The mission of The Family Institute at Northwestern University is to strengthen and heal families from all walks of life through clinical service, community outreach, education and research.

The Family Institute at Northwestern University, founded in 1968, is a premier organization dedicated to couple and family therapy, community outreach, education and research. In addition to our community sites, we have four staff practice locations, including Evanston, Chicago, LaGrange Park and Northbrook. For more information on our staff practice, please call 847-733-4300 or visit our website at www.family-institute.org.
President’s Letter

from William M. Pinsof, PhD

Greetings! During the past year we have seen a significant increase in demand for couple, family and individual therapy at The Family Institute. With government passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act in March 2010, prospects for improved mental health care coverage for our clients are on the horizon. This legislation, along with the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008, ensures that more people than ever will be able to avail themselves of the services we provide at the Institute.

The Parity Act finally reflects what we have known all along – the mind-body connection is real and coverage of mental health care services is as important as coverage for any physical illness. In fact, there are consistent research data demonstrating that broader mental health coverage reduces the cost and utilization of physical health services.

Even before the movement for parity in mental health services, The Family Institute was committed to providing low-cost mental health services through our Community Outreach Program and our Bette D. Harris Family and Child Clinic. That commitment continues today through our Community Outreach Program, where therapy is free of charge, and our Clinic, where the average fee is $12.00.

Although we don’t yet know all of the implications of the new health care law, we see it as good news for The Family Institute and the individuals, couples and families that we serve.

We thank you for your continued support of The Family Institute and your commitment to our mission to strengthen and heal families from all walks of life through clinical service, community outreach, education and research. We remain dedicated to serve.

Bill Pinsof
President

Institute News is published twice a year for friends, donors and alumni.

To join the mailing list, visit www.family-institute.org.

If you wish to receive more information and updates on events and happenings at The Family Institute, please email spuntillo@family-institute.org.

Are you a member of the media? Would you like to speak with Family Institute staff? Please contact Cyndi Schu at 312-609-5300, ext. 400 or cschu@family-institute.org.

For more information on our Community Outreach program, please contact Dominique McCord, Director of Community Outreach, at dmcord@family-institute.org.

Development News

Community Outreach Promotes Emotional Well-Being

Rites of Passage and Mentoring Program

By Suzanne Puntillo

Thanks to the generous support of donors, our Community Outreach program provides affordable and accessible care to at-risk families throughout the Chicagoland area.

The services are offered in collaboration with Chicago and Evanston public schools and include individual and family counseling, groups, workshops and consultation.

Counseling services are an integral part of the Community Outreach Program, but research has shown that prevention and early intervention services such as groups and workshops are just as important if not critical. All of these services are powerful tools in promoting emotional well-being, increasing awareness of mental health issues and reducing the stigma around needing and receiving support.

This past year, one such group, the Rites of Passage and Mentoring Program, was conducted at Northwestern University, a Community Outreach partner. Facilitated by Community Outreach Coordinator Darryl Turner, the program was the first of its kind at the school.

The purpose of the Rites of Passage and Mentoring Program is to prepare male, inner-city youth for future success through positive male role modeling, providing validation and affirmation through mentorship, and equipping them with tools and skills that will assist them with understanding the responsibilities that accompany the transition into manhood.

Over a 10-week period, the group addressed topics on self-respect and respect of others, establishing realistic goals and a plan to achieve them, discovering their leadership potential and developing leadership skills, and the importance of community service. The group also helped to increase parent participation and interest in the school and in their child’s academic achievement. Many of the participants’ parents attended meetings, participated in a “Fun Night” of athletic activities and games, and attended a closing “Crossing Over” ceremony that included a formal dinner at a local restaurant.

The Rites of Passage and Mentoring Program has been well received and proven to be successful. A number of non-participants have already expressed desire to participate in the program next year. We have plans to make this an ongoing group and hopefully replicate it at other schools.

For more information on our Community Outreach program, please contact Dominique McCord, Director of Community Outreach, at dmcord@family-institute.org.

Board of Directors

James H. Fidler, Chair
Sue Kennedy-Brechers, Vice Chair
Michael Anthony
Janet L. Minett
Raymond E. Redley
Barbara Bungay
Don J. Leopold
Michael Frank
Lester Frankel
Dorothy Gentner
Sue Glar
Eugene Schub
Victor I. Green
Paige Hurts
Adam J. Huritzman
Ernest Kavetski
Edward L. Kamens
Rabbi H. Lipton
Paul D. Lane
Rudy Medjvan
Joan Einker Mendel
Annette F. McCaff
Celia More
William M. Pinsof
Vincent E. Roger
Michaels Hargraves
Herbert A. Gross
Paul M. Lurie
Eugene Golub
Dorothy Gardner
Michael Frank
Paula Harris
Victor E. Grimm
James H. Feldman
William C. Ellis
A. Steven Crown
Jean Armour
E. Franklin Hirsch
Ashley F. T. McCall
Thomas J. March
Adam J. Hecktman
Paula Harris
Eugene Golub
Dorothy Gardner
Michael Frank
Victor E. Grimm
James H. Feldman
William C. Ellis
A. Steven Crown
Jean Armour
E. Franklin Hirsch

