Message from the President

Dear AHC Members,

I hope you are having an amazing week!!! These are exciting times for members of the Association for Humanistic Counseling. Our division is garnering a reputation for being creative and having innovative projects. And as a result of this reputation we’re attracting talented individuals who want to be a part of the excitement. Dr. Vicki Kress from Youngstown State University contacted me recently and wanted to know how she could contribute to AHC. She is now a member of the Projects Committee working with Dr. Carl Sheperis.

We have 10 or more awards including Humanistic Clinician, Humanistic Advocacy, Humanistic Counselor Educator, and Humanistic Dissertation that will be presented at the Town Hall Meeting at the ACA Conference in Cincinnati. There were 9 programs nominated for the Make a Difference Grant this year, so the Awards Committee had to make a difficult decision. And 3 new Emerging Leaders were selected for the mentoring program chaired by Dr. Brande Flamez.

Recently, I received an email from President-Elect Matthew Lemberger-Truelove discussing our Association’s 50 Chapters Initiative. He is imploring AHC members to found and lead a state chapter of our division asserting that individuals feel a stronger sense of commitment to an organization that has local roots. I agree with his assertion that the establishment of local chapters is “vital to AHC’s future existence and evolution.” I will be attending the North

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Carolina Counseling Association’s annual conference in February and I plan on talking with the NCCA President regarding the steps in the process of founding a North Carolina chapter of AHC.

Finally, I strongly encourage all of you to attend the first Association for Humanistic Counseling National Conference which will take place in Manhattan, New York on June 7th and 8th. Past President Michelle Perepiczka has taken the lead as Conference planner, and the success of this event depends upon a strong showing of support and participation from our membership. Our first national conference marks a significant milestone in our Association’s evolution. For this reason, I also strongly encourage you to submit a proposal to present at our first national conference. The conference theme is “Humanism in the Counseling Profession.” What does that mean in terms of conference session topics? The conference committee is seeking humanistic programs to fit into one of the following four tracks: (1) Graduate Student Preparation and Career Counseling, (2) School Counseling, (3) Clinical Mental Health, and (4) Counselor Education and Supervision. Of course, program descriptions and learning objectives should emphasize Humanism and Humanistic principles. For further details, visit our Association website and click on the “AHC 2013 Conference Information” link. The deadline for submitting a program proposal is February 28th. This is a great opportunity for professional development and an opportunity to play a part in a historical “first” in the evolution of AHC. I look forward to seeing you at our National Conference in June!

Best regards,

Mark Scholl, Ph.D.
AHC President
This issue of the Association of Humanistic Counseling Newsletter is honored to spotlight the contributions of Dr. Michelle Perepiczka to the Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC). Dr. Perepiczka is the former president of AHC and has made significant contributions to the organization, as well as being a highly successful mental health counselor.

Dr. Perepiczka is currently working diligently to establish the first conference for the Association for Humanistic Counseling. The conference will be held Friday, June 7, 2013 and Saturday, June 8, 2013 at the New York Institute of Technology in New York, New York. Information about the conference and registration forms can be found on the AHC website. The conference theme will focus on humanism in the counseling profession. The deadline for proposal submissions is February 28, 2013 and registration will be available onsite in addition to online registration. Individuals wanting to get involved or assist with the conference preplanning can email Dr. Perepiczka at mperepiczka@gmail.com.

I recently spoke with Dr. Perepiczka about how she became involved with AHC. She divulged that she became involved in AHC during the last year of her doctoral program. She reports that the AHC president gave her extensive information about how to become involved and since that time she has been very active within the division. Dr. Perepiczka admits her involvement started with a couple of emails, but since that time it has been a great experience that has provided her with numerous resources.

Dr. Perepiczka encourages individuals wanting to become involved in AHC to email the current AHC president Dr. Mark Scholl and the president-elect Matthew Lemberger-Truelove or to use the contact information on the AHC website. Dr. Perepiczka also recommends reaching out to AHC board members and discussing your interest to get involved.

Dr. Perepiczka also recommends that individuals interested in humanistic counseling first become familiar with theories and accountability. Next, they should begin reviewing articles that provide information about evidence based practices for humanism. Additionally, she recommends joining the AHC division. She encourages individuals to search the different resources that the website has available and to make contact with AHC members. She reports that the AHC members are great resources and have emerged as leaders within other divisions. Next, Dr. Perepiczka reiterates the value in attending the AHC conference. The conference will focus on the use of humanism in differing careers. Lastly, Dr. Perepiczka encourages individuals interested in humanistic counseling to attend the AHC town hall meeting that will be held at the American Counseling Association Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. During this meeting, AHC national awards will be distributed to recipients and Emerging Leaders Recipients will be recognized. Individuals interested in the AHC National Awards can visit the AHC website at www.humanisticcounselor.com.

