

The International Connection

The International Family Therapy Association



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Family In a Global World

Prague Conference



PRAGUE - The Prague Conference will be held in honor of Virginia Satir's 90th birthday and in memory of her being the Honorary President of the first World Conference on Family Therapy held in Prague 20 years ago.

Three Satir groups, Avanta the Virginia Satir Network, the Satir Institute of the Czech Republic and the Satir Institute of the Slovak Republic are co-sponsoring the conference in Prague May 16 - 19, 2007.

The plenary themes for the Conference are: Sameness and Diversity in Families of the Five Continents; Multidisciplinary Care of the Family; Therapeutic Work with the Family; and The Personality and Work of Virginia Satir and her Global Legacy.

The plenary speakers include Dr. Florance Kaslow, the first president of the International Family Therapy Association (IFTA); Dr. Judith Landau, the president-elect of IFTA; Dr. Donald Bloch, the honorary vice-president of the first Prague conference; Dr. Maria Gomori, friend and colleague of

Virginia Satir; and, Dr. Lee Wai-Yung, Director of the Hong Kong University Family Institute and co-author of *Mastering Family Therapy* with S. Minuchin and G. Simon (2006). There will be many workshops and other speakers. The conference committee is also planning several post-conference programs in several different European cities

The International Family Therapy Association has endorsed the conference and the IFTA Board of Directors will meet on Friday 11 AM - 4 PM and Saturday, 4 PM - 6 PM.

John Banmen, Honorary Chair of the Prague Conference and an IFTA Board member said, "since IFTA is not holding its own congress this year, we invite all IFTA members to attend the Prague Conference and then attend the IFTA Portugal Congress in 2008.

For registration and hotel information about the Prague Conference, see www.conference.cz/wfc2007. John Banmen can be contacted at jbanmen@dccnet.com.



Ifta Board Election Results

President Toby Herman announced the election of Francisco Aviles as President-Elect. Dr. Aviles begins his term on July 1, 2007. IFTA Board officers are chosen by election from membership by the Board of Directors. President Toby Herman's term expires on June 30, 2007. At that time, President-Elect Judith Landau becomes President. Current Past-President Arnon Ben-tovim ends his term on June 30 as well. The other Board officers are Chris Venter, Secretary and William Northey, Treasurer.

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CELEBRATING PAST SUCCESS AND TAKING STOCK

Toby Herman, CFT

2005-2007 IFTA President

The XV IFTA Reykjavik Congress was an enriching experience. It was refreshing after Congresses in Turkey and the USA, to be in a country where people still enjoy the freedom to wander around without fear of security, where young mothers leave their prams safely outside and children play freely. The police carry no weapons and Iceland has no military but for half a century when the US has maintained a military presence in Iceland. The US withdrew their troops just before the Reykjavik congress

leaving Iceland's airspace defenseless. Perhaps this left our participants with a false sense of security but, like the Icelanders say, we can now fear everything and do nothing or fear nothing and do everything. Most prefer the latter believing that the first would entail a world-view of us (good guys) vs. evil (them bad guys). In any case our colleagues in Iceland were thankful to be able to help with the XV IFTA Congress but would have liked to offer more extensive hospitality. Those of you that stayed with Icelandic families know that although everything is expensive, especially food, Icelanders spare no expense for their guests.

It was exciting to have speakers from different traditions in our field, the solution focused and the more analytic traditions. Hector Fernandez Alvarez talked about the importance of trust in the therapeutic relationship and how our personal styles can influence the process and outcomes of therapy. Family Therapy is a Utopia, he said, but the Utopia must be "concrete." We as therapists can help our clients create a better future by offering them a safe space to dream, where alternatives are explored and experiences reorganized. Our work is then to nurture a "concrete utopia," one that is sufficiently close to the patient's present possibilities to be realistically attainable. Kaethe Weingarten spoke of realistic hope, of doing hope and doing hope with others. She emphasized the importance of looking for courage and supporting the whistle blowers to resist isolation and to bear witness to despair, to refuse indifference. To practice realistic hope we need to resist isolation and bear witness and honor "whistle blowing courage." Frank Pitman sees therapy as a process of empowerment and feels that therapy is fueled less by the techniques or training of therapists than by the therapist's values, the individual experience and wisdom of the therapist. Kenneth Hardy spoke eloquently of how the person of the therapist is an essential factor in therapy. Harry Korman and Yvonne Dolan were, of course, more focused on the end and how the client can know that they have what they wanted from therapy. We were very fortunate to have our revered colleague Insoo Kim Berg address Congress participants. She died suddenly on January 10th. Insoo had an enormous absolute impact on us all. She had confidence in the strengths and abilities of the individual and said "Knowing when to push, when to let go, what to listen to, and what to ignore - all these skills are based on the profound respect for human dignity and working to restore a sense of who they are and what they want to be." Insoo affected everyone both personally and professionally. There were so many more wonderful speakers and the experience of listening to them was truly enriching.

