

# The *EGPS* News

Newsletter of the Eastern Group Psychotherapy Society

Fall 2008

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**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

*Shoshana Ben-Noam,  
PsyD, CGP, FAGPA*

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**Letter from the  
 President:  
 Reflections on Our  
 Natural Habitat**

*Peter J. Taylor, PhD, CGP, SEP*



Those of you who attended our last Spring Event heard how passionate I am about the land where I live with Roger and our dog Magio, how much the privilege of living there feeds me, how much we want to protect the land and its natural inhabitants. We do what we can to help the native plants flourish, by protecting them from the devouring overpopulation of deer and the competition of invasive species. We're learning that as the native plants we protect survive past their first springtime emergence, the native creatures return, as well. By creating a bounded space and inviting nature to fill it, for the first time this year we saw the trout lilies bloom—and then we see eastern tiger swallowtail butterflies in the flower garden, a ribbon snake sunning itself near the woodpile, an American toad navigating the precipice

of a stone retaining wall. I'm sure that in decades past they comfortably lived on this land with all their usual cohabitants, but our urban and suburban civilization no longer leaves much room for them to complete the circle of their interconnected lives. This is a complexity so complex that we can't possibly plan for it. We can only protect the space and let nature take its course.

At our Spring Event, I proposed that EGPS is a kind of native habitat for group therapists, a place in which—when the right environmental conditions are fostered—group therapists just naturally congregate, and cross-pollinate, and thrive. Last week, watching a swallowtail butterfly feasting on the phlox pollen, I realized that if the phlox weren't there, the swallowtail wouldn't have its food, at least not here. Perhaps it would go elsewhere, or perhaps it would go hungry. Perhaps it wouldn't even survive. And I thought—might the same be said of members of our psychotherapy groups? Where else do they find the community of emotional attunement and understanding of interrelated differences that we all need to be our best and deepest selves? If they haven't been fortunate enough to grow up with such an experience, how do they create it, where do they learn to live there, native and free? I'm afraid that in our modern world there

are precious few opportunities for this natural habitat of human beings.

So it's my hope that we group therapists are gardeners of a particular kind. We might enjoy the beauty of a tropical orchid, but we especially value the native phlox because it's part of a living ecosystem. The tropical orchid feeds the creatures with which it co-evolved in Costa Rica, but here in New York it's disconnected from that particular purpose. As group therapists, we may enjoy the high drama of Hollywood, but I hope we are humble enough—and fiercely protective enough—that in our work we attend to the subtler ecosystems that support real life, in all its nuanced diversity and interconnectedness. At times we intervene, at other times we get out of the way, and while we can never fully map all the complexity of our group members' humanness—or our own—we understand that it is there and we honor it week after week with our careful attention, inviting each self to be true to its essence as it emerges in interaction with others.

Each Sunday morning, I pick up our portion of vegetables from a seventh-generation family farm. Last week included the first potatoes of the season. I thought about that. All summer the potato vines have been

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## Letter from the Editor

*Shoshana Ben-Noam,  
PsyD, CGP, FAGPA*

The Olympics are over. The summer too. The day after Labor Day, I woke up to the sound of the waves in Montauk, at the Eastern tip of Long Island. There were very few crowds in this small community, a community surrounded on three sides by ocean and bays. No boardwalks or developments on the beach. What a pleasure to walk on these wide beaches. What a place to relax and unwind. Little did I know it was the quiet before the economic storm!!

This issue offers several ways for nurturing the therapist. Phyllis Cohen, PhD, addresses "Healing the Therapist through the Arts" in a stimulating article. Robin Good, PhD, proposes a thought provoking article on "Maintaining our Balance: Nurturing the Therapist Inside and Outside the Group." In an educational article, Haim Weinberg, PhD and Martha Gilmore, PhD, enhance our techniques in working with large groups in their article: "The Large Group Experience." In the light of the shaky current events, what our issue has to offer regarding the therapist's nurturance is particularly relevant.

The Annual November Conference, entitled: "Mutual Desires, Mutual Growth: How Therapists Evolve with their Groups," will further enrich our skills in nurturing ourselves and others.

Hope to see you there. ■

## Letter from the President

*continued from page 1*

growing. Now, these wonderful brown tubers are ready to be pulled from underground and turned into tasty things to nourish us. So much of our work happens underground. And then one day, we are in awe as another moment of nourishing human interconnectedness emerges. That particular moment might never have happened if we hadn't tended the habitat needed for it to grow. Won't you join me in tending EGPS—and then nourishing yourself with its abundance? ■

## Healing the Therapist Through the Arts

*Phyllis Cohen, PhD, CGP,  
FAGPA<sup>1</sup>*

There are poignant citations in literature, from Shakespeare to the present day, as to the healing, restorative contributions of the arts and the part they play in nurturing well-being. There are the gifts of love, music, friends, flowers, food, nature, religion, family, dance, sex, spirituality, humor and intellectual discovery. Any or all of these come into play when there is a need to "heal the healer."

Just as the First World War was called the Great War, we tend to think of 9/11 as the 'Great Trauma.' Therapists saw victims at unbelievable sites and patients came weeping into our offices, many having seen devastation beyond comprehension. It soon became apparent that therapists in

treating these patients were equally deeply affected. "Without careful attention we are at risk. It is essential to acknowledge that nurturing the therapist's emotional needs is vital in sustaining a continuing ability to treat patients in a mature, professional way." (Cohen, 2004, p.62)

I truly believe that when we go to work we go into battle. After tragedies strike, we are asked to explain the inexplicable; to fill gaps torn in people's lives, to contain unbearable feelings and make them bearable. "In the domain of unusually strong feelings and unexpectedly perseverant thoughts, perhaps the hardest thing to know is where we stop and others begin." (Ettin, 1995, p.3) In the aftermath of tragedy in our patients' lives, whether major or minor, we function much as does projective identification. The toxicity is taken in, filtered through what we have seen, heard, know and are, and then must be given back in a more tolerable, benign form.

In my experience working in the aftermath of 9/11 with therapists in New York, too often I heard, "I can't bear it. It's too much. Maybe I should retire. I can't sleep at night because of my thoughts. I'm eating too much. I'm eating too little. I'm frightened for my children. I go into my office and pray for strength." To some degree, these same words arrive in our offices in every day practice.