Finally, when Dr. Perepiczka was asked how she conceptualized humanistic counseling, she stated that although AHC does not have a specific definition, she conceptualizes it as a vast array of different philosophies, ethical considerations, and theoretical approaches that are combined. She believes that “it’s not just client centered, Adlerian, Existential or anything like that, but kind of all of those things put together.” She continued to state that “what we look for in humanistic counseling is a sense of promoting wellness and wellbeing of people. The main thing with social justice is trying to remove social barriers from the people that we work with. I think the key components of humanism would be respecting the rights and dignities of others, trying to help our particular clients and also trying to help society at large, and focusing on a wellness and holistic sense of human beings.”

We look forward to the AHC conference and would like to thank Dr. Perepiczka for being our spotlight member!

If you have recommendations for future AHC members to be highlighted in the “Member Spotlight” section of the AHC Newsletter, please contact Lacey A. Ricks, Counselor Education and Supervision Doctoral Student at Auburn University at Lar0019@auburn.edu.
Message from the Heart

My Best Friend Grace
By: Bethany Brendlinger

Although we still stand in our separate space, when I am near you, I feel you.
Sensing me too, you break from your pasture life and greet me with gentle grace.
Your wild heart and giant body tame as you catch me in your sight, and my heart and soul fill with peace at the touch of your face.

Reunited, I guide you to grain, and you are so gentle as I brush your hair and clean your feet.
We are so happy to be together again and we catch each other up on the time we’ve spent apart.
I tell you my stories and you show me where you’ve been by the thorns in your tail and the mud on your feet.

As I saddle you up, the weight of the world begins to be left behind.
You let me climb up you, and I become more myself as you hold me high.

Soon, we are alone in the most preferred company, and it is so quiet in this wild that we can hear each other’s thoughts.

My words and dreams are so honest and safe as I speak with your spirit.
I can tell you about all my human thoughts and you never judge, or even criticize. You just offer your presence and in your stillness I completely unwind.

I let you run, fast and unbridled, and I feel so safe.

With the wind in our hair, you show me your world. The leaves brush past and the ground beneath us leads us to our path home.

As we ride into the sun, we move as one.

When we return, I cool you down, you kiss my shoulder and I turn you free.

You run and roll and sneeze back into your pasture life.

As I turn to walk back to the world, I smile because I know that you’ll always come back to me, out of the wild, with your grace.
"Untitled"
Original Artwork by Eric Crumley
Oil/acrylic on wood
Recently, in the *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, a special edition was devoted to a timely subject in our counseling profession, that of professional identity and a vision for the counseling profession. Being a relatively new member of The Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC), I immediately thought back to my original review of McLaughlin and Boettcher’s (2009) article on the dichotomy of conformity or distinction in counselor identity. It was my first experience with considering the state of the counseling profession and recognizing the impact the AHC had on the philosophical foundations of the counseling profession. McLaughlin and Boettcher (2009) discussed the identity of the counseling profession and historical lessons members of the profession might draw from either continuing in the medical model or retaining its own distinctive, humanistic approach. This is, no doubt, a relevant and important discussion to embark upon and precisely what Colette Dollarhide (*Journal of Humanistic Counseling* editor) undertook with the special issue. Hansen’s keynote article, proposes consideration of the counseling profession from a traditional humanities lens rather than a scientific framework; in addition to advocating for the counseling profession to evolve in this direction.

Hansen’s proposal was sure to illicit counter-points and critical debate, and with the sum of the author’s scholarly work so well-regarded in Humanistic circles, the article provided an excellent opportunity for a unique series of back-and-forth dialogues to occur in the special edition of the journal. While all three series of articles are valuable for their respective reasons, it seems appropriate to review Hansen’s centerpiece prior to choosing one of the specific critiques and subsequent dialogues, in order to draw attention to this unique edition of the *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*.

Initially, in Hansen’s article, he lays out the history of the counseling profession as both an art and a science, highlighting the point at which we currently reside, where most practitioners might conceptualize counseling along both artistic and scientific lines. Hansen explains how advocates for a scientific vision of counseling have recently been the only side articulating a professional vision of either ideology, and while the humanistic critics of a purely scientific ideology have critiqued the new scientific movements, there has not been many proposals for movements in the opposite direction, whereby the profession grounds it’s ideologies in the humanities. Essentially, this is the purpose of the article, to propose grounding the counseling profession in the humanities and demonstrate this vision to be a better fit for the profession than the scientific one.

