



APRIL ONLINE MEETING

Winnicott Goes Viral:

A Look at Early Relationships Through Viral Videos

Free to RECAMFT MEMBERS - \$36 for Non-CAMFT Members

Presented by: **Orit Weksler, LMFT**

- **Friday, April 2, 2021**
- **10:30 am - 12:30 pm**
- **Zoom Webinar**



What makes our early experiences meaningful and useful? What helps us know ourselves and make sense of the world? Using viral videos from the early days of YouTube, we will attempt to answer these questions using Winnicott's ideas about "The Full Experience"; "Personal Gestures"; "A Holding Environment" and Transitional Space". We will think about attachment, metallization, play and discuss ideas about rhythm, knowledge and the importance of pausing in an interactive and fun training.

In this workshop we will come to know about Winnicott's concepts of "The full experience", "Transitional space", "Holding environment" and understand the relationship between "rhythm", "knowledge" and "pause" in creating a transitional space that allows for growth and creativity. We will also experience a "holding environment" in the presentation itself and reflect on how to use this experience in their clinical work.

Born and raised in Jerusalem, Orit Weksler, LMFT studied Expressive Arts Therapy following her work in theater, spoken word and alternative education. Upon emigrating to the US in 2002 she completed her MFT license requirements in CA and opened her private practice in Berkeley in 2008 where she sees adults, teens and children.

Orit's interest in early development has brought her to the study of psychoanalytic theory, attachment, EMDR, IFS and more. She is passionate about attempting to translate different theoretical models into practice in a way that would make sense to a diverse audience. She has developed this presentation as a way to connect with teachers, parents and clinicians from different backgrounds. Her specialties include working with children and adults on the autism spectrum, giftedness, adoption, creativity and mental illness.

Zoom Webinar - *Please note that once you have RSVP'd for this event you will receive a link to register for the Zoom Webinar. You must complete this second step to gain access to the event link.



**2021 Acting President's
Message:
Diana's Auntie**

One of my favorite people in the world is a tiny person named Diana. She is three, and I am her "Auntie". We get so very excited when we see each other. She lives in San Francisco, and I try to see her at least once a month. Diana's mama is a woman from China who fell in love with a person from my family. This year I celebrated my very first Chinese New Year's Eve with a family dinner cooked by Diana's mom, and lots of red envelopes and decorations. I learned it is the biggest holiday of the year, like Christmas, Thanksgiving, and New Year's Eve combined, and the best part is the evening before when families celebrate by decorating the house and having a big meal together. Diana and I had so much fun putting up decorations, and setting the table. Here's a picture of us I took that day.



"Diana and her Auntie Laura"

As I write this message, it is a few days after a 21-year-old man who had been to a treatment center for "sex addiction" (is it, or isn't it?) killed six Asian women in Georgia. Lest I think this only happens in the Deep South, this morning I saw a video of an older Asian woman in San Francisco crying through her swollen, red bruised face, after she had been attacked by a white man, not far from where Diana lives. I think about how much I love Diana and her mom, and am so grateful they have not yet been personally touched by this type of horror. Every time a racist acts out, I wonder, do we all feel the same deep communal shame? The day after the horror in Georgia, I received an email from Barbie Robinson, Director of Sonoma County Department of Health Services. She said, "Yesterday, the County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California (CBHDA), County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA), County Health Executives Association of California (CHEAC), and California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (CAPH) issued a statement alongside local government across California and the nation declaring

racism as a public health crisis. We in Sonoma County echo this statement and stand in solidarity with these groups."

I forwarded the email to our listserv. The statement is about a page and a half, and I encourage everyone to read it. Here is an excerpt.

The events of 2020 sparked by the tragic deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and too many others, combined with the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) elevated a national dialogue on the negative impacts of systemic racism throughout the nation... Studies have shown that racism is a social determinant of health that results in an unfair lack of access to adequate housing, education, and employment and an elevated risk for justice involvement and reduced access to healthcare and public health services, often resulting in early mortality... Simply put, *structural, systemic racism kills.* (County Leaders Statement on Racism as a Public Health Crisis [italics: mine])

Last year under the foresight and leadership of 2020 President Tara D'Orazio, RECAMFT created our Racial and Social Justice Committee. The committee created a mission statement, published a survey for our members, and created a webpage with two videos (less than two hours to watch both) and four suggested books. I ask all our members to visit the webpage here:

<https://www.recamft.org/Racial-and-Social-Justice>

As you consider how you will educate yourself in becoming an anti-racist (who doesn't want to be that?!), **please start by looking through the resources your colleagues have thoughtfully created for you on RECAMFT's website, and commit yourself to viewing at least one video, or reading one suggested book.** On behalf of Diana, I want to thank you in advance for renewing your passion and zeal to educate yourself, and for being part of a community that honors the journey of our BIPOC colleagues and clients, and who is dedicated to eliminating systemic racism.

