



Focus on NDCA

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Motherhood and Mental Health

Anna Thompson, MS, LPCC NDCA President

As many of you know, my little miracles were recently born. On July 18, Jack William Thompson and Ruby Mabel Thompson joined our family. I have been praying and hoping for this day to come for many years. It hadn't come easy for us, as is true for many couples these days, and I was so excited to finally be a mom. During my pregnancy I had a few parents of twins tell me, "Just remember...it'll get better." My thoughts to these comments were two-fold: "Why would you say this to someone who is about to have a baby (or two babies in my case)?" and "How could it not be amazing? I am finally going to have the babies I have wanted for so long." My head was in the clouds during my whole pregnancy imagining all the wonders of being a mommy. Of course I knew it was going to be a lot of work, but it did not matter one bit.

Then they were born. I was not prepared for the rush of emotions that followed. Elation and fear at the same time. Seeing Jack and Ruby's faces for the first time was an amazing moment. They had to be in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for 2 weeks for antibiotics, but were healthy babies and I am so thankful for that. They were soon home and then the hard work truly began. But I was ready, or so I thought. The nursery was sure ready (as my family lovingly teased me about daily). Instead, I froze.

I have always struggled with anxiety and managed it pretty well with the skills I have been taught in counselor training. I had heard to watch closely for Postpartum Depression after the twins were born, but did not know about Postpartum Anxiety. Or how hard

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it can take a hold of a person. Thankfully, I have a wonderful support system, and I was able to practice what I preach with my clients and reach out for help when I needed it. Now Jack and Ruby are 3 ½ months old (where does the time go?!), I am back at work, and I am LOVING being a mom. The help I received for my Postpartum Anxiety has allowed me to manage my anxiety (not always perfectly, but that's ok too) and truly enjoy my new little family. The silver lining to this experience is I have a newfound understanding and ability to really know how the change of becoming a parent can be on a person's mental health. This personal knowledge will allow me to help others that have similar experiences.

What I did not know is that Postpartum Anxiety is even more common than Postpartum Depression, just less known. According to Postpartum Support International, Postpartum Depression affects about 10 percent of new moms. Jonathan Abramowitz, Ph.D., associate chairman of psychology and director of the Anxiety and Stress Disorders Clinic at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill states, "We call Postpartum Anxiety the hidden disorder because so few moms recognize it and it goes undiagnosed." In a study that tracked 1,024 women during the first three months after they gave birth, researchers from the University of Heidelberg in Germany found that more than 11 percent experienced some form of Postpartum Anxiety, while approximately 6 percent developed Postpartum Depression. According to Mayo Clinic, 89 percent of new parents find their minds racing with numerous worries: "What if my baby stops breathing at night and I don't know?" "What if my baby slips while I'm giving him a bath?" And so on, and so on...

Some level of anxiety is normal and even healthy. When it turns to irrational fears that

impede functioning, it turns into Postpartum Anxiety. These symptoms include:

- Racing thoughts, inability to quiet your mind, or to settle down. Inability to relax. Being so overwhelmed that you just freeze.
- Feeling like you have to be doing something at all times: cleaning bottles, washing baby clothes, cleaning the house, entertaining the baby, etc.
- Feeling a high level of worry. ALL THE TIME.
- Feeling incapable of taking care of the baby yourself and worried what could happen if left alone with the baby.
- Fear that is so all-consuming you become physically ill.
- No appetite.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Feeling a sense of dread and knowing something is wrong.

These symptoms are often triggered by the huge (I mean HUGE) hormonal shift that occurs following pregnancy. Tack sleep deprivation onto that, changes in routine, and the stresses of providing around-the-clock care for the first time ever, and it's no wonder it can be a struggle for many new moms.

A mom's personality also plays a significant role. "Moms with Postpartum Anxiety often describe themselves as Type A, sensitive, or easily worried," says Sherry Duson, a family therapist in Houston who specializes in treating those with pregnancy and postpartum mood and anxiety issues. Often moms will want to "wait and see" if symptoms will subside or improve. This makes sense and for some moms it works. However, that approach can be very risky too. Left untreated, Postpartum Anxiety can interfere with a mom's ability to bond with her baby. Unfortunately, it

usually falls on the mom's shoulders to report her symptoms to the doctor. When researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston screened 491 mothers for Postpartum Anxiety or Depression six weeks after they gave birth, 17 percent had one or the other; yet the majority of them had not been diagnosed.

