



## Interview with Stewart Aledort, MD, CGP, FAGPA

By Patricia Florence, LCSW

**PATRICIA FLORENCE (PF):** Dr. Aledort, your return to Austin as our speaker at this year's Fall Conference is generating a lot of interest and excitement. We're looking forward to your presentation.

**STEWART ALEDORT (SA):** I always enjoy Austin. You have a great community, and I'm happy to be invited.

**PF:** In reading your conference title, I am curious as to what you mean by the courage required to live in a good fit.

**SA:** During treatment, a person must have the courage to withstand the enormous pull of the Passionate Bad Fit that I assume all my patients have. To move into a good fit means to continuously struggle with the urge to move back to the Passionate Bad Fit. I've moved to change the terminology, over time, to Passionate Bad Fit rather than the Omnipotent Child, because it seems more translatable to me and to others. The Omnipotent Child holds all the Passionate Bad Fits—misattunements—and it becomes an important source of the early laying down of identity traces in neuronal channels in the right hemisphere, and this becomes a template for intimacy. It affects what you do with other people and who you are. The body—its somatic memory—holds everything. It is the most powerful, indelible, and passionate memory. The Passionate Bad Fit is a piece of one's body ego and is a piece of one's identity and the passion of the good fit—at the beginning—doesn't rival the passion of the bad fit.

**PF:** Given the passion associated with the bad fit, why would a patient want to change?

**SA:** They don't! But they are not having satisfactory relationships. No one comes to me wanting a motor overhaul. They usually want an oil change and lube job. We need to invite clients into wanting the deeper change. And the way that I do that is by developing a group culture that supports and encourages that change. It takes four to five years for a starting group to develop a culture that helps them have the courage to live in a good fit. People will do anything to have a constant sense of self, and I use that to develop a healthier sense of self.

**PF:** How do clients respond to your challenging their sense of themselves?

**SA:** They become upset, threatening me, threatening to leave the group. They're confused, bewildered. The hardest thing is for them to understand that I don't love the monument they built to the passionate bad fit as they do. The narcissistic injury must be dealt with repeatedly, over time. They often report having bad dreams of chasms and big, empty spaces. I tell them that these are the feelings associated

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### AGPS ACTIVITIES

#### October 23, 2009

Friday Night Conversation  
Hosted by Tammy Brown

#### November 7-8, 2009

AGPS Fall Conference with Stewart L. Aledort, M.D., CGP, FAGPA. Details and registration, page 19. Doubletree Club Hotel, 8:30 AM-4:30 PM

#### November 14, 2009

Fall Party  
See [www.austingroups.org](http://www.austingroups.org) for more info.

#### April 24-25, 2010

AGPS Spring Conference with Joel Frost, Ed.D., CGP, FAGPA.  
Continuing Education : 6 Hours.

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Dear AGPS Members,**

Change. It's how I began my first letter at the beginning of this year, and little did I know then how appropriate it would be as the year has progressed. Change has occurred on many fronts.

We've had the sad and shocking experience of the untimely death of one of our board members, Noe Maza. Noe joined the board after participating as an AGPS member for many years. Noe loved being a part of and cared deeply for the AGPS family, and he touched many lives in our larger therapy community. I remember meeting Noe at one of the first workshops I attended -- he always had a smile and friendly greeting. It seems impossible to express the mix of feelings at the loss of such a longstanding member of our community.

Patricia Florence, President-Elect, left the board to take care of personal issues that left too little time and energy to carry out her duties with AGPS. She served on the board in the past term as Programming coordinator and recently Scholarship committee chair. We will miss Patricia's contribution and look forward to her continued participation with AGPS.

These changes required an early injection of new energy to the board. I am delighted to know that our membership has approved Tammy Brown, LCSW, CGP to take over as President-Elect. Tammy joined the board this year, served on committees and is preparing to serve our first two-year term as President beginning in January. I am excited and relieved to know that Tammy is ready to take over soon.

Laura Ebady, Psy.D. was approved by the board to fill the vacancy left by Noe and joined the board in late August. Laura will serve out the term through 2010 as Membership Chair. Laura previously served as nominating committee chair for our 2009 election. Mandy Blott, Ph.D. was approved by the board to fill the vacancy created by Tammy's role change and attended her first board meeting in September. Mandy will be editing *The Voice* in 2010 and handling other committee assignments.

We are lucky to have the enthusiasm and energy of Tammy, Laura, and Mandy joining our current board members, Pam Greenstone, Josie Whitley, Judy Hardwick, Alyson Stone, and Jane Cobb. This is a group that we can rely on to keep the wheels turning. I am grateful.

Our calendar of events has been full this year. We held our Spring Conference in March with Paul Kaye. Then, Katie Griffin and Patricia Tollison presented the Principles of Group Psychotherapy course over four weekends, with proceeds benefiting AGPS.

Joseph Acosta presented an ethics workshop in June to a packed house, titled *Fight, Flee, or Engage: Working with Aggression in Groups*. In August Jeanne Bunker offered and donated a one-day Psychotherapy Training Institute. Lisa Mersky hosted a Friday Night Conversation in August on the topic, *The Art of Living Fully: Creating Meaning for Ourselves and Our Patients*. In September, Katy Koonce presented an ethics workshop titled, *It's a Small Town: Being Your Authentic Self in the Presence of Dual Relationships*.

Several more events round out the year. On October 23, president-elect Tammy Brown will be hosting a Friday Night Conversation. We're eagerly anticipating our Fall Conference November 7-8, with Stewart Aledort. Having heard so much buzz about the last time he presented in Austin and from others who've seen him work at AGPA, I don't want to miss this! We will wrap up the year with our annual fall party November 14. And for those like me who like to plan ahead on the calendar, save the date for our Spring 2010 Conference -- Joel Frost will present April 24-25.

One of the wonderful changes this year has been a more formal awarding of scholarships to our local events. You all have made this possible with donations at events and when renewing memberships each January. We have plans to refine the application process soon to make it a little less daunting for applicants. You will also experience new, easier-to-transport speakers for our sound system at our Fall conference. Thanks to Pam Greenstone for taking on the heavy lifting!

We continue to present info about AGPS to graduate school classes in the area, which brings in new student and recent-graduate members. While some of our former members have not renewed, our overall membership remains steady and strong.

By mid-November you'll be receiving ballots for the next slate of board members to begin in 2010. Open positions will be President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and one Member-At-Large. We'll also be asking for your annual dues which cover the calendar year January -- December. We will continue to offer members lower rates on workshops and conferences, opportunities to get ethics CE's, wonderful community, stimulating presentations, and fun!

Let me close by thanking you for your membership and support. Thank you to our presenters for donating their time and energy. And thank you to the board members who make it all happen.

Thank you for being a wonderful community!

Derek Leighton, LMFT, LPC

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

**Dear AGPS Members,**

As I put the final touches on this edition of *The Voice*, our community is reeling from the sudden death of one of our members, Noe Maza. Noe's life touched many, and his death is felt deeply in our small, interconnected community. At times like this, we are reminded how fragile and unpredictable life is. It seems fitting that this edition celebrates life's complexities and the courage it takes to live fully. We explore themes of sexuality, intimacy, passion, and good and bad "fits" in relationships.

The upcoming fall conference with Stuart Aledort MD, CGP, FAGPA is generating excitement as we anticipate the energy that Dr. Aledort is sure to bring to the topic: It Takes Courage to Live in a Good Fit: Excitement, Sexuality and the Omnipotent Child. In his engaging interview with Patricia Florence, Dr. Aledort discusses his ideas on how clients can be encouraged to gradually release their hold on outdated models of intimacy [bad fits] and create more satisfying relationships [good fits]. His approach to therapeutic change is both creative and stimulating and will certainly lead to an invigorating November conference. Be sure to register soon, as you will not want to miss this one! (Dr. Aledort encourages participants to prepare for the conference by reading the articles listed at the end of the interview.)

Lisa Mersky's book review provides a rich introduction to Dr. Aledort and his varied literary interests. Her book review is a valuable resource, summarizing a wide range of fiction and nonfiction books.

Katie Griffin and Patricia Tollison have begun what they hope will be a new tradition of offering the Principles of Group Psychotherapy Course in Austin. This class or its equivalent is a requirement for becoming a Certified Group Practitioner. Our community has a large number of group practitioners who have earned their CGPs and the number continues to grow. Katie and Patricia have co-authored an article describing their experience of leading the class this spring, and Jane Cobb offers her reflections as a participant.