With gratitude to RECAMFT's Racial and Social Justice Committee for their thoughtful, caring work,

Laura Strom, PsyD, LMFT
2021 Acting President, RECAMFT

Laura Strom, LMFT, Ph.D is in private practice in Santa Rosa and can be reached at 707-889-9168

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*It's easy. Just send your email request to
join the RECAMFT listserv to:*

therapy@recamft.org

*Once your RECAMFT membership is
confirmed address emails to the group to
recamft@groups.io*

2021 Schedule At-A-Glance

Subject to change: details will appear on our events page as they are finalized

April 2, 2021 **Orit Weksler 2 CEUs**
Winnocott Goes Viral: A Look at Early
Relationships through Viral Videos
\$36 for non-CAMFT members

April 9 **9-11 RECAMFT Board Meeting**

April 9 **11:30 Members Crafting Group**

FREE TO RECAMFT MEMBERS ON ZOOM
REGISTRATION REQUIRED – WWW.RECAMFT.ORG

RSJC EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

“Systemic Racism Explained” a four minute video by Act.Tv on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YrHIQIO_bdQ

Me & White Supremacy by Layla F Saad
How to Be an Anti-Racist by Ibram X. Kendi
Raising White Kids: Bringing up children in a racially unjust America by Jennifer Harvey
White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo
My Grandmother’s Hands by Resmaa Menakem
Between the World and Me by Ta-Nahisi Coates
Race, Politics, and Pedagogy Education in a Time of Crisis by Henry A. Giroux

13th, free on YouTube courtesy of Netflix. A must see to grasp how slavery exists today.

“Racism is Real”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTcSVQJ2h8g>

Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pM-HpZQWKT4>

Miss Representation full documentary on YouTube:
<https://youtu.be/3syOGI2nbbs>

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A Call for Therapist Self-Examination on Racial Issues

The article "To be Black in Sonoma County," written by David Rosen in the Sonoma County Gazette, February 2, 2021, gives us an opportunity to hear stories and voices of Black people in our community and what they are facing, right here in our "progressive" home. I hope you will google the original article for the full experience (link below). As you read this material, I invite you to notice your internal reactions, moments of disbelief, tightness or fear, and explore them; journal about it or talk with a peer, as recommended by Resmaa Menakem in his book, *My Grandmother's Hands*, 2017.

In the article, Rosen speaks with six Black musicians and activists in Sonoma County about what it is like to live here as a Black person. Each person has a unique experience, and yet many experiences were common. Rosen writes that all of them spoke of, "being perceived as a threat, of having to change how they behave, change who they are in front of others, because they face constant attitude and apprehension." Dido George, an artist/producer, expresses, "You can feel the energy change in the room when I walk in. When I walk in a store, I feel the energy change." Rosen describes how being seen as a threat throughout any given day when in public is an hourly, and exhausting experience.

Being pulled over by the police more often than white people, as well as a fear of police in Sonoma County was cited in multiple narratives. Dido says, "When I do a show, I got to pray I make it home. Literally I pray, God please let me make it home safely with no police interference."

Dell Parker, a songwriter and advocate shares that, "My parents conditioned me and my two older sisters to be able to blend in with our white counterparts...don't do anything that's going to call attention to yourself." This illuminates the exhausting task of constantly standing out, being noticed and questioned and also being asked to *not* be different, to downplay the parts perceived as not acceptable, in order to be safe enough, in order to survive. Parker continues, "The downfall is sometimes thinking that I've lost myself."

Rosen quotes local composer and human rights activist Benjamin Mertz from his Facebook page on the morning of the capitol insurrection this January.

He wrote, "Being Black in America is fighting back a scream every day. It's pitching your voice just right to make sure you're not perceived as a threat. It's getting the taillight fixed immediately so you don't get pulled over and murdered. You know how exhausting this is? Being in love with a country that hates you so much? That's how much some of you hate me. And tragically, don't even know it. Don't even see the connection."

For those of us who are not Black, are we brave enough to look within and see the ways our prejudice plays out in our daily lives and harms people? Perhaps living in a county that is considered by some to be "progressive" has allowed us to think we are beyond bias, that we are outside of the problem. Being a therapist with good intentions doesn't mean that we automatically understand ourselves in regards to racial issues; nor does it give us a free pass from doing this crucial work. I feel that being a therapist adds a great deal of urgency to doing this work. In order to hear, believe and support BIPOC clients and their daily lived experience of racism, we need to be able to see the ways we ourselves have been molded in a racist culture, and how our thoughts and experiences are suffused with this prejudice, be it conscious or unconscious.

Eki Shola, physician and musician states, "These talks right here... in this column need to be among everyone. It can't be us Blacks again and again and again educating everyone on being Black... and for free." The onus is on white people, and anyone who harbors prejudice against Black people, to do this work, and to help bring awareness to each other. There are many good resources listed in this newsletter to begin with.