Hansen brings up many well thought out points regarding how ingrained a scientific framework is in the counseling profession. As he presents history throughout Freud, Watson, Skinner, Maslow and Rogers, the reader is taken down a path illustrating the decisions of such men in attempting to legitimize the profession by placing it in the realm of science. Perhaps the contexts of this history might explain how science has the overwhelming say in this profession, but as counseling has evolved, the humanistic side has, to an extent, become more prevalent and Hansen attempts to make the leap forward in conceptualizing a way in which counseling is guided more in humanities than in science.

The crux of Hansen’s proposal comes in asserting the polarities of scientific ideologies, whereby the counseling profession would stress human complexity over simplicity, and multiplicity of perspectives over singular truth. Hansen stresses that science should be retained as a tool to investigate the effectiveness of counseling interventions; however, it should not be used to overtake the profession, as techniques or lists of competencies only go so far with the complexities of humans. Hansen suggests counselor education should focus more on subjective client meanings rather than symptoms and diagnosis; qualitative research methodologies should be regularly taught; and counselors should maintain a critical stance toward the medical model rather than uncritically participating in it.

On the surface, the argument and proposal seem straightforward, but once Hansen outlines his approach towards changing the professional vision of counseling, the reader is able to come to grips with how pervasive scientific thought structures the counselor framework. Essentially, Hansen re-structures the profession into a forum of philosophical debate, whereby accreditation standards, continuing
education requirements, professional limitations based on professional identity, and supervision standards are all done away with or become self-determined.

The article was written as a starting point in the discussion of where to begin in moving the counseling profession towards a humanities vision rather than a scientific vision. In addition, the article was meant to spark controversy and debate. It is a beautifully written, conceptual piece which accomplishes exactly what is was intended to do, invite discussion.

References

A Discussion of Humanism


Reviewed by Greg A. Meyer,
Assistant Professor of Psychology & Counseling, Northeastern State University

As I have previously reviewed, Hansen’s (2012) thesis on developing the foundation of the counseling profession towards a humanities ideology, and away from scientific ideology, garnered much debate. In particular, Lemberger engaged in a series of back-and-forth articles, worthy of review. In an attempt to invite the reader to access the latest Journal of Humanistic Counseling, I offer a rather simplified review of said discussion, which illustrates the incredible level of thought and intentionality with which this special issue of the journal was constructed.

In response to Hansen’s (2012) proposal for the counseling profession moving toward a humanities based ideology, Lemberger responds with the argument, in “A Return to the Human in Humanism: A Response to Hansen’s Humanistic Vision,” that a humanistic counselor, with the capacity to recognize his or her uniqueness, has the potential to interpret the current scientific framework of the profession and subjectively interpret it themselves, without needing to create an essential humanities ideology, nor condemn a scientific system for the profession. In addition, While Lemberger agrees that the scientific ideology has infested the counselor profession, leading to significant reductionism in scholarly and therapeutic work, it is the interpretative capacity of the humanistic counselor, and his or her clients, that facilitates the spirit of humanism rather than the tools or ideology used. Finally, Lemberger proposes a new dialectic whereby the counselor profession does not reduce the complex and subjective potential by creating a one dimensional ideology. After detailing his argument regarding the lack of foundational difference between qualitative research and quantitative research, with each utilizing symbols (i.e., qualitative utilizing linguistic symbols and quantitative utilizing numeric symbols), and readers subjectively interpreting said symbols, Lemberger continues by endorsing Hansen’s (2012) approach where counselors must relinquish diagnosis as a truthful representation of a client’s being, and develop skepticism of any truth claim that a particular counseling strategy might be a universal remedy.

Lemberger’s response invites Hansen to respond in turn, beginning another round of exchange. Hansen’s “Rejoinder to Lemberger” essentially states that they both agree on the diagnosis, that the counseling culture has become infested with scientific ideology; however, they disagree on the way in which the collective profession must move forward. Hansen explains that instead of disagreeing with Lemberger’s response or proposal, he must simply offer a way of conceptualizing the differences of their respective proposals. Hansen establishes that his analysis was from a cultural critique of the counseling culture, where it is our responsibility to consider gross, ideological chunks currently defined by the culture; whereas Lemberger focused on an individual critique of the inter-subjective counseling encounter.