Life Trustees

Joan Armer
A. Steven Crown
Nancy C. Green
William C. Ellis
Betty Epstein
Mary Gruner
E. Franklin Hirsch

Calendar of Events

April 23, 2010
Spring Circle of Knowledge
Lake Shore Country Club, Glencoe

October 22, 2010
Fall Circle of Knowledge
TBD, North Shore

May 5-8, 2010
Sue Johnson Internship
Rotary International, Evanston

April 16, 2010
Spring Circle of Knowledge
University Club of Chicago, Chicago

October 22, 2010
Fall Circle of Knowledge
University Club of Chicago, Chicago

If you are interested in more information about our upcoming events, please email spuntillo@family-institute.org.

In this issue: WHEELS, April 23, 2010, Spring Circle of Knowledge, Lake Shore Country Club, Glencoe. The program was conducted by Family Institute staff, with Cyndi Schu as facilitator. Details can be found at www.family-institute.org.

For more information about our upcoming events, please contact Suzanne Puntillo, Director of Development, spuntillo@family-institute.org.
This past October, Cheryl Rampage, PhD, discussed the mixed blessings of technology and how it drives cultural change. She also detailed the impact of technology on intimate relationships, including unanticipated problems of cell phone use. These problems include safety (the distraction factor), expense, and intrusion and temptation. Dr. Rampage also pointed out the positive and negative aspects to social networking. The positive aspects include the ease of making and maintaining contact without geographic or time boundaries. The negative include superficiality and “spying” on people on these sites rather than communicating and relating with them.

The Circle of Knowledge is another way we strive to further our mission and create a stronger society through healthier families.
40th Anniversary Celebration and Alumnus of the Year Awards

The Alumni Association held a special reception following the Fall Conference in November to celebrate The Family Institute’s 40 years of post-graduate and graduate education. Alumni, staff, faculty and current students gathered to mark the anniversary and reconnect with each other.

In addition to celebrating, the Alumni Association also presented the annual Alumnus of the Year awards to two distinguished alumni. The award for Marital and Family Therapy went to Sant Singh, who graduated from the Counseling Psychology program in 1982. She also completed the chemical dependency program at The Family Institute. Ms. Sutherland worked at Alexian

States. He currently teaches at the University of Chicago and maintains a private practice.

The award for achievement in Counseling Psychology went to Nancy Sutherland, who graduated from the Counseling Psychology program in 1982. She also completed the chemical dependency program at The Family Institute. Ms. Sutherland worked at Alexian

Institute. Once you have a username

exclusive for graduates of The Family

section. Membership is free and

in the field of marital and family therapy.

Alumni Spring Social

The Alumni Spring Social originally planned for April 28 has been postponed. Please stay tuned for further details.

Anna Hurtig Fund

As many of you know, the Alumni Association experienced a profound loss this year: With the passing of our dear friend and colleague, Anita Hurtig, the Alumni Advisory Board created a special fund in her memory. To honor Anita’s lifelong dedication and service to underserved and minority populations, any funds raised will be used to serve these communities.

Thanks to a generous foundation, we have the opportunity to both honor Anita’s memory and make a major impact on bringing mental health care to neighborhoods where little or no services exist. The Family Institute has been awarded a $15,000 challenge grant in support of its Community Outreach program, and the foundation has committed to match, dollar for dollar, every new or increased gift.

There are so many needs not being met in these challenging times; this is an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of local families. Please join us in honoring Anita’s memory and continuing her work.

In Memoriam – Carolyn Wollaston

The Family Institute is saddened by the loss of an early alum, Family Institute Board member and affiliate therapist. Carolyn Wollaston passed away last November.

Mrs. Wollaston completed our two-year program in Marital and Family Therapy and worked as a psychiatric social worker at several social service agencies throughout the Chicagoland area.

Staff therapist William P. Russell, MSW, LCSW, LMFT, remembers Mrs. Wollaston as a very warm and genuine person with a wonderful sense of humor. “Carolyn had a gift for building relationships and she utilized that gift to make a difference in the lives of clients, colleagues and friends. She was enormously supportive of The Family Institute. I know it represented an ideal sense of humor.”

In addition to her important work on the board, Mrs. Wollaston was particularly supportive of the Institute’s efforts to open a practice in

Naperville. “She had a spacious and beautiful office in an historic mansion in downtown Naperville (complete with a family of raccoons in the attic),” remembers Mr. Russell. “Almost 20 years ago, she was kind enough to share her office with the Institute and, as such, she provided the first home for the Institute’s Outreach Program.”

