



Hawaii Family Digest

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Message from the President - Revolution to Evolution

In Hawaii, there are now two Marriage and Family Therapy professional associations serving the needs of the Hawaii Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT). One of these organizations, the Hawaii Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (HAMFT), has served Hawaii professionals and communities since 1974, and has been incorporated under the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) as a fully tax exempt 501 (c)(6) Domestic Non-profit Corporation since 1988. The HAMFT is now independent of all central organizational affiliation, and is able to incorporate freedom, creativity, and the

spirit of aloha into its mission. The other MFT organization, the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy: Hawaii Division (AAMFT-HI) was formed under the DCCA on June 1, 2011. We, the HAMFT, look forward to relevant collaborations with the AAMFT-HI, as we move forward toward the realization of parallel purposes.

and the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy: California Division (AAMFT-CA). The CAMFT has 30,000 MFTs and AAMFT-CA has approximately 3500, reflecting the choices of the California MFT. Freedom of choice is a catalyst to the much-needed evolutionary process.

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Hawaii is the only other state known to have followed the lead of California, where there also exist two MFT professional associations: the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT);



Kai Swigart, PhD, MFT



Meet the Board of Directors

HAMFT President



Kai Swigart, Ph.D., M.F.T.
[E-mail Me](#) [Read My Bio](#)

Hawaii County Board Representative



Mākela Bruno-Kidani, M.F.T.
[E-mail Me](#) [Read My Bio](#)

HAMFT President-Elect



Kirsten Tyson, Ph.D., M.F.T.
[E-mail Me](#) [Read My Bio](#)

Kauai County Board Representative



Jennifer Stevens, M.F.T.
[E-mail Me](#) [Read My Bio](#)

HAMFT Chief Financial Officer



Ann Yabusaki, Ph.D., M.F.T.
[E-mail Me](#) [Read My Bio](#)

Maui County Board Representative



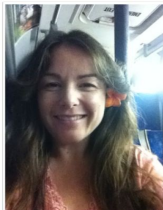
Lydee Ritchie, M.F.T.
[E-mail Me](#) [Read My Bio](#)

HAMFT Secretary



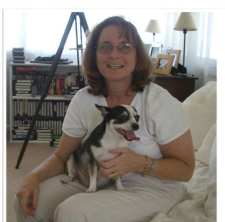
Holly Espinueva, M.F.T.
[E-mail Me](#) [Read My Bio](#)

Director at Large



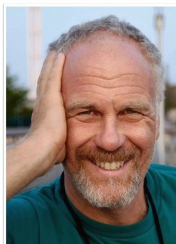
Jeanne Bisson, M.F.T.
[E-mail Me](#) [Read My Bio](#)

City and County of Honolulu Board Representative



Leslie Ross, Ph.D., M.F.T.
[E-mail Me](#) [Read My Bio](#)

Director at Large



Steven Katz, M.A.
[E-mail Me](#) [Read My Bio](#)

HAMFT History

The HAMFT has existed since 1974 in a variety of forms and under various names. From 1974-1988 the HAMFT was comprised of an informal group of mental health professionals interested in promoting systemic and relational therapies. On January 8, 1988 the "Hawaii Di-

vision, American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy" was formed as a Domestic Nonprofit Corporation under the Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA). On July 23, 1998 Articles of Amendment were filed changing the HAMFT corporate

name to the "Hawaii Association for Marriage and Family Therapy: Division of American Association of Marriage & Family Therapy." On May 19, 2011 Articles of Amendment were again filed changing the HAMFT's name to "Hawaii Association of Marriage and Family

Therapists (HAMFT)," reflecting the dissolution of its relationship with the AAMFT. On June 1, 2011 the HAMFT, no longer affiliated with the AAMFT, returned to independently promoting the field of Marriage and Family Therapy in Hawaii.

Membership Information

HAMFT Clinical

Member: \$100 annual membership for a Hawaii licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (\$10 application fee).

HAMFT Prelicense

Member: \$50 annual membership for an MFT intern, applicant, or student enrolled in a degree program leading toward licensure.