Josie Whitley contributes a reflection on the good and bad fits she and other professionals have experienced in life and clinical work. This piece covers the range of experiences we all encounter, from the pain of isolation to the joy and inevitable sorrow we feel in our most cherished intimate relationships. And Candyce Ossefort-Russell and Gaea Logan offer a selection of compelling poems that explore desire, passion and the intricacies of intimacy.

I have truly enjoyed the experience of editing the *Voice* and feel honored to have worked with each person who has contributed to the newsletter. I am continually amazed by how blessed I am to live and work in a community of such talented and supportive people. Your new editor will be Mandy Blott. Please offer her your support as well as ideas for articles in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Alyson M. Stone, Ph.D.

**AGPS BOARD CONTACT LIST****President**

Derek Leighton, LMFT, LPC  
(512) 658-2960

**President-Elect**

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(512) 327-5001

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(512) 374-1099

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(512) 469-0765

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(512) 627-1796

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(512) 698-0294

Jane L Cobb, LCSW, BCD, CGP  
(512) 323-0021

Laura Ebady, Psy.D.  
(512) 689-6755

Alyson M. Stone, Ph.D.  
(512) 306-0072



## Interview

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with transitions, that it's courageous that they're having these dreams, and reporting them to the group and that it's hard and terrifying to be in a vast void. I let them know that they are shifting something elemental within themselves.

**PF:** What were you seeing in your patients that indicated that this concept and work was necessary?

**SA:** That's a good question. I think I probably saw something in myself at first. I felt something was missing, and I wasn't feeling satisfied. People who should have gotten better weren't. We understood all the unconscious conflicts and relationships, but they weren't having the major changes in their lives I would have expected. I'd been reading Margaret Mahler and the importance of the first years of life, and I was beginning to think we didn't go back far enough. We needed to go back to preverbal experiences. I started to think, "what happens if I assume everyone here is an infant?" I began to take the role of symbiotic mother and to relate to people in that way. I was profoundly influenced by Dr. Elvin Semrad and Dr. Harold Searles for their ability to easily and with confidence take and merge with their patients. Clearly this touched me from my own history and unconscious and made me feel like I suddenly knew who I was as a therapist. The "aha" moment is quite symbolic of the formation and transition of the passionate good fit as I had experienced it.

Keep in mind that I never took group training. Much of my work has come from my own instincts. I am influenced by my analytic training, and firmly believe in the unconscious and the power of relationships and empathy. A real difference between my thinking and the Modern

Analytic thinking is that I use myself at the beginning as the bridge rather than using group members as the bridge. I'll ask a patient "What's it like listening to me talk to J, about his need to...?" I think they miss out on the early experience if the leader sits back. If the members are infants, they are not capable of forming a group by themselves.

When someone can't find words for an experience and yet knows the experience is inside of them, I introduce the concept of preverbal experiences. If someone is having trouble speaking, I ask him "Can you draw? Hum a tune? Sing a song?"

**PF:** If you are working with preverbal experiences, it seems as though it would be difficult for clients to express those experiences. How does it happen?

**SA:** When someone can't find words for an experience and yet knows the experience is inside of them, I introduce the concept of preverbal experiences. If someone is having trouble speaking, I ask him "Can you draw? Hum a tune? Sing a song?" One patient described his first years of life as being like Edward

Hopper's painting "Sunlight in an Empty Room." That painting is bereft of any decoration or any people. It illustrated his experience of his intense isolation with his mother in his earliest years, of being alone and no one to talk to about it.

**PF:** How are you able to convey these concepts to therapists who want to learn to use your model?

**SA:** I do it in several ways. There are writings and lectures. But it's hard to teach it through writing or talking about it. I have three training groups, one in New York and two in Washington. Some have been running for twelve years now. We meet twice a year, and it amazes me how people hold it. After six months, we're back in the groove in minutes. I teach them how I conceive of group, introduce the concepts, how to work with the transference and countertransference, and teach by example. People get very connected to it and to groups. In the Institutes, people come ready to learn and to experience it. I teach them to challenge their patients and to build a culture that supports the challenge. At the beginning, that's the therapists' responsibility, not the group's. You don't rely on infants.

**PF:** With the passion of the bad fit being a passion of misattunement, it seems to me that a therapist who is attuned may be experienced as a bad fit by a patient rather than a good fit. How do you address this issue?

**SA:** Of course, we have to start out very nurturing and I try to give patients the sense that I am listening and attending to them, which I am. They initially assume it's a bad fit. I try to hear the resistance this brings up and may say, "I think you're telling me how difficult your early life was

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## In Search of Good Fits

By Josie Whitley, Ph.D.

Stuart Aledort, the Austin Group Psychotherapy Society fall conference presenter, has provided us with a provocative title for the conference, "It takes courage to live in a good fit: Excitement, Sexuality and the Omnipotent Child." His particular emphasis is on his concept of the omnipotent child. I'm intrigued by the title in many other respects as well. I decided to ask other people for their associations about the notions of courage, good fit, and excitement (with or without sexuality). I was pleased with the variety and generosity of the responses I received. I'll be bringing them into this piece as I talk about the things that the topic brought to mind for me.

Several years ago Phil Flores was the presenter at one of our conferences. In an aside he said, "My wife and I have an agreement that we can't both be crazy at the same time." The group laughed and then one participant asked, "How do you find someone with whom you can make and keep that agreement?" He gave a little background about his relationship with his wife and then he said something that has stayed with me ever since. "When you find someone who relaxes your physiology, grab hold and don't let go!" Good advice!

I've been amazed about the ways people remain in "bad fits" for so long that it seems impossible to imagine how they survive --- toxic jobs, marriages, parent-child relationships, friendships, love relationships, therapeutic relationships, etc. In fact, sometimes people are so inured to all kinds of "bad fits" that they think that they're normal. I've had male patients who reported that they discovered that they had been wearing shoes

that were two sizes too small – for years. They thought it was normal for feet to hurt all the time! If we can ignore physical pain, how much easier is it to ignore or deny psychological pain?

I ask couples with whom I work to describe how they touch. Some couples have no place outside their bed (if they sleep together at all) where they actually can touch easily. They have separate chairs, separate offices in the home, and then they sleep in a king-size bed where

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there's no danger of even an accidental touch. Often these are the couples whose intimate life has become almost nonexistent. These are some of the loneliest people I see. It's so much harder to tolerate being alone when there is someone there but with whom there is little or no contact beyond the most concrete interactions necessary for simple functioning.

Over the years I've been intrigued as well with the ways people find one another and establish "good fits" with friends, lovers, spouses, therapists, partners, hairdressers, financial advisors, personal train-

ers, teachers, mentors, allies, contractors, colleagues, etc

Maybe we spend so much time looking at the "bad fits" that come to our offices every day we forget to look for and celebrate the "good fits." Some couples describe a rich life full of opportunities for touching.

I'm always heartened by the stories I hear of longtime relationships that provide true support, friendship, and honest opportunities for growth. A person I know described her very elderly parents as needing no more than a twin bed when they sleep, so intertwined are they in repose. An elderly woman was enraged that her husband of many years had died, leaving her alone. She said that sometimes she went into his room and screamed at him because he had left her. She looked at me intently and shouted, "He was my friend, my companion, and my lover! Just because he was sick for so long and we were in our seventies didn't mean we never had sex! I miss that!!! Do you believe me?" I said, "Yes, I believe you, and I can see why you miss him so much." She relaxed and said very quietly, "Yes, I miss him every day," and began to cry softly.

So, even when we find a good fit, we are vulnerable to losing it. It takes courage to enter into that territory because inevitably we will lose those dear ones with whom we fit so well. Many of the responses to my invitation included the word "risk." It's a paradox that at times it's quite a risk to let go of the familiar even though the familiar may be very harmful. One respondent talked about "pushing the edge of being present and showing up... To be fully alive means not

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## Good Fits

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being scared of any aspect of ourselves” (Mersky, 2009).

Some of the responses mentioned the fit that can be found in physical intimacy—not only sexual intimacy but also the intimacy of mothering, nurturing, and relating to loved ones. Others talked about the experiences of being a therapist and “really showing up; not staying behind our therapist masks, [but] being a bit more vulnerable in our humanity and being more alive and present” (Marriot, 2009). When we ourselves have taken the risk to do our own work in therapy, we can learn the power of finding a “good fit” with a trusted therapist and even having the opportunity to work through the times of “bad fit” to reach new levels of understanding.