Thankfully, I had a support system of family, the twins' pediatrician, and my doctor that took notice and encouraged me to get help. As counselors, it is so important to remember to get help ourselves when it is needed and to look out for our loved ones when they need it too.

Now... who wants to see pictures of the twins? :)

Pre-Conference Speaker Announced

NDMHCA and NDSCA are happy to announce our pre-conference speaker will be Dr. Ed Jacobs on a full day workshop about Impact Therapy. Impact Therapy is a theory driven, multi-sensory approach to counseling. He uses strategies that incorporate not only verbal, but also visual and kinesthetic exchanges with client's to improve effectiveness and promote change. This workshop will be filled with interventions to add to your counseling toolbox! You can register at www.ndmcha.org. The pre-conference will be held Thursday, February 19, 2015 at the Career Academy on BSC's campus. Early Registration for members is \$60 (before January 15)! CEUs are in process of being approved.

NDMHCA is now accepting nominations for 2015's Outstanding Mental Health Counselor Award. Recognize someone who has made outstanding contributions to the counseling

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Calling All Nominators!

Is there someone you admire for their techniques, ideas, or actions? Please nominate them for a NDCA award! We love to present awards to those who excel in their field.

Hurry! The deadline to submit is December 30th!

The outline and the submission forms for the awards listed below are located on our webpage: www.ndcounseling.org under Awards.

Glenn Dolan Award – An individual who has demonstrated able leadership, excellent rapport and service to the community, outstanding contributions to their organization

Innovations Award – An individual who has made innovative contributions in research or published articles in the field of counseling

Friend of Counseling Award – An individual who has demonstrated support for counseling in the state of North Dakota through his/her profession

Outstanding New Professional Award – An individual who has developed an outstanding program and demonstrates exceptional interpersonal skills

Member Emeritus Award – for NDCA members who have retired

Please submit award nominations by December 30, 2014 to: Rebecca Porter, Minot State University, Registrar's Office, 500 University Ave W, Minot, ND 58707 or Fax: 701-858-3386 or Email: rebecca.porter@minotstateu.edu
Rebecca Porter

AMHCA Conference

The annual leadership conference for American Mental Health Counselors Association held in Seattle Washington on July 8-10, 2014. I went to the evening reception on July 8 feeling nervous and not knowing what to expect. Within the hour I was laughing and visiting with Joel, Rudy, Keith, Renee, Gale and some other people having a great time. I went out to eat with our Midwest Regional Director and some other friendly people. As the week went on, I realized that some of the people I had met the first night were some of the leaders in AMHCA.

The leadership conference gave opportunities to speak with our respective regional directors to discuss strengths and weaknesses in the mental health field in our home states. We were able to brainstorm ideas about possible solutions to the unique set of challenges that each state is currently facing to better assist clients. Sessions revolved around topics ranging from: developing the board with membership expansion, professional identity, clinical standards and federal guidelines were also discussed. It was a great opportunity for learn about challenges in the other states as well as making connections for the future.

The AMHCA annual conference theme was "Thriving in the New Era of Healthcare Reform". I went to a variety of sessions on focusing on clients from the GLBT community including competency and suicidality rate. There were sessions about counselor accreditation and how it will change the standards of counseling to make the profession more unified.

One keynote speaker was Dr. John Gottman who spoke on "The Science of Trust and Betrayal". I have read Dr. Gottman's work over the years and was excited to see him present his work in person, (in case you are wondering....yes of

course I sat in the front row). He discussed how to create trust, how love scientifically happens, and how it is possible to move past in a betrayal in a relationship. He shared some personal stories and is so passionate about his work. He gives much credit to his wife Dr. Julie Gottman, who is not only his partner in love but also his partner in career. I was fortunate enough to have the fantastic opportunity to speak with him, receive his autograph and even take a photo with him.

By Rebecca Salinas

GRADUATE RESEARCH PARTICIPATION NEEDED

Amanda ELISE Johns is in the Counselor Education doctorate program at the University of New Orleans. Her research is on the ethical competencies of therapists working with clients' right-to-die issues. If you would like to participate in her survey, please email her at aejohns@myuno.edu.