"The Heart and Conscience of the Counseling Profession"
Lemberger replies to Hansen’s offer of re-conceptualizing the differing opinions as cultural analysis versus individualistic analysis, in “A Reply to Hansen’s Cultural Humanism,” by explaining that you cannot separate the two. In addition, Lemberger explains that humanism is unique in that “the individual has the capacity to define the cultural experience rather than the culture defining what is pertinent or useful to that individual” (p. 181). Therefore, if the counseling culture has misused humanistic principles inherent in the profession, adopting a more scientific ideology, then the only way these cultural misusages can be deterred is through empowering the individual in the culture to confront the culture. Otherwise, the risk is in limiting human capacity and removing the individual human from his or her culture, which seems to go against humanistic philosophy.

Finally, Hansen offers his closing thoughts, “Extending the Humanistic Vision: Closing Thoughts,” not as a counterpoint to Lemberger, but to illustrate his appreciation for having the opportunity to participate in this civil debate with all contributors involved. Hansen reiterates his conceptual experiment of proposing a shift in professional culture, transforming counseling into a humanities profession, as the values system of science seems to have overtaken the professional lives of counselors.

This is not only an intelligent and thoughtful discussion; it is also a relevant and timely series about the philosophical nature of the counseling profession. The profession inevitably progress in a direction, regardless if professionals are aware of the direction or not. This series illustrates the importance of becoming aware of the cultural progression the counseling profession is experiencing, by bringing about civil discourse regarding it. The articles are strongly encouraged for anyone with even a remote interest in the counseling profession.

References


Reviewed by Karin K. Hansing, Auburn University

In many theoretical models of counseling the relationship is a vital key for success. Teri Pichot shares how the relationship between a client and a trained therapy dog can make Solution-Focused Brief Therapy even more successful. This book does an excellent job of informing the reader that it takes a trained therapist and a trained animal to do this work. The early chapters cover the basics of Animal Assisted Activities / Therapy (AAA/T) as well as refresher on what Solution Focused Therapy entails.

Animals as part of the therapeutic relationship are becoming more prevalent. It is important for counselors to be aware of the culture of the animal, to be able to read the animal’s cues as well as to know how to choose a dog appropriate for Animal Assisted Activities / Therapy (AAA/T). These topics are discussed in Chapter 3: What Every Therapist Needs to Know about Dogs Before Partnering with One in AAA/T (Pichot, 2011). Solution Focused Therapy sessions focus on what the client wants to accomplish in therapy. This is done by utilizing specific strategies such as, The Miracle Question, Scaling Questions, Coping Questions and Problem Free Talk. The therapy dog also becomes an intervention tool and should be included in the treatment plan. Solution-Focused Therapy is used with all age groups and cultural considerations are included in chapter 7. The settings vary as well from in-patient, out-patient, and substance abuse treatment facilities. The final chapter of this book touches on the important topics how using the dog for therapy affects the handler, the dog and other relationships within the community.

This book has been used as part of graduate level curriculum to provide students a unique application component to Brief-Therapy. The organizational and state by state resources in the back of the text allow readers to continue learning even after they have finished reading the book. I enjoyed reading this theory
Child Parent Relationship
Karin Hansing, Auburn University

The relationship between a parent and child is a common one witnessed around the world. In 2011 47.5% of married couples both had jobs according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics ("Employment Characteristics of Families Summary," n.d.). This practice outside of the home can have both positive and negative effects on the relationships with the children at home. Gary Landreth states “Parents at all economic levels in our society are under tremendous stress from economic and societal demands and from time commitments required to maintain their standards of living and lifestyles” (Landreth, 2002). A parent’s physical and emotional relationship with children is challenged when increased levels of stress are present. The ability to respond to a child’s emotional needs is a skill that many parents struggle with. This struggle can have long term effects on the child’s mental health and that is why “if we are to significantly impact in positive ways the mental health of our future adults population, greater effort must be made to substantially improve the mental health of all children, not just those who obviously are in need of professional help” (Landreth, 2002). The ability for a parent to become the therapeutic agent in children’s lives seems to be most effective and Filial Therapy takes on that task.