HAMFT Associate

Member: \$75 annual membership for licensed Marriage and Family Therapist from a different state, licensed professional in related field, or student in related field (\$10 application fee).

HAMFT Affiliate

Member: \$25 for annual membership for ancillary professionals (family law attorneys, clergy, hospital representatives, university staff, insurance company personnel, social service agency employees), legislative representatives, or otherwise relevant parties (\$10 application fee).

Member Benefits

- Legislative Advocacy
- Professional Networking
- Continuing Education
- Member-to-Member List Serve
- Member Forum
- Hawaii Therapist Locator
- Practice Building Support
- Insurance Consultation
- Newsletters
- Internship Supervision
- Strong Leadership
- Transparency, Accountability, and Inclusion
- MFT and Prelicensed Resources

Become a member of the HAMFT
Komo mai hau mapuna hoe!
Dip in your paddle, join in the effort!



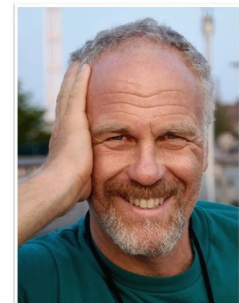
HAMFT
 Hawaii Association of Marriage
 and Family Therapists

A Question of Ethics

You are working with a client who is a drug dealer. He tells you that he is selling a drug on the street that has caused the death of two peo-

ple. He is continuing to sell these drugs, and just says, "Hey, these people know these drugs are bad for you. Some people just react badly."

He has refused to stop. He is seeing you about marital issues. What do you do?



Steve Katz, MA., MFT

Parity In Hawaii

As more Hawaii professionals become licensed as MFTs, and as we continue realizing the significance of our vendership attainment; Members are becoming increasingly interested in the details related to successful business practice as MFTs in Hawaii. One of these details, which is generating growing interest, is that of Mental Health Parity.

Pursuant to parity, there are both federal and state rules. To learn more about the state guidelines related to Mental Health Parity, please click on the following link from the National Conference of State Legislatures: (www.ncsl.org/default.aspx?tabid=14352) where you will find State Laws Mandating or Regulating Mental Health Benefits.

Following are the Parity Diagnoses recognized in Hawaii, as taken from SB761, which became law on June 21, 2005:

- Schizophrenia
- schizo-affective disorder
- bipolar types I and II
- obsessive compulsive disorder
- dissociative disorder
- delusional disorder
- major depression

Below is the legal citation for your reference:

Full Parity, Minimum Mandated Benefit and Mandated Offering State Laws

State: Hawaii

Title/Law Citation/
Effective Date: Mental Health and Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Insurance Benefits; ST § 431M-1 to 431M-7; Eff.1988

Insurance Policies Affected by law; Exemptions: Group and Individual with small employer exemption – 25 or less employees

Type of Benefit: Serious Mental Illness – as defined in most recent DSM

Type of Benefit: Mental Health Parity

Co-pays and Co-insurance: Must be equal

2005 HI Laws Act 140 (SB 761):

A BILL FOR AN ACT SB761

RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. Section 431M-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending the definition of "serious mental illness" to read as follows:

"Serious mental illness" means a mental disorder that is of sufficient severity to result in substantial interference with the

activities of daily living, consisting of at least one of the following: schizophrenia, schizo-affective disorder, [[and]] bipolar types I and II, obsessive compulsive disorder, dissociative disorder, delusional disorder, and major depression, as defined in the most recent version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association[, which is of sufficient severity to result in substantial interference with the activities of daily living]."

SECTION 2. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



Kai Swigart, PhD, MFT

2012 Annual Conference

We are excited to announce that Dr. William Doherty will be presenting in March 2012 in both Honolulu and Hilo for our next HAMFT Annual Conference.

About Dr. Bill Doherty

William J. Doherty, Ph.D., is Professor of Family Social Science, Director of the Citizen Professional Center, and former Director of the Marriage and Family Therapy Program at the University of Minnesota. He presents workshops nationally and internationally. He has received the Significant Contribution to the Field of Marriage and Family Therapy Award from the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. He has won three teaching awards

and his classes are noted for clarity, organization, challenge, humor, and practical applicability. His book for married couples is *Take Back Your Marriage: Sticking Together in a World That Pulls Us Apart*. He is co-founder of the National Registry of Marriage Friendly Therapists. His new work focuses on couples on the brink of divorce.