We also see this ebb and flow of good and bad fits in our groups. There is a great deal of power in group as people allow others in the group to influence them to see themselves in a different light. Whether the feedback is positive or negative, when group members let in the truth of what they are hearing, it allows a transformative experience to occur. That experience not only affects the members directly involved in the interaction, it also affects those who witnessed it. “It is impossible to always recognize when our point of view and thus our functioning become skewed. In a courageous relationship we are willing and able to help each other regain perspective and have personal and relational healing” (Griffin, 2009). Simply being in a group requires courage. In a group we are exposed to multiple eyes. What they can see about us is often uncomfortable to tolerate—even when what they see is positive.

Groups also offer an opportunity for excitement. We “need difference and not knowing what is going to happen interpersonally in the next moment to have excitement. Excitement needs safety, low limbic activation, good robust frontal cortex [activity], which doesn’t happen if you are feeling in any way threatened” (Marriot, 2009). As a “good enough” group therapist, maintaining enough safety without suppressing intensity is a great challenge. Too much safety leads to

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boredom; too much intensity and group members can feel too threatened to engage in the kind of work that leads to growth.

In *Women Who Run with the Wolves*, Clarissa Pinkola Estes, (1992), interprets the story of the ugly duckling from a Jungian perspective. She asserts that the ugly duckling’s mother may not have been a bad mother for a duck but couldn’t be a good mother for the duckling. She says that when the ugly duckling finds its flock, then it can see itself more accurately and claim its beauty. When we become ther-

apists we attempt to become good fits for such a variety of people that it’s inevitable there will be times when we fail them. As we work through these failures, healing in both therapist and client can take place. For those clients for whom we are simply not a good fit, it is important that we stay open to the possibility that our clients are seeing us more accurately than we realize. Pathologizing the other is one of the greatest roadblocks to growth I see. It’s no less true when we do it.

We are “wired” to long for a good fit. That longing for connection can motivate us to keep experimenting and learning in spite of setbacks, failures, pain, or loss. The capacity to stay open to connection is reinforced by being in a “good enough” group with a “good enough” therapist. “Developing a good fit takes work. It takes courage to speak your mind freely and take the risk of finding out what happens” (Morris, 2009). Steve Finn (2009) offered,

When people have the courage to become more aware: usually of things in themselves or in their lives that they haven’t yet been able to see or haven’t yet let themselves see...[it] seems to have the potential to create incredible growth, turmoil, changes, and crises—which I guess means it is integrally connected to excitement.

As our efforts encourage our clients to deepen their awareness, both they and we have a great opportunity to enter into the wonder of the capacity of human beings to grow through connection with others.

So thanks to those who offered me their thoughts on the fall topic: Jane Cobb,

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# AGPS GROUP LISTINGS

FALL 2009

AGPS Groups Listing is an ongoing feature of *The Voice*. You must be a paid member to list your group in *The Voice*. For additions, changes or deletions to this list, please make the change by signing in to your account via our website ([www.austingroups.org](http://www.austingroups.org)) or contact us for help at [agps@austingroups.org](mailto:agps@austingroups.org).

AGPS does not endorse or recommend the practitioners on this list. You are responsible for interviewing and selecting the practitioner you want for your treatment.

By requesting resources and referrals you understand and agree that Austin Group Psychotherapy Society and its affiliates are not responsible for the services, or lack thereof, as well as licensing of any of the providers listed. Minors should consult with a legal guardian or other adult when considering treatment and providers.

## Female Groups

Kathleen Adams, PhD	327-8311	Wed 6:15–7:30 PM	Women's group: 20's, navigating friendships, school/career, and identity issues
Patty Andrews, LCSW	589-8271	Wed 6:00–7:30 PM	Lesbian & Bisexual Women's Interpersonal (now forming)
Tammy Brown, LCSW,CGP	327-5001	Mon 11:00 AM–12:30 PM	Women's process group, 35-55, major depression and bipolar
Tammy Brown, LCSW,CGP	327-5001	Thu 5:15–6:45 PM	Women's process group
Jeanne Bunker, LCSW, CGP	328-3947	Tue 6:45–8:15 PM	Women's Psychotherapy Group
Carbonneau w/ Cross	469-0392	Mon 5:30–7:00 PM	Adult Women's Process Group
Janet Carbonneau, M.Ed., LPC,CGP	469-0392	Wed 5:30–6:45 PM	Adolescent Eating Disorder Group for Girls 14 to 19
Jane L Cobb, LCSW, BCD, CGP	323-0021	Mon 12:00–1:30 PM	Women, Mood, and Food: A 10-Week Group for Women
Jane L Cobb, LCSW, BCD, CGP	323-0021	Tue 6:00–7:30 PM	Women at Work Who Want MORE: A 6-Week Group for Women
Jane L Cobb, LCSW, BCD, CGP	323-0021	Wed 7:00–8:30 PM	Psychodynamic
Jane L Cobb, LCSW, BCD, CGP	323-0021	Sat 12:00–1:30 PM	Wives and Partners of Sex Addicts
Susan Ducloux, LPC, NCC	732-2226	Wed 12:30–2:00 PM	Divorce with Dignity
Susan Ducloux, LPC, NCC	732-2226	Wed 3:45–5:00 PM	Adult Women's Eating Issues
Susan Ducloux, LPC, NCC	732-2226	Wed 6:00–7:30 PM	College Women's Eating Issues Group
Patricia Dziuk, PhD	478-5900	Mon 5:30–7:00 PM	Women's Psychotherapy Group
DeLinda Fox, LCSW,CGP	771-9313	Mon 5:30–6:45 PM	Eating Disorders Group
Fox w/ Greenstone	771-9313/374-1099	Thu 12:00–1:15 PM	Women's Psychotherapy Group
Naomi A Freireich, LCSW	306-0180	Tue 5:30–6:45 PM	adult women's group
Naomi A Freireich, LCSW	306-0180	Thu 5:30–6:45 PM	adolescent girl's group
Naomi A Freireich, LCSW	306-0180	Sat 11:30 AM–12:30 PM	girl's group ages 7-10
Pam Greenstone, LPC	689-7279	Tue 6:30–8:00 PM	ongoing psychodynamic group
Katie Griffin, LPC, CGP	656-4067	Mon 5:00–6:30 PM	Adult Psychotherapy
Katie Griffin, LPC, CGP	656-4067	Tue 11:30 AM–1:00 PM	Adult Psychotherapy
Melissa Hargrave, LMFTa	444-9922 x328	Tue 5:00–6:30 PM	Women's Coming Out Group (Waterloo Counseling Center)
Melissa Hargrave, LMFTa	444-9922 x328	Thu 5:30–7:00 PM	Women's Psychotherapy Group: For women with same-sex attraction. (Waterloo Counseling Center)
Gina Keegan, MA, LMT	462-1456	Mon 6:00–7:30 PM	Anger Management for Women
Gina Keegan, MA, LMT	462-1456	Mon 7:45–9:15 PM	Anger Management for Men and Women
Beverley M Larkam, LCSW, LMFT, CGP	476-4182	Mon 7:00–8:30 PM	psychodynamic
Gaea Logan, MA, LPC	327-6311	Wed 10:30 AM–12:00 PM	psychodynamic
Sue Marriott, LCSW, CGP	419-7018	Tue 5:45–7:00 PM	psychodynamic
Lisa Mersky, LCSW, BCD, CGP	474-6148	Mon 12:00–1:30 PM	psychodynamic
Stacy Nakell, LCSW	586-6862	Tue 7:00–8:30 PM	Psychodynamic Group- Women in their 20s and 30s

### Female Groups (cont.)

Joanne Olsen, LCSW	474-8555	Tue	6:15–7:45 PM	High School Adolescent Girls' Group
Joanne Olsen, LCSW	474-8555	Thu	6:15–7:45 PM	Middle School Adolescent Girls' Group
Candyce Ossefort-Russell, MA, LPC, LPC-S	789-6244	Tue	11:15 AM–12:45 PM	Ongoing psychodynamic/interpersonal for ages 55 and up
Erin Pearl, LPC	377-2500	Wed	4:30–5:45 PM	Self-Esteem Group for Adolescent Girls
Jill Pressley, MA, LPC	402-5344	Tue	5:00–6:30 PM	Psychodynamic Women's Group
Seja Rachael, MA, LPC	441-8334 x1	Thu	7:00–8:30 PM	Ages 38-58 relational/ insight oriented
Allyson Stone, PhD	306-0072	Wed	11:50 AM–1:20 PM	Women's process and self-care group