Filial therapy is a:

“unique approach used by professionals trained in play therapy to train parents to be therapeutic agents with their own children...parents are taught basic child-centered play therapy principles and skills...parents learn to create nonjudgmental, understanding, and accepting environment that embraces the parent-child relationship thus facilitating growth and change for both child and parent.” (Landreth, 2002)

Children communicate through play (Axline, 1969; Landreth, 2002). By teaching parents the language of play, and how to use play therapeutically, the communication gap between parent and child can be closed (Guerney, Guerney, & Andronico, 1999; Landreth, 2002). According to Child Centered Play Therapy parents are taught to focus on the person (child) rather than problem, the present rather than past, feelings rather than thoughts or acts, understanding rather than explaining, accepting rather than correcting, the child’s direction rather than parent’s instruction and the child’s wisdom rather than parent’s. This is frequently done through a 10 session methodology called Child Parent Relationship Therapy (CPRT). Filial Therapy / CPRT is empirically based and well researched with diverse populations and in different settings. The sessions focus on the relationship with the understanding that the parent has more emotional significance to the child then a therapist. CPRT is used to treat a wide range of social, emotional and behavioral difficulties. The experientially based training sessions are typically held with 6-8 parents. The facilitator demonstrates and role plays skills with the parents. Parents then practice the skills at home during their weekly videotaped play session with their child. Supervision of the weekly tapes allows immediate feedback and encouragement for the parents.

Through this therapeutic medium the relationship between a child and parent is supported and improved. In a brief amount of time there is potential for beneficial changes to be made.

References:
Humanistic Perspectives

Humanistic Perspective
André Felton

In 2011 I was providing Intensive In-home counseling services to an 11 year old boy, his his mother, and his maternal grandmother. The goal of our time together was to re-establish the relationship between the boy and his mother as the boy was primarily raised by his grandmother. It became clear to me that each person had a different perspective on how they saw themselves in the family. With the use of play-doh I asked each family member to portray how they saw themselves and the other family members. I then asked each person to explain their creation and have the others simply listen. My goal for this exercise was to help each individual explore their views of themselves and how the family members saw one another. In addition it would allow for open communication and self actualization. Each family member shared and a sense of connectedness appeared to occur within the family. Witnessing such a moving experience helped me recognize how significant counseling is and the impressions it leaves on others.

The Choice for Self-Awareness
Sarah Kitchens

We are faced with choices every day, it starts early in the day. When the alarm goes off in the morning, we have a choice. Do we turn it off and get out of bed or do we hit the snooze button and lay there just a few more minutes? We have a choice each day of what clothes we wear, what we eat, and the list goes on. Often the choices we make come easy. Typically it’s a yes or no, this or that type of choice, the type of choice that doesn’t rock your world. The type of choice you don’t have to use much brain matter to solve. And then we have the choices that impact us as a person, they help develop who we are, they change us.

The choice to become increasingly more self-aware is an extremely important choice we can make as a counselor. Understanding how we make choices, why we make choices, and the actual choices we make are extremely important in the development of self-awareness and in the counseling process. As counselors, we often talk to our clients about the importance of self-awareness. We want to promote self-awareness in others, we encourage personal growth, yet we often forget about the importance of remaining self-aware. Often we are so wrapped up in everything we have going on and in helping others, we forget to examine our own lives. Make a choice today to examine yourself and encourage personal growth in your own life. It will impact you and help you remain the most effective counselor; after all, that is our goal.

Career Support Group: A Counseling Intervention Designed Specifically for the Community Corrections Population
Jason O. Perry

Jason Perry is employed with the State of North Carolina, Department of Public Safety, Division of Adult Correction.

Finding a job is not easy, and for individuals who are on probation or parole a criminal past creates additional obstacles in addition to those which exist due to low employment rates and an unstable job market. These individuals are typically ordered by the courts to either be employed or seek employment, yet career resources are often sparse. Additionally, many of these individuals have never completed an application or experienced a structured employment interview. Career Support Group is an open-ended, self-help group for individuals who are on probation or parole and are unemployed. It includes psychoeducational and counseling group elements, which focus on development and personal growth. The rationale for conducting this type of group is as follows: 1. A criminal record can be an obstacle for an individual who is seeking employment, 2. Individuals who are on probation, parole, or post-release supervision are often required to actively seek employment, and 3. Individuals who are on probation or parole often lack adequate interviewing, resume, and job-seeking skills. Career Support Group is a concept which was developed in order to meet such needs and to empower individuals while helping them to both identify and maximize their strengths.
Authentic Relationship
Robert Dearborn
New Mexico State University

If I was pressed to articulate the heart of personal transformation in a few words, I might say something like this: It is the movement that springs from authentic relationship. Fleshing out that statement from a holistic, humanistic perspective, I could add that making an authentic connection inspires movement toward progressively deeper and expanded levels of awareness and expression on multiple levels. On the level of the body we can experience the movement from dulled to refined sensitivity. From a psychological perspective we see the movement from dis-ease to growth and self-actualization. In terms of ecology we’re talking about the movement from crisis to balance. Spiritual seekers might call it the movement from suffering to inner harmony and peace. No matter the context, the same general principles apply, namely that the quality of relationship is authentic and transformative to the degree that it 1) fosters and/or supports the refinement of an individual’s sensitivity and awareness, and 2) provides a context in which a person is encouraged to freely act and express from that refined, embodied awareness. In sum, personal transformation is experienced in the discovery and expression of one’s most genuine intentions in a particular context of relationship.