Pre-Conference... Continued from page 4

field. Must be a current member of NDMHCA to nominate. Go to ndmhca.org for more details!

NDMHCA has also been trying to keep our members involved by updating our Facebook page and using it as a networking tool to get the word out about job opportunities, trainings, news updates, etc. We invite even non-members to like our Facebook page to get the latest updates and post directly to the link yourself when you or your agency has something going on you would like to share!

Jen Eberle, NDMHCA President

2015 Mid-Winter Conference

Midwinter Conference Plans are coming along nicely and I wanted to share some of the excitement we have planned so far. First of all, thank you to everyone that have submitted presentations for this year's conference, we currently have over 59 sessions submitted at this time. If you are still thinking about a topic please contact me as soon as possible.

We will once again be at the Radisson Hotel in Bismarck on February 20-22. This shifts out conference start date to a Friday afternoon and ending on Sunday afternoon. Rooms can be reserved at state rate at the Radisson so reserve your room early.

This year's theme is "Putting the Pieces Together: Enhancing Your Counseling Toolbox." To me, this theme reflects all the training, techniques, theories, and tools that make us up as counselors. It is what we rely on to operate in our settings as counselors, and sometimes we need to enhance, refresh, or learn new skills to be able to service our clients.

I am excited for the presentations that have been coming in and for the keynote speakers that are coming to share their wealth of knowledge in different areas through their keynotes and breakout sessions. Here is some information on our keynote speakers: (Full Bios are found at <http://bit.ly/1yDgBJL>)



Vincent "Vinnie" Pompei is the Director of the Youth Well-Being Project at the Human Rights Campaign Foundation. One of Vinnie's primary roles at HRC is to chair Time to THRIVE, an annual national conference for educators and other youth-serving professionals to promote safety, inclusion and well-being for LGBTQ youth.



Dr. Michele Kerulis is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) in the state of IL, a certified consultant through the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (CC-AASP), and member of the United States Olympic Committee Sport Psychology & Mental Training Registry. Dr. Kerulis is the Program Director of Sport & Health Psychology at the Adler University in Chicago. She is highly involved in professional associations and holds leadership roles in several associations, including President of the Illinois Counseling Association (2013-2014). Dr. Kerulis is a professor of counseling and sport psychology, an active freelance writer, private practice therapist, public speaker, and prepares and presents workshops for a variety of audiences.



Erin Martz, MLA, M.Ed attended Auburn University where she earned both a Master of Liberal Arts degree in Literary Theory and Sociology as well as a Master of Education Degree in Counseling Psychology. She previously worked with the Alabama Prison Project to provide mitigation counseling for people charged with capital murder and is currently the Director of Ethics and Professional Standards for the American Counseling Association.

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Joyce Marter has been a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor since 1998 and is a specialist in self-esteem, life transitions, and personal/professional development. She is founder and CEO of Urban Balance, an insurance-friendly counseling practice with nearly 70 therapists working from six locations in the Greater Chicago Area. Marter currently serves as President of the Board of the Illinois Mental Health Counseling Association and President Elect-Elect of the Illinois Counseling Association. She's a blogger for The Huffington Post and PsychCentral.

Tentative schedule for this year's conference is listed below:

Friday February 20th:

- 12:00 Welcome
- 12:30 Keynote: Dr. Vinnie Pompei
- 1:40 Breakout Sessions
- 2:40 Breakout Sessions
- 3:40 Breakout Sessions
- 5:00 Keynote: Erin Martz
- 7:00 Social

Saturday February 21st:

- 8:00-10:00 Division Meetings
- 10:00 Breakout Sessions
- 11:00 Breakout Sessions
- 12:00 Awards Dinner
- 1:40 Breakout Sessions
- 2:40 Breakout Sessions
- 3:40 Breakout Sessions
- 4:40 Breakout Session
- 6:00 Presidents Reception

Sunday February 22nd:

- 8:00 Breakout Sessions
- 9:00 Breakout Sessions
- 10:00 General Business Meeting
- 11:00 Closing Keynote: Dr. Michele Kerulis and Joyce Marter

