



# The Michigan Mentor

Newsletter of the  
MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY  
*A Division of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy*

www.michiganfamilytherapy.org



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

In a "normal" year I would be reporting on the recent Lobby Day that MAMFT hosted at the State Capital in Lansing. However, as an audience of Michigan residents, I am certain that you are well aware that our beloved state has been far from "normal" for over 2 years now. The absence of a Lobby Day in 2010 should not be interpreted as a backing away from pursuing an update in language to our current scope of practice. Rather, the MAMFT Board is trying to be sensitive to spend resources wisely, and unfortunately a Lobby Day during the kind of election year (8 of the 9 members of the Senate Health Policy Committee are leaving office) as well as the economic state of the State is not a prudent decision.

The MAMFT Board is hard at work devising and executing a strategic plan that works to sustain the profession as both viable and desirable in Michigan. This plan balances the expenditure of resources (time, money and human) to maximize impact for our members. Main tenets of this strategic plan include: 1) achieve parity, 2) increase public awareness, 3) strengthen membership, and 4) maintain and uphold the integrity and efficacy of the profession.

In the upcoming months MAMFT will be creating many opportunities to become involved as members. These opportunities will include:

- Seminar on the topic of highly conflictual divorce and how to treat adolescents and children in the cross-fire (Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011)
- Annual educational conference (April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011)
- New professional networking meetings (to be announced)
- Study groups for members about to take the national exam (to be announced)
- "Meet and greets" with newly elected legislators

I encourage each of you to become more involved with MAMFT than you were last year. I truly look forward to seeing the same smiling faces at our events and would like very much to welcome new ones. Please join me in strengthening your membership within our organization; the Board is dedicated to creating opportunities, please take advantage of these throughout the 2011 calendar year. See you soon!

Tianna Hoppe-Rooney, PhD, LMFT  
President, MAMFT 2010-2012

### [A View of the AAMFT National Conference, 2010](#)

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*Christopher Keown-Belous, MA, LLMFT, CFLE*

The 2010 National Conference for AAMFT was held in Atlanta, Georgia from September 23-26<sup>th</sup>. The conference itself was held in the Marriott Marquis Hotel, downtown. The theme of the conference was "Marriage: Relational and Societal Perspectives." As far as conferences go, it was your pretty standard run-of-the-mill national conference, encompassing aspects related to clinical development for the practicing couple and family therapist.

There were several focus tracks for attendees to participate in, including medical family therapy and ethics. The keynote speakers for the conference spoke on a wide range of topics, including same-gender marriage, how relationships work, history of marriage, and marriage and religion. John Gottman was the opening plenary speaker, followed by Charlotte Patterson on day



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two. For the two plenary on Saturday, Stephanie Coontz and John Witte, Jr. presented interesting talks related to marital history and religion. Out of the four plenary the most interesting in my opinion had to be Charlotte Patterson's talk on Same-Sex Marriage: A Changing Legal Landscape for Couples and Families. Charlotte Patterson is a widely respected researcher in the field of Lesbian and Gay families. She brought this expertise into an eye-opening and entertaining presentation that kept interest and brought attention to a frequently overlooked problem in our society: discrimination of others. I, for one, only wish the rest of the conference could have been so enlightening.

The conference was marketed as having a diverse and inclusive theme, yet there were few workshops and options available for families that fit into these criteria. There were a few workshops related to affirmative therapy, and a few on ethnic diversity; however the wide range of options were the similar to other AAMFT conferences in the past. I found it disheartening that the focus tracks for this year's conference were not related to diversity. This conference had so much potential, and yet I felt as though it was squandered. This may be a comment in and of itself on the conservative nature of our leading national organization, but I will let you be the judge of that.

I believe that the conference planning committee did have the best intentions when coming up with the theme of the gathering with an attempt to be inclusive of varying diversity within couple relationships. However, this conference – sadly – fell short of this goal. The conference did have wonderful organization and seemed incredibly streamlined from start to finish. If there were any logistical problems they were not noticed by attendees. This is a strength of the AAMFT national conference that I have always noticed – they are consistently structured and predictable.