Counseling in the Dark
April Mack
University of Wyoming

While working as a school counselor, there were times that I felt like I was counseling in the dark. The first day on the job I was thrown into the trenches with little direction and high expectations. I may not have thought intentionally about what my counseling theory was, I simply counseled. I found myself listening to angry parents who just needed to be heard, crying with students in their loss, understanding that while there were times to advocate for the student that it was much more effective to assist them in advocating for themselves, and assisting students in reaching for their dreams. I suppose the truth was that in the dark I let my heart lead the way.

As a doctoral student, I find myself trying to truly define my counseling theory. I reflect back on the ways in which I worked with people and I see unconditional positive regard, empathy, authenticity, and caring for the client. I realize that my humanistic counseling theory has been present all along. It is an inherent piece of who I am as a person. Suddenly, the room fills with light, and I am no longer counseling in the dark.

My Journey to Becoming a Well Rounded Counselor
Nicole Griffith
Oakland University

As a second year counseling student, I am gaining a sense of what developments I need to make as a person to be a successful counselor. I believe a significant aspect of being a counselor is making an effort to understand and accept human differences so that I may see each client for who they are. In some instances, counselors may be the only person in their client’s life that is willing to put forth the effort in understanding them and accepting their differences. I believe acceptance is an important aspect of the counseling practice. A counselor’s acceptance has great potential to empower a client and give them a sense of faith and creates a “come as you are” environment to foster client growth and change. In order to do this effectively as a future counselor, I developed a personal motto to vow to take the time to understand how I engage with my belief system and my perceptions. This has launched me on a journey that goes beyond the education I am receiving, and I have come to understand how important it is to acknowledge my biases and judgments and in doing so, have come to a new understanding of the person I am, and the counselor I aspire to be.

Graduate Student Perspectives

Counseling in the Dark
April Mack
University of Wyoming

While working as a school counselor, there were times that I felt like I was counseling in the dark. The first day on the job I was thrown into the trenches with little direction and high expectations. I may not have thought intentionally about what my counseling theory was, I simply counseled. I found myself listening to angry parents who just needed to be heard, crying with students in their loss, understanding that while there were times to advocate for the student that it was much more effective to assist them in advocating for themselves, and assisting students in reaching for their dreams. I suppose the truth was that in the dark I let my heart lead the way.

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People have been doing a lot to help the citizens of Newtown, Connecticut in the wake of the December tragedy. As it turns out, so have animals. The American Counseling Association’s e-mail newsletter recently included a link to a Chicago Tribune article describing the work of “comfort dogs” with Newtown residents. In the article, Tim Hetzner, the president of the charity employing the dogs, Lutheran Church Charities, states, “Dogs are non-judgmental. They are accepting of anyone. It creates the atmosphere for people to share” (Nix, 2012). Regarding animal-assisted therapy, Beck and Fine assert “Pet owners commonly view their relationships with animals in humanistic terms” (2010, p. 9). It seems that we have an inclination to ascribe human qualities to animals and interact with them correspondingly. Furthermore, therapy animals naturally embody the humanistic characteristics of empathy, congruence, and unconditional positive regard. Humanistic theories and corresponding counseling approaches emphasize the phenomenological experience of life. Therapeutic human-animal interactions are fundamentally humanistic and thus should be included in the category of humanistic therapies. Hopefully future humanistic endeavors will continue to include the non-human companions with whom we share this world.

References


Association for Humanistic Counseling
Meeting Schedule for ACA Conference,
Cincinnati, Ohio, March 20th – 23rd

AHC Board Meeting, Hyatt, Buckeye A, Wed. March 20th, 2:00 – 5:00 pm

AHC Board Meeting, Hyatt, Bluegrass B, Thurs, March 21st, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

AHC Editorial Board Mtg., Hyatt, Hoosier B, Thurs, March 21st, 2:00 – 4:00 pm

Joint Reception, AHC, AACE, AADA, ASERVIC, IAOOC, Hilton, Rockwood, Friday, March 22nd 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Town Hall Meeting, Hyatt, Bluegrass A, Saturday, March 23rd, 11 am – 12:30 pm

Please note: All meeting rooms are subject to change. Check the conference guide and addendum for final meeting room assignments.
**AHC Wellness Center**

**Empty Plate Project**

**Information**

**POWER PACK: CINCINNATI EMPTY PLATE PROJECT SETS GOAL!**

Seventy-four percent of all the school children in the Cincinnati school system are on free lunch. But what happens to these children over the weekend? We know that adequate food is necessary for concentration, completing homework, and mental and physical health.