For more information about Bill, check out his [Professional Autobiography](#), 26 pages from 2001 or his updated [curriculum vitae](#).

Bill will be presenting on **"Bad and Good Couples Therapy: Engaging Couples and Reducing Conflict."**

For more information about Dr. Doherty,

please visit www.drbilldoherty.org.

Description of Workshop

Most workshops focus only on what to do to make therapy effective. But we all know that mistakes are common in therapy, and perhaps particularly in couples therapy, which Jay Haley once said is the most difficult of all types of therapy to do well. This workshop will identify the most common screw-ups therapists make in couples therapy, and demonstrate ways to avoid them. There will be something for both beginning and experienced therapists, who tend to make different mistakes. The workshop will feature clips from movies, some of them hilarious, and a video demonstration of a way to work with a

kind of couple who are often poorly served in couples therapy: ambivalent couples on the brink of divorce. This highly practical workshop will make your couples therapy more effective, whatever your model.



William J. Doherty, Ph.D.

Hawaii Chapter

‘Ano’ai me ke aloha. Greetings and a very warm welcome to the Big Island members of our new chapter!

I am excited and proud to be embarking on a new and

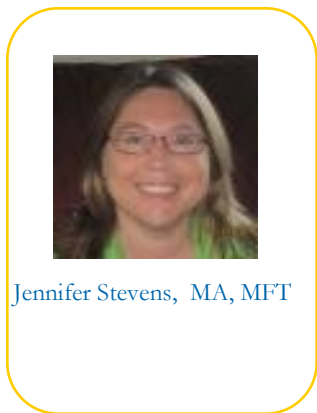
wonderful journey with you all. As your island representative, please know that this chapter will be doing our best to support you and our profession of helping others.

I look forward to meeting, networking and collaborating with you all soon. much mahalo.



Makela Bruno-Kidani, MFT

Kauai Chapter



Jennifer Stevens, MA, MFT

Aloha Friends,

We had our first new monthly chapter meeting Friday August 5th 11:45 am - 1:15 pm . The meeting was small as several members were on summer holidays this month. Thank you to those of you who let me know about your scheduled vacations and plans to attend future meetings.

While we start as a new independent HAMFT, our group is not at all new as we have been friends and colleagues for many years. Those of us at the meeting

discussed having topic discussions in areas of interest and sharing treatment strategies. One of the first areas of interest is that of effective trauma interventions (old and new ideas) and will be followed up at our meeting in September. We also discussed inviting a key guest professional to come to a meeting as an informal meet and greet to facilitate networking and promoting our common areas of concern in the community (a family law attorney, psychiatrist, primary care doctor, etc.)

Please join us at our next meeting with your ideas, enthusiasm and vision as we continue to support one another in our work as MFTs on Kauai.

We will be having regular brown bag lunch meetings on the 2nd Friday of the month with the next meeting scheduled for September 9 at 11:45 am to 1:15 pm I will be hosting the meetings at my office, 4442 Hardy St., Ste. 102 , Lihue. For directions. please call 482-0994.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Maui Chapter - Maui's Super Intern: Toni Rodrigues, MA

After 30 years of working in the mental health field, Maui resident **Antoinette Rodrigues**, "Toni," decided to earn a second master's degree in psych counseling. The graduate of Loyola Marymount University enrolled in Argosy's MFT Program and chose to do her practicum at the Co-occurring Day Treatment Program (COD) at Aloha House Inc. While attending school and working in COD, Toni also juggles a steady job at Maui Family Support Services, as well as being a wife to her husband of 24 years and mother to her teenage son.