### Male Groups

Jay M Erwin-Grotsky, LCSW-CGP	732-7272	Mon	6:30–8:00 PM	Gay Men's Modern Analytic Process Group
Jay M Erwin-Grotsky, LCSW-CGP	732-7272	Wed	6:30–8:00 PM	Gay Men's Modern Analytic Process Group
Bernard Fleming, LPC, LMFT	329-9890	Thu	4:30–5:30 PM	Middle School Boys Group
Bernard Fleming, LPC, LMFT	329-9890	Thu	6:00–7:00 PM	Adolescent Males
Randy Frazier, PhD	342-8950	Mon	6:15–7:30 PM	Interpersonal process-oriented group
Michael Hegener, LPC, CGP	472-2880	Thu	6:45–8:15 PM	Men's ongoing psychodynamic
Richard Holt, PhD	236-0448	Tue	7:00–8:30 PM	Gay men
Jeff Hudson, MEd, LPC, CGP, FAGPA	472-7476	Tue	6:30–8:00 PM	Gay and bisexual men
Jeff Hudson, MEd, LPC, CGP, FAGPA	472-7476	Thu	4:30–6:00 PM	Gay and bisexual men
Beverly M Larkam, LCSW, LMFT, CGP	476-4182	Mon	5:15–6:45 PM	Psychodynamic
Rick Laskowski, LCSW	444-9922	Mon	6:00–7:30 PM	Gay/bisexual men (Waterloo Counseling Center)
Rick Laskowski, LCSW	762-1024	Tue	4:45–6:15 PM	Gay/bisexual men
Rick Laskowski, LCSW	444-9922	Tue	7:00–8:30 PM	Gay men's coming out support group (Waterloo Counseling Center)
Leighton w/ Kennington	658-2960	Mon	6:30–8:00 PM	Men: Food & Sex—An 8-Week Therapy Group 9/14/09–11/2/09
Derek Leighton, LMFT, LPC-S, NCC	658-2960	Wed	7:00–8:15 PM	Sexual Health/Porn Addiction & Sexual Compulsion
Derek Leighton, LMFT, LPC-S, NCC	658-2960	Thu	6:00–7:15 PM	Gay / Bisexual Men
Gerry Lowe, LCSW	327-5400	Mon	4:30–6:00 PM	Men's psychotherapy group
Jordan Price, LCSW	512-450-4814	Wed	7:30–8:45 PM	Men's Process Group
Travis Sebera, LPC, supervisor	327-7500	Mon	5:00–6:15 PM	Ongoing focusing on anger and mens issues using modern analytic short term formula
Mark White, LCSW, LMFT	329-6070	Tue	4:30–5:45 PM	Pre-Adolescent Boys' Counseling Group: 4th, 5th, 6th Grades
Mark White, LCSW, LMFT	329-6070	Tue	6:00–7:15 PM	Adolescent Males Counseling Group: Young Adult Group
Mark White, LCSW, LMFT	329-6070	Wed	4:30–5:45 PM	Adolescent Males Counseling Group: Middle School Group

### Mixed Gender

Acosta w/ Kelly	576-9523	Tue	11:00 AM–12:30 PM	Interpersonal therapy group for clinicians
Joseph Acosta, LPC	576-9523	Wed	7:00–8:30 PM	Interpersonal therapy group
Joseph Acosta, LPC	576-9523	Thu	7:00–8:30 PM	Interpersonal therapy group
Kathleen Adams, PhD	327-8311	Mon	4:45–6:15 PM	Beginner group; learning about feelings, individual therapy not a prerequisite
Kathleen Adams, PhD	327-8311	Tue	5:30–7:00 PM	Hi-function individuals dealing with very primitive affects; all members in long-term ind. therapy
Rich Armington, LCSW, CGP	440-8910	Wed	5:30–7:00 PM	NA

**Mixed Gender (cont.)**

Rich Armington, LCSW, CGP	440-8910	Thu	5:15–7:15 PM	SCT; includes 1/2 hour of body centering/awareness w/ Heloise Gold
Mandy Blott, Ph.D.	698-0294	Tue	6:30–8:00 PM	Interpersonal Process Group, Ongoing
Michelle Bohls, LMFT	577-3371	Mon	11:15 AM–12:45 PM	Interpersonal Group
Bill Bruzy, LCDC	477-9595	Wed	5:30–6:45 PM	Addictions recovery
Bunker w/ Erwin-Grotzky	328-3947/732-7272	Mon	12:00–1:30 PM	Modern Analytic Process Group
Bunker w/ Erwin-Grotzky	328-3947/732-7272	Tue	11:00 AM–12:30 PM	Modern Analytic Process Group
Jeanne Bunker, LCSW, CGP	328-3947	Tue	4:30–6:00 PM	Modern Analytic Process Group -- NOW FORMING
Paul Compton, MD, CGP	658-2805	Tue	5:30–6:45 PM	Psychoanalytic
Barbara E Davis, LCSW, CGP	345-9353	Mon	5:30–7:00 PM	body-oriented psychotherapy
Sherry Dickey, PhD	452-3035	Tue	5:30–7:00 PM	NA
Sherry Dickey, PhD	452-3035	Thu	5:30–7:00 PM	Psychodynamic
Patricia Dziuk, PhD	478-5900	Tue	12:00–1:30 PM	psychodynamic
Bernard Fleming, LPC, LMFT	329-9890	Mon	6:00–7:30 PM	Psychodynamic/Object Relations
Carl Gacono, PhD	472-4348	Mon	6:00–7:30 PM	Psychodynamic
Lois Graham, PhD	346-0079	Mon	12:15–1:45 PM	Modern Analytic
Lois Graham, PhD	346-0079	Tue	5:15–6:45 PM	Modern Analytic
Katie Griffin, LPC, CGP	656-4067	Thu	5:00–6:30 PM	Adult Psychotherapy
Michael Hegener, LPC, CGP	472-2880	Tue	6:45–8:15 PM	psychodynamic
Richard Holt, PhD	236-0448	Wed	6:00–7:30 PM	psychodynamic group
Richard Holt, PhD	236-0448	Thu	6:00–7:30 PM	psychodynamic group
Charlotte Howard, Ph.D	469-6008	Mon	4:45–6:15 PM	Young Adult Psychotherapy Group
Charlotte Howard, Ph.D	469-6008	Mon	6:30–8:00 PM	Adult Psychotherapy Group
Charlotte Howard, Ph.D	469-6008	Tue	5:30–7:00 PM	Young Adult Psychotherapy Group
Charlotte Howard, Ph.D	469-6008	Tue	7:15–8:45 PM	Anxiety Reduction Group
Hudson w/ Pully	472-7476/477-9945	Mon	4:30–6:00 PM	object relations/interpersonal
Hudson w/ Pully	472-7476/477-9945	Wed	5:15–6:45 PM	object relations/interpersonal
Hudson w/ Pully	472-7476/477-9945	Thu	6:30–8:00 PM	object relations/interpersonal
Kelly w/ Acosta	458-4646	Tue	11:00 AM–12:30 PM	Interpersonal group for clinicians
Nancy Kelly, PhD LCSW	458-4646	Wed	5:30–7:00 PM	Interpersonal group
J. Worth Kilcrease, LPC, FT	658-2674	Tue	6:30–8:00 PM	HOPE Perinatal Loss Group–Grief
J. Worth Kilcrease, LPC, FT	658-2674	Thu	6:30–8:00 PM	PAL (Pregnancy After Loss) Group–Anxiety
Katy Koonce, LCSW	329-6699	Thu	4:30–6:00 PM	Psychodynamic
Fabianna Laby, PsyD	638-3555	Tue	12:00–1:30 PM	Support for parents of children with special needs
Beverley M Larkam, LCSW, LMFT, CGP	476-4182	Mon	9:00–10:00 AM	AAMFT, AASECT
Laskowski w/ Romain	762-1024/560-0846	Wed	6:00–7:30 PM	psychodynamic/interpersonal
Bruno Lepore, LPC	832-646-8795	Tue	6:30–8:00 PM	Anger Aggression Intervention and Prevention Group
Bruno Lepore, LPC	416-7246	Wed	5:30–7:00 PM	COPE–Coping and Overcoming Chronic Pain Effects
Bruno Lepore, LPC	416-7246	Thu	5:30–7:00 PM	HOPE–Helping Families Overcome Chronic Pain Effects
Gaea Logan, MA, LPC	327-6311	Mon	11:45 AM–1:15 PM	psychodynamic/interpersonal
Gaea Logan, MA, LPC	327-6311	Tue	12:30–2:00 PM	psychodynamic
Gaea Logan, MA, LPC	327-6311	Tue	3:45–5:15 PM	psychodynamic
Thomas Lowry, PhD, ABPP, LFAGPA	346-2332	Mon	5:00–6:30 PM	intensive psychodynamic group for mid-adults