The Freestore Food Bank of Cincinnati has a wide variety of activities and programs to feed the hungry. The Association of Humanistic Counseling's Empty Plate Project has chosen one of the many. The chosen area provides food packages called Power Packs for children to take home on the weekend. Volunteers prepare nutritious food, bag it, and distribute it on Friday afternoon to each child who is part of the program. The program was named Power Pack because one student stated that the food gave him power.

More than 3,800 Power Packs are sent home every Friday afternoon at a cost of approximately $6,400 per school per year.

The goal of the Empty Plate this year is to attempt to fund raise $6,000 during the convention to underwrite one school. Can we do it? AHC has been sponsoring this activity for the past 22 years raising close to $100,000. We are going to try our best with the help and generosity of convention leaders and conference participants to reach our goal.

If you are not attending the convention but would like to donate to this project, you can send a check made out to the Freestore Food Bank to Dr. Sonya Vassos, Empty Plate Chair, at Two Fifth Avenue, PHN, New York, New York 10011

**AHC Wellness Center**

Four wellness programs will be presented at the Cincinnati convention. The AHC wellness initiative was founded by Dr. Sonya Vassos 14 years ago to address the specific stresses of counselors who are attending the ACA convention. Programs are not academic in nature but experiential.

What is wellness? According to an international research firm named SRI, wellness is a proactive and holistic approach meant to address the root causes of our personal and societal ills. And, Dr. Halbert Dunn, describes it as a concept that includes self-knowledge, creative expression and good physical and mental health.

The above definition is the structure of the AHC Wellness Center. Programs are focused on self knowledge, self examination, and stress reduction. Therefore, meditation, yoga, proven areas that promote self knowledge and mental and physical health are generally included in the Wellness Center program as well as additional presentations that are experiential in nature. For example, a third program of the four for the ACA convention is entitled, Regret and Forgiveness.

The Wellness Center is always presented on the second day of the annual ACA convention. Everyone is welcome.
Announcing the AHC 2013 National Conference!

Friday June 7, 2013 and Saturday June 8, 2013

New York Institute of Technology—Manhattan campus:
West 60th and 61st Streets on Broadway – Manhattan - New York, New York 10023

“Humanism in the Counseling Profession”

The conference will consist of four 4-hour long workshops on Friday from 1:00pm to 5:00pm. Saturday will consist of 1 hour long content sessions held from 9:00am to 5:00pm.

Call for Proposals!

Deadline to submit a proposal: February 28, 2013

The conference committee is seeking possible programs to fit into the following tracks for Saturday:

◊ Graduate Student/Counseling Career
◊ School Counseling
◊ Clinical Mental Health
◊ Counselor Education and Supervision

Please note that all sessions should emphasize Humanism!

To submit a Presentation Proposal for the AHC 2013 National Conference please click HERE.

Notification of Accepted Proposals: March 15, 2013

Registration Information

Click here to obtain the registration form
One day registration available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Early Bird by April 15, 2013</th>
<th>Advanced by June 6, 2013</th>
<th>On Site June 7 &amp; 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHC Members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>$139</td>
<td>$159</td>
<td>$179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>$59</td>
<td>$79</td>
<td>$99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>$189</td>
<td>$219</td>
<td>$239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>$109</td>
<td>$129</td>
<td>$149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hotel Information

Additional hotel information available on AHC website here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotel &amp; Phone #</th>
<th>Cost (per night)</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Address &amp; Phone Number</th>
<th>Discount Info/ Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hudson Hotel</td>
<td>$279 and up</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hudsonhotel.com">http://www.hudsonhotel.com</a></td>
<td>356 W 58th St, New York, NY 10019</td>
<td>Discount if paid in advance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Side YMCA</td>
<td>$220 for 2</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ymcanyc.org/westside/quest-rooms/">http://www.ymcanyc.org/westside/quest-rooms/</a></td>
<td>5 W 67th St, New York, NY 10023</td>
<td>Hostel accommodations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Columbus</td>
<td>$299 and up</td>
<td><a href="http://www.thompsonhotels.com/hotels/nyc/6columbus">http://www.thompsonhotels.com/hotels/nyc/6columbus</a></td>
<td>6 Columbus Circle, New York, NY 10019</td>
<td>10% discount on 3 night stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Inn</td>
<td>$250 regular</td>
<td><a href="http://www.holidayinn.com/hotels/cc/en/new-york-city/ncup/hotelDetail/destinationId/5%2FWest%2F60thStreet%2FC-NV6rooms%2F">http://www.holidayinn.com/hotels/cc/en/new-york-city/ncup/hotelDetail/destinationId/5%2FWest%2F60thStreet%2FC-NV6rooms%2F</a> Adults%2BC-children%2BratePreference%2BCBA%2BCanAll</td>
<td>440 W 57th St, New York, NY 10019</td>
<td>Discount if paid in advance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Econo Lodge</td>
<td>$94</td>
<td><a href="http://www.leohousenyc.com/">http://www.leohousenyc.com/</a></td>
<td>332 W 47th St, New York, NY 10036</td>
<td>Discount if paid in advance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Message Board

Want to Assist with the FIRST AHC National Conference?
Do you have a desire to serve AHC with planning, organizing or on-site activities?
Contact Michelle Perepiczka at: mperepiczka@gmail.com

Get Connected!
AHC is on the web. See us at http://afhc.camp9.org
AHC is also on Facebook!
AHC is also on Twitter!

Research Interests
Want to connect with other AHC members about research interests or request assistance with your research?
Are you a student or new professional that would like to connect with other AHC members that have the same research interest?
Contact us at: humanisticcounseling@gmail.com

AHC Mentorship & Membership
Are you interested in mentoring a new member of AHC?
Are you a new member of AHC that would like a mentor?
Contact us at humanisticcounseling@gmail.com

Have a Great Idea?
Do you have a great idea for our bulletin board, website, or organization?
Contact us at humanisticcounseling@gmail.com

Local & State AHC Connections
Want to connect with other AHC members?
Want to connect with existing local or state AHC organizations?
Want to start a local or state AHC organization?
Do you have news from your local or state AHC organization?
Contact us at: humanisticcounseling@gmail.com

AHC Student Member Development
To assist AHC students with their academic/professional development members of the AHC staff are now offering to review papers, resumes and cover letters.
If you are interested in submitting a paper, resume or cover letter for feedback please send it to the following email address: humanisticcounseling@gmail.com

“The Heart and Conscience of the Counseling Profession”
Call For Submissions

Humanistic Perspectives – we are interested in hearing from clinicians, researchers, program developers, and educators who use humanism in their professional practices. Submissions may include short humanistic research perspectives, classroom approaches, counseling techniques, et cetera (please do not exceed 200 words).

Graduate Student Perspectives – in this section, we want to hear from the graduate students with a focus on humanistic counseling. Submissions may include essays on humanistic counseling approaches, classroom experiences, and outreach initiatives (please do not exceed 200 words).

Messages from the Heart – please send your essays, poems, artwork, et cetera to be included in this section (please do not exceed 100 words).

All submissions should be sent to Co-Editors, Elizabeth Hancock & Todd Prater at eah0038@auburn.edu
**AHC Information**

**Interested in Joining AHC?**

As an AHC member, you will receive:

**The Journal of Humanistic Counseling:** This fine journal has been a mainstay in counseling literature. Articles cover a wide range of topics related to mission and purpose of AHC and its research mission.

**InfoChange:** This is the official newsletter for AHC. It contains the latest information on AHC activities, discussion of issues important to AHC members, and other items of interest.

**Voting Privileges and Access to Members Only Activities:** The Annual membership meeting is held each year at the ACA Conference. As a member, you are invited to join in the business activities of the organization and have your opinions and ideas heard.

**Access to Discussion Group and Member Listserv:** As a member, you will have access to these at reduced or no cost.

To join please print the membership form and select AHC as your division. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader.

**Who Are We?**

AHC encourages the development of the whole person: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects; promotes the dignity and worth of the individual within the context of community and culture; recognizes and cherishes diversity in an increasingly multicultural society; promotes advocacy within our profession, our home, and world communities; identifies cutting edge issues for counseling and human development professionals; and encourages dialogue and promotes solutions.

**What is AHC?**

**The Heart and Conscience of the Counseling Profession**

AHC has a proud history as one of the original divisions of ACA which was then APGA. Over the years, AHC earned the nickname "the Conscience of the Association" because of the mission to address the very real concerns of human beings in arenas ranging from professional and career to personal growth and wellness.