Fortunately, as practitioners we have extraordinary professional resources. There are peers we can meet with, supervisors to consult, training analysts and therapy groups to explore with and seminars in which we can process.

It is the personal life of the therapist that is usually most at risk. Altruistic use of our

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time seems to be a common fault, since it so often results in self-neglect. Earlier I have written about the diverse ways that therapists coped with their own sense of trauma after 9/11, in attempts to replenish their own capabilities. Many selected music, from the woman who turned to drumming to another who repeatedly played the Brandenburg Concerti. A therapist who was a child of the holocaust told my group that all she could think of was that her new family would be killed, so she returned to religion and worship. Another fragile therapist felt that supplies would disappear and that he might starve to death, so began to obsessively hoard food. Months later, the sight of the many cans still in the closet allayed his anxiety. Strikingly, a group of therapists decided to cook Sunday dinners for each other to recreate their fond memories of Sabbath visits to their grandmothers; always considered a safe and special place. And I do consider that preparation of food can be an art form.

To emotionally replenish ourselves, it is often the smaller comforts that provide so much. An afternoon browsing a little-known museum; a walk through the Japanese Gardens of the Botanic Garden; cycling through hidden paths in a park; a sprig of flowers unexpectedly in the office; or just getting lost in a book, a play, a film or an opera. These permit us to luxuriate for a brief time in another world. Perhaps most important, there is the power of shared laughter, the joke that breaks tension as it reminds us of the sense of the ridiculous, sexuality, which recalls the sublime.

As I've discovered for myself there is a great difference between recognizing the need and thinking of how to fulfill

it. There are two brief personal stories, one that occurred days after 9/11 and the other this past summer, in which it was managed successfully. Both are emblazoned in my mind.

In the first, I was leading a group of ministers whose churches were all located close to Ground Zero in the downtown area. They had asked for help so that they could help their congregants. The room was filled with feelings of fear, a loss of faith and a sense that it was all too much to bear. I must admit I felt exactly the same way. After working together for hours when some sense of peace had finally entered the room, I left feeling totally drained. All I could think was that I needed **green**. Not just grass, not trees, but the basic color, green! I got into the car with my husband and it was my good fortune that he, who had been a child in London during the Blitz,

understood perfectly. He drove up beyond Bear Mountain to a small lake surrounded by a forest of green and nothing else. The serenity of 'the nothing' put me back together so that I could return to work the next day.

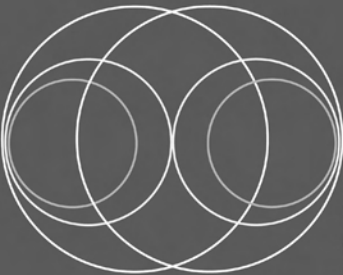
The second event that stands out for me took place in Japan last year. We were in Hiroshima on the weekend of the anniversary of the bombing. There were 5,000 chairs set up for the occasion, a park filled with international celebrities and wall-to-wall people. But over all there was a blanket of silence, except for one thing; the frequent sound of a deep and reverberating bell. Curiosity aroused, we tracked it down to an open structure where people lined up to strike an enormous bell to call for peace. I took my turn, walked up the few steps and with an amazing sense of rightness I swung the clapper that rang the bell.

Somehow, the pure note echoing through the air filled me with its own music and it felt healing and whole and right. Clearly that message was that each of us must find our own bell to ring and our own music to march to in this journey for emotional replenishing.

There is a need to permit ourselves to know that the good things of life need not be saved just for use following major traumas. These nurturing art forms need to be allowed to live in our day-to-day lives, incorporated into our spending of precious time. Let us not forget that the best tool and only tool we have to conduct therapy with is ourselves. And a good tool has to be kept sharpened, polished, put in a safe place, and most of all, be treasured. ■

#### References:

- Cohen, P.F. (2004), The care and feeding of the therapist in times of trauma. *Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy*, 21 (1): 81-99
- Ettin, M.F. (1995), From one to another: Group consultation for group psychotherapy. *Group* 19 (1): 3-18.



2008 Annual Conference  
of the  
**Eastern Group  
Psychotherapy Society**

Friday, November 21, &  
Saturday, November 22

**Mutual Desires,  
Mutual Growth:  
How Therapists  
Evolve  
with Their  
Groups**

Riverside Church  
91 Claremont Avenue  
New York City  
(one block east of Riverside Drive  
@ 120th Street)

### Get Ready to Express Your Desires and Evolve at This Year's Conference

*Sherry D. Breslau, PhD, CGP  
and Patti L. Cox, PhD, CGP,  
Conference Co-Chairs*

This year's Annual Conference, "Mutual Desires, Mutual Growth: How Therapists Evolve with Their Groups" will be held on Friday, Nov. 21st and Sat. Nov. 22nd, once again at the breathtaking Riverside Church.

Our Conference Committee has been working year round to bring to you a very diversified selection of presentations

*continued on page 4*

## Annual Conference

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by an extraordinarily talented group of faculty members.

Our Friday Plenary presentation, "I Dread My Group: Group Supervision—An Opportunity for Mutual Growth and Development," will be presented by Kathleen Hubbs Ulman, PhD, CGP, FAGPA. This presentation will include a demonstration supervision group, as well as comments from the discussants: David Altfeld, PhD, CGP, LFGPA and Ronnie Levine, PhD, CGP, FAGPA.

Saturday's Plenary, "Spontaneity and Creativity: A Psycho-drama Take on How Therapists Evolve with Their Groups," will be presented by Louise Lipman, LCSW, TEP, CGP, CET III who will talk about how group therapists, of all disciplines and theoretical backgrounds, can expand their role repertoires to make the best use of their creative selves. Mark Ettin, PhD, CGP and Jacob Gershoni, MSW, CGP, TEP will be the discussants.

Both Plenaries promise to be dynamic and stimulating, as well as practical and educational.

And that's not all, folks! With almost 50 events to choose from, reflecting multiple disciplines and theories, there will be something for everyone!

By now, EGPS members should have received their Conference Programs. The program is also available on our website at [www.egps.org](http://www.egps.org).

If you have any questions about the Conference, please feel free to contact Sherry Breslau ([docbreslau@aol.com](mailto:docbreslau@aol.com)), or Patti Cox ([pattilcox@earthlink.net](mailto:pattilcox@earthlink.net)).