For all of her contributions, the Institute is truly grateful. She will most certainly be missed.

Every gift is meaningful.

There are several ways you can make a difference and honor Anita’s memory with a donation to our Community Outreach Program.

Donate online at

www.family-institute.org

Mail a check payable to

The Family Institute

The Family Institute,

Advancement Department,

8 S. Michigan Avenue,

Suite 500

Chicago, IL 60603

Call (312) 609-5300, ext. 480

Institute News

Alumni Advisory Board List

Janice Wilcox, PhD, LPC, Chair

Heather Bates, LMFT

Linda Brencat, LMFT

Erica Emma-Watson, MA

Gary Frenz, FPM, CPC

Janie Henry-Javner, LMFT

Nancy Jensen, PhD

Jayne Kinsman, LMFT

Nancy Williams, PsyD

Debbie Youderian, LMFT

Maryanne Williams, PsyD

Maryan Qureshi, MSMFT

David Klow, LMFT

Jaime Henry-Juravic, LMFT

Erica Estes-Watson, MA

Leah Brennan, LMFT

Janice Witzel, PhD, LCPC, Chair

Suzanne Puntillo, LMFT

Institute Director of Development

Maryam Ganeshi, MSMFT

Nancy Sutherland accepted the Alumnus of the Year award from Lee Blum, who directed the Counseling Psychology program for more than 30 years.

Nancy Sutherland accepted the Alumnus of the Year award from Lee Blum, who directed the Counseling Psychology program for more than 30 years.

Call (312) 609-5300, ext. 480

Janice Witzel, chair of the Alumni Advisory Board, welcomes guests to the 40th anniversary celebration following the Fall Conference.

Heather Bates nominated Sant Singh for the Alumnus of the Year award based on his years of service in the field of marital and family therapy.

Alumni Spring Social

The Alumni Spring Social originally planned for April 28 has been postponed. Please stay tuned for further details.

Alumni Spring Social

The Alumni Spring Social originally planned for April 28 has been postponed. Please stay tuned for further details.
Tell Me Again What You Think of Me: Reassurance-Seeking and Negative Feedback-Seeking Among Couples with Depressive Symptoms

By Lynne Knobloch-Fedders

Approximately 18.1 million American adults suffer from major depressive disorder or dysthmic disorder each year (Kessler, Chiu, Demler, Merikangas, & Walters, 2005). They experience symptoms such as irritability, fatigue, persistent feelings of sadness, disinterest in once-pleasurable activities, difficulty concentrating, sleep disturbances, and even thoughts of death (National Institute of Mental Health, 2008). Their romantic partners, too, can be affected by depression. Individuals with a depressed romantic partner are themselves vulnerable to psychological distress (Benazon, 2000), depression (Benazon & Coyne, 2000), and relationship dissatisfaction (Koons, Papp, & Cummings, 2008).

Two communication behaviors are closely tied to depressive symptoms: reassurance-seeking and negative feedback-seeking. Reassurance-seeking involves asking for affirmation that an individual is lovable, worthy, and valued (Joiner, Metalaky, Katz, & Beach, 1996b). Negative feedback-seeking involves soliciting disapproval, criticism, and disparagement (Joiner, 1995). These behaviors represent a quest for self-evaluation of either positive or negative valence (Joiner, Alifi, & Metalaky, 1993). Although most people engage in both behaviors occasionally, individuals with depressive symptoms tend to seek reassurance and negative feedback persistently and repeatedly, even after reassurance and negative feedback-seeking behavior. Reassurance-seeking involves asking for affirmation that an individual is lovable, worthy, and valued (Joiner, Alifi, & Metalaky, 1993). Although most people engage in both behaviors occasionally, individuals with depressive symptoms tend to seek reassurance and negative feedback persistently and repeatedly, even after two partners have already offered it (Petit & Joiner, 2000). Excessive requests for approval and disapproval may function as both causes and consequences of depression (Haeffel, Voelz, & Joiner, 2007). Relational uncertainty is likely to play a role in people's reassurance-seeking and negative feedback-seeking behavior. Relational uncertainty refers to the questions individuals have about participating in an interpersonal relationship (Knobloch, 2010). It occurs when people are unsure about their own involvement in the relationship (labeled self-uncertainty), their partner's involvement in the relationship (labeled partner uncertainty), and the status of the relationship itself (labeled relationship uncertainty).

Our research group at The Family Institute, including our collaborators Leanne Knobloch and Emily Durbin, studied whether relational uncertainty could account for the links between reassurance-seeking, negative feedback-seeking, and depression symptoms. As part of the study, we recruited 69 romantic couples who completed questionnaires measuring their depressive symptoms and relational uncertainty. Couples also participated in 50 minutes of videotaped conversation, which was rated by coders for the frequency of reassurance-seeking and negative feedback-seeking behaviors. Results indicated that depressive symptoms were the primary predictor of reassurance-seeking behavior, but relational uncertainty was the primary predictor of negative feedback-seeking behavior.

