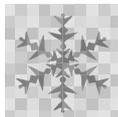


CONNECTING

Healthy Information from the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center  November/December 2006

Spiritual Gifts from Clients

Musings/Nattering on spiritual gifts to the therapist during therapy



Above all, the relationship between therapist and client exists to serve the needs of the client. Any spiritual gift the therapist receives comes unbidden, unexpected, and sometimes, not fully recognized.

Experiencing the relationship in this way is itself a gift.

To the client: I am grateful you had the courage to risk coming to this place—the office of a stranger—at a time when you may feel lost, vulnerable and hopeless.

Your courage inspires me.

As we gradually build our relationship, we develop a partnership: joint explorers in an unknown land, developing understandings together that neither of us could develop alone.

Your ability to trust and grow inspires me.

When we are confounded and stuck, we can trust in the relationship and sometimes find our way through to a more comforting and hopeful place.

Your perseverance inspires me.

Sometimes I have a fixed idea of what you need and you discover a way totally your own, beyond what I could imagine.

Your creativity inspires me.

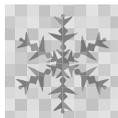
Perhaps, at first, I find it hard to be comfortable with you or your concerns. This leads me to look within, to lift to my awareness personal experiences or feelings that I need to encounter to be more free in meeting you with compassion.

Your unique humanity inspires me.

Sometimes our work ends before I am ready, and sometimes we jointly feel we have arrived at the goal.

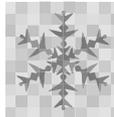
I appreciate the gift of practicing letting go, of celebrating that the achievements you made in therapy are from you and belong to you. You carry them with you to serve you in the future.

~ Richard Douglass, M.S.W., L.I.S.W.



It is nothing less than an honor to be present when a client, a couple, or a family are trying to sort through their own personal issues in my presence. I truly consider it a gift for them to entrust me with their life stories and struggles, and ultimately, to be a witness in their healing. The privilege of being there to hear and accept their realities is at times difficult, but to watch them emerge on the other side as a healing, growing person is a spiritual gift for which I am most grateful.

~ Jeanne Weakland, M.A., L.M.H.C.



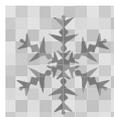
I have received numerous spiritual gifts from clients. Overall, I find a great purpose and meaning in my life through my work with them. Through my connection with my clients, I receive small confirmations of the existence of a great goodness and love. My clients remind me, through the work I do with them, of all I need to work on and do for myself.

Several years ago, I was given the gift of grace for two days after the death of a client with whom I had been working closely. During that brief period of reflection and grief, I became aware of how my own personal mistakes and shortcomings had led me to a life of greater meaning. I realized I was where I was supposed to be and without those parts of my life, I might have chosen a different path.

I have a particular special memory of a client I worked with several years ago. He kept a collection of decorative apples as a reminder of health. When he was close to death, he told me he wanted me to have one of those apples after he died, a particular glass one. Since it appeared not to be worth a great amount of money, the agency where I worked allowed me to accept the gift. After he died, his family confirmed that he had wanted me to have this apple, so I went by to pick it up. His family gave me a different apple than the one he had described to me. I didn't want to intrude on the family's grieving, so I took it, thanked them, and said nothing.

A few months later, I decided to leave that job and someone with whom I had worked gave me a going-away gift. It was an apple, just like the apple the client had wanted me to have. The remarkable part was, my colleague knew nothing of the story of the apple, but had bought it because our bond had been through that particular client. No matter their form, each kind of spiritual gift from my clients provides me with faith and hope in a greater good.

~ Angela Clark, M.A., L.M.H.C.



I think the most significant spiritual gift I receive from my clients is courage. It has often been noted that courage is not the absence of fear, but rather courage is going forward in the presence of fear.

Coming for therapy is a significant act of courage. It is very difficult to brave the social stigma of being in therapy. Even after that initial hurdle is overcome, the work of therapy, sharing one's hidden pain with a stranger, requires more courage still. Particularly for individuals who have suffered harm at the hands of another, it takes a great deal of courage to undertake the ongoing

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process of trusting a therapist and being willing to enter into the pain and fear in order to come out on the other side. It requires courage from the therapist to trust that there is another side for the client to reach, and to help contain the intensity of their pain and fear as we make the journey together. More than that, though, I think that being able to witness clients doing this day after day in my office provides me with a high standard to aspire to myself. I see their example, their willingness to trust me and to keep going, and I remember to trust, to keep the faith, and to find whatever is necessary to walk alongside them for as long as it takes.

~ Lisa Streyffeler, Ph.D.

New Staff at the Center Dee Paddock, M.A., M.T.S.