While the conference had its low points, it certainly had a great many high points. The social events of the conference were well attended, and allowed for extensive networking. The academic showcase highlighted several doctoral and masters programs from around the country. The presenters of the workshops were well-equipped and provided much needed expertise in various areas. The venue was magnificent, located in a gigantic beautiful building in wonderful downtown Atlanta. There were plenty of attractions within walking distance, including the World of Coca-Cola, Georgia Aquarium, Olympic Park, and the CNN Headquarters. Overall, I thought that the conference was a worthwhile adventure – and look forward to future conferences from AAMFT.

## Member Profile: Jerome Price, MA, LMSW, LMFT

**By Carrie Coen, LMFT**

As we move into fall it becomes apparent what incredible treasures we have in Michigan. From crisp sunny mornings, flaming red and orange leaves, to the smells of cider mills and the cheers of crowds at collegiate football games our state has so much to offer this time of year.

Likewise, we have many treasures in this state's Marriage and Family Therapy clinicians, professors, and students. MAMFT wants to take the time to appreciate those therapists who are doing great things in our gorgeous state. You may remember the last newsletter's feature of Mary Ensroth as our first member profile. If you know of a therapist you



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would like to be recognized in our next newsletter please send an email to [mamftmi@yahoo.com](mailto:mamftmi@yahoo.com).

Born and raised in Detroit, MI and a Michigan State University graduate, one locally grown therapy-treasure is Jerome Price, MA, LMSW, LMFT. Perhaps what is most valuable and intriguing about this therapist is his early training with founders of family therapy, Jay Haley and Cloe Madanes.

Jerome Price was supervised by Jay Haley and Cloe Madanes at The Family Institute of Washington, D.C. He later went on to co-present with these accomplished clinicians, authors, and teachers. He became what is known as a regional faculty member where he was able to educate others on strategic family therapy. During this same time Jerome Price worked on a study conducted by University of North Carolina Department of Community Psychiatry. There he worked with William Hollister, a founding member of NIMH.

Working with such impressive founding members of organizations that are so familiar to marriage and family therapists and other mental health professionals gives Jerome Price a unique perspective in his current work as a therapist, supervisor, professor at Wayne County Community College, and author.

Jerome Price wrote *Power and Compassion: Working with difficult adolescents and abused parents* and co-authored a parent skills training curriculum with Judith Margerum, *The Right to be the Grown-Up: Helping Parents Be Parents to Their Difficult Teens* which provides coping skills and a host of practical, easy-to-implement strategies to help parents reclaim their lives when their children's behavior is out of control. He recently co-authored, *Defusing the High Conflict Divorce: A treatment guide for working with angry couples* and currently Price, Margerum and James Windell are co-authoring a trade book titled *Take Control of Your Divorce* that will be released at the end of this year.

As co-director in his private clinic, Michigan Family Institute, Jerome began specializing in working with adolescents and their families. It was through this work, Jerry was introduced to working with high conflict divorces when he found himself treating the divorced parents as well



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as needing to testify in divorce proceedings regarding the teens he was serving. For information about Michigan Family Institute go to [www.mifamilytherapy.com](http://www.mifamilytherapy.com).

It is with great pride and excitement for MAMFT to announce that Jerry Price is combining these two areas of interest and expertise and will be the presenter for MAMFT's upcoming seminar entitled **BRIEF THERAPY WITH ADOLESCENTS CAUGHT IN DIFFICULT DIVORCES Strategies for Changing Both the Family and the Teenager** on February 25, 2011 in East Lansing. Please stay tuned to upcoming emails and flyers for information regarding registration and other details about this fascinating event.

