



The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist

A Bulletin of the Iowa Association for
Marriage and Family Therapy

A Letter From the President

by David Rosenthal Ph.D., LMFT

It is time for all of us to decide what type of community we want to have. Following the recent and continuing attacks on the United States we find ourselves confronted with a number of choices. Things we once believed were safe now seem dangerous. Flying, going to a concert or athletic event and evening opening our mail forces us to confront a new reality that we might not be safe. Think about the new words that have entered our daily vocabulary, "ground zero" Anthrax, Taliban and Cipro. What is critical is how we respond to these events and daily choices.

On a national scale we can choose to travel, guard our basic civil rights, and support our community or be defeated by a fear that many of our clients regularly face. What is our response to them when they tell us they cannot move, feel stuck, or are basically immobilized by an anxiety they do not often understand but try and cope with on a daily basis?

Over the past month I have sat in a number of meetings and watched enough TV news to recognize how easy it is for well meaning professionals to "medicalize" what should be seen as a normal reaction to trauma. The sleeplessness, difficulty concentrating and overall fear of an unknown attack should be seen as our immediate response to what has occurred. When these effects linger however we need to recognize that we

also need the help and support of our community.

In March we will have the opportunity to come together as a community. This will be our opportunity to discuss the events of September and beyond and also have a conversation about how we are doing as people and couples and family therapists.

This column was originally written to describe the steps we have taken in the legislative area, our new web page, and the exciting spring conference being developed by Matt Bruch our President-Elect. All of these activities are still important, particularly the conference, but in light of recent events, I also recognize a need for us to develop as a community. I am asking that we have a conversation about our future. During the conference I would like the membership to discuss whether IAMFT is a useful part of their lives. This is a time for all of us to question all of our time commitments, particularly when everything seems so fragile. My hope is that we can come together during that conference, learn about each other and how our lives have changed since September and discuss the future of our community. Looking forward to seeing you all then!



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The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist

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Display advertising must be submitted camera-ready (unless exclusively text, then it must be typed and double spaced) and pre-paid at the following rates:

Price	Type	Size
\$25 (\$20 members)	Classified listing	5 lines
\$50 (\$40 members)	Business card size	2x3 1/2
\$90 (\$72 members)	Quarter page	3 9/16 x 4 3/4
\$150 (\$125 members)	Half page	7 1/2 x 4 3/4
\$300 (\$200 members)	Full page	7 1/2 x 9 1/2
FREE for IAMFT members	Job Postings	-

Submissions are to be sent directly to the Editor. Please make checks for advertising payable to IAMFT and send to Ron Werner-Wilson, IAMFT Treasurer, 1322 Elm Hall, Suite 1101, I.S.U., Ames, IA 50011.

The editor reserves the right to reject, abridge or modify any advertising or other submitted material as deemed appropriate. Opinions expressed by the editorial staff of *The Iowa Marital & Family Therapist* by articles published, advertisements, and letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of AAMFT, the IAMFT officers and Board of Directors, or the IAMFT membership.

Iowa Association for Marriage & Family Therapy

Spring 2002 Conference
April 5 & 6 Pella, Iowa

Mark your calendars, write in your PDA's, pencil in your Franklin Planners Iowa Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Spring 2002 Conference planned for Pella, Iowa on April 5 & 6. The conference will be held in the new Global Pavilion at Vermeer Manufacturing. The theme for this upcoming conference will be Coaching For Life & Work! Look for more information in the brochure that will be mailed. See you all there and bring a colleague.

IAMFT.COM Under Construction

Board members are pleased to announce that the Iowa Association for Marriage and Family Therapy will have a website up and running soon. The Beta version IAMFT.COM can be brought up however, the subsequent pages following the home page are not yet completed.

You might ask, "Why are we not using IAMFT.NET or IAMFT.ORG?". Good question, easy answer. Due to other states that begin with an I such as Illinois, Idaho, and Indiana, Iowa is limited to the acronym available. It is not necessary for organizations to have a dot ORG address. Organizations wanting more hits may use the dot COM and receive an increased amount of traffic compared to dot ORG sites. COM on the end of the address stands for common. Many people think that COM stands for commerce. This is an understandable error.

At your pleasure, look up IAMFT.COM. I think that you will be pleased with the look and feel of our website. In our next newsletter, the unique features of our website will be discussed.