We are very pleased to be welcoming **Dee Paddock** to the Center staff. Dee is a mental health counselor and a spiritual director. She holds a master's degree in counseling psychology from the University of Colorado, a master's degree in theological studies from

The Iliff School of Theology, and clinical training from the C.G. Jung Institute of Colorado. She provides counseling and spiritual direction to individuals, couples, and families. Dee has special interests in Jungian psychotherapy, spiritual growth and development, infertility, adoption, proactive parenting, midlife transitions, and healing from trauma. Dee will be seeing clients in a private office at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Call the Center to schedule an appointment with Dee (515) 274-4006.

The IRA Charitable Rollover Provision

For the tax year 2006 and again in 2007, the new IRA Charitable Rollover provision allows taxpayers to donate up to \$100,000 annually from their IRAs **tax free** to a charitable cause, such as the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center. Donors do not get a tax deduction for the gift, but the money is excluded from taxable income when computing taxes, so the tax benefit can still be significant to the donor.

Here are some other requirements for these "qualified charitable distributions:"

- IRA holder must be age 70½ or older.
- Distributions must be made directly to public charities, not to donor-advised funds or support organizations.
- Distributions may only be made from traditional IRAs and Roth IRAs.

Since people older than 70½ are required to take minimum distributions from their IRAs, they could rollover their minimum distribution without having to count it as income and pay taxes on it. If they have excess funds in their IRAs that they know they will not need in retirement, this is an excellent opportunity to be generous and forgo the taxes on distributions up to \$100,000 each year. Do check with your tax advisor and then think about a charitable gift to the Center at the holidays. Thank you.

C.O.O.L. Corner Children Overcoming the Obstacles of Life

Spiritual Gifts from Children



A young man with autism came into my office and I told him my dog had died after being hit by a car. This young man didn't say much, just mumbled a condolence and looked down at the floor. We proceeded to discuss some really positive steps toward independent living that he was taking and the worries that accompany those steps. We wrapped up our session and said goodbye. As I opened the door to the waiting room and was saying goodbye to his mother, this young man looked at me and said, "I'm sorry about your dog." He put his arms around me and gave me a hug.

~ Grace Percival, M.A.



My C.O.O.L. colleagues and I meet twice a month to provide each other with support and dialogue about difficult cases. I came to one such meeting frantic with worry about two children whose mother had died suddenly. I felt so helpless and hopeless. I cried. My colleagues held my tears and absorbed my fears. They are always here for me.

~ Grace Percival, M.A.



When I think of spiritual gifts I have received from clients, two things come to mind. One is the privilege and honor I feel when children, teens, and their families allow me to witness their stories. The simple act of sharing and witnessing stories is a sacred thing that is often overlooked in this modern, technological age. The other gift I receive is being shown again and again in many different ways how resilient children and teens can be in the face of overwhelming and terrible things in their lives. Even when they may be struggling greatly with some serious problems and burdens, they are managing to survive and adapt. When they may have lost sight of their inner strength and resilience, it is rewarding when I can help them find these qualities again and incorporate them into the next chapters of their personal stories.

~ Douglas R. Aupperle, Ph.D.



The most uplifting spiritual gift that I receive from my work with children is their resiliency. In working with children who have been severely abused, traumatized, and struggling with difficult issues, I am awed on a daily basis by the strength that they are able to find within themselves to keep progressing and moving forward. I believe that I am honored to be a part of that journey with them, aiding them to find their wholeness.

~ Kelli Hill Hunt, Ph.D.



MANifest: A Gathering of Men

MANifest is a program for men, facilitated by male counselors, built around weekend retreats and Saturday workshops.

MANifest is for men of all ages and from every walk of life.
Lowell Houts, D.Min., and Mike Sears, Ed.D., facilitate.

MANifest workshops

Fee: \$50 for each workshop, includes lunch. MANifest workshops are held at Queen's Point, 2793 St. Charles Road (stone house 6 miles west of St. Charles). Please call the Center to pre-register (515) 274-4006.

Men and Their Fathers **Saturday, November 11, 2006** **9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Whether a man did or did not have a relationship with his father is a powerful influence on the developing male personality. Men continue to deal with their dad's physical and emotional presence or absence within their relationships throughout their adult lives. When sons grow up with little or no expression of a father's affirmation and blessing, they often carry a sense of failure, or shame, or anger that seems unrelated to life events. "Men and Their Fathers" workshop will provide participants the opportunity to explore these issues within their particular growing-up situations.

Men and Sex **Saturday, January 13, 2007** **9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Henry David Thoreau once said, "I lose my respect for the man who will make a coarse jest about sex, but when asked to speak seriously on the subject remains silent." Gym classes, locker rooms, and maybe an extremely awkward "birds and the bees" talk with a parent are the sum of most male experience with sexual discourse growing up. No wonder most men find it very difficult to know where to begin to have a serious discussion about sex. The workshop facilitators observe that the more men can have serious discussions, the more confidence they'll feel in their sexuality. "Men and Sex" workshop will provide an opportunity for men to explore the sexual~emotional connection and enhance their understanding of themselves as sexual human beings.