Taking Stock After coming together to strengthen ourselves and our professions, our personal and professional connections, it is good to take stock. The world is changing and so must we. IFTA is now entering the next stage of its development. The Reykjavik Congress was perhaps the last congress where IFTA enters into a financial partnership with a local association. From now on IFTA will hold congresses financially independent from the host country, but dependent on their cooperation and collaboration. Only time will tell how this change will affect IFTA's growth. Hopefully it will lead to a stronger IFTA and the possibility of holding congresses in countries where financial considerations are less significant and to the possibility of subsidizing our Board to our yearly IFTA Board meetings. It is imperative, however, that we continue to look to our colleagues in other therapy organizations and continue to promote our external relations policy with organizations that influence social policy and mental health practice. We need to strengthen our Non Governmental Organization (NGO) status in the United Nations to be able to promote positive change, peace and freedom to grow and prosper for one and for all. IFTA is an organization that is dedicated to promoting the needs of practitioners all over the world and I am proud to be part of it. I am grateful to our founding President Florence Kaslow for starting us on this venture and to my predecessors who worked hard to ensure our aims.

Transitions On July 1st of 2007 our President Elect Judith Landau will take over the Presidency and Francisco Aviles-Gutierrez from Mexico will become President-Elect. Francisco is currently the President of the Mexican Family Therapy Association (AMTF). He was a member of IFTA's Board of Directors in 1996-2000 and was again elected for the term of 2006-2009. I am confident that with your help and under their charge, IFTA will blossom and grow.

Portugal 2008 I hope to see you this May at the World Family Conference in Prague where we will be celebrating the 90th birthday of Virginia Satir and the 20th anniversary of the first World Conference of Family Therapy in Prague (1987). The Honorary President of the Conference is Dr. John Banmen, a member of the IFTA Board. It is held under the auspices of the Lord Mayor of Prague, myself for IFTA and the Board of the Session of Family of Therapy of the Psychotherapeutic Society. Make sure to look for our first Announcement of upcoming IFTA World Congresses: the XVI IFTA World Congress in Lisbon in the spring of 2008 and the XVII IFTA World Congress in South Africa, in the fall of 2009. In the meantime I wish you health, peace and happiness and I thank you for your participation and contribution to IFTA.

REFLECTIONS, HOPE, AND RESILIENCE FEATURES IN ICELAND IFTA CONGRESS

A variety of presenters highlighted the International Family Therapy Association's XVth World Family Therapy Congress October 4-7 in fascinating Reykjavik, Iceland, each reflecting one or more facets of the congress theme: Reflection, Hope, and Resilience: Strengthening Foundations. The plenary session presentations of the twelve major presenters ranged from the sharing of knowledge and questions from lengthy clinical careers to critical analysis of contemporary social development and its effects, to practical observations on specific therapeutic approaches, to trends in family therapy organizational development, to experiential/participatory offerings.

Some Reflections From a Veteran Therapist

Frank S. Pittman, III (USA) opened the congress with an admittedly "often controversial" statement of things he wished to pass on to other therapists at his "mid-career" after 45 years as a therapist and treating more than 15,000 families. The 21 opinions that he has amassed about therapy, mental illness, happiness and unhappiness-about life are given in a sidebar.

Observations from Solution-Focused Therapists

Three leaders in Solution Focused Therapy--the late Insoo Kim Berg (SA), Yvonne Dolan (USA), and Harry Korman (Sweden)--each presented from different perspectives of that therapeutic approach. Berg, who died on January 10, 2007, presented in a plenary session on solution building in child protection services, describing "child protective services as the most difficult work anywhere in the world." She offered practical, useful tools including ways to form effective working relationships and such immediately helpful tools as "six useful questions that are key to successful outcomes." Dolan's presentation on "the grammar of hope" examined the power of words, silence, and behavior when working with trauma and offered practical techniques for respectfully offering hope while gently helping people find ways to cope and gradually moving forward following life changing events. Korman gave four reasons why he is still using "the miracle question" after 20 years of using it. It is: one way to create goals for therapy; a virtual miracle (as an emotional experience); a preparation for exceptions; and as part of creating a progressive story.