This study's results point to three key relationship-level processes – relational uncertainty, reassurance-seeking, and negative feedback-seeking – as important variables associated with depression among couples. Our research program's next step is to try to design interventions to help reduce relational uncertainty, reassurance-seeking, and negative feedback-seeking among couples seeking treatment for depression.

See reference on page 9

REFERENCES


The Science of Love

Sue Johnson's Emotionally Focused Therapy

Dr. Johnson is Director of the Ottawa Couple and Family Institute and the International Center for Excellence in Emotionally Focused Therapy. Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) offers a unique perspective on how to use the power of emotion and the new science of adult attachment to create significant, lasting change in couple relationships. This approach to helping couples build more loving relationships has been taught and studied around the world and is becoming one of the foremost approaches in couples therapy today.

Dr. Johnson will present her Externship in Emotionally Focused Therapy to therapists May 5-8 at the Rotary International in Evanston. This event, sponsored by The Family Institute, will allow participants to learn the basic concepts and theory of emotionally focused therapy, identify the stages and steps of treatment, begin to formulate problematic cycles of interaction and helpful couples end cycles of blame and disengagement so that they can restore and deepen the emotional bond between them.

For questions or more information on the Externship, please contact Kristen Catuara at kcatuara@family-institute.org or at 847-735-4500 ext 206.

To learn more about Dr. Johnson's work, visit www.eft.ca or www.holdmethetight.net.
What attracted you to The Family Institute?  
I first became exposed to The Family Institute through my father, Gene Golub, who served on the Board for many years. I have long been in awe of the immense value the organization provides with its core commitment to the preservation of family. As a result, my family sponsors a lecture series in our father’s honor on a variety of subjects relevant to the work of The Family Institute.

What do you hope to accomplish during your tenure on the Board?  
As a new Board member, I look forward to cultivating relationships with other Board members and the leadership team while learning more about The Family Institute from a leadership perspective. I’ve started my participation with the new Board Governance committee because it’s a good fit with my interests and skills. My desire is to assist in expressing the message about all that The Family Institute does in its mission to strengthen and heal families from all walks of life.

What three words describe the Institute?  
Committed, innovative, nurturing.

Maru Torres-Gregory, JD, MSMFT

What do you like most about working at The Family Institute?  
I believe The Family Institute is a very unique place where I can pursue my main professional interests: clinical work, teaching and clinical supervision of trainees. Before working here, I really did not see how I could satisfy these three professional goals simultaneously at a single location.

What is your favorite part of your job?  
Aiding a question, almost being able to see all the commotion in the client’s brain and the “I had never thought of that before” that follows. I know then that my question will have an impact on the client’s life.

Why did you become a therapist?  
In 1997, I went to an MFT conference in Orlando, Fla., with my father-in-law, who is a psychiatrist in Puerto Rico. He had asked me to join him in order to explore a career change, as I was not very happy practicing as an attorney. It was love at first sight!

What is your favorite food?  
Steak, rice and beans, and fried ripe plantains. When I was in college, my mom would make it, freeze it and FedEx it to me. All my friends would magically stop for a visit when they saw my name on the delivery bulletin board.

Contact Maru at mtorres-gregory@family-institute.org.

NEW BOARD MEMBER

Michael Anthony is a partner and senior vice president of the James Mintz Group. He has more than 30 years of investigative experience conducting and managing a wide range of complex inquiries for corporate, law firm and government clients. Before joining the Mintz Group, he founded and was president of Pinnacle Group, he founded and was president of Pinnacle Research, an investigations company in Chicago. Michael served eight years on the Chicago Police Department. Michael also served on the United States Justice Department Transition Team on behalf of the Clinton administration. Michael holds two Master’s degrees, one in criminal justice and one in management from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. Michael is a motivational speaker, host of a weekly radio program and a licensed aircraft pilot.

What other words of wisdom?  
Never lose your curiosity. As soon as we stop being curious, we stop growing, we stop learning and we stop changing.

What music is currently in your CD player/on your iPod?  
Elvis Live. My 3-1/2 year old will not let me enjoy any of my music in the car unless we listen to Elvis first. I also have a lot of Spanish Rock on my iPod: Camilla, La Ley, Jurnee, Presuntos Inculpados, Los Rabanes, among others.

What is your favorite food?  
Steak, rice and beans, and fried ripe plantains. When I was in college, my mom would make it, freeze it and FedEx it to me. All my friends would magically stop for a visit when they saw my name on the delivery bulletin board.

Contact Maru at mtorres-gregory@family-institute.org.