

Subject: [APSA COVID-19] Welcome from the COVID-19 Advisory Team Co-Chairs
Date: 3/22/2020

To: COVID-19@list.apa.org

Greetings All —

We're very glad to be sending our first message using the new COVID-19 broadcast list. We hope it will prove to be a valuable resource in a difficult, uncertain time. One thing we do know, no matter how difficult and uncertain the times, is that the best way to get through this is to get through it together. Our purpose is to help with that.

In fact, the purpose of the COVID-19 Advisory Team can be boiled down to a question: What do the members of the psychoanalytic community need from APsA and other organizations during the COVID-19 crisis to help care for ourselves and our patients while also being a source of helpful information for the general public? We are under no illusions that this will be easy. Nor do we assume we will succeed in our efforts. But we will try our best.

We will try to share only accurate information. Social media and listservs makes it easy for inaccurate information to travel much faster and farther than the truth and corrections. We will avoid that.

We will try to share timely and relevant information. Events are unfolding so rapidly that something true in the morning is false news by the evening.

We want to make sure the amount of information we send remains manageable. After a day spent on the screen or phone instead of in the office with people sometimes the last thing one wants to do is wade through an avalanche of on screen information. So, we will not be a group looking for all the latest "scoops" that only add to your email avalanche.

We will also stay focussed on the reality that this is a pandemic. No one has chosen to be here. And, truth be told, it's going to get worse. So we have to get ready now. This is not a time for the controversies and theoretical debates that help make a psychoanalytic life such an interesting one. This is a time to marshal our resources to get through a pandemic as safely as possible. There will be plenty of time on the other side to welcome those interesting discussions.

Finally, we will try our best to recognize that we are as much inside the traumas and losses of the current moment as are our patients. Sometimes what's needed is support and comfort in addition to accurate, timely, and relevant information

What's most important right now is that we need your help to be of help. We need to know what your concerns and questions are. What are the resources you need to make these difficult days of remote treatment, social distancing, and uncertain worry less difficult? And what have you found that is useful and helpful we can share with others? We have arranged for a special email address where you can send those concerns and questions along with resources you find useful. The address is covid19-questions@apsa.org. This address will be monitored by members of the COVID-19 Advisory Team. All emails will be read (except for the inevitable spam that will soon arrive!) but we will not be responding to individual messages. Please frequently make use of this to share your concerns, questions, and resources. We need your help to be of help.

We are all in this together. We hope to see everyone at the Town Hall later this Sunday evening.

Stay safe,
David Scharff
Todd Essig
Co-Chairs, APsaA's COVID-19 Advisory Team