### Mixed Gender (cont.)

Alaire Lowry, PhD, CGP, ABPP, FAGPA	346-2332	Tue	11:00 AM–1:00 PM	psychodynamic psychotherapy for adults
Lowry w/ Lowry	346-2332	Tue	5:15–6:45 PM	young adult psychotherapy group (19-30)
Thomas Lowry, PhD, ABPP, LFAGPA	346-2332	Wed	11:00 AM–1:00 PM	intensive psychodynamic group for mid-adults
Joy Luther, LCSW	343-9609	Wed	5:45–7:30 PM	Short term psychoeducational group: DISCOVERING THE AUTHENTIC SELF: The SCT/AE approach to change
Beth Malitz, LCSW	476-5649	Wed	4:15–5:45 PM	object relations
Beth Malitz, LCSW	476-5649	Wed	6:00–7:30 PM	object relations
Sue Marriott, LCSW, CGP	419-7018	Tue	11:30 AM–1:00 PM	psychodynamic
Lisa Mersky, LCSW, BCD, CGP	474-6148	Wed	5:45–7:15 PM	psychodynamic
Jan Morris, PhD	346-2332	Tue	5:00–6:30 PM	Modern Analytic
Jan Morris, PhD	346-2332	Wed	5:00–6:30 PM	Modern Analytic
Stacy Nakell, LCSW	586-6862	Sat	3:00–4:30 PM	Psychodynamic process group--currently interviewing potential members
Candyce Ossefort-Russell, MA, LPC, LPC-S	789-6244	Tue	6:00–7:30 PM	Advanced Psychodynamic/Interpersonal
Erin Pearl, LPC	377-2500	Mon	5:30–6:45 PM	Anxiety Group
Erin Pearl, LPC	377-2500	Wed	5:15–6:30 PM	Cancer Support Group
Jordan Price, LCSW	450-4814	Mon	7:30–8:45 PM	General Process
Pully w/ Hudson	477-9945/472-7476	Mon	4:30–6:00 PM	object relations/interpersonal
Andrea Pully, MEd LPC	477-9945	Mon	6:30–8:00 PM	ongoing process group
Pully w/ Hudson	477-9945/472-7476	Wed	5:15–6:45 PM	object relations/interpersonal
Pully w/ Hudson	477-9945/472-7476	Thu	6:30–8:00 PM	object relations/interpersonal
Seja Rachael, MA, LPC	441-8334 x1	Thu	7:15–8:45 PM	NA
Victor Rivera, MA, LPC	732-2120	Wed	6:30–8:00 PM	psychodynamic group for adults
Amiel Romain, MEd, LPC	560-0846 / 762-1024	Wed	6:00–7:30 PM	psychodynamic/interpersonal
Rochelle Satterfield, PhD	499-8419	Mon	7:00–8:30 PM	psychodynamic
Rochelle Satterfield, PhD	499-8419	Wed	7:00–8:30 PM	psychodynamic
Travis Sebera, LPC, supervisor	327-7500/306-1488	Wed	6:00–7:30 PM	psychodynamic
Travis Sebera, LPC, supervisor	327-7500/306-1488	Thu	11:30 AM–1:00 PM	psychodynamic--relationships, social phobias
Travis Sebera, LPC, supervisor	327-7500/306-1488	Thu	6:00–7:30 PM	general issues/psychodynamic
Robert Seidel, MSSW, LCSW, BCD	473-8293	Thu	6:00–7:30 PM	Psychodynamic/Interpersonal
Sydnor Sikes, PhD, ABPP	469-0582	Mon	4:45–6:15 PM	SCT
Jev Sikes, PhD	469-0888	Mon	4:45–6:15 PM	object relations for 20's
Jev Sikes, PhD	469-0888	Tue	8:00–9:30 AM	object relations
Sydnor Sikes, PhD, ABPP	469-0582	Tue	4:45–6:30 PM	SCT
Jev Sikes, PhD	469-0888	Wed	8:00–9:15 AM	object relations
Jev Sikes, PhD	469-0888	Wed	4:45–6:15 PM	adult object relations
Jev Sikes, PhD	469-0888	Wed	6:30–8:00 PM	adult object relations
Jev Sikes, PhD	469-0888	Thu	8:00–9:30 AM	adult object relations
Sydnor Sikes, PhD, ABPP	469-0582	Thu	4:45–6:15 PM	SCT
Alyson Stone, PhD	306-0072	Tue	4:30–6:00 PM	Object Relations/Interpersonal

**Mixed Gender (cont.)**

Patricia Tollison, PhD	478-1064	Mon	12:00–1:30 PM	Psychodynamic
Josie Whitley, PhD	469-0765	Mon	5:15–6:45 PM	long-term, psychodynamically oriented group
Josie Whitley, PhD	469-0765	Tue	6:00–7:30 PM	long-term psychodynamically oriented group

**Study/Training**

Joseph Acosta, LPC	576-9523	Fri	9:30–11:00 AM	Consultation group
Kathleen Adams, PhD	327-8311	Wed	11:15 AM–12:45 PM	Lessons from Pandora's Box: Adventures in Psychotherapy Study Group
Armington w/ Armington	306-0166	Mon	12:00–1:30 PM	Intermediate level SCT training group
Cassano w/ Armington	327-4170	Wed	9:00–10:00 AM	SCT(tm) supervision group (alt weds.)
Jane Cobb, LCSW, BCD, CGP	323-0021	Fri	9:00–10:30 AM	Case Consultation and Practice Development
Freireich w/ Marriott	306-0180 / 419-7018	Mon	1:00–2:30 PM	psychoanalytic study/consultation group (alt. Mon.)
Sandra Grimes, LCSW	565-1838	Tue	3:30–5:00 PM	Clinical Supervision for LMSWs seeking LCSW license
Hudson w/ Pully	472-7476/477-9945	Wed	9:00–10:30 AM	object relations/interpersonal
Nancy Kelly, PhD LCSW	458-4646	Fri	9:45–11:15 AM	Study and case consultation (Alt. Fridays)
Fabianna Laby, PsyD	638-3555	Tue	10:30 AM–12:00 PM	Practice Development
Derek Leighton, LMFT, LPC-S, NCC	658-2960	Thu	1:00–2:00 PM	Private Practice Consultation / LPC Supervision
Gaea Logan, MA, LPC	327-6311	Wed	8:00–9:30 AM	wisdom and psychoanalytic psychotherapy (15 CEUs/3 Ethics)
Gaea Logan, MA, LPC	327-6311	Fri	11:00 AM–12:30 PM	wisdom and psychoanalytic psychotherapy (15 CEUs/3 Ethics)
Thomas Lowry, PhD, ABPP, LFAGPA	346-2332	Mon	TBA	AAMFT supervision
Lisa Means, MA, LPC	472-5848	Fri	9:45–11:15 AM	Consultation and Study Group
Lisa Mersky, LCSW, BCD, CGP	474-6148	Fri	4:00–6:00 PM	Creativity workshop
Jan Morris, PhD	346-2332	Fri	12:00–1:30 PM	Modern Analytic Study/Training (Alt. Fri.)
Candyce Ossefort-Russell, MA, LPC, LPC-S	789-6244	Wed	8:30–10:00 AM	Therapists Study Group With AEDP Focus
Candyce Ossefort-Russell, MA, LPC, LPC-S	789-6244	Fri	8:00–10:00 AM	Writing Group for Therapists
Amy Person, M.S., LPC	494-9977	Mon	12:45–2:00 PM	Private Practice/Consultation Group
Pully w/ Hudson	477-9945/472-7476	Wed	9:00–10:30 AM	object relations/interpersonal
Travis Sebera, LPC, supervisor	327-7500	Wed	12:00–1:15 PM	Supervision group focusing on countertransference issues using modern analytic approach
Sydnor Sikes, PhD, ABPP	327-3408;469-0582	Wed	2:00–3:30 PM	SCT Foundation Training Group (NEW-begins March 24)
Sydnor Sikes, PhD, ABPP	469-0582/343-9609	Thu	12:30–2:00 PM	SCT training group
Gianna Viola, LCSW	585-4518	Tue	12:00–2:00 PM	LCSW Supervision Group
Beverly Voss, LCSW	338-9797	Fri	TBA	InterPlay Pilot Project (6 wks)

**Transgender**

Katy Koonce, LCSW	329-6699	Mon	4:45–6:15 PM	psychodynamic group for gender variant, long term
Katy Koonce, LCSW	329-6699	Wed	7:00–8:00 PM	Support group female born, identify differently, 1st and 3rd Wed, by donation
Katy Koonce, LCSW	329-6699	Wed	7:00–8:00 PM	Support group for trans women, MTF or MT, 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, donation

## Interview

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when I try to feed you. You don't know what to do with it." Complaints about the room are interpreted as complaints about the relationship with the dyadic merged early bodies of mother and infant. I interpret everything as if they're telling me about their early mostly pre-verbal experiences.