"Toni is not your average practicum student," states **Lydee Ritchie**, MFT, who facilitates the After Care program at COD. "She is a super intern coming to the program with decades of experience, yet is open and willing to learn new approaches, styles, strategies, and models in treating both addiction and mental illness." Ritchie adds, "Toni is a work horse with a fantastic atti-

tude. She helps lead psychotherapy and psychoeducation groups, then she'll do individual sessions and progress notes. She's eager to do mental health and addiction assessments, as well as recovery treatment and crisis plans. [She'll even go to an Ohana meeting for a CWS consumer in the program, and take another one to an AA meeting.](#) Plus, on her own initiative, she'll vacuum, throw the trash, organize and redecorate the office.



Dr. Kai Swigart, HAMFT president, presenting Toni with a "Certificate of Appreciation for Outstanding Service"

Now, how much luckier can I get?"

"We'll all have withdrawals after Toni leaves the program at the end of the year," quips **Bob Lanser**, LSCW, Program Manager of the

COD Day Treatment program. "If only we could clone her."

"The consumers all love her," states **Larry Ruiz**, MA, CSAC. Ruiz facilitates the Day Treatment classes of COD. "She already has a good understanding of the dynamics of addiction and mental illness in family systems. And we're so ever grateful that she is initiating the first COD 'Friends and Family Night.' We've been talking about it, but never really pur-

alism and compassion, Maui HAMFT boardmembers **Holly Espinueva** and Ritchie nominated Toni to be honored by HAMFT at its annual conference this year. Dr. **Kai Swigart**, HAMFT president, presented Toni with a "Certificate of Appreciation for Outstanding Service." She also received \$100 to help cover her registration fee to Scott Miller's presentation.

Toni, in her ego-less way declared, "But why am I getting this? I didn't do anything." Then she laughed her big booming infectious laugh. Ritchie replied with a chuckle, "She's also funny, that's why I call her my COD 'sparkplug.'"



Antoinette Rodrigues

Continued on page 9...

sued it until she took ownership of this new project."

Impressed with her caliber of workmanship, her commitment and dedication to the profession of MFT, her profession-

Maui Chapter *continued from page 8*

"By the way, Toni was amongst the first to become a member of HAMFT on July 15, 2011," states Dr. Kai. "That was the very first day we opened the doors to membership."

If all goes well, Toni hopes to graduate in

June 2012. Ritchie and Ruiz also expressed their hopes: To see her coming back to be a permanent member of the COD staff.... Well, of course in addition to seeing her reach her goal of setting up a private practice, too.

"We can't be too selfish," laughs Ritchie. "But Super Interns are hard to come by."

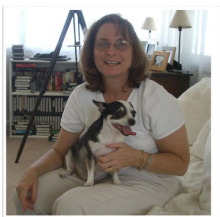


Lydee Ritchie, MFT

Oahu Chapter

Suggestion Box

As seasons change and school begins, as football takes the stage; as reasons range and rules set in, as youth gives way to age; our vision is of truth, of hope, of helping people grow; of serving our profession and communities, did you know?



Leslie Ross, PhD, MFT

Our Oahu Chapter is excited to get started under our newly independent governance structure. We have two new Oahu Directors on the Board, and together we will create the Chapter which will best serve you, our MFT profession, and Hawaii communities.

We need your suggestions in order to plan our Oahu Chapter activities. We could hold monthly round table discussions, offer luncheon meetings with continuing education, or hold pau hana meetings on Aloha Friday

nights. We could offer mini-workshops, provide community service, or co-sponsor activities with sister associations. Please complete the following [survey](#), specify your preferences, and offer suggestions. You may also email suggestions to SuggestionBox@HAMFT.net.

Jeanne Bisson and Steven Katz were appointed into Director-at-Large Board positions, in order to support me in the development of our growing Oahu Chapter. Please join me in welcoming Jeanne and Steve into their new roles. To learn more

about them, please visit our [website](#) and click on "Meet the Board of Directors."

We need your help to co-create our Chapter! Please take a moment to complete the [survey](#) and offer your suggestions. If you have not yet joined our HAMFT, please take a moment to do so. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to [contact me](#) or anyone on the Board to discuss them! Let's get started!

Professional Liability Insurance

“...continue receiving this coverage regardless of your affiliation with another organization.”

