

Empowering relationships...



JUNE 2020

The Redwood Empire Therapist

OUR JUNE MEETING

...And They Lived Happily Ever After!

About Imago Relationship Therapy & Helping Dreams Come True Doreen Van Leuwen, LMFT

Our June 5th RECAMFT Speaker will be an ONLINE WEBINAR via the ZOOM platform. You will be receiving an invitation to the meeting in your email. Make sure that you have downloaded the ZOOM app onto the device you intend to use to “attend” the meeting. When it gets close to the time of the meeting, follow the prompts in your email invitation. RECAMFT is the host, and when we “go live” for the session you will be asked to join.



*Now some words about
the upcoming topic to
be presented by Doreen
Van Leeuwen, LMFT,
Certified Imago
Relationship
Therapist...*

Couples therapy is exhilarating when you know that what is going on in the room is two people rediscovering love...you palpably sense the happiness, warmth and deepen closeness between two people who showed up in pain. But what makes for “good” couple’s therapy? Certainly not individual treatment x 2! Nor is it the outcome of rational explanation of what is not working, and why! And heaven forbid you should weigh in on who is on the right side, and who is in the wrong?

Even though I’d completed my MFT training, early on some very awkward and awful couples sessions convinced me that I was woefully unprepared. That coupled with memories of my parents’ arguments, and later, the demise of my first marriage, made me wonder, “What goes on within the committed relationship that allows it to thrive or dooms it to fail? And how can I be useful as therapist?”

June 5th, 2020 – Online RECAMFT Meeting

11:00 Announcements & Explanations
11:30 – 12:45 Presentation
12:45 – 1:00 Q & A

About Imago Relationship Therapy & Helping Dreams Come True Doreen Van Leuwen, LMFT

ZOOM MEETING

**YOUR INVITATION AND LINK WILL BE SENT
TO YOU BY EMAIL – Watch for It!**

1.5 CEUs AVAILABLE – RECAMFT CEU PROVIDER IMIS 57173
Save Time – Pre-Register at www.recamft.org

MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO ALL ~ NON-MEMBERS FREE (\$15 FOR CEUS)

Then I was introduced to *Imago relationship Therapy*, the school of training that finally helped me make sense of how to sit with couples who were deep in distress because they had lost their connection, and didn't know how to repair that. What I admire about *Imago Therapy* is its focus on combining a rich understanding of couples relational dynamics, and the ability to use well-placed interventions to bring about intentional shifts in thinking and behavior.

Imago Therapy provides me as therapist with an approach and a plethora of interventions and skills to stay differentiated from the riptide-like suction of the couple's dysfunctional plight. Through this work, I've learned to identify how the twosome in front of me inadvertently tugs at me to join in their chaos and upheaval. Instead, *Imago Therapy* offers a steady and secure ship to sail through the tossing waves of conflict, as I gently invite them to join me in that vessel instead.

Because change really is very, very hard, & neither partner wants to change, and because each thinks the OTHER is the one that REALLY needs to shape up, the astute couples therapist must navigate a steady course in guiding through the ever present shoals of blame and ruinous rocks of resentment.

I hope you will join me on Friday, June 5th as we explore some of the intricacies of *Imago Therapy*. We'll have fun learning about guiding the couple into the new structure and process that provides safety, invites cherishing behaviors, encourages differentiation, builds shame-resilience, redefines what it is to listen, restructures frustration, enhances empathy and stimulates passion. Effective *Imago Therapy* facilitates the couple to become each other's healers, skilled at building and maintaining robust connection together!

RECAMFT is accepting applications for our monthly trainings for 2020-2021 until June 30th. You can complete an application by visiting our website and clicking the news and events tab on the top of the page.

President's Message
Tara D'Orazio , LMFT



Zoomed Out

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey letting us know where your needs lie and what you are interested in RECAMFT offering by way of services and support. I am grateful to all Members of the Board have been following up with personal phone calls, connecting with members one-on-one, and learning more about how we are being personally and professionally affected by the novel coronavirus.

I used to boast that I had a job that didn't require 8 daily hours in front of a computer. That's certainly changed. It's been a process finding a balance between the need for connection and the need for rest. They often feel at

odds with each other. Do I jump on a Zoom call with friends to satisfy my need for companionship? Or do I take up my knitting with an audiobook just to step away from screens for a while? Every day the answer seems to change and mindfulness has been my greatest tool for figuring out what I need in the moment.

I have found that a few adjustments to my practice have greatly helped with screen-fatigue. Setting my desk up against a window allows me to stretch my eyes during video calls by switching my focus to something in the distance. Adding a break in the day where I completely step away from all screens and go for a walk without my phone has helped with getting the all-important Vitamin D, refueling from nature, regulating my breath, and re-centering my mind by re-entering my body. This becomes an opportunity for my body to pass me her wisdom: we need water, our legs need to stretch, you're holding our breath, we need to release, we need to feel.

I've also found it very important to zoom out while I'm Zooming in, to hold the big picture of our circumstance. At the end of every day and week, I take an inventory of how it went. There are large fluctuations in my mood and energy levels, some days bursting and some days depleted. The long view reminds me to be gentle with myself on days when I am hyper and refreshed; to remember that decisions made with an abundance of energy must be carried out even during days of exhaustion. When that push comes on to take on another client, an extra shift, another activity, another commitment, another pressure to be productive, I take a breath and consider those difficult days. I am gentle and careful with myself, learning the real value of self-care and practicing letting go of old messages that say "but are you doing enough?" Yes, I am surviving a global pandemic. That is enough! And you are, too. That is enough.