We look forward to seeing you in November! ■

## Maintaining Our Balance: Nurturing the Therapist Inside and Outside the Group

Robin Good, PhD, CGP<sup>1,2</sup>

By definition, "nurture" means to nourish and also "to promote the development of." If a therapist feels nourished within his work, what aspect of himself or his work is being developed or promoted? What does it mean when we speak of "nurturing the therapist inside the group?" Clearly, this is a provocative topic; many of us still hear the bells of classical theory ringing in our ears, demanding that we be a blank screen, an asymmetrical, one-person psychology, where the patient's neurotic conflicts, desires, fears are the exclusive material of treatment. The idea of therapists being "nurtured" inside therapy could suggest too much focus on the feelings or needs of the therapist instead of the patient — a serious concern which I will address later.

I would like to propose that the relational orientation or two-person perspective, even multi-person perspective in group, is the context in which I think about how and when I feel nurtured *within* a therapeutic situation. The relational perspective, according to Lewis Aron (1996), looks to the intersubjective encounter as a vehicle for cure — a meeting of minds that is both affective and experiential. It is in these affectively alive and present encounters that I feel engaged and nourished — that I leave an individual or group session either feeling challenged, touched, or pained — some-

how enriched by a deeper understanding of the connections between myself and my patients.

The following clinical example reveals the power of immediacy and emotional communication. The group context can provide a holding environment that transcends individual treatment as it allows one to feel joined with others through multiple, affective connections that support members through difficult life experiences.

Nina came into the group depressed, talking about losing her mother to cancer when Nina was a teenager. It was awkward and embarrassing to be missing her mother so much since she had passed away 20 years earlier. Tears flowed as the patient spoke of what she missed about her mother, yet the expectation from people that she be "over it." In the world, Nina was feeling "shut down" and alone. In response to Nina's intense sadness and shame, group members began revealing feelings and details never before shared. One after another, those who had lost parents, spontaneously spoke of the particular ways they longed for them. Other patients, whose parents were still living, connected poignantly to longing for a lost relationship. Nina's shame faded away as the group continued to connect to her experience. As the group therapist, I felt guilty and fortunate that my parents were still with me. I listened quietly, at first unable to connect, yet simultaneously in tune with Nina and the group. Privately, I had become aware that my guilty-gratefulness was actually akin to Nina's enduring appreciation. I could then channel my experience into an interpretation of how I was connecting with her — that Nina's intense valuing of her relationship with her mother was something I related to and found touching vs. worthy of shame.

Unlike classical theory, relational theory views "interpretation" as a mutual, affective,

interpersonal participation. It is an observation from *inside the interaction*, which notes where the therapist stands vis-à-vis the patient and what sort of relatedness is possible between them. In this sense, interpretation is key to psychotherapeutic exploration, containing aspects of the therapist's subjectivity which becomes available for use (Aron, 1996, p.118).

Any valuable interpretation conveys to the patient or the group something of the therapist's affective responsiveness. The relational viewpoint is that people have needs to connect, to attach, to know and be known by others as well as have an impact on them. In the clinical example given, Nina and the group members were affected by each other and their responses demonstrated that. Patients also need to feel they can have an emotional impact on their therapists. This impact can only be known if therapists respond in some way that demonstrates that they have been affected, moved, changed (Aron, 1996, p.120).

Even though I am highlighting the importance of the therapist's affective responsiveness, as alluded to in my opening, if therapists were to express their emotional reactions to patients in as "authentic" a manner as possible, this could be felt as too much focus on the feelings or needs of the therapist rather than the patient. Instead, we transform an affective response into an intervention or interpretation which modulates that response, preserving the affective, cognitive and relationship components of an interpretation. This transformation allows the patient to experience the interpretation in the service of his needs vs. the therapist's.

<sup>1</sup> Based on a presentation at the 2007 EGPS Annual Conference.

<sup>2</sup> Faculty, EGPS Group Therapy Training Program; [robingood@optonline.net](mailto:robingood@optonline.net)

We need to balance the value of emotional spontaneity with the corollary value of sustaining the therapist's emotional reactions, thereby containing, holding, processing, digesting, or modulating them.

The therapist's attunement to his own emotional responsiveness to the patient, whether he is forthright, contains a reaction, or channels it into an interpretation — allows him to be emotionally engaged in the interaction in the here-and-now. Engagement of this sort is active not passive, whether or not the therapist says anything immediately to the patient.

In contrast, the therapist's emotional non-responsiveness equals passivity, deadness, vacuous listening, mindless coasting — none of which are productive for patients nor nurturing for therapists. However, we slip into these resistances and avoid our emotions just as patients do. This can happen more often when therapists are not maintaining their balance outside of their work, when they are excessively stressed, in crisis, or overwhelmed by some personal issue. Whether it pertains to the therapist or patient in a given context, the ultimate awareness of non-responsive "flatness" is of utmost importance. Private reflection by the therapist or with the patient or group can help to figure out what is being avoided and why — thereby coming alive again.

Feeling nurtured within our therapeutic work entails this active, emotionally alive involvement in the interaction. Being attuned to our emotional selves in our work becomes the vehicle for understanding our patients and the relationship we are co-creating, which is the primary task of treatment. Much of what nurtures

therapists outside the group (intimacy, the arts, physicality, nature, or time for personal reflection) is, in some form, parallel to what nurtures us inside the group — namely, exchanges or connections that engage our emotional selves.

Striving to be emotionally alive and present is not always easy or comfortable. What may be nurturing within my work is not necessarily "safe." The emotional demands are challenging and tiring when it is necessary and in the patient's interest to contain, hold, or digest difficult feelings — highlighting that one does not have free license to share or self-disclose to patients. The task of engaging with patients in a thoughtful yet emotionally alive and responsive way allows us to feel stretched and more often nurtured by this work. ■

**Reference:**

Aron, L. (1996). *A Meeting of Minds – Mutuality in Psychoanalysis*. Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press.