Many of you have asked what to do in order to maintain your CPH & Associates Professional Liability Insurance coverage now that the HAMFT is no longer affiliated with the AAMFT. Following some negotiations with Phil Hodson, the CPH Owner and President, we have some great news.

First, if you are or have been covered

under the CPH insurance, then you will be able to continue receiving this coverage regardless of your affiliation with another organization. What this means is that if you have ever been covered under the CPH insurance while you were a Member of the AAMFT, the CAMFT, or another affiliate organization; then you will continue to be eligible for the same coverage at the same rate whether you still belong to the larger organization or not. If you experience any problems while renewing your policy, please contact

me and I will take care of it for you.

Secondly, pursuant to HAMFT Clinical and Prelicense Members obtaining CPH & Associates Professional Liability Insurance for the first time, Mr. Hodson and I have worked out an agreement for Hawaii MFTs who do not belong to one of the central affiliate organizations. Please contact me or your Chapter Representative for details.



Kai Swigart, PhD, MFT



CPH
& ASSOCIATES

Need assistance?
Call us at 800-875-1911

Revolution to Evolution continued from page 1

As humans evolve, increasing numbers appear to prefer collaborative leadership, greater transparency, and accountability in their organizational affiliations. This allows for greater inclusion, co-creation, and knowledge of what is really going on within their organization. Some seem content to allow the corporate fathers to continue controlling all information and activity, to tell them what to do, and to take responsibility for their actions. However, it is the idealistic belief of this writer that we humans will continue to awaken, and that one of these approaches will soon be extinct. In California, it appears as though the evolutionary process is clearly underway.

Marriage and Family Therapy, one of five professions designated by the Federal Government as a

“Core Mental Health Profession,” along with psychiatry, psychology, social work, and psychiatric nursing; was identified in 2010 by the U.S. News and World Report as one of America’s top 50 careers. The MFT profession again received this recognition in 2011.

Marriage and Family Therapy is a science driven, research based profession comprised of mental health practitioners trained and licensed to independently diagnose and treat mental health and substance abuse problems. MFTs specialize in treating mental disorders within the context of relationships. MFTs work with the individual, couple, or family to change behavioral patterns so that problems can be resolved.

[MFTs are effective.](#)

Research studies repeatedly demonstrate the effectiveness of marriage and family therapy in treating the full range of mental and emotional disorders and health problems. Adolescent drug abuse, depression, alcoholism, obesity and dementia in the elderly -- as well as marital distress and conflict – are just some of the conditions Marriage and Family Therapists effectively treat. Studies also reveal that clients are highly satisfied with services of Marriage and Family Therapists. Clients report marked improvement in work productivity, co-worker relationships, family relationships, partner relationships, emotional health, overall health, social life, and community involvement.

[MFTs are wanted and used by the public.](#) In a recent study, 96% of consumers report

that marriage and family therapists are mental health professionals they would recommend to friends. Over 98 percent of clients of marriage and family therapists report therapy services as good or excellent. (1) MFTs are widely accepted in the area of Substance Abuse Treatment. The US Department of Transportation now uses Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs) to evaluate any of the approximately 12.1 million people performing safety sensitive transportation jobs who are covered by DOT drug and alcohol regulations. In addition, studies by the Lewin Group (2) have shown that MFTs receive as much or more regular training in Substance Abuse Treatment as other mental health professions.

[Continued on page 12...](#)

Revolution to Evolution continued from page 8

[The Federal Government extensively recognizes MFTs in education, veterans' treatment, Tricare, and other areas.](#)

The Veterans Administration (VA) also uses MFTs as mental health providers under the Veterans Benefits Act (38 U.S.C.A. §7402). This law authorizes the hiring of MFTs within the VA, and specifically mentions MFT qualifications in addressing veterans' post-traumatic stress disorder needs. The Department of Education, in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, designates marriage and family therapists as qualified providers of early intervention services to infants and toddlers with a disability. Champus/

Tricare, the federal health care program for members of the uniformed services and their families, also uses MFTs as mental health service providers.