Contributions from Iceland and Norway

Attention to current social development and its appearance in various patterns of family constellations and relationships, with special emphasis on patterns in Iceland and Scandinavia, was paid in the address of Sigrun Juliusdottir (Iceland). Emphasizing the crucial role of change, she drew on research results, including a new study on young people's life styles and family values, and offered some conclusions regarding the possibilities and ethical obligations the emerging pattern implies for therapeutic work with families and intimate relationships. Tom Andersen's (Norway) presentation on "In Troubled Times We can Easily Contribute to Excluding and Not Including Talks" mentioned Harry Goolishian's concept of "the problem-created system" and a philosophical overview of three areas of reality with the possibility of connecting the three parts with the concept of the problem-created system.

Hope for the Best and Prepare for the Worst

Living in the midst of the terrible three-high technology, terrorism, and trauma-has made everyday life a familiar stage for hurt, hopelessness, and low grade despair. These broader social issues coupled with the normal struggles of everyday life have helped to contribute to a state of unstated suffering, noted Kenneth V. Hardy (USA). Hardy gave specific attention to exploring how the concept of suffering can be used to promote a sense of

purpose and hope for us as therapists and in the work we do. Hope was also a major theme in the address of Kaethe Weingarten (USA). She said that realistic hope: accommodates doubt and despair; incorporates contradictions; seeks goals and pathways to those goals; and celebrates a variety of narrative forms. She also expanded on seven actions that make the practice of realistic hope more "do-able": Seek inspiration in the arts. Train ourselves to perceive realistic hope. Think of hope as a verb not a noun. Use global resources. Look for courage. Work toward participation. Stretch the boundaries.

Personal Style of the Therapist and Hope

Hector Fernandez-Alvarez (Argentina) highlighted the personal style of therapist and the factor of hope, presenting a synthesis of his research on the style and its applications in various clinical and cultural contexts to illustrate the salient aspects that contribute most to develop and sustain the factor of hope so necessary to confront the obstacles in therapy and to open up the path that enables the therapist to find the alternatives which help free the patient.

Panel on Organizational Developments and Implications

Three invited panelists--William C. Nichols (USA), Arlene Vetere (UK), and Mony Elkaim (Belgium)--reported briefly on family therapy organizational developments and their implications for the future. Vetere and Elkaim essentially described developments with the European Family Therapy Association, focusing on current activities to advance the credentialing of family therapists in several nations. Nichols sketched the emergence of marital and family therapy as a full fledged profession in the United States, and to some extent in Canada, and pointed to the importance of family therapy focusing on the person of the therapist and the relationship between the therapist and the clients, the therapeutic relationship.

Besides the plenary sessions, the congress offered scores to shorter presentations by clinicians and researchers from countries around the world.

IFTA CONGRESS DRAWS FROM 39 NATIONS

The XVth International Family Therapy Association's World Family Therapy Congress drew participants to Reykjavik, Iceland from 39 countries around the world. The largest contingents came from Norway (107), the United States (64), Sweden (52), and Iceland (49). Other nations represented included: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, and the United Kingdom.

The following sponsors helped people to attend: the Danish Association for Systems Therapy and Consultation, the Finnish Association of Family Therapy, the Norwegian Family Therapy Association, the Jacobs Foundation, the City of Reykjavik, and the (Iceland) Ministry of Social Affairs.

Presided over by Toby Sigrun Herman (Iceland), IFTA president, the congress was conducted in cooperation with FFF, the Icelandic family therapy association.



TRAINING MATTERS

A Report from the Reykjavik IFTA Congress
Phoebe Prosky, Coordinator/Secretariat

The Iceland Congress yielded the Training Division seven new members, including three organizational members from Austria, Canada and Hungary. At our Training Resources table we had a large selection of donated video and audio tapes and several books, many of which were enthusiastically purchased by old and new Division members. This Resources table, where materials are available to Division members for \$1 US apiece, is proving to be popular and very useful for people in need of training materials; it is also helping to attract members to our Division. The Portugal Congress is on the horizon: Please put aside one piece of training material that you are not using to bring to Portugal for our table; if everyone brought one piece, we would be well supplied. If you cannot get to Portugal, please send your material to me at 143 Flying Point Road, Freeport, Maine, 04032, USA. We maintain a clearinghouse of materials and will get them to the Congresses.