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### **EGPS Fund for Special Projects**

*Phyllis F. Cohen, PhD,  
PsyD, CGP, FAGPA,  
Honorary Chair  
Peter J. Taylor, PhD, CGP,  
SEP, President  
Margaret Postlewaite, PhD,  
CGP, Co-Chair, Past  
Presidents Committee*

We're pleased to announce that the Fund for Special Projects has received more than \$11,000 towards purchasing a sound system for our annual conference and other events. We want to thank all those who have already shown their extraordinary support for the mission of EGPS in this way and to invite those who have not yet done so to please help us achieve our goal before the November Conference. ■

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### **Contributors to EGPS Fund for Special Projects**

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### **James Edward Williams, CSW Remembered 1939-2008**

*Peter J. Taylor, PhD, CGP,  
SEP, EGPS President*

Jim Williams, who was on the Board of Directors of EGPS for many years, died on August 13, 2008. He was a long-time Editor of our Newsletter and later developed our website, maintaining it until just a few years ago.

Jim had a private practice and founded the NY Counseling Service, a referral service for psychotherapists. He volunteered his counseling services to 9/11 rescue workers dealing with the aftermath of the destruction. He was devoted to helping others unravel the complexities of their lives through psychotherapy.

We are saddened by his untimely death and reminded again of the fragility of our lives and connections. ■

## EGPS Training Program

*Leon Schein, EdD, LCSW, CGP, Director*

The Training Program commenced its historic twentieth class on October 15th. This was in no small part due to the efforts of our creative, energetic and resourceful Co-Deans of Admission Ellen Rubin, PsyD and Anne McEaney, PhD.

This year's graduation was celebrated on June 11th, 2008 at St. Vincent's Hospital. The graduates included Lisa Borneman, LCSW, Dionisios Bougas, BSC, Syma A. Dar, MD, Rabbi Jo David, MA, Gloria T. Gaev, LMSW, Rob Handelman, PsyD, Rev Barbara Hoffmann, LCSW-R, Heidi B. Landis, RDT, LCAT, Catherine A. Marsh, MA, LCAT, ATR-BC, Debbie Radzinsky Buchuk, Nilova (Tina) Saha, LMSW, Virginia A. Seewaldt, PhD, Donna Siegel, LMSW, Sarah Wilkinson, LCSW-R.

We also acknowledged the graduates of the One Year Program who completed a second year of supervision: Susan Blum, LMSW; David Campbell, PhD; Siobhan Dolan, RN-C. Neal Spivack, PhD, CGP was their supervisor.

Our graduation speaker was Ken Porter, MD, CGP, FAGPA, a founder of the Training Program. Ken is highly regarded in our field for his work in group psychotherapy and spirituality. His topic was titled "Who We Really Are: Spirituality and Group Psychotherapy."

The Dean of Faculty, Alan Shanel, CSW, CGP, and the Dean of Professional Development, Phyllis Wright, LCSW, CGP, have participated this year in consolidating the activities of the program and ensuring its quality. The success of this past year, as

measured by student comments, is in no small part due to the creativity, energy, and resourcefulness of our Faculty, Shoshana Ben-Noam, PsyD, CGP, FAGPA; Lena Furgeri, EdD, CGP, FAGPA; Robin Good, PhD, CGP; Ronnie Levine, PhD, CGP, FAGPA; Shelly Menolascino, MD; Paul Schienberg, PhD, CGP; the Supervisors Mildred Forrell, LCSW, LPsyA, CGP; Neal Spivack, PhD, CGP; and Experiential Group Leaders Chera Finnis, PhD, CGP; and Leah Slivko, LCSW, PsyA.

The Training Program has developed extensive materials for the EGPS website, including a description of course offerings. Margaret Postlewaite PhD, CGP has continued to update the present site which has been most beneficial to the Training Program. The Program appreciates the generous support of

Peter J. Taylor, PhD, CGP, SEP, President of EGPS and the Board of Directors. ■

## Highlights From The Board

*Barbara Feld, LCSW, CGP, FAGPA, Secretary*

Recently there has been a change in the Board membership. Michelle Collins-Greene, PhD became President-Elect and Margaret Postlewaite, PhD, CGP retired in her role as Past-President. Lena Friedman and Anne McEaney, PhD, CGP completed their term as Board members and Lynn Pearl, PhD, CGP, Mary Sussillo, LCSW, BCD, CGP, Joan Wittig, MS, ADTR, LCAT, and Dan Raviv, PhD, CGP are the newly elected Board members. Claudia Arlo, MSW, CGP has joined

Ronnie Levine, PhD, CGP, FAGPA as Co-Chair of the Professional Discussion Group; Greg McColl, MSW, CGP is exploring the possibility of starting a Discussion Group in Brooklyn; Edward Elder, M Div, LMHC will be Conference Co-Chair Designate to join Patti Cox, PhD, CGP when Sherry Breslau, PhD, CGP steps down after the Nov. 08 Conference. And Dominick Grundy, PhD, CGP has been appointed the new Editor of GROUP as of Jan. '09.

Our special project, the acquisition of a microphone system, is progressing well and we hope to have one by the time of the Annual Conference in November. ■

## Long Island Discussion Group Update

*Gregory J. MacColl, LCSW, CGP*

Our last meeting of the year, in June '08, was an all day workshop on "Caring for the Group Therapist." Nella Hahn graciously held this event in her home and helped put together several wonderful meditative sessions. The September meeting began with a presentation by Alison S. Pepper on "Women Executives in the Forefront of News Programming: the Challenges of Business Group Dynamics." In October, Estelle Rauch presented the "Therapist's Life Stages: Impact on Clinical Perspective." In November, Arlene Grossman will host a brunch as we watch and discuss the HBO hit, 'In Treatment.' Both new and seasoned therapists, in agencies or private practice, are welcome! For more information please contact Greg MacColl, at 718-805-1660 or at [gregmaccoll@aol.com](mailto:gregmaccoll@aol.com). ■

## EASTERN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY SOCIETY

*Recipient of 2007 AGPA Award for  
Excellence in Education in Group Psychotherapy*  
**ONE YEAR TRAINING PROGRAM 2008-2009**

*Are you a therapist currently working  
in private practice, at an agency or a clinic?  
Do you conduct groups or have you been thinking about it?  
Do you want to gain in group knowledge and expertise?  
Join us for a year of comprehensive training.*

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Ellen Rubin 212 721-5546  
[ellenirubinpsy@verizon.net](mailto:ellenirubinpsy@verizon.net)

**Director:** Leon Schein, EdD, LCSW, CGP  
**Co-Dean of Admissions:** Anne Slocum McEaney, PhD, CGP  
**Co-Dean of Admissions:** Ellen I. Rubin, PsyD  
**Dean of Faculty:** Alan Shanel, LCSW, CGP  
**Dean of Professional Development:** Phyllis Wright, LCSW, CGP

# EGPS Training Program Graduation



*Training Program's Faculty & Consultants*  
Left to right: Lena Furgeri, Chera Finnis, Mildred Forrell, Paul Schienberg, Leah Slivko, Neal Spivack, Robin Good, Shoshana Ben-Noam, Ronnie Levine.