[MFTs are more likely to practice in rural areas than are other mental health professions.](#)

Family Therapists are more likely to be in rural areas than psychiatrists and also to be in areas that do not have a psychiatrist (3). In the most rural counties in the U.S., which make up 15.5% of all counties in the U.S., there are twice as many MFTs as psychiatrists in those counties (4). Including Family Therapists in health plans has led to a

greater number of covered providers in rural counties.

[MFTs specifically work in concert with other professions as well as with families and communities.](#)

MFTs specifically look for ways to collaborate within the entire system of care. In a recent study, nearly half of the clients of MFTs were also taking some form of psychotropic medication, demonstrating MFTs traditional collaborative and working relationship with other professions (5).

and Family Therapy (Alexandria, VA AAMFT 1996) 18.

2. Henrick Harwood, "Training of Behavioral Health Practitioners to Address Substance Use Disorders," *Family Therapy Magazine*, November-December 2003,40-42.

3. David Bergman, "Marriage and Family Therapists Serving Rural Clients," *Family Therapy Magazine*, November-December 2004,33.

4. David Bergman, "Marriage and Family Therapists Serving Rural Clients," *Family Therapy Magazine*, November-December 2004,32.

5. David Hartley, et al., *State Licensure Laws and the Mental Health Professions: Implications for the Rural Mental Health Workforce* (Portland, ME: Maine Rural Health Research Center, University of Southern Maine, 2002) 8.

1. William J. Doherty and Deborah S. Simmons, "Clinical Practice Patterns of Marriage and Family Therapists: A National Survey of Therapists and Clients" *Journal of Marital*

Federal Parity Perspective

The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act

Introduction: The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 (MHPAEA) is a federal law that provides participants who already have benefits under mental health and substance use disorder (MH/SUD) coverage parity with benefits limitations under their medical/surgical coverage. MHPAEA may apply to two different types of coverage:

- 1) Large group self-funded group health plans (CMS has jurisdiction over self-funded public sector (non-federal governmental) plans, while the Department of Labor (866-444-3272) has jurisdiction over private sector self-funded group health plans.);
- 2) Large group fully insured group health plans.

New! On February 2, 2010, regulations implementing MHPAEA were published. See information below and new materials in the "Related Links Inside CMS" and "Related Links Outside CMS".

[Read more...](#)

The History of the Profession



Mary Riemersma

For a broader historical perspective on the field of Marriage and Family Therapy, please consider the following article:

The Building of a Profession

Many marriage and family therapists are unaware of the profession's humble beginnings in the State of California. Marriage and family therapy or marriage, family and child counseling as it was

known in the early years, was initiated and crafted by years of legislative initiatives.

Marriage and Family Therapy was birthed as marriage counseling in the 1920s. It was initiated as a part of the routine work of physicians, especially as a part of obstetrics and gynecology, which was itself just becoming a recognized medical specialty. By the

1930s marriage counseling was a recognized specialty. After several false starts, an organizational meeting of the American Association of Marriage Counselors (now AAMFT) was held in June of 1942. At its inception, it was widely multidisciplinary including the professions of medicine, psychology, social work, law, ministry, and teaching.

[Read more...](#)

Hawaii Freedom Story

Emerging from within a land of lush rainforests, whispering waterfalls, and vibrant rainbows; secret beaches, dancing waves, and sweet aloha; where the language recognizes more than 200 kinds of winds; a story of courage and truth has arisen to join the sacred magic of this place.

After a prolonged controversy that attracted national attention within therapy circles, a new Hawai'i organization for marriage and family therapists was announced today. The president of HAMFT, Dr. Kai Swigart, explains why the local organization pursued its independence, "After more than a decade of dictatorial leadership, resulting in various abuses of power and

cover-ups, one of its state divisions, the Hawai'i Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, stood up against this national powerhouse due to its questionably punitive handling of a matter which resulted in an EEOC Complaint and Settlement." When asked what happened next, Swigart says "The result was that our membership dues, our only source of funding, were withheld in order to force us into compliance. When we stood strong, our charter was then suspended with the threat of charter revocation if we failed to submit to the bullying tactics. Holding on to our courage, strength, and dignity, we stood our ground. We were then dechartered, and this national organization representing a profession based on the sys-

temic healing of relationships, dissolved our 23 year affiliation without allowing a single meeting, phone call, or email to discuss the matter." When asked what they did, Swigart says "This Corporation believes it is above the law. It resorts to bullying tactics in order to maintain its absolute power and control over people and information. After dechartering us, it represented us as a villain that damaged its corporation and lost everything, rather than as a courageous branch of itself pursuing truth and accountability that gained its freedom. In these words you will find the rest of the story."