**PF:** Dr. Aledort, thank you so much for talking with me today. I have no doubt that this conference will be as engaging as I've found our conversation.

Dr. Aledort encourages all participants to prepare for the conference by reading the following articles. These readings are not required.

### Recommended Reading:

Excitement: A Crucial Marker for Group Psychotherapy (available on the AGPS website, [www.austin-groups.org](http://www.austin-groups.org))

Mahler and Kohut: A comparative view (available on AGPS website)

Aledort, SL. (2002). "The Omnipotent Child Syndrome: The Role of Passionately Held Bad Fits in the Formation of Identity." *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 52, 67-87. (available for a fee at [www.atypon-link.com](http://www.atypon-link.com). Enter search term *international journal of group psychotherapy* then go to number 52.)

Aledort, SL. (2003). "Fleshing Out the Omnipotent Child in Group Psychotherapy," *Group*, 27: 151-167. (available for a fee at [www.springer-link.com](http://www.springer-link.com))

Patricia Florence, LCSW has been in private practice in Austin for three years. Prior to opening her practice, she was a therapist at Waterloo Counseling Center, where she also completed one of her internships. She co-lead a women's psychotherapy group for four years and is currently developing a group for women living in the aftermath of divorce. She can be contacted at 512-320-4582 or [paf@patriciaflorence.com](mailto:paf@patriciaflorence.com).

## Good Fits

(continued from page 4)

Steve Finn, Vicki Griffin, Alaire Lowry, Sue Marriot, Lisa Mersky, Jan Morris, and Carl Pickhardt. Their contributions enriched my thinking and hopefully will enrich yours as well.

### References

Estes, C.P. *Women who run with the wolves: Myths and stories of the wild woman archetype*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1992.

Finn, S., 2009, personal communication.

Griffin, V., 2009, personal communication.

Marriot, S., 2009, personal communication.

Mersky, L., 2009, personal communication.

Morris, J., 2009, personal communication.

Josie Whitley is a psychologist in private practice who works with individuals, couples, and groups. Her work is influenced by attachment theory and the ways in which

our attachments contribute to the growth and development of our habitual ways of responding to the people and events in our lives. She utilizes the research on the plasticity of the brain in helping her clients develop compassion for themselves. Compassion can assist them in coming to believe that they can change and create lives of meaning. She has found the work of Daniel Siegel, Allan Schore, John Gottman, and Brent Atkinson particularly useful. Josie can be reached at 512-469-0765.

# The Adventure of Teaching the 12-Hour Course

by Katie Griffin, LPC, CGP and Patricia Tollison, Ph.D., CGP with Jane Cobb, LCSW, BCD, CGP

*I had been waiting to take the Principles of Group Psychotherapy course for a couple of years. I was starting to worry that I would have to resort to going to Houston, so I was thrilled when I got word that the course would be taught here in Austin. I was somewhat anxious because I knew the course included group experiences and I had never been in an ongoing group before. . . . I think the best practice that all the teachers demonstrated was creating a space where one could feel comfortable enough to share openly and honestly, both in demo groups and in the processing afterward. But most of all, I enjoyed meeting some of my colleagues in the community and experiencing the universality that I always teach my students is a benefit of group therapy.*

— Jo Ann Brandon, LCSW  
COPSD Coordinator  
Austin State Hospital

For four consecutive Saturday mornings we met with nine stalwart individuals in Beth Malitz's "tree house" office and focused our attention on the Principles of Group Psychotherapy, AGPA's 12-hour course. On three of the mornings, a skilled group leader from our community joined us to present didactic material and to demonstrate his/her particular theoretical framework. We had the chance to see similarities and differences in the approaches and experience the principles of group psychotherapy in action. Beverly Snodgrass offered us the unique opportunity to be introduced to the Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) group model. Jan Morris presented and

demonstrated Modern Group Analysis. Jev Sikes completed our four weeks with his thoughts on and a demonstration of psychodynamic group work.

During the first Saturday meeting, a question regarding optimum group size prompted an e-mail communication with Scott Rutan whose text with Walter Stone is used in the curriculum. Scott quickly joined our team, responding with helpful input. In teaching this course we had the opportunity to experience the connection, expertise, and support that our group community offers at both the local and national levels.

This course is taught each year at AGPA's annual meeting and it or its equivalent is required for certification through the National Registry of Certified Group Psychotherapists. AGPS last offered this course in the mid 90's and oral history suggested that while it was a positive experience, there was a lot of material to cover in a short period of time and a lot to undertake alone. In planning to teach the course this time, we made use of that wisdom by sharing responsibilities, enlisting help, and working to focus and condense the material. We are writing this piece as a way to document this experience and to encourage a new Austin tradition of teaching the course regularly to benefit AGPS and the larger group community. Jane Cobb was a participant in the course and has joined us to write this article; the comments in italics are hers.

The first step was easy. We both thought it was a great idea. Long on enthusiasm, but short on time and skill, we created a flyer. We decided that we would limit the size to twelve participants and set eight

as our minimum. With eight participants, AGPS would offer a scholarship. When the eighth application showed up, we were thrilled, but then realized we had to actually figure out how to organize this elephantine task.

The content outline provided in the curriculum guide is challenging in that it is often elliptical. Those who wrote it clearly knew what they wanted to include, but frequently refer to topics in incomplete sentences and sometimes with just a few words. Right off the bat we were confronted with terms we had never heard, including "narcissistic triad." In case it is also new to you, the term refers to the grandiose professional ego ideal that is omnipotent, omniscient, and absolutely benevolent. New terminology aside, we muddled through and came up with what we hoped would be a reasonable plan for the twelve hours.

*When I consider the breadth of material covered in the course, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. Thus, I'm glad to have the hand-out for a refresher and also be able to look back at the notes I took. In class, a few gems from "the masters" were mentioned which have stayed with me. Particularly noteworthy are times when the masters' viewpoints conflicted:*

*"If you've got 3 people, start a group!"*

—Ann Alonso

*"You should start a group with at least 7 people."*

—Scott Rutan and Walter Stone

*Learning that extremely experienced group leaders have differing viewpoints helps me feel freer to consider*

## 12-Hour Course

(continued from page 13)

*their wisdom and then discover my own truths.*

Socrates, viewed by some as the first group leader (Ettin, 1992), and his interactive dialectic method were introduced in our first meeting. He became a minor focus, but a model for group leadership that includes active engagement in authentic interactive inquiry. In that first meeting we danced through other history, definitions of group, member selection, group agreements, and characteristics of and the choice to be a group leader. If there were a cartoon version of the morning, the final frame might well have shown all of us smiling but everyone's eyes spinning. Talking about and thinking about group is really interesting and stimulating, but we agreed with participants that despite our efforts this was still a lot of material to cover and not enough time to process it in three hours on a Saturday morning.

"Short term, structured groups" is a new module added in this most recent edition of the curriculum guide. The class itself offered the opportunity to be a part of such a group. We discussed and experienced the development of group climate, roles, and a group coalescing. Beverly Snodgrass expertly presented the highly structured and time-limited DBT model with a demonstration during the second class meeting. Participants were led in a calming meditation used in DBT for the development of what is termed "wise mind," a mindfulness practice, intended to improve members' ability to observe their reactions to help them break habitual, destructive patterns. We were able to see in DBT groups a contemporary model that follows from earlier psychoanalytic group models in which the focus is on one member at a

time interacting with the leader with no emphasis on group-as-a-whole or group development.

*I appreciated the opportunity to learn more about DBT since this is a treatment modality that has been shown to be effective in working with borderline personality disorder and bulimia. I came away from Beverly Snodgrass's presentation with some tools for working more skillfully with people having Axis II issues – in particular, how and when to validate clients in such a way that they are apt to feel heard and not be as inclined to either attack the therapist or flee therapy.*

In the third week our focus was on the change process in group work and development as a group leader. Jan Morris artfully related these topics to Modern Analysis. In her presentation and demonstration she emphasized the technique and use of "bridging," a tool for linking members of a group together and underscoring "the presence of small communities in the room" (Ormont, 2001, p.287). Bridging can be used to facilitate mechanisms of change – imitation, identification, internalization, and the therapeutic processes of confrontation, clarification, and interpretation (Rutan & Stone, 2001). On this Saturday morning we celebrated the willingness of the participants to take the risk of being open and showing up as themselves under Jan's leadership. Once again it was made clear why the best way to really learn the principles of group psychotherapy is to be a part of a group.