*Training Program's Director & Deans*  
Left to right: Ellen Rubin, Phyllis Wright, Alan Shanel, Leon Schein, Anne McEaney.



*EGPS One-Year Training Program's Graduates*  
Standing Row: Left to right: Barbara Hoffman, Catherine Marsh, Sarah Wilkinson, Donna Siegel, Dionisies Bougas, Gloria Gaev, Virginia Seewaldt, Jo David, Debby Radzinsky.  
Sitting Row: Lisa Borneman, Syma Dar, Heidi Landis, Tina Saha, Rob Handelman.



*2nd year Consultation Class*  
From left to right: William Rush, Joan Siobhan Dolan, Neal Spivack – Consultant, David Campbell



*Kenneth Porter*



*EGPS members at the Training Program's graduation*

## Financial Report

Neal Spivack, PhD, CGP,  
Treasurer

I once again have the privilege of presenting the summary for another financial year, this one ending May 31, 2008. For the second consecutive year, EGPS has had a surplus. Our total income of \$149K (figures are rounded), exceeded our expenses of \$130K by almost \$19K. The credit for our good financial condition goes to those throughout the organization who have supported our programs and worked hard to hold down expenses. In particular, the Training Program had a very successful year, drawing a large first year class as well as attracting a second year group.

In June '07, we held our biannual Fund Raiser that earned about \$7K (including the expenses from the 2006-7 fiscal year). In addition, the Professional Discussion Group continued to be a strong revenue producer. These sources of income offset decreases in income from the Annual Conference (we essentially broke even) and the Spring Event. Nonetheless, we remain financially strong; we were able to give our administrator a long overdue raise as well as institute a policy of annual cost-of-living allowances for her. In addition, we have been able to conduct an extremely successful fundraiser for a sound-system, continue to raise money for the J. Dustin Nichols Scholarship Fund, and support the publication of our excellent journal, GROUP. ■

### EASTERN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY SOCIETY FINANCIAL SUMMARY Comparison 2006-2007 and 2007-2008

	<u>6/01/06-5/31/07</u>	<u>6/01/07-5/31/08</u>
<b>INCOME</b>		
<b>Membership Activities</b>		
Annual Conference	\$ 44,448	\$ 38,810
Training Program	\$ 20,700	\$ 31,500*
Long Island EGPS Activities	\$ 295	\$ 335
Professional Discussion Group	\$ 4,550	\$ 5,155
Spring Event	\$ 6,093	\$ 4,505
Fund Raiser	\$ -	\$ 22,067
<b>Member Services/Benefits</b>		
Membership Dues	\$ 30,135	\$ 27,640
Journal Royalties	\$ 28,545***	\$ 15,117
Newsletter Ads	\$ 250	\$ 1,350
Thorne Memorial Fund	\$ 530	\$ 378
Publication Sales	\$ 339	\$ 100
Community Outreach Services	\$ -	\$ 1,950
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$135,885*</b>	<b>\$148,907</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>		
<b>Membership Services/Benefits</b>		
Annual Conference Expenses	\$ 37,851	\$ 38,801
Training Program	\$ 22,573**	\$ 25,288
Long Island Discussion Group	\$ 645	\$ 646
Professional Discussion Group	\$ 1,558	\$ 2,195
Spring Event	\$ 3,313	\$ 3,883
Fund Raiser	\$ 3,867	\$ 11,186
Membership Renewals/Retention	\$ 1,828	\$ 1,741
GROUP Journal	\$ 30,035	\$ 24,492
Newsletter	\$ 2,929	\$ 4,341
Website/Directory	\$ 675	\$ 677
Referral Service	\$ 550	\$ 1,079
Collegiality/Hosting	\$ 352	\$ 167
Marketing Committee	\$ 264	\$ -
Community Outreach Task Force	\$ 330	\$ 320
<b>Administration</b>		
BOD & EC	\$ 3,747	\$ 4,065
Nominating Committee	\$ 1,279	\$ 1,498
Annual Report	\$ 437	\$ 492
Administrative/Finance	\$ 8,844	\$ 9,993
Administrative Exp for Fundraising Activities	\$ -	\$ 1,365
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$121,077**</b>	<b>\$130,229</b>
<b>NET</b>	<b>\$ 14,808</b>	<b>\$ 18,678</b>

#### Addendum

##### **J. Dustin Nichols Scholarship Fund**

Solicitations Income	\$10,348	
Income with Dues	<u>\$ 1,700</u>	
<b>INCOME</b>		<b>\$12,048</b>
<b>07-08 Scholarships</b>		<b>\$(2,800)</b>
<b>FUND BALANCE</b>		<b>\$ 9,248</b>

##### **Fund for Special Projects**

Income	\$11,156	
Income with Dues	\$ 395	
<b>FUND BALANCE</b>		<b>\$11,551</b>

\* includes \$2,800 scholarship money from J. Dustin Nichols Scholarship Fund

\*\* includes \$1,900 of expense from prior years

\*\*\* includes one-time settlement payment from previous publisher of \$17,000

## The Large Group Experience

Haim Weinberg<sup>1</sup>, PhD, CGP,  
FAGPA & Martha Gilmore<sup>2</sup>,  
PhD, CGP, FAGPA

As of 2002, the participants of the EGPS Annual Conferences have encountered a "strange" format of group: the Large Group (LG). For many group therapists who are used to the traditional small group, this format is unknown and confusing. Some ignore it as if it never existed in the Conference schedule, or deliberately avoid it and skip its meetings (especially easy as they are tucked into the two lunch breaks). Others come once, feel overwhelmed, frustrated and perplexed, and vow that they will never come again. Still others come from time to time, wondering about the nature of this "strange beast," waiting for the features of the small group to appear. Yet some group practitioners become "addicted" to the LG, attending year after year, feeling that something important is happening there, and even finding that the LG becomes the highlight of the Conference for them. This short article is directed to all these people, plus those who are new to the EGPS Annual Conference or have never heard of the LG. We hope to explain the idea behind the Large Group, correct some common misperceptions. We must admit that we are somewhat biased about LGs as we are fascinated by them.