Rosen leaves us with an important question to consider. "Do you act differently when you're around a person of color? If so, then just be honest with yourself and make a decision to get to know more and more people that don't look like you." I remember the moment I realized that, when meeting a group of parents at my kid's school, I was more comfortable making friends with white people than people of color. It was scary and disappointing to acknowledge my prejudice to myself. It felt like the ground fell out from under me and a new ground was there, a bigger one, a truer one. Because of that moment and many more since, I am more able to recognize the realities of Systemic Racism, and how it shows up in me. I am a microcosm of the bigger system. And this gives me a lot of power to make a change. I encourage all of us to step into this realm, to hear the stories of what it is like

to be Black into Sonoma County, and to do the work that we are called to do right now.

Find the full article at <https://www.sonomacountygazette.com/sonoma-county-news/to-be-black-in-sonoma-county/>

By Jessica Peters Malmberg, AMFT
Member of RECAMFT's Racial and Social Justice Committee

*If you are interested in joining a book group to read and process Resmaa Menackem's **My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies**, please contact us at rrsjc@googlegroups.com*

The Offering

By Bob Engel, MFT

Meridian University, May 2009

The truth is written with black ink
on black cloth
and those who hold it
can feel the still damp thread
but the message
remains obscure.

The truth is written in letters of fire
on the surface of the sun
and those who would
read it
are quite right
to fear they will be blinded

and if the truth were written nowhere else
we would have faint hope of finding it.

Come then
to the cohort of beings
bring your part of the code,
cipher and decipher
the holy Braille written on one another's hearts.

Be tender, but resolute
accepting that no matter how gentle the touch
sometimes the heart cannot be held without
bleeding.

We are so grateful to Bob Engel for submitting his Poems for Therapists for publication herein. Fortunately for us, there are more to come! You are in for a treat.

What You Missed

Gina Culver

Due to the new demands of managing the Zoom webinars, the Programs Committee is in need of volunteers to write the What You Missed Articles each month. These are not super hard to write, we will provide the guidelines, and we are asking that each month until summer (April, May and June) that a member of RECAMFT writes the article: 3 months = 3 members. **We also need volunteers to help manage the behind-the-scenes of running Zoom presentations. Please email Patrick or Gina at RECAMFTprograms@gmail.com to volunteer or ask questions.**



On March 5th, Haleigh Scott, PhD presented “Providing Effective Therapy for Clients with Autism or Other Developmental Disabilities.” She explained what intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) were, how they are diagnosed, how assessment

tools are not standardized for clients with IDD, and how to work with clients with IDD. Haleigh provided a few case studies within her presentation as well as we had 2 breakout room discussions around case studies. My takeaway was Haleigh was trying to show us that though we may have to make some adaptations, treating clients with IDD is no different than treating our other clients in that if a client presents with anxiety or depression, we work with them on managing their anxiety or depression, for example.

It was very apparent to me that Haleigh is passionate about her work, receiving both her MA and PhD in IDD-related psychology. Her interest in the field started with helping her mother out in her mother’s special education classroom for students with autism. Haleigh answered members’ questions throughout her presentation and shared about several experiences with clients in session, specifically allowing them time to talk about what was important to them (cartoon characters, airplanes, etc). What I found helpful from the presentation, was the validation that I was utilizing some of the skills to build rapport already with many of my clients.

In addition to defining what IDD is, Haleigh defined several other field terms. The other one that stands out for me is “diagnostic overshadowing.” Haleigh defined this as a clinician passing off a client’s mental health

symptoms as part of their IDD- e.g., “he does that because he has autism” versus encouraging a medical professional to rule out any underlying medical conditions or looking at the symptoms in relation to mental health. I thought this poignant as I believe this happens frequently, not only in mental health but also with medical doctors. Something I will continue to be mindful of when parents or clients report new symptoms during treatment.

My final takeaway was: do not be afraid or nervous to work with clients with IDD.



They are an underserved population, often not getting adequate mental health services. Do not feed into the IDD myths. If you are unsure, ask. Parents and clients are an expert of what is going on for them. If you are unsure, get trained or take webinars to further your knowledge so you are more comfortable working with this population.

Watch the recording for the in-depth information Haleigh provided. Check out her website (ascendsupportservices.com) for more information.

To see the recording of this training if you missed it or to watch it again, check out the members only area of the RECAMFT website. You can also watch previous CE workshop recordings there too.

The Programs Committee is always looking for presentation ideas and speaker recommendations. Email the committee at RECAMFTprograms@gmail.com with ideas!

Thank you to all of our members and non-members for your support and attending the monthly workshops! You are the heart of our chapter.

Also at the heart of our chapter is the Board at the 3/12 Meeting. Get out your magnifying glass to match names to our team list. To view this in color, see the newsletter on the website.





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PCIT is available in person at our Windsor, CA location
or via telehealth video anywhere in CA.

Contact us to refer a family!

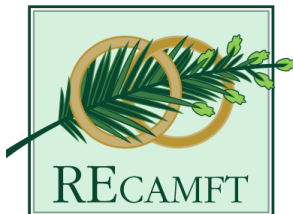
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