*It was great to learn more about Louis Ormont's (Modern Analytic) approach to group, especially that:*

*\*"Therapists should enjoy their groups."*

*\*"You should leave your group with more energy than when you came in."*

*\*"The group is the agent of change."*

*Also in relation to the Modern Analytic approach, Jan Morris informed us that it is a theory of "exploration rather than explanation." The benefit to me of this and other statements from the class is that they prompt me to look at my own groups and clinical work with a keener eye. As a result, I've been able to facilitate deeper communications with and between my group members. Likewise, I find I'm more able to stay present in group with a curious, questioning mind in situations that previously would have left me flummoxed, helpless and uncomfortably silent.*

"Termination" was the didactic topic of our final meeting and Jev Sikes masterfully led a conversation and a demonstration of psychodynamic group therapy. Modeling appropriate transparency and self-disclosure by a group leader, he set the stage for further risk-taking and connection in the demonstration group during this final session.

*As the group of us coalesced over time, the class became more personally valuable.*

One of the important topics in the discussion of termination is resistance on the part of the leaders to having members leave. We could feel that resistance on the final Saturday morning as the last participant left. Even though it would be good to have the weekend morning

## BOOK REVIEW

# A Look at What Stewart Aledort is Reading

By Lisa Mersky, LCSW

For this edition of the book review, I asked our fall speaker, Stewart Aledort, to share with us some of the recent books he has been reading. Stewart responded in a very generous fashion, with an eclectic list that revealed the depth and width of his many interests. Instead of choosing one to review extensively, I am going to share the entire list with you, followed by brief descriptions and comments.

Stewart's recommendations begin with some fiction. His choices seem to reflect an interest in history and different contemporary cultures.

- **We Need to Talk about Kevin, Lionel Shriver.** A journalist as well as novelist, Shriver's novel portrays what might lead an adolescent to engage in a massacre-style killing ala Columbine. It is a psychologically astute, darkly humorous novel.
- **The Song Before It is Sung: A Novel, Justin Cartwright.** A dark fictionalized depiction of an actual 1944 attempt on Adolf Hitler's life, by a prize winning South African-born novelist.
- **Saturday, Ian McEwan.** This powerful English piece of post-9/11 fiction explores ideas of fate, purpose and life's fragility.
- **March, Geraldine Brooks.** This novel imagines the Civil War experience of Mr. March, the absent father in Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*.
- **The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo, Stieg Larsson.** This strikingly original debut thriller – the first in a trilogy – was a European best-seller and is now hugely popular in the US.
- **White Tiger, Aravind Adiga.** A memorable tale of one taxi driver's hellish experience in modern India. It is a darkly comic, sardonic, and acute observation of the social order.
- **Blindness and Seeing, Jose Saramago.** Seeing, the Nobel prize winner's best known novel of mythic power, was recently made into a movie. Blindness, a political satire set in the same nameless capital city, has a lighter, more farcical, tone.
- **The Inheritance of Loss, Kiran Desai.** This novel is set in mid-1980's India. The main character in the teeming cast is Jumabhi Patel, a Cambridge educated judge, who has recently retired and is leading an isolated life. The novel ponders questions of nationhood, modernity, class and cultural identity
- **One Hundred Years of Solitude and Memories of My Melancholy Whores, Gabriel Garcia Marquez.**

His list includes some political commentary and history.

Stewart recommends two books by **Milton Viorst**, a former staff correspondent for *The New Yorker*:

- **Storm from the East** describes America's conflict with the Arab world as simply the last round in a 1400-year



struggle between Christianity and Islam.

- **What Shall I Do with These People?: Jews and the Fractious Politics of Judaism** describes the historical context behind Judaism's current divisiveness.
- **Isaac's Storm: A Man, a Time, and the Deadliest Storm in History, Erik Larson** is a powerful chronicle of the huge and destructive hurricane that struck Galveston in September of 1900.

Three of his favorite authors are Oliver Sacks, Jerome Groopman, and Irving Yalom, and for each he recommends all of their writings. Jerome Groopman is the author of *How Doctors Think* as well as many *New Yorker* articles about medical care.

The professional choices Stewart included were eclectic and suggest his preference for writers who integrate cultural, sociological and philosophical perspectives into the psychological mix.

- **Exuberance: The Passion for Life, Kaye Redfield Jamison.** Jamison, whom many of us remember from her memoir *An Unquiet Mind*, here detours from her usual analysis of mood disorders to explore exuber-

See "Reading" page 16

## 12-Hour Course

(continued from page 14)

back, there was real loss. Before teaching this course we knew each other only slightly, but we found we were a good team and that we both loved thinking about groups and the practice of group leadership. Scott Rutan had offered the suggestion in our e-mail correspondence that as group leaders we “muse” on the impact of all our decisions on our groups and our group members. For four Saturday mornings that is what we had the opportunity to do with at least nine or ten others with a like interest. We recommend the experience.

### References

Ettinger, M. (1992). *Foundations and applications of group psychotherapy*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Ormont, L. (2001). Bridging in group analysis. In L. Furgeri (Ed.) *The technique of group treatment*. Madison, CONN: Psychosocial Press.

Rutan, S. & Stone, W. (2001). *Psychodynamic group psychotherapy* (3rd ed.). New York: Guilford Press.

Jane Cobb is a psychotherapist in private practice. She works with adults and specializes in relationship issues, eating

disorders, and women's therapy groups and is now a Certified Group Psychotherapist. She currently serves on the Board of AGPS. She can be reached at 512-323-0021.

Katie Griffin is a group psychotherapist in private practice. She runs three groups, and also specializes in issues related to bisexuality, substance and process addictions. She is a former president of AGPS, and currently co-chairs the Special Interest Group for GLBT issues at AGPA. She can be reached at (512) 656-4067.

Patricia Tollison is a psychologist in private practice specializing in long-term psychodynamic psychotherapy and case consultation. She is a former president of AGPS. She can be reached at 512-478-1064.

## Reading

(continued from page 15)

ance, which she describes as a positive psychological state characterized by “high mood and high energy,” and “an abounding, ebullient, effervescent emotion.” She celebrates a galaxy of historical and literary figures who exemplify exuberance.

- **The Group as an Object of Desire: Exploring Sexuality in Group Therapy, Morris Nitsun.** Nitsun explores desire and sexuality in a group therapy context, with a focus on the erotic connection, the dissociation of desire, the group as witness, and erotic transference and counter-transference.
- **Standing in the Spaces: Essays on Clinical Process Trauma and Dissociation, Philip Bromberg.** Written from a predominantly interpersonal perspective, this collection of essays is imaginative, unpredictable, original and wide-ranging.
- **Intrusive Thoughts in Clinical Disorders: Theory, Research and Treat-**

**ment, David Clark.** This book surveys the research on intrusive thoughts in several clinical states, including depression, anxiety disorders, psychosis and sexual disorders.

- **Cherishment: A Psychology of the Heart, Elisabeth Young-Bruel and Faith Bethelard.** Young-Bruel, a psychoanalyst and biographer of Anna Freud, and Bethelard, a psychotherapist, here merge Eastern philosophy and Western psychoanalysis to explore the writings of Japanese psychoanalyst Takeo Doi. They translate Doi's concept of *amae*, the infant's preverbal expectation of care and our lifelong desire for it, as cherishment. Fitting in with relational and intersubjective thought, the authors provide new ways of thinking about love, attachment and care, while questioning older views of independence and self-reliance.
- **Dreams of Love and Fateful Encounters: The Power of Romantic Passion, Ethel Person.** Person declares that

madly romantic love is not a delusion, but a valid experience and an agent for personal growth. She argues for a view of romantic love as a powerful agent of change, as central to human culture as it is to human existence. Employing a philosophical and cultural perspective to understand the existential dilemmas posed by love, she cites accounts drawn from literature, film and real life.

I hope these brief descriptions will give you some stimulating choices for further reading. And thanks to Stewart Aledort, for these rich and varied recommendations.

Lisa Mersky, LCSW, has been leading groups in private practice in Austin since 1985. Her current special interest is in the intersection between creativity, spirituality, and authenticity. She can be reached at 474 - 6148 or at her website, [www.lisamersky.com](http://www.lisamersky.com)

## Still Echoes: Poetry for Contemplatives, Listeners, and Witnesses

Compiled by Gaea Logan and Candyce Ossefort-Russell

### Touch Me

Summer is late, my heart.  
 Words plucked out of the air  
 some forty years ago  
 when I was wild with love  
 and torn almost in two  
 scatter like leaves this night  
 of whistling wind and rain.  
 It is my heart that's late,  
 it is my song that's flown.  
 Outdoors all afternoon  
 under a gunmetal sky  
 staking my garden down,  
 I kneeled to the crickets trilling  
 underfoot as if about  
 to burst from their crusty shells;  
 and like a child again  
 marveled to hear so clear  
 and brave a music pour  
 from such a small machine.  
 What makes the engine go?  
 Desire, desire, desire.  
 The longing for the dance  
 stirs in the buried life  
 One season only,  
     And its done.  
 So let the battered old willow  
 thrash against the windowpanes  
 and the house timbers creek.  
 Darling, do you remember  
 the man you married? Touch me,  
 remind me who I am.