The LG is not a small group. This simple truism sounds clear on paper but is hard to remember in practice. A common mistake is to come to the LG expecting the familiar

processes of self-exploration, cohesion and intimacy. Sometimes a member brings in a personal problem believing that they will get feedback, or a personal response to their distress. They may become very disappointed when the LG fails to "act" like a small group. Instead the LG is mostly aimed at exploring societal and organizational dynamics. The focus of the leaders is not on the individual but on the group-as-a-whole, reflecting conscious and unconscious processes of the organization/conference in which the LG takes place, or of society-at-large. While the LG may be therapeutic, any resemblance to therapy is more to sociotherapy than psychotherapy.

LGs can be "crazy" and chaotic. It is difficult to follow a thread, and voices may be unheard or ignored. The individual experience can be intimidating and paralyzing. Even finding one's voice in the crowd can be difficult, and for some people just expressing their thoughts in the LG feels like an achievement. Members may wonder, "Do I dare disturb the universe, overcome my fears and say what I have in mind in public?" The fears are only partially imaginary, because the individual voice might be lost in the crowd, drawing no response at all, which may become a narcissistic blow. Still it is important for the participants to be able to express themselves, as participation in the LG brings to the fore a sense of citizenship and belonging to a community.

LGs can be overwhelming and confusing. It is difficult to think clearly in this setting, and not easy to make sense of the experience. The loose boundaries and weakened container, due to inconsistent participation in the group

sessions, enhance regression and evoke fragmentation anxieties. It takes time to understand what happened and to absorb the events. That is why we often offer small groups following a LG experience to process the individual's feelings and restore a sense of identity that is sometimes threatened by the LG. Yet it can be strengthening for the ego to go through this experience and to be able to crystallize one's boundaries and keep one's identity under the pressure to merge with the mass.

LGs can also be aggressive and conflictual. The anxieties of the LG create a tendency to cling to familiar subgroups. Sometimes one "attaches" to a friend they came with. Other times members identify with social subgroups centered around gender, ethnicity, religion, political attitude, or any other minority-majority issues. Because there are strong defense mechanisms of splitting and projective identification in the LG, the tendency to group into such social subgroups can create intense conflicts. The LG, then, provides a unique opportunity for members to become intensively aware of multicultural issues and social conflicts from a passionate and involved, rather than intellectual and detached, point of view.

LGs reveal what is called "the social unconscious" or the organizational unconscious. The LG has become part of almost every important group therapy conference nowadays, but each organization applies it in a way that reveals some of its dynamics and unconscious. The challenge, however, is to stay an individual among the crowd, feel the possible conflict of being involved in the community, and explore social issues. ■

### Reference:

Weinberg, H., & Schneider, S. (2003). Introduction: Background, Structure and Dynamics of the Large Group. In S. Schneider & H. Weinberg (eds.), *The Large Group Revisited: The Herd, Primal Horde, Crowds and Masses* (pp. 13-26). London: Jessica Kingsley.

## Tributes to Toby Chuah Feinson, PhD, CGP

Lucy Holmes, PhD CGP

Toby Chuah Feinson died on May 5, 2008 at Bellevue Medical Center, two weeks after she was critically injured in a traffic accident in Harlem. A psychoanalyst in private practice and a member of EGPS, Toby was one of the Founders of the Center for the Advancement of Group Studies (now the Center for Group Studies), where she served as Administrative Director. Originally a teacher, Toby established two organizations, Adventures in Teaching and Counseling and later, GroupWorks. Both were devoted to bringing emotional education to schools in New York and New Jersey, using techniques of Modern Group. Toby worked closely with the American Group Psychotherapy Association to help the educators and children who were traumatized by the events of September 11, 2001. She went on to provide consultation services, continuing education, and emotional education through the group process to principals, guidance counselors, administrators, and children.

Toby had a passionate belief that groups could help prevent teacher burnout by encouraging educators to put the primitive feelings generated in the classroom into words, and by giving them tools to help their students use those same primitive feelings in ways which fostered

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haimw@group-psychotherapy.com

<sup>2</sup> Private practice, Sacramento & Davis,  
CA. mlgilmore@ucdavis.edu

progressive emotional communication. The groups she and her facilitators led for students addressed the big issues for public education: the primitive acting out of violence and the feelings of hopelessness and despair which lead young people to drop out of school. Toby will be sorely missed by all who loved and respected her, both personally and professionally.

She is survived by her husband Robert Feinson and two sons, Lawrence and Christopher Chuah.

### *Patti L. Cox, PhD, CGP*

In the relatively brief time I knew Toby she impressed me the most with her generosity and loving spirit. When I talked to Toby about things that mattered to me, she listened. She seemed to know when to just listen, and when to offer input and advice. Regardless of how busy she was, she always made time for me and was truly available. She demonstrated these qualities consistently as the Director of GroupWorks, the organization she developed that paired expert group facilitators with school guidance counselors to train them in groupwork.

I recall one problematic 4th grade boy who persistently "circled" the group every session and refused to stay in his seat. Toby and I discussed what communication his "circling the group" might express in light of his history. Toby proposed that I put his name on the chair beside me and gently suggest that he had a place with me. This creative suggestion was invaluable.

What a terrible tragedy to lose such a talented, gentle, and kind soul as Toby. ■

## Member News

### Welcome New Members

Madhu Ahluwalia, MD  
Ann Bareish, LCSW  
Isil Bilican, MA  
Kevin Braga, MSW  
Shawneladee Cole, LCSW-R  
Neil Friedman, MEd  
Ruth Geller, MD, MEd  
Kevin Gillette, PsyM  
Andrea Grunblatt, PhD  
George Jagatic, DTR, LCAT  
Yoon Im Kane, MSW  
Jani Klebanow, PhD  
Marsha Luftig, CSW  
Kristine Miranda, MSW  
Shawna Newman, MD  
Beth Ostergaard, MSW  
Dylan Payne, DO  
Maria Romani de Goes, LCAT, ATR  
Sara Rothstein, MPS  
Rhoda Shapiro, LCSW

### Honor Roll of New Member Sponsors

Sherry Breslau  
Ed Elder  
Lena Friedman  
Anne McEneaney  
Mary Sussillo  
Peter Taylor  
Joan Wittig

JANET BAUMANN, PhD, CGP completed her doctoral work at New York University in May, 2008. Congratulations Doctor Baumann!!