Training Division Board Members met with the IFTA Board to report on our activities and seek their input on our Faculty Exchange Program and other Division matters. The Board was enthusiastic in its support of the activities of the Division. We had a very useful discussion of the Faculty Resource Program. In broad outlines the discussion yielded that we must keep two foci in mind: providing training to countries whose programs are just starting out, and developing collaborative exchanges with countries whose programs are already somewhat developed.

Our Membership Meeting of the Division in Iceland was a small one, with people from Canada, Austria and the U.S. in attendance. We focused on infrastructure issues, such as qualifications for providing training for the Faculty Resource Program, finding funding to make the Faculty Resource program sustainable after our original funds are expended, exploring the possibility to have Training Division dues collected by IFTA using credit cards to relieve the problems of money exchange, and proposing a sub-plenary on training at the Portugal Congress.

Currently the Training Division Board is in the process of reviewing drafts of the materials that will structure the Faculty Resource Program: qualifications to participate as a trainer, the application form for trainers, and the application form for programs seeking trainers. We hope to have the final form of those materials out to the general IFTA membership by spring 2007.

Please remember to donate your used training materials. And thank you to all who have done so in the past.

Phoebe Prosky, Secretariat for the Training Division, can be contacted at 143 Flying Point Road, Freeport, Maine 04032, USA. pprosky@suscom-maine.net

CALLING ALL IFTA MEMBERS

Please set aside one item of used training materials - a book or tape you can spare or have written or produced - to donate to the Training Division. If everyone donates one item, we will have a good supply to make available to developing programs in need of materials. Bring your materials to the Portugal Congress or send to Phoebe Prosky at the above address.

Journal of Family Psychotherapy Available Online to IFTA Members

The Journal of Family Psychotherapy is now available online to IFTA members. That means you not only will receive a hard-copy issue of the Journal each quarter, but you can also get the Journal online!

You should have by now received login information from Haworth Press. Since we do not always have accurate email information from all of our members, or we may have an error in the database, you may not have received that information.

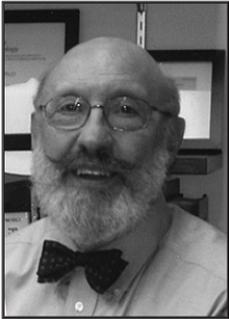
If you have not received an email with instructions on how to log in to the Journal's online access, contact **Lisa Clark** at Haworth Press: LClark@haworthpress.com Just give her your name and address, and tell her that you are an IFTA member who would like information on how to log in to the Journal of Family Psychotherapy.



16th IFTAa world congress Portugal Spring 2008

Report of the Office of the Secretariat:

General Secretary: William Hiebert



William Hiebert

Online Renewal of Memberships

The IFTA web site linkage for online credit card renewals has been up and running for six months. The glitches have been worked out and the system accepts credit cards from most countries around the world.

If you wish to renew your membership online (the fastest and easiest way), simply go to www.ifta-familytherapy.org and click on Application/Renewal and follow the instructions. Or, you may go directly to the Application/Renewal page by going to www.ifta-familytherapy.com and complete the application. Please use the postal address where you receive your credit card statement when you complete the application on the bottom of the page. The security code, which you must fill in, is the last 3 digits of the number of the back of card. If you are using American Express, the security code is the 4 digits on the front of the card above the main number.

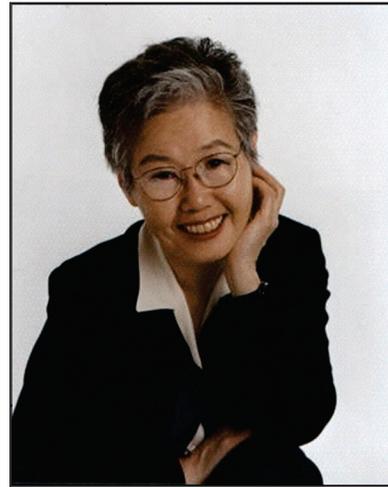
Is Your Email Addresses Current

Many members change their email addresses and don't notify the Secretariat. If you haven't received an International Connection or Journal for some time, check with us to see if your email address is current.

You will receive a 60 day, and then a 30 day notice. After the passing of your anniversary date, your membership will expire. Please let us know if you are having any problems with this system.

Anniversary Date Renewal System

We now use an "anniversary date" system. Each person's IFTA membