



The President's Corner

By Elizabeth "Lizzie" Sunzeri, LMFT
OAMFT President

The Oregon Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (OAMFT) has experienced a significant change. James Brown is relocating back to his home in Louisiana. He left his post as President of OAMFT at the end of November 2011.

James also served as the OAMFT Board Treasurer prior to being the association's President. As the former Treasurer, James achieved financial savings for OAMFT through his action of having SKYPE Board meetings as opposed to Board members traveling to Portland each month. He also promoted switching to electronic ballots and newsletter distribution, again creating a financial advantage for OAMFT. We hope to continue James's efforts in being attentive to our budget.

It was fun to work with him, and we will miss having him as we progress in Oregon. We wish the very best for James. As President-Elect, I am moving into this position and I plan to continue the progress that James started.

One of the most exciting new events for OAMFT is that we are creating an Executive Director position for Erica Davis, who has worked so diligently for OAMFT as the board's Administrative Assistant. With Erica in this position, OAMFT has a more organized professional and powerful presence to represent the organization. Additionally, she is experienced in Strategic Planning. Together Erica and Steven Rogers, OAMFT's Legislative Representative, will lead the Board in creating a new vision through the development of a Strategic Plan. We on the Board are eager to move forward in this endeavor.

Additionally, the OAMFT Board is planning our Fall 2012 conference. We will be working together to put

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Announcements:

- > Future Network News editions will be sent via email and available online. Be sure to **keep your email address current with AAMFT** to receive your copy!
- > OAMFT announces two new board members: **Elizabeth Limbocker** (Treasurer) and **Barbara Massey** (General Board Member). Congratulations and welcome to the board!
- > OAMFT thanks outgoing board members: **Deanne Fahy, Shelley Hanson, Jim Prather and James Brown**. Thank you for your contribution to OAMFT!
- > OAMFT has a new address. Please send all future correspondence to **P.O. Box 42036, Portland, OR 97242**

Editorial Policy

This is the official newsletter of the Oregon Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (OAMFT), and is published four times each year in Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring. OAMFT is a state division of the American Association for Marriage and Therapy (AAMFT), 112 South Alfred Street Alexandria, VA, 22314-3061, www.aamft.org. Membership in OAMFT and subscription to the newsletter is provided to Oregon professionals upon their meeting the minimum educational and clinical requirements for membership in the national organization, AAMFT. Copies of the newsletter can be made available to nonmembers upon request to the Editor.

Articles may be submitted by either mail or email. Articles submitted must be in Microsoft Word (or compatible program). See contact info below. Photographs must be submitted in .jpeg format and ready for use (no editing necessary). If return of materials is desired, please send a self-addressed envelope with sufficient return postage.

EDITORIAL POLICY: Opinions expressed by the Editorial staff of the newsletter, in articles published and Letters to the Editor, do not necessarily reflect the views of AAMFT, the OAMFT Officers and Board of Directors or the OAMFT membership.

OAMFT

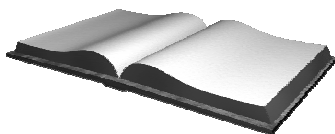
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Email: oamftboard@gmail.com

Have you read a book or seen a movie recently that would be relevant to the work of MFTs? OAMFT is looking for movie and book reviews as well as articles for the quarterly newsletter. To submit an article, book or movie review, email us at oamftboard@gmail.com



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Advertise your programs, practice, conferences, job openings or office rental space. Display advertising must be submitted print-ready and prepaid at the following rates (add \$35 if setup is required):

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Classified ad rate: \$35 per 75 words (\$35 minimum charge). Discounts for multiple issue advertising. The Editor reserves the right to reject, abridge or modify any advertising or other submitted material as deemed appropriate and necessary.

Find us on the web at:
www.oamft.org

Address Change?

Update your new contact information on AAMFT's website @ www.aamft.org.

OAMFT uses the AAMFT online database to send Oregon members information, such as this quarterly newsletter.

Stay updated on your state's association by keeping your address current at AAMFT.

Do you have a job posting to share?
 Please email us at oamftboard@gmail.com with the information. All job postings are free in the Network News!

The President's Corner

By Elizabeth "Lizzie" Sunzeri, LMFT
OAMFT President

on a special event for you! Our goal is to host a two-day conference where you can obtain 15 CE credits.

I am excited to be serving you as President of OAMFT. I encourage you to read the notice for the opening of the President-Elect position and take into consideration if you would like to join this enthusiastic team as we strive toward education, leadership, and advancement in the field of Marriage and Family Therapy. I have a feeling OAMFT is creating a fine team, geared toward making progress for all of you in the field of Marriage and Family Therapy.

Al the very best,

Lizzie

A farewell...

Hi all. Life sure is full of twists and turns isn't it? This is my last message to you as President. I am moving to Louisiana at the end of November. There are a number of reasons for this, not the least is that I have recently learned that I am going to be a grandpa, and so being close to family has become more important than ever before.

I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve this year as your association president and I know that your incoming President, Elizabeth Sunzeri, will do a marvelous job. She has also shown her ability in her role as President-Elect. I know that she and the Board have many new and exciting things planned for the future. I also want to thank the Board for allowing me to work alongside them on promoting our profession. I will certainly miss each of you and if you are ever in New Orleans, look me up.

Well, time to finish packing. I will always think fondly of Oregon and especially Oregon MFTs. As I have traveled around the state, I have had the chance to meet some of you in person and I am much richer for it.

Happy trails,

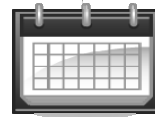
James

Calendar of Events



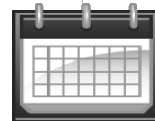
December 2011

12/31 Deadline for submitting nominations for President-Elect special elections



January 2012

1/21 5-7pm: Meet and Greet with new OAMFT Board Members



November
2012 OAMFT Fall
Conference

More information about these events is available at www.oamft.org.

Invitation to run for the OAMFT President-Elect

OAMFT is seeking a clinical member of OAMFT, who is interested in teamwork and leadership. The position requires attendance at two yearly conferences. Both conferences will require air travel and participation at AAMFT Conferences over an extended weekend. The position involves attending one monthly board meeting via Skype and requires attendance at two yearly board meetings in Portland, Oregon. The position is a five-year commitment. It includes a two-year position as President-Elect, two years as President, and one year as a Past President in an advisory position.

To read the full job description, see "OAMFT Board Job Descriptions" under the "About OAMFT" tab. We welcome clinical members to advance their career and apply for this worthy position. If you wish to be considered for the position, please complete the President-Elect form (visit www.oamft.org to download) and submit to OAMFT via mail (PO Box 42036, Portland, OR 97242) or email (oamftboard@gmail.com) by **December 31st, 2011**.

Emotionally Focused Therapy: The Genius in Asking People How They Feel

By Sarah O. Arp-Howard
MFT Student, Lewis and Clark College

In October, I was privileged to attend the OAMFT-WAMFT conference with Emotionally Focused Therapy founder Dr. Sue Johnson.

Saturday night, right after we all drove home, a friend asked me what I had been up to at the conference. "Emotionally focused therapy!" I said excitedly. He replied, "So Sarah, how do you *feel* about that," drawing out the "e" in "feel" to make sure his sarcasm was clear. Completely jazzed and on my toes after seeing Sue speak, I retorted, "You know, I'm beginning to see the genius in that very question."

Hearing Sue speak, I could not help myself from feeling all sorts of emotions, and that was precisely her point. She asserts that we have to do our work on an emotional level if we expect our lives to change. "If it just sits in your prefrontal cortex," Sue says, "you'll forget about it when you go home!"

Through her stories, Sue convinced me, and I think all of us, something we already knew in our bones, that we are biologically wired to use our emotions as tools for gaining a sense of safety from one another. "Belonging," Sue asserts, "is the most basic element in our humanness." It is how we as a species have learned to survive, by relying, responding, protecting, and attuning to one another. Emotion, as our primary tool for this survival dance, is not some internal process that we work to self-regulate. No, it exists *between* us. Emotions are how we reach out to one another, saying, as Sue puts it, "Are you there for me?"

If I had any doubt that as animals, we attune on an emotional level in order to connect with others, it was dispelled by watching a video Sue shared of Grebe birds, who mate for life. It is well worth a visit to YouTube to check out the video yourself: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1XAfo_uVgk>.

Okay, okay, I think to myself, emotion is without a doubt an ingenious tool. But, how do I handle it in sessions with clients? How do I help lead clients I work with towards emotional attunement? How do I help them connect in the midst of the problems that bring them to therapy? Sue offers answers to these questions in what she calls the roadmap of Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT).

In de-escalation, the first stage of Sue's roadmap, it is our job to help clients identify their patterns of interaction and access the underlying attachment emotions that drive those patterns. Here, Sue talks about exploring emotion with clients, helping them expand it, name it, feel it and change it from the inside out. She likens this process to working with clients' emotions step-by-step, as if teaching them how to dance the tango. We slow down the emotional process, staying close to clients' concrete experiences, and slicing the present moment thinner and thinner, until we have uncovered the underlying attachment emotions that are already guiding people towards connection with one another.

In stage two of the roadmap, therapists help clients reflect on their process, restructuring the bond between clients. Now that they can recognize their patterns in the moment, we guide them to ask one another, what just happened here? What are you really needing from me? What is hard for you about hearing that from me? Here, we help clients reach for one another, promoting acceptance from one person to another so that their needs for attachment can be met. Our goal is to teach them how to attune to one another so that they can feel safe in each other's arms.

Stage three, Sue says, is usually very short. Here, clients have shifted to new ways of interacting with one another that are emotionally responsive, thus fostering a more secure bond between them. At this point, clients can use emotion to help them increase their sense of safety within their relationship. Imagine if everyone could feel like that.

Sarah O. Arp-Howard is currently finishing up her degree in Marriage, Couple and Family therapy at Lewis & Clark College. She has six months of internship under her belt, and still fancies the genius of the question, "how do you feel about that?" If you want to ask her this or another question, feel free to contact her at: sarah.o.arp@gmail.com.

Turning Abstract into Passion

By Oana Mihaela Nita
MFT Student

There truly is a distinct moment in my life where I can recall locking in my decision to spend a life in the study of psychology. I was a senior in high school and had to take one more elective before graduation so I chose psychology because it was an abstract topic for me, essentially I had no idea what it entailed.

At that point I had been in the United States for about six years which I spent the majority of time being a misunderstood person because my sense of style was fairly awful and I never seemed to fit into any group or clique. I would spend much of the time pondering the differences between the society I was experiencing here and the one I grew up in back home in Romania. I had many questions about human interactions and the way feelings and words were exchanged among individuals. School was especially hard for me because the life I was expected to live there was an exact opposite than the religious and cultural strict life I was living at home resulting in constant conflicts in my own self.

While going over the most simplified psychology material, these questions started to be answered. We would go over simple human development basics and emotional aspects of personalities. For the first time in my life, my curiosity was being fed the most substantial information and when I was in that class, I felt more home than anywhere else. From then on it was obvious that psychology was mine and I wanted more, as much as I could because I wanted to understand people at their happiest and at their most vulnerable moments.

Specifically wanting to be a marriage and family therapist did not come much longer after that as I found my most perfect path of how to help the people that are in fact at their most vulnerable state of mind. I know what it feels like and instead of dwelling on the cards I was dealt, I found strength in them, wisdom I could pass on especially to families that have a hard time understanding each other. My ultimate goal is to be in a position where families can trust me and let me help them answer their own questions. The world is full of beautiful families full of differences and emotional patterns. I want to spend my life learning how to help them find a path that everyone can walk together. I'm a firm believer that if we all thrive on understanding the big picture, only then we can see the small details and work on them one by one. I want help every family that comes my way do that and help them find their rhythm in life.

Sue Johnson Conference Review

By Abbie Rogers
MFT Student, George Fox University

I was privileged to attend the OAMFT & WAMFT 2011 Northwest Regional Conference and hear Dr. Sue Johnson present. I am currently in the Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling program at George Fox University and have taken the EFT class, and have mentored a later class as well. For me, this conference helped to cement some of the foundational pieces of how to better practice EFT with clients successfully.

I enjoyed hearing Dr. Sue Johnson present. I found her to be endearing and gracious, as well as a wealth of knowledge surrounding attachment theory, couples communication, and of course the practice of EFT and how all of this plays out in the therapy room.

For me it was very helpful to hear in her own words what steps a counselor needs to be mindful of when entering the room with a couple. EFT provides a comprehensive set of steps and strategies to use when collaborating with clients to be able to provide each partner with a corrective emotional experience that allows them to reconnect on a deeper emotional level.

Though I am not well versed in dance terminology, I loved her passion and exuberance for the Argentinian Tango. Dr. Johnson described how she views this dance as an analogy for what a connected and secure bond between partners should look like. The Argentinian Tango is improvised, and requires both partners to be fully present in the moment, and fully attuned to one another in order to dance this successfully. To see each couples' relationship as a dance, allows the therapist to be the dance choreographer –reminding the couple that while there will be miss-steps along the way, that if they come back together and attune to each other, they can yet continue this dance together throughout the rest of their lives.

Through this 'dance' they can have their primary need met, by knowing they have a 'safe haven' to go to in the other partner, and a 'secure base' to go out from. If partners have this connection there is a deep knowledge that the other is there for them, that they matter to the other, that they can depend on one another and that they are both engaged in this process together –just as if they were on the dance floor.

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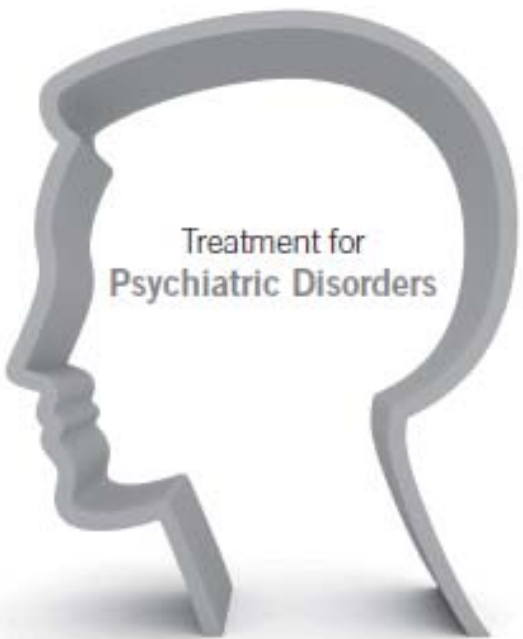
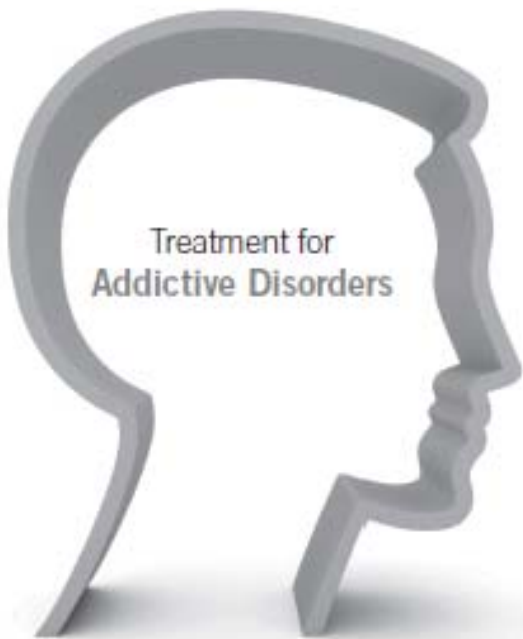
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Join us at our next Meet & Greet in January! Visit www.oamft.org for details!



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**Upcoming Board Meetings
and Events:**

January 21st: OAMFT Meet &
Greet in Portland, 5-7pm

See the OAMFT website for
meeting location and further
details - www.oamft.org.

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