CREATIVE ARTS THERAPY CONFERENCE
Therapists’ Self-Disclosure – Finding the Balance

Program Agenda:

8:30-9 a.m.  Registration and Coffee
  Multipurpose Room, Sondra and David S. Mack Student Center, North Campus

9-9:15 a.m.  Welcome
  Student Center Theater, Sondra and David S. Mack Student Center, North Campus
  Introductory Remarks: Dr. Joan Bloomgarden, Creative Arts Therapy Program Director, School of Education and Allied Human Services, Hofstra University

9:15-10:30 a.m.  Keynote Address:
  Steven Kuchuck, LCSW, NCPsyA, LP
  Therapist Self-Disclosure – Current Trends
  To launch this current and controversial topic of self-disclosure, psychoanalyst Steven Kuchuck will provide a definition and historical overview of one of the most challenging topics within the field of creative arts and talk therapies. Freud first cautioned the therapist against revealing anything of a personal nature, but today, rather than an automatic “forbidding” of self-disclosure, we are faced with the much more complex truth that sharing details about ourselves, deliberately or inadvertently, can either deepen and further the work or impede a patient’s progress. Patients who request or even demand to know things about us are not always ready for, interested in or helped by having these questions answered, and patients who seem to not want to know about us might need to be helped to wonder more. Mr. Kuchuck will discuss ways to differentiate these states and address related concepts of therapist privacy, vulnerability, shame and pride.

10:45 a.m.- Noon  Morning Workshops

Noon-1 p.m.  Lunch – Multi-Purpose Room

1:15-2:30 p.m.  Keynote Address:
  Janos Marton, M.F.A., Ph.D.
  From Art Therapy to Art: Issues of Self-Disclosure
  Dr. Janos Marton has been director of The Living Museum on the grounds of Creedmore Hospital in Queens for more than 20 years. He was instrumental in converting a two-story cafeteria into an art space that more than 800 mentally ill people have used as their creative space. Dr. Marton has been involved with the production of art by psychiatric patients, not as art therapy, but as an outlet where people come together to celebrate art. At the museum, “There is freedom from convention. Everyone fits in. Everyone has something to say. And personal expression helps play a positive role in one’s self-esteem and recovery.” Client art work has been shown at SoHo galleries, and is currently traveling in an exhibit to various art galleries around the county.

Dr. Marton’s HBO film, The Living Museum, which will be shown after his address, features Dr. Marton and his patients in the museum talking about their lives and their art.

2:45-4 p.m.  Afternoon Workshops or Screening of The Living Museum
Ms. Loumeau-May's work was featured on ABC's Primetime Thursday, as a bereavement counselor for children who have suffered the loss of a loved one in their community. In this workshop participants explore the boundaries of the therapeutic arena. The art therapist's self-disclosure will be considered as enhancing of or disturbing to the client's therapeutic progress. We will question the nature of self-disclosure, in the context of the conference, the development of safe spaces, containing versus interconnectedness, empathy versus compassion, and the therapist's modeling of self-development. Through mental imaging and creative expression, participants will assess their personal style, decision-making process, and intuitive choice for self-disclosure as well as the risks, values and ethical considerations in their unique professional settings.

Historically, women have come together and created social groups. During these meetings women begin to trust and disclose significant issues while engaging in a creative process. This workshop will engage participants in the art of knitting, doll making, collage layering (a special process) and scissoring. Therapists are encouraged to (re)learn techniques and consider formation of their own therapist circles where self-disclosure could naturally happen among peers.

Jung described psychotherapy as a deep exchange between client and therapist. Noting that the therapist, "is effective only when affected," he added, "Only the wounded (physician) heals." It is common for those who choose the path of healer to have found this calling through suffering and personal transformation. In hospice and bereavement work, therapists' deepest psychic wounds of loss can be reactivated. Bereavement work challenges art therapists to be objective and intimate at the same time. They must maintain boundaries and yet, to be honestly transparent, always focusing on the needs of those in their care. They receive their clients' pain, and respond with their own humanity and skill. In this workshop, participants creatively explore their own "wounded healers." They also discuss self-disclosure as enhancement or weighing, and how it can interrupt the clients' process. (a.m. & p.m.)

Recently, she has been working with mentally ill hospice patients. Currently Nicole is interested in translating art therapy into Indian culture in a creative and expressive arts therapy program. She has worked with a variety of populations in community settings and specializes in working with children and their families. Dorit is a student at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology and is working on her doctoral dissertation, which focuses on mental imaging as a vehicle for transpersonal development.

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