[Read more...](#)



Kai Swigart, PhD, MFT

The Marriage Marketing Dance

For most therapists there is nothing more jarring than the contrast between the joy of working with couples in therapy and your stomach pit of misery at the idea of marketing to find them. The good news is couples offer great energy in session and in your marketing. Let's reframe marketing to couples and give you very concrete ideas on how to attract them.

Branding Yourself

When I say "brand" I mean that sense someone would have of your therapy practice and your personality. It could be considered a "high energy, humorous, secular focus on newlyweds", or it could be having a long career and expertise in helping couples on the brink of divorce. The point is the more you figure out who you are and how to express your passion, the more likely clients are to be attracted to you! Too often therapists are desperate to be neutral but that backfires in marketing. Energy, passion,

values, and explaining why you love working with couples is going to make you stand out. And for the love of therapy, do not mention theories, modalities, or anything that your 8th grader wouldn't understand! Save your Gottman love for your colleagues and instead focus on empathizing with the prospective couple.

Why Therapy?

Relationships are probably the hottest area of psychology, which means you aren't just competing with local therapists but with books, programs, websites, religious institutions, and family or friends of couples in distress who offer advice. When a couple seeks therapy it's usually a heavy decision. The more you express all the various ways therapy can help their marriage, the more likely you are to get the skeptical partner to agree to see you.

Remember your bullet point list of marital distress on your

website is someone's entire universe-destroying situation. When you list reasons couples seek therapy, consider making each bullet point link to a new page that goes more into depth, offers hope and an understanding of how you can help! Put yourself in the shoes of the spouse who finds out at 3am their partner has been having an affair. They vomit, they toss and turn and call in sick to work the next day. When they finally wake up after fitful sleep, they go online to find answers, help, coping, and hope. You are their online marital 911.

Serving the Couples Needs

When you've got two people it just adds to the chaos of getting to therapy. Do they see you near her work, his work, their home? How do they handle childcare? Who does the therapist search and how do they communicate the "top contenders" to their spouse?

The first thing you should do for Google searching is to list ALL the neighborhoods nearby. Depending on how well your website is respected by Google, you may attract more couples searching for the town 5 minutes away from you because you had that town name physically listed on your site. Make sure you list on your homepage any unique offerings: evenings, weekends, intensives, workshops or support groups. Those are going to help a client decide to contact you instead of the therapist next door (or worse, not even seeing a therapist.)

The most interesting way to help prospective clients share your website is to have a social sharing button. This does not mean you have to be on social media yourself, but with various easy buttons (that are free and take seconds to set up)

[Continued on page 16..](#)

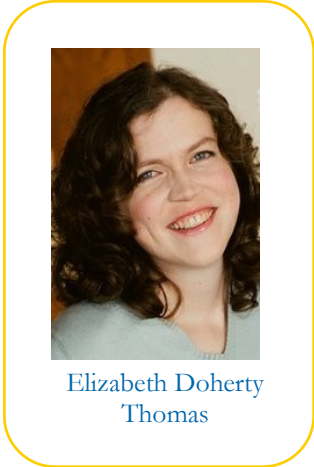
The Marriage Marketing Dance - continued from page 15

you can let couples print your contact/directions page, Facebook, Tweet, email, or otherwise share your page in one of the countless ways there are to share websites. Two of the many free services out there I use are addthis.com and socialtwist.com. You or your webmaster can easily add the small piece of code to every page on your website.