## Starting a New Practice: A Narrative

By Katie Bozek, PhD, LLMFT

When I would imagine what I would do after I finished graduate school I always envisioned myself starting my own practice. The thought of working for someone else, or for an agency had not really crossed my mind. When I did my practicum with an agency it solidified my desire to be on "my own" and not have to deal with the office politics, and policies that someone else created.

During the last leg of my dissertation process I started to search for office space to set up my practice. I thought that it would be easy: (1) find office space, (2) start seeing clients. Oh how naïve I was! No one told me about all the paperwork it took to get a name and clear it with the state, or the fees that went with it! Then I had to find an office. It took me several months to find the "right" office space; one that was affordable, spacious, and had all the "amenities" that I would need. I learned a lot through that process about the terminology of office space and what would and would not be included in a month's rent. I learned that the term "cam's" (common area maintenance) often leads to disappointment and frustration because it means there are added costs to the stated rent. I would find a nice office space that was relatively affordable and then the dreaded "cams" would make the rent jump—sometimes by hundreds of dollars! I finally settled on a one-room "office" that was housed in a large building with many other office suites. This set-up included furniture, internet, a receptionist, phone, and other office "amenities", such as a copy machine & fax capabilities. I had completed the first "step" of my two-step plan.

The next step I knew would be more difficult, but still, I had confidence and my naiveté. I spent several weeks just going to my office and working on the last part of my dissertation, finishing some



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other publication manuscripts, and devising a marketing strategy. Other private practitioners I knew told me the benefits of calling doctor offices and setting up times to bring in breakfast or lunch as a way to get in the door to talk briefly about my practice and the services I would be able to provide. No one told me how difficult it would be to be able to get someone on the phone to set up such a meeting! After a month of call-backs and unreturned phone calls I was told by one office that it may just be better to drop off an afternoon “snack” with some brochures. So, armed with my cookies and brochures I targeted select pediatrician offices around my office and called to see if it would be ok to drop off a “snack”. This seemed to appease the busy office managers more than trying to set up 15 minutes to talk to the doctors & nurses.

I also sent out an “introductory” letter as advised by a successful practitioner and friend. I sent this to doctor offices, school counselors/psychologists/social workers, and some local legislators as a way of informing them of the new resource in their area. This proved to be more successful, as I made connections with some area school counselors at a nearby junior high school.

Once I started to get a few calls (really, not even a handful) I realized my ignorance in insurance company policies and who would take me. There were many emails to friends who are in private practice and who deal with insurance companies on a regular basis. Thankfully, they were very gracious in their advice, guidance and encouragement.

Every person that I have spoken to who has gone into private practice on his/her own has warned me that it will take a while to build up my practice—at least 2 to 3 years. Though I knew this going into it, there are still times where the fact that I don’t have a “booming” practice, yet, is hard to swallow. When people ask, “How is the practice going” I start by saying that I’m able to pay rent without having to dip in my savings account because I’m not sure how to quantify “how its going” otherwise. I am busy, I love what I do, and I can pay my bills, and that is enough for now.

I celebrate every phone call that I get from someone inquiring about services and am devastated when I realize that I cannot provide them the services they need because their insurance company does not recognize my MFT license. This is why it is also so important for private practitioners to continue in the lobbying efforts that will ultimately aid in reimbursement issues in the future. I know that with continued effort on my part and others to pass legislation that will clarify our scope of practice I will be even more successful in my little one-room office.

In the end, I am very happy that I went out on my own and started my practice. It’s been a huge undertaking that has involved more work and heartache than anticipated, but what is any success without some struggles along the way?



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## Voting As a Tool for Advocating for Yourself, Your Clients

By Carrie Coen, LMFT

Often at this time of year we are inundated with reminders to vote, typically in the form of slanderous TV commercials for campaigns at the state and local levels. We may decide to ignore the process by changing the channel or pressing mute, or reject it completely by passing up our opportunity to vote. By not voting, the voice of our complaints is never heard by the appropriate representatives. As therapists this is especially meaningful because we may also feel obligated to raise the concerns of and advocate for those we serve. In addition to voting, it's so important to communicate with our elected representatives about concerns that effect our profession, licensure, businesses, and educational institutions. This can be done via simple actions such as making a call or email to scheduling a meeting with your official or attending a town hall meeting. Truthfully, these officials are much more accessible and eager to meet their constituents than it may seem.