Working with Dissociative Processes in Psychotherapy



Dates: January 5 - March 29, 2007

Time: Fridays, 8:15 – 9:45 a.m.

Location: Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center

Cost: \$200 plus textbook(s) if desired

Instructor: J. Jeffrey Means, Ph.D.

Registration Deadline: December 22, 2006

CEUs: This course provides 15.00 hours towards the continuing education requirements of the Iowa Board of Social Work Examiners and the Iowa Board of Behavioral Science Examiners.

This seminar will begin with a brief overview of the spectrum of dissociation. The focus will be on issues common in the psychotherapy process with persons suffering from dissociative disorders including: how dissociation functions as an effective defense for the preservation of the self; signs and symptoms of dissociative disorders; switching as a process of compartmentalization and affect regulation; the use of art work and writing in therapy; grounding; management of transference and countertransference dynamics; working with parts; and issues of self-harm and re-enactment. Multimedia resources will be used in addition to a broad range of clinical material. Participants will be encouraged to bring examples from their own clinical settings for class discussion.

THE INSTRUCTOR - J. Jeffrey Means, Ph.D.

J. Jeffrey Means, Ph.D., is Director of Professional Education at Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center and Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Behavioral Medicine at Des Moines University. He is a licensed clinical psychologist, pastoral counselor, and marriage and family therapist. In addition to his clinical practice at the Center, Dr. Means has interests in teaching, writing, supervision, professional formation, and clinical case consultation. He is the author of *Trauma & Evil: Healing the Wounded Soul*, published by Fortress Press.

SAVE THIS DATE!

Annual Meeting ~

35th Anniversary Celebration

Thursday, February 22, 2007, 6:30 p.m.

Doug Ronsheim, D.Min., Executive Director,
American Association of Pastoral Counselors
Guest of Honor and Speaker

Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center Foundation

Please consider a bequest to the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center Foundation when writing or reviewing your will. Help secure the Center's commitment to *future* generations. Together, we are sure to make a difference in the lives that follow ours.

Growth through Connection

A Group Therapy Experience



Debbie Reed, Ed.D.



Peter Brantner, M.Div.

Debbie Reed, Ed.D., and Peter Brantner, M.Div., Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center therapists, will co-lead a group counseling experience for people who want to grow in their ability to openly and honestly communicate their feelings and enhance their connectedness with others. The primary purpose of the group is the enhancement of each member's capacity for positive, respectful relationships with himself/herself and with others. The group will meet weekly for 90 minutes on Thursdays from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m., over a 16-week period, beginning February 1, 2007. The cost per session is \$40 (\$640 total). The group will meet at 2929 Westown Parkway, Suite 110, West Des Moines. Each prospective group member will be screened prior to acceptance into the group. For enrollment and/or further information, please call the Center, (515) 274-4006.

Debbie Reed, Ed.D., earned her doctoral degree in counseling education from Drake University. She is a licensed mental health counselor and has extensive prior group counseling experience.

Peter Brantner, M.Div., is a pastoral counselor. He earned his M.Div. degree from St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, MO. He is currently enrolled in the Masters of Community Counseling Program at Drake University.

Holiday Gifting

- ♥ Making a gift to the Center puts care and compassion at the core of your holiday giving.
- ♥ A holiday gift with real thoughtfulness would be to remember or honor those on your gift list through a tribute gift to the Center. Making such a gift extends your care and esteem far deeper than material objects.

*“As the purse is emptied,
the heart is filled.”*
~Victor Hugo (1802-1885)
- ♥ The holidays are times when memories of the departed come to heart. A memorial gift would give special honor to those people who are no longer with us and, at the same time, bring hope to someone who is struggling in life on limited resources.
- ♥ Any gift to the Center – memorial, tribute, or outright contribution – would benefit those less fortunate who may be having a difficult time emotionally at the holidays.
- ♥ Call Kathleen Murrin at the Center to help with gifting at the holidays (515) 274-4006.
- ♥ Are you looking for a unique gift with purpose and meaning for some special person(s) in your life? Consider the gift of relaxation, peace, and health promotion through Healing Touch. Gift certificates are available through the Center. Contact Kathy Reardon, R.N., M.S., Certified Healing Touch Practitioner, at the Center (515) 274-4006.

CONNECTING

is a publication of the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center, an independent, interfaith, not-for-profit organization. For nearly 35 years, the Center has been providing counseling and educational services to adults, families, adolescents, and children for the purpose of enhancing emotional, spiritual, and relationship health. The Center has satellite offices in Ankeny, Lamoni, Lenox, Leon, Mt. Ayr and Osceola.
Editor: Kathleen Murrin

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