— by Stanley Kunitz, in *The Collected Poems*

i like my body when it is with your  
 body. It is so quite new a thing!  
 Muscles better and nerves more.  
 i like your body. i like what it does,  
 i like its hows. i like to feel the spine  
 of your body and its bones, and the trembling  
 -firm-smooth ness and which I will  
 again and again and again  
 kiss, i like kissing this and that of you,  
 i like slowly stroking the, shocking fuzz  
 of your electric fur, and what-it-is comes  
 over parting flesh...And eyes big love-crumbs,  
 and possibly i like the thrill  
 of under me you so quite new.

— by e. e. cummings, in *A Selection of Poems*

### Ask Much, The Voice Suggested

Ask much, the voice suggested, and I startled.  
 Feeling my body like the trembling body of a horse  
 tied to its tree while the strange noise  
 passes over its ears.  
 I who in extremity had always wanted less,  
 even of eating, of sleeping.  
 Agile, the voice did not speak again, but waited.  
 "Want more" --  
 a cure for longing I had not thought of.  
 But that is how it is with wells.  
 Whatever is taken refills to the steady level.  
 The voice agreed, though softly, to quiet the feet of the horse:  
 a cup taken out, a cup reappears; a bucketful taken, a bucket.

— by Jane Hirshfield, in *After*

### Anniversary

By Ted Kooser

Didn't I stand there once,  
 white-knuckled, gripping the just-lit taper,  
 swearing I'd never go back?  
 And hadn't you kissed the rain from my mouth?  
 And weren't we gentle and awed and afraid,  
 knowing we'd stepped from the room of desire  
 into the further room of love?  
 And wasn't it sacred, the sweetness  
 we licked from each other's hands?  
 And were we not lovely, then, were we not  
 as lovely as thunder, and damp grass, and flame?



## AGPS Sustainers and Benefactors

AGPS wants to recognize those members at the Sustainer and Benefactor levels who have demonstrated their commitment to support our professional organization at an enhanced level. Thank you for your contributions!

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### AGPS Past Presidents

We are grateful for our rich history of outstanding leadership and would like to honor our past presidents for their service and commitment to AGPS. Thank You!

Roger Hall  
 Jev Sikes  
 David Cramer  
 Barbara Davis  
 Roll Fellows  
 Patricia Tollison

Patti Cox  
 Bob Murphy  
 Gaea Logan  
 Richard Holt  
 Michael Hegener  
 Jeff Hudson

Sue Marriott  
 Jeanne Bunker  
 DeLinda Fox  
 Katie Griffin  
 Pam Greenstone

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### New Certified Group Practitioners (CGP)

Congratulations to the newest AGPS members to earn the title of CGP. Way to go!

Joseph Acosta, LCP

Janet Carbonneau, M.Ed., LPC

Jane L. Cobb, LCSW, BC



## Fall Conference

### It Takes Courage to Live in a Good Fit: Excitement, Sexuality and the Omnipotent Child

Stewart Aledort, MD, CGP, FAGPA  
November 7, 8:30-4:30

#### Saturday Conference

Location: Doubletree Club Hotel • MLK and I-35  
512-479-4000

#### Saturday Conference Fees

If pre-paid by October 30:

Members: \$100 • Nonmembers: \$120 • Students: \$50

If received after October 30 or for payment at the door, add \$20.

#### Continuing Education: 6 Hours

Dr. Aledort will discuss the origins of the Omnipotent Child and its contributions to identity formation and templates of intimacy. There will be an emphasis on the developmental phases that the group and individuals go through with the lens focused on identity, intimacy, passion, and sexuality. The courage to live in a good fit will be demonstrated in the demo groups as well as in multiple case vignettes from his clinical practice. The role of the therapist will be underscored, particularly during the earliest phases of the group. During each phase the therapist must let himself or herself be the object of desire.

#### Learning Objectives

Attendees will be able to:

1. Identify and list the characteristics of the Omnipotent Child.
2. Identify the power of excitement in the group process.
3. Identify the techniques to flesh out the Omnipotent Child in the group members and the group.
4. Identify the latent sexuality in the group and the methods used by the therapist to enhance its working through.

#### Sunday Consultation Group

November 8, 9:00am-12:00 noon • Location TBD

If pre-paid by October 30: \$100

If received after October 30 or for payment the day of, add \$20.

The Sunday morning consultation group will be an informal group in which participants may further explore topical questions and consult on pertinent group/case material from their practices. The first 10 people to sign up will compose the consultation group; they will be notified of the location and other details. Please check the appropriate box on the registration form to attend.

## AGPS Conference Information & Registration

To register, complete the form below and mail it along with your payment (payable to AGPS) to:

Austin Group Psychotherapy Society  
P.O. Box 684434  
Austin, TX 78768

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone(s) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Saturday Workshop – prepaid by Oct. 30. After Oct. 30, add \$20

AGPS Member \$ 100

AGPS Non-member \$ 120

Student\* \$ 50

Total Amount Paid \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to attend the *Sunday Morning Consultation Group*  
9:00 am-12:00 noon (\$100 prepaid by Oct. 30; \$120 payable day of)

\* Must be enrolled in a professional training program. Please send documentation of student status with payment.

– Limited scholarships to cover registration fee available. For more information, contact [agps@austingroups.org](mailto:agps@austingroups.org).

– **Early registration is encouraged** and appreciated; there will be a \$20 surcharge for at-the-door registration.

– Refund Policy: A \$15 administration fee will be deducted from all refunds. No refunds will be given after the Conference.

#### About the Speaker

Stewart L. Aledort, MD, CGP, FAGPA, is a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the George Washington School of Medicine, a faculty member and one of the founders of the National Group Psychotherapy Institute, and a faculty member of the Washington Psychoanalytic Institute. He is in private practice and runs three biannual training groups for senior therapists. He has lectured across the country at various AGPA Affiliate Societies and has published articles about the Omnipotent Child and other group psychotherapy experiences. He will be giving the Pre-Institute lecture and demonstration for the second time at the AGPA 2010 Annual Meeting in San Diego.



Austin Group Psychotherapy Society – AGPS  
P.O. Box 68434  
Austin, TX 78768-4434  
Address Service Requested

### **Register Today!**

## It Takes Courage to Live in a Good Fit: Excitement, Sexuality and the Omnipotent Child

Stewart Aledort, MD, CGP, FAGPA  
November 7 • 8:30-4:30

Sunday Morning Consultation Group  
**limited to 10 people**

Stewart Aledort, MD, CGP, FAGPA  
November 8 • 9:00-12:00 noon; location TBD

### **Don't miss out!**

Benefits of participating in the consultation group:

- Participation in a small group with a nationally recognized clinician in which to ask questions, present case material for consultation, and/or to work on personally relevant material.
- Opportunity to integrate and consolidate material from the Saturday conference.
- Networking with colleagues in a deeper way.

### **SAVE THE DATES:**

#### **October 23, 2009**

Friday Night Conversation  
Hosted by Tammy Brown

#### **November 14, 2009**

Fall Party  
See [www.austingroups.org](http://www.austingroups.org) for more information.

#### **April 24-25, 2010**

AGPS Spring Conference with Joel Frost, Ed.D., CGP, FAGPA.  
Continuing Education: 6 Hours

### **SHARE YOUR VOICE**

*The Voice* is such a rich publication because of the articles contributed by you, the members of the AGPS community. The newsletter is published twice a year. In each issue we hope to learn more about the varied voices that make up our community. If you have not yet submitted an article, please consider sharing your voice with this vibrant community. We will consider all submissions and are available to help you give shape to your ideas or polish rough drafts.

### **A BIG THANK YOU**

The publication of *The Voice* is a group effort. My special thanks to Derek Leighton, Josie Whitley, Tammy Brown, Jane Cobb, Mandy Blott and Laura Ebady for their help with editing. Thanks also to the AGPS board members who have supported me in innumerable ways in preparing the *Voice* for publication. I would like to extend my warm appreciation to those who have invested their time and energy in writing articles for this edition of *The Voice*.