SHOSHANA BEN-NOAM, PsyD, CGP, FAGPA Guest Edited the GROUP Journal issue on Trauma, Group and Couple Therapy, Sep. 2008; was invited to lead a small group institute at the Mid-Atlantic Group Psychotherapy Society Annual Conference, West Virginia, Nov. 2008.

ALICE BYRNE, LCSW, MSW, CGP, LOIS KENNEDY, PsyD, JEROME LEFF, CSW, CGP and EMANUEL SHAPIRO, PhD, CGP, FAGPA will lead a workshop

on "Countertransference and Gender" at the AGPA Meeting in Chicago, Feb. 2009; also, Guest Edited a GROUP Journal Special Issue on Gender.

LENA FURGERI, EdD, LCSW, CGP, FAGPA presented a workshop on "Constructive-Destructive Dialogue in Group," August, 2008 at the European Symposium in Group Analysis, Dublin, Ireland.

ROBIN GOOD, PhD, CGP was at the USTA Sectional tennis tournament for 4.0 senior (over 50) women tennis players, Sep. 12-14, 2008. Winning teams go on to the Nationals in California.

BONNIE JACOBSON, PhD published a book entitled: "The Shy Single" by Rodale Press.

LEE KASSAN, MA will publish an article on: "Encounters in the Waiting Room" in the Fall 2008 issue of the Annals of the American Psychotherapy Association.

SUSAN KAVALER-ADLER, PhD, ABPP, NCPsyA conducted two workshops at the Object Relations Institute on: "The Primal Pivot in the Dance of Psychic Transformation" and "Countertransference," Spring 2008; will also conduct workshops on: "Time as an Object" and "Guilt: From Neurotic Guilt to Existential Grief."

JERRY KOSSEFF, PhD, CGP is entering his 62nd year as an Adjunct Full Professor at Teachers College, Columbia University, teaching: "Issues in Contemporary Psychoanalytic Theory and Practice." This coincides with the great grandson who has come along as the newest member of his "Health Dynasty" family.

GREG MACCOLL, LCSW, CGP was invited back to lecture on: "9/11 Parent Support Group" at Columbia University School of Social Work, August, 2008 (following his article in the International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, July, 2007).

CHARLES MAYER, MDiv, PsyD, LMHC, CGP was awarded the PsyD degree by the Graduate Theological Foundation in South Bend, Indiana, May, 2008.

ROBERT S. PEPPER, CSW, PhD, CGP will present a paper entitled: "Boundaries, Ethics and Chaos Theory in Group Psychotherapy" at the AGPA Meeting in Chicago, Feb. 2009.

ELLIOT ZEISEL, PhD, CGP, FAGPA was invited to conduct a one-day Special Institute at the AGPA Meeting in Chicago, Feb. 2009; has assumed the role of Vice-Chairman of the Group Psychotherapy Foundation.

The following EGPS members published chapters in: Scott Simon Fehr, Editor (2008), "101 Interventions in Group Therapy." New York & London: The Haworth Press.

RICHARD BECK, LCSW, BCD, CGP, FAGPA published chapters on: "When Boundaries Breathe," and, "In My Old San Juan."

SHOSHANA BEN-NOAM, PsyD, CGP, FAGPA published a chapter on: "The Fee: A Clinical Tool in Group Therapy."

ANNE McENEANEY, PhD, CGP published a chapter on: "What Do You Mean I Should Tell Her What I Think About Her?" Psychoeducation About Interpersonal Process.

MARGARET M. POSTLEWAITE, PhD, CGP published a chapter on: "The 'I's Have It!'"

DAN RAVIV, PhD, CGP published a chapter on: "Using The Group Power For Interpretation."

ROBERTA L. SLAVIN, PhD, LP published chapters on: "The Use Of Group Processes For Alleviating Teachers' Stress Within a School Setting," and "Stress Reduction For Students In Elementary And Middle School."

JOAN WITTIG, MS, ADTR, LCAT published a chapter on: "Bridging In Group Therapy Using Movement Improvisation." ■

### Referral Committee Update

*Mary V. Sussillo, LCSW, BCD, Co-Chair*

The Referral Committee of EGPS is in the process of enhancing its referral network and reaching out to those who can benefit from a group experience, thereby generating more referrals to our members' private groups. We need your help to accomplish this expansion! Our plan is to reach out and contact:

- psychotherapy institutes, social service agencies and hospitals,
- grammar/high school/college counseling programs,
- employee assistance programs,
- alcohol and drug treatment facilities
- eating disorder programs
- acting schools
- nursing programs
- senior centers, caregiver organizations, hospices
- individual or multiple private practices

**If you have the name and email address of a contact person at an organization, or an individual/group therapist**

**that you are currently or have been previously affiliated with, who may be a good group referral resource, please email me.** When we receive your contact suggestions, we will email our flyer entitled "Are You Looking for a Group?" Please let us know if we can use your name when we email your contact person. We will also attach a copy of Eastern Group Psychotherapy Society's Groups list.

Also, **if you belong to Listserv(s)** that we could use to promote referrals to EGPS by posting our flyer, please email me the address.

We are excited about expanding our Referral Service to benefit patients as well as you, our experienced and dedicated members. Your help in this worthwhile endeavor is greatly appreciated.

Please do not hesitate to call, **212-289-8570**, or email me, [marysussillo@aol.com](mailto:marysussillo@aol.com) if you have any questions or suggestions. Spread the word of our extensive group services to your colleagues, friends and family! ■

### Fund Raiser 2009

*Jim Ellis, PhD, CGP & Marie Rothschild, LCSW, BCD, CGP, Co-Chairs*

An exciting Fund Raiser is being planned. EGPS is honoring its Training Program: Faculty, Deans and Director, on its 20th Anniversary. This calls for a big celebration!! Details will follow.