Executive Director's Report

Jeff Kerber, PhD., LMFT

There are almost no words left unsaid that can describe the experiences and feelings many of us have been dealing with since the events of September 11. Beyond these brief introductory comments I will not pretend to have any kind of insight that any one of you haven't already considered. In a tragic way we have all been reminded of the very real nature of the psychological and emotional aspects of our lives. Be assured the role we play in our communities is important, especially now that our communities may never quite be the same. IAMFT is continuing to focus on issues that were important before September 11 and will be important in the future. We are a group of people trained and dedicated to helping others improve the quality of their lives, often including the quality of their most important relationships. Taking our lead from AAMFT and for the first time in our associations' brief history we issued a press release on September 18, 2001 it read as follows:

Iowa Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
Press Release for September 18, 2001

These are difficult moments for children and families throughout the United States, including here in Iowa. Many of us will have our lives effected directly or indirectly by the tragedy of a week ago and the events likely to come in the future. The Iowa Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (IAMFT) recognizes the tremendous importance of families coming together and having conversations about recent events. During this most difficult tragedy we want to support Iowa's families in their efforts to nurture one another. Although the physical destruction is far away from us, many Iowans will be touched by this attack and the emotional trauma for all of us may not diminish for some time.

The IAMFT represents several hundred trained and experienced mental health professionals dedicated to helping children and families coping with painful problems every day, including Tuesday, September 11, 2001. Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists are in our Iowa community to help, please use their professional support.

Families can find additional support and information by consulting the following:

www.aamft.org
www.TherapistLocator.net
www.nimh.nih.gov
www.redcross.org
www.helping.apa.org
www.usd.edu
www.mentalhealth.org
www.nasponline.org
www.ces.purdue.edu

This fall is an important time for our association for a number of reasons that I will briefly summarize below.

IAMFT is preparing for introduction of a Marital Policy bill to the state legislation that is research based and outlines best practices for strengthening the quality of marriage in Iowa. We will be refining the policy

guidelines in the next several months as we are also discussing the merits of the proposed bill with potential legislators for their sponsorship. We have also been discussing the proposed bill with other interested groups garnering support for the policy as being sound and non-controversial. If introduced this upcoming session, the bill will most likely have an uphill battle as any policy effecting marriage is viewed cautiously as an important change in the eyes of state legislators. Nevertheless, such efforts are important as IAMFT continues to advocate for our clients and our communities.

Over the summer the IAMFT continued its member support for the Mental Health Advocacy Coalition (MHAC) participating in strategic planning for continued effort to pass a Mental Health Parity Bill. By now you have heard previous reports of the one step forward - two steps back progress of this legislative effort. Discussions with Dr. Gleason of the Department of Public Health and with numerous policy makers for business groups and insurance carriers have revealed no quick solutions to the ever-present "cost issues." What is clear is that the state's, and now country's, difficult financial situation will not provide the optimum environment for such a change to health care insurance regulations.

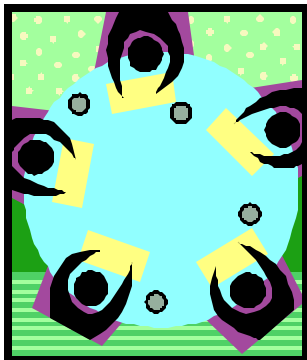
Finally, but perhaps foremost - THANK YOU - to all of our members/Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists who returned the Practice Patterns Survey initially conducted this past July. The survey was developed by IAMFT in collaboration with AAMFT and an Iowa based insurance carrier with the goal of gathering data to inform third party payers about our specialty group. If the survey is news to you that may be because it was mailed to all Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists registered with the state and not necessarily to all AAMFT/IAMFT members. If, on the other hand, you remember seeing the survey, completing it and sending it in, then again - Thank You! The initial response rate was over 50%, excellent for a direct mailing. We are hopeful that a second mailing sent out in late September, will result in an improved response rate of better than 75%. A high response rate is particularly important due to the relatively limited number of Licensed MFTs in Iowa, just under 200. By comparison there are approximately 5000 Social Workers in the state and somewhere near 700 Mental Health Counselors, the two groups we are most often compared with. Finally, if you happen to have received the survey either in July or early October and recall that it is on the bottom of a stack of things you are trying to avoid, then please take 20 minutes (ten minutes to find it and ten to complete it) to complete and return to IAMFT in the self addressed/stamped envelop that was included. Better late than never truly applies and we need data to continue dispelling the myths and misperceptions about Marriage and Family Therapists.

Thank you for your support of Marriage and Family Therapy. Please keep aware of the information provided on our web site and stay in touch via e-mail at jjkerber@home.com or phone (515) 988-0136.



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