Hopefully you've learned something new and can go back to your website and make some changes or additions. Not being neutral about marriage is probably one of the simplest, most powerful marketing tools you've got. My MFT husband has a great couples therapy practice and most of his new intakes say

they came because of his views of marriage commitment. I encourage you to stick your foot out a bit and see what happens.

Elizabeth Doherty Thomas is starting graduate school in the fall to be an MFT. Since 2005 she has been running MarriageFriendlyTherapists.com. In 2008 she launched her MFT husbands private practice on a shoestring budget with her tech skills. Elizabeth is also the Psychotherapy Networker's social media consultant. Connect with her at ThomasConsultation.com.



Elizabeth Doherty Thomas

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Love working with hope-filled, motivated couples? ✓ Want more visibility online? ✓ Join a therapy directory co-founded by Bill Doherty, Ph.D., and endorsed by Sue Johnson, Ph.D., Michele Weiner-Davis, MSW, and many other top marital therapists. 	<p>The National Registry of</p>  <p>MARRIAGE FRIENDLY THERAPISTS</p> <p><small>An Advanced Practitioner Network</small></p> <p>Join today.</p> <p>www.MarriageFriendlyTherapists.com</p>
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GoodTherapy.org Collaborates with HAMFT and Publishes Article about Tug of War with AAMFT

On August 23, 2011, GoodTherapy.org published an online article titled "[AAMFT Loses Tug of War with Hawaii Division](#)" to share the story about HAMFT's struggles with AAMFT. The decision to publish and share this story with GoodTherapy.org's audience was based on support for acknowledging an important message contained within the story – a message about how unethical misuse and abuse of power, in this case by one organization and group of persons over another, often leads to harm and distrust in the mental health field.

A collaborative relationship is developing between

GoodTherapy.org and HAMFT, as the two organizations share a complimentary mission and vision that support a mutual goal for promoting and advocating for ethical and healthy Marriage and Family Therapy practices.

Ranked as one of the top therapist directories on the web, GoodTherapy.org is an organization consisting of mental health professionals from over 30 countries worldwide who support efforts to reduce harm in therapy.

GoodTherapy.org was founded by [Noah Rubinstein](#), a licensed marriage and family therapist, in an effort to address and prevent therapists

from misusing their power, getting their own needs met at the expense of their clients, violating boundaries, and treating clients in punitive and condescending ways.

As an advocate for healthy psychotherapy, GoodTherapy.org educates the public about the differences between healthy and unhealthy psychotherapy practices and promotes collaborative and non-pathologically based approaches within the professional community.

Launched in 2007, the GoodTherapy.org Network receives over 1.5 million therapist searches

each month and reaches, through a variety of partner and advertising networks an estimated seven million people per month.

GoodTherapy.org maintains the highest membership requirements, individually verifying that each applicant meets strict educational, licensure, and philosophical guidelines.

For more information, please check out the [GoodTherapy.org mission and vision](#) and [membership benefits](#) and [requirements](#).



Grow Your Practice with GoodTherapy.org
Supporting Healthy Therapy



MFTology: Beijing Perspectives on Psychotherapy

Xiaoyi Fang, head of the doctoral level counseling program at Beijing Normal University spoke with UO Counseling Psychology and Human Services students and faculty members about "Current Trends on Couples and Family Therapy in China" on Monday, March 17th. During his week-long visit,

Fang will meet with faculty in the College of Education to observe clinical training strategies and research initiatives.

Emerging China sees growing need for psychotherapy. In China, the majority of psychology professionals are still concentrated in the big psychiatric hospi-

tals and in the teaching hospitals, or in specialist counseling clinics.

But trends suggest that rapid expansion in the economy is creating opportunities to expand the current Chinese treatment model, and health professionals in China are looking at suc-

cessful psychotherapy and counseling training programs to develop additional strategies to address shifts in Chinese attitudes toward seeking counseling support.

[Read more...](#)

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Please visit www.hamft.net for more information and updates!

HAMFT promotes the field of Marriage and Family Therapy as an art, a science, and a mental health profession as it networks, educates, and advocates for the enrichment of its members, the advancement of its vocation, and the health of its community.



HAMFT
Hawaii Association of Marriage
and Family Therapists