**Save the Date: Sunday, June 7, 2009. ■**

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## GROUP Journal Welcomes Writers

*Marty Livingston, PhD, CGP, FAGPA, Editor & Dominick Grundy, PhD, CGP, Incoming Editor*

GROUP would welcome professional writing by EGPS members. Writing about your work is an excellent way to share information with other professionals and to clarify your own ideas. Shorter and longer pieces can be considered, depending on the genre. For more information, please contact the current Editor, Marty Livingston (M-Livingston@nyc.rr.com) or the incoming Editor, Dominick Grundy (Grundyd4@earthlinknet). ■

## Past-Presidents Committee

*Bert Weinblatt, PhD, CGP, LFAGPA & Margaret Postlewaite, PhD, CGP, Co-Chairs*

The EGPS Past-Presidents Committee worked closely with Peter J. Taylor, PhD, CGP, SEP, EGPS President, to invite the participation of Past-Presidents in the recent EGPS fundraising effort for Special Projects. We're pleased to announce that all Past Presidents contacted supported this effort, showing their continued interest and dedication to the

work of EGPS. Keeping alive connections to those who have served EGPS so diligently is the task of our committee and seems vital. If others have suggestions of tasks appropriate for this committee, please feel free to contact us at postlewaitem@gmail.com. ■

## Spring Event

*Lynn Pearl, PhD, CGP, Co-Chair*

On May 8, 2008 we held our annual Spring Event. Stewart Aledort, PhD, CGP, FAGPA gave a stimulating presentation on "Sexual Attraction and Excitement in Groups: Through the Developmental Lens." We had the advantage of an excellent new venue at the Pratt Institute, especially conducive to members' socializing and networking.

As co-chairs of the Event, Jim Ellis, PhD, CGP, and I want to thank Joan Wittig, MS, ADTR, LCAT (who made the Pratt Institute venue possible), Leon Schein, EdD, CGP, Amy Kossoy, and Jan Vadell, our Administrator, for their great contribution to the production of this Event.

The Event was well-attended and we look forward to another successful one in 2009. We are currently in the process of determining the topic and other details for next year's event.

We'll keep you posted! ■

## Margo Steinfeld, LMSW, MA. CGP Relational Psychotherapist

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*EGPS Joint Board*

*Upper Row: Left to right: Peter Taylor, Neal Spivack, Lena Friedman, Dan Raviv, Anne McEaney, Shoshana Ben-Noam, Leon Schein, Patti Cox, Jonah Schwartz, Marty Livingston, Doug Ruest, Joan Wittig. Middle Row: Ronnie Levine, Marie Rothschild, Greg MacColl, Bert Weinblatt, Lower Row: Margaret Postlewaite, Lynn Pearl, Sherry Breslau. Jim Ellis & Mary Sussillo are missing in the picture.*



*Marty Livingston, Herb Rabin & Bert Weinblatt*



*Stewart Aledort*



*Peter J. Taylor, President*



*Joan Wittig & Marie Rothschild*



*Doug Ruest & Lena Friedman*



*Jan Vadell, Administrator*



## Peer Works

*Social Skill Building Groups for Children*

*Groups start October 2008*

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*[www.peerworksnyc.com](http://www.peerworksnyc.com)*

*Contact Jan at: 917-583-5517*

*[kidsgroups@gmail.com](mailto:kidsgroups@gmail.com)*

## New Recovery Groups for Men

*Sexual Compulsivity, Internet, Alcohol,  
Drugs, Codependency*

### Twelve Weeks

#### Groups in Manhattan and Westchester

Group members will have the opportunity to explore, in depth, the family dynamics that produce shame, guilt, anger, and loneliness which resulted in addiction. The group will learn new ways of addressing issues through the use of anger management techniques, relapse prevention, and improving communication skills in a supportive environment.

**For More Information Contact:**

**Stephanie Kravec, LCSW, CSATII, SAP**  
*Certified Sex Addiction Therapist*

New York City 212-315-3449

Westchester 914-738-5989

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PANEL 10-4:30 p.m.

**TANGO PERFORMANCES during lunch** at 1:45 P.M.,  
lunch from 1:00 to 2:45 P.M.

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**Distinguished Panel:**

LINDA HOPKINS, Ph.D., author of the Comprehensive  
Biography of Masud Khan, The False Self, Conference paper:  
"The Demonization of Masud Khan: Realities and Projections"

SUSAN KAVALER-ADLER, Ph.D., ABPP, NCPsyA, Founder  
and Executive Director, Object Relations Institute, author of  
3 books (Routledge) and 55 articles that deal with the demon  
lover theme and complex. Conference Paper: "Tales of the  
Demon Lover: Seduction, Date Rape, and Aborted Surrender"

JEFFREY SEINFELD, Ph.D., Scientific Member of Object  
Relations Institute, author of multiple books on object relations  
theory, including The Bad Object and The Empty Core,  
Interpreting and Holding

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Mailing Address:  
Phone Numbers:  
Email:

## Opening to Intimacy

This group develops the capacity for intimacy, both with oneself and others, by way of group interaction. Focus is on blocks to depth connection as it shows up in the group process. Emphasis is on progressive emotional communications and the analysis of group resistance and defenses to promote mutuality. The group is of mixed ages and genders.

## Dream Group

Dreams provide a "royal road" to the unconscious and dream work within a group framework gives an added dimension of breadth and support. Working with the embodied imagery of the dream is especially emphasized in this group. A unique group experience emerges.

## Jungian Supervisory Group

This a supervisory discussion group led by Jungian Analyst, Gary Brown, for those professionals wishing to add a Jungian dimension to their work with individuals and who would like to explore their cases in a safe group format. The mythological imagery in the background of everyday psychological problems is discovered and, via amplification by myths and fairy tales, is brought to bear on cases by way of a variety of clinical approaches. Special attention is given to mid-life issues and the practical healing power of the image in dreams, life events, and life stories

GARY BROWN, L.C.S.W.-R, L.P., is a Jungian Analyst in private practice with individuals and groups on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

Please feel free to call him with inquiries at  
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## Jacob Gershoni, LCSW, CGP, TEP

### Experiential & Psychodrama Group Therapy and Training

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- Monthly open psychodrama workshops
- Training in psychodrama for mental health professionals

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New York, NY 10001-3006

**Phones:** 212.795.1192 or 212.947.7111

**Email:** [Jacobg12@gmail.com](mailto:Jacobg12@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.GrouPsychodrama.com](http://www.GrouPsychodrama.com)

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If interested, contact  
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