On a micro-scale, voting is also important for representatives on the MAMFT Board, the local division of our professional organization, AAMFT. By voting we select the voices of those we would like to represent the wants, needs, goals and concerns of Marriage and Family Therapists in Michigan. These elected representatives then communicate that on the local, state, and national level to policy makers, stakeholders, and other people of influence; whether it's in government, educational institutions, insurance corporations or the national branch of the professional organization.

In this scenario, too, voting is just one step. The next step is to make your needs and goals known to these officials. For the MAMFT Board this may mean introducing yourself at an event or conference, attending a Lobby Day, sending an email to [mamftmi@yahoo.com](mailto:mamftmi@yahoo.com), or attending an open board meeting.

Stay tuned for upcoming email reminders and ballot mailouts for the MAMFT Board elections as well as votes about a policy change regarding electronic voting procedures.



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Please consider posting ads for employment opportunities, supervision, shared office space, etc.

Please call Carrie Coen at (248) 763 6537 for details.

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## **UPCOMING EVENTS FOR YOUR CALENDAR**

### **WORKSHOP - Level 1: Bridging the Couple Chasm: A NEW Research Based Approach**

The Illinois Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (IAMFT) is hosting a two-day professional workshop by a Certified Gottman therapist and trainer, J. Graham Thompson, LMFT. The workshop will be held October 22 & 23 at Our Saviors Church, Arlington Heights, Illinois. Training is from 9am-4pm with sign-in at 8:30am. Attendees will see how to apply the research-based principles and interventions of Gottman Method Couples Therapy to strengthen:

- The Friendship System
- The Conflict System
- The Share Meaning System

Standard 2-day registration is \$400 or \$250 for students. For more information visit [www.IAMFT.org](http://www.IAMFT.org)

### **Workshop: Spirituality in Psychotherapy with Dr. Kenneth Pargament**

On November 12, 2010 Dr. Kenneth Pargament, Professor of Clinical Psychology at Bowling Green State, The Psychology Department of Madonna, and the Samaritan Counseling Center in Farmington Hills have collaborated to provide a workshop to give practitioners a framework for understanding and addressing spirituality in psychotherapy. The workshop will take place at Kresge Hall, Madonna University, 36000 Schoolcraft Rd, Livonia, MI 48150. Please go to [www.smaritancounselingmichigan.com](http://www.smaritancounselingmichigan.com) for details.



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## **SEMINAR: "Caught in the Crossfire"**

### **BRIEF THERAPY WITH ADOLESCENTS CAUGHT IN DIFFICULT DIVORCES**

#### **Strategies for Changing Both the Family and the Teenager**

Jerome Price, M.A. will present an abundance of information to members who work with volatile couples (marriages and divorces) and the children caught in the conflicts. Jerry is launching a book on this topic in Fall 2011 and is one of Michigan's own. Please plan to join us for this very relevant clinical topic on **Friday, February 25<sup>th</sup>** at the Hannah Community Center in East Lansing, MI. The seminar will run from 9am-3pm.

### **2011 MAMFT Spring Conference:**

Representatives from AAMFT report that conference attendance in Atlanta was up 17% from the following year. This excites us to think that we are hungry as professionals for continuing educational opportunities and hope this will mean the same increase in Michigan. This year's annual conference will again be held at the Hannah Community Center in East Lansing, MI. Please reserve the date of **Friday, April 15<sup>th</sup>** to come and spend with many of your MFT colleagues from around the state. We will again offer an array of topics and speakers to satiate the different needs and desires we have as clinicians.

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### **2010 MAMFT Board of Directors:**

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