After processing the responses from the member survey, I'm left with a serious question: How do we foster opportunities for connection through distance mediums when people are saturated with online interactions and feeling "zoomed out"? This is the number one hurdle to how effective virtual monthly meetings, virtual support groups, video lessons, and virtual events can be; the people are sick of virtual!

We will, of course, continue to work on making RECAMFT services available online, now and post-pandemic. We have lots of exciting ideas floating around that I'm not ready to share because, to be honest, I'm not sure yet which ideas will stick and become real and which just won't be possible. My ideas often outgrow my capabilities, and I think that is an error in the right direction. But I will say that I am really excited about the future of RECAMFT! Our June presentation is going to be our first experience with hosting an online event and I am looking forward to seeing you there!

Be kind to yourself. Be good to others. Be Kind.
Tara

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*Life is the dancer,
and you are the Dance.*

~ Eckhart Tolle ~



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JUNE WORD PLAY

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 X X U Y C I M H X R F Z G O L C S Y D D
 T T F L R M I Y I L Z N X X A J Q B L A
 X S K A L U B T E N V X U P T Z I G K L
 L R L B Y E W H N U A I S F T B M B E M
 Y W B X S E X M W P V L J V O Z H P O E
 C M S K K B B P L W A W K P C F A W Z T
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 R Q Q H S D F K V B B X T C B F O W E A
 V Y H N K W X L Z I L R C C E N E J H T
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 M R P E R S O N A L G E S T U R E S H O
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 X D Z E S M W Z J O V O W L G J N W N G
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 FULLEXPERIENCE
 FUN
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An Introduction to Cannabis Assisted Psychedelic Therapy (CAPT)

Lani Lee, LMFT

There is phenomenal potential for health and healing being demonstrated by the current research surrounding the emerging field of Psychedelic Therapy, with medicines such as MDMA and Psilocybin looking on track for FDA approval within the next few years, and Ketamine currently starting to be used off label to treat



clinical issues such as suicidality, PTSD, end of life anxiety, and treatment resistant depression.

There is another highly accessible and often overlooked classic psychedelic, Cannabis Sativa, which, with close attention to setting, mind-set of the client, and clinician skill set, reliably produces similar

experiences with comparable therapeutic implications as the more well-known psychedelic medicines. As a shapeshifting plant spirit ally, Cannabis responds greatly to the nuances of how the plant is approached. By creating an experience infused with intention, reverence, ritual, curated music, and then turning inwards with mindful attention, we can invite the psychedelic, or “soul manifesting” qualities to emerge to support our holistic unfolding.

As a Somatic Psychedelic, (somatic meaning “of the lived body”), Cannabis provides a unique contribution to the family of psychedelic medicines. Cannabis activates both the Sympathetic and the Parasympathetic nervous system simultaneously, allowing the trauma stored in the cells and connective tissues of the body to be re-experienced while in a relaxed state, thus creating the conditions for resolution, discharge and healing.



Artwork by Alex Grey

Furthermore, unlike other psychedelics, Cannabis allows the journeyer to maintain agency throughout the process, truly choosing how deep to go, at what pace, or when to titrate out of the experience by simply opening the eyes.

Since September of 2019 I have been training clinically towards a credential in “Cannabis Assisted Psychedelic

Therapist” through Medicinal Mindfulness’ Psychedelic Sitter’s School in Colorado (Founders, Daniel and Alison McQueen). Cannabis Assisted Psychedelic Therapy (CAPT) is rooted in Trauma Informed, Transpersonal, Somatic, Mindfulness based therapies, and current best practice Psychedelic Therapy methods to empower clients in accessing their own inherent movement towards health and wholeness.

Medicinal Mindfulness has just opened the first legal Psychedelic Plant Medicine Therapy Clinic in the US, and for the past 5 years they have been treating clients both individually and in groups using CAPT for concerns such as PTSD, Depression, Anxiety, Existential Anxiety, Substance Abuse, Grief, and Spiritual Development with promising clinical outcomes, such as clients reporting a resolving of PTSD symptoms within a few sessions.

This potent plant brings the promise of sustainability and abundance on all levels. With the current state of the world, we need all our allies on board for large scale collective trauma healing, initiation, and self-actualization if we are to evolve, adapt and survive in symbiosis with our environment at this critical time in history. The time is now for our personal and collective healing so we can each bring our own unique medicine into the world and contribute ALL of our resourcefulness, innovation and creative resilience to turn the shifting paradigm towards creating a collaborative and sustainable future for our children’s children.

More to come! Please be in touch- feel free to reach out to me for conversation, questions or support.

Other resources for continued inquiry:

Daniel McQueen’s book “Psychedelic Cannabis: Breaking the Gate” as a resource for self-exploration. www.MedicinalMindfulness.org for access to recorded talks, podcasts and information on trainings.

Lani Lee, LMFT specializes in supporting healing professionals and is currently offering CAPT sessions in her private practice in Santa Rosa, CA. 707-331-5246, www.LaniLeeMFT.com



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