism](#)

We invite all of you to join us at a special APsaA Town Hall on Sunday, June 14th at 7 PM Eastern, where we will begin what we hope will be an ongoing conversation about racism.

Sign-up to this Town Hall is available at www.apsa.org/addressing-racism. This will be one part of an evolving series of activities within APsaA to focus on racism – in our own minds and institutions, in our patients, and in society at large.

Are you interested in contributing to the next Newsletter?

Are you interested in writing a summary of one of the panels, symposia, discussion groups, or workshops at the next National Meeting in New York, February 9-14, 2021? Do you have any other contributions in mind that you think might be of interest to fellow Psychotherapist Associates, such as articles about books or movies, talks or research reports?

Please contact Padma Desai, LPC, LMHC (padma@padmadesai.com) with suggestions, inquiries, or regarding contributions to the Psychotherapy E-Newsletter.

Information: Please click on the link for information about joining APsaA's [Psychotherapist Associates](#). Benefits include a discounted meeting fee. Or contact APsaA's Membership Services Assistant, Bronwyn Zevallos (membadmin@apsa.org) to receive a brochure.

You are currently on APsaA's list to receive the [Psychotherapy E-newsletter](#). If you do not wish to receive future issues, please let us know by sending an email containing your name to APsaA's Manager of Membership Services, Debbie Steinke Wardell (dsteinke@apsa.org), and we will remove you from our e-newsletter distribution list.

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