Title of Program

1. Let the Students Be Tired: A Love and Logic Approach
2. How to be a Cool Refuser: Keep Your Friends and Maintain Your Dignity
3. Promoting Safety, Inclusion and Well-Being for LGBTQ Youth
4. ACT Test Prep - Is It Necessary?
5. Interventions for LGBTQ Bullied Youth
6. Introduction to Sport Psychology
7. Balancing the Dimensions of Wellness
8. Counseling Student Athletes
9. The Essence of Tradition and Wellness: Using Martial Arts as a Counseling Intervention
10. Perinatal Wellness
11. Living Online - A Guide for High School Students
12. "Overdone - Practicing Wellness in a Hurry-Up World"
13. What The Big Deal About Brain Injury?
14. Taking the Conversation from Personal to Data Driven
15. eTranscripts in North Dakota
16. Solution-Focused Consultation and Parent Conferences
17. Using Sandtray Therapy to Effectively Support Adolescents in Schools and Communities
18. Sandtray Counseling with Children
19. Understanding the Worlds of Adolescent Girls Who Self-Injure: Listening and Helping Teens in Distress
20. Helping Elementary School-Aged Students Who Have Experienced the Death of a Loved One: Using the Kids Supporting Kids Curriculum to run a Grief and Loss Group
21. Influence of Animals in the Lives of Clients: Animal-Assisted Therapy and Beyond
22. Kids Supporting Kids Grief And Loss Group*
23. Real Live Pinterest Professional Learning Community for School Counselors
24. How to Deal with Difficult People & Resolve Conflict: Practical Solutions
25. How to Promote Confidence, Self-Esteem & Empowerment: A Counselor's Toolkit
26. Love Your Work & Your Life: Establishing

- Self-Care & Work-Life Balance
27. Is the Friendship Club Effective? *
 28. Become an ace at completing the "ACE" & get a college credit too
 29. Using RUPrepareND.com to make YOUR life easier!
 30. Growing in your Profession through Strengths-Based
 31. Private Practice Forum
 32. High School/Middle-Junior High School Sharing Session
 33. Elementary Sharing Session
 34. NDSU Counselor Education Update: Program development and career opportunities
 35. Living Through Trauma and Learning From it to Help Others
 36. The Benefits of Monkeying Around: Empowering Children Coping with Chronic Illnesses
 37. Impact Counseling
 38. Activities that teach Character
 39. The magic of counseling
 40. Session Title: Sexually Abused Men; What Helping Professionals Need to Know.
 41. Working with Military Children
 42. Networking Counselors in Private Practice
 43. Supervision - What it is and what it is not.
 44. CACREP or not CACREP
 45. Research on Willpower
 46. Monitoring and Reducing Our Youth's At-Risk Behaviors
 47. Brain Research on Learning and Addiction
 48. Assessing Re-offense Risk in Batterers
 49. Career Awareness for Grades K-5
 50. Utilizing Google Apps for the Helping Professions
 51. How Do I help Refugees and Immigrants Adapt to a New Life?
 52. The Brain, ACE and Resilience
 53. Reiki Healing *
 54. The 2014 ACA Code of Ethics: A Review of Critical Changes
 55. Meditation and Counseling *

56. Lessons Learned from Administering the ACT ASPIRE
57. Enhancing the Counseling Profession through the Use of Pinterest
58. North Dakota Application Week
59. Assisting Students in Developing Resiliency from a School Counseling Standpoint

*Indicates Graduate Student Poster Session

ROOM FACILITATORS WANTED!

During the breakout sessions for the 2015 NDCA Conference, we would like to have a room facilitator for each speaker. If you would be interested in volunteering to do this, you can send me an email, or you can indicate this on the bottom of the conference registration form.

What are the responsibilities?

- *Be at the room at least 10 minutes before the start of the session*
- *Tidy up the room if it needs it*
- *Introduce yourself to the main speaker and ask if they need any assistance with equipment, handouts, etc.*
- *If there is a problem, please contact the hotel for assistance*
- *Introduce the speaker if they would like you to do that*
- *Thank the speaker at the end of their session*
- *You may need to get more chairs*
- *Close the door at the start of the session*
- *If the room has run out of water and glasses – notify the front desk*

*Let me know if you would like to volunteer:
marcia.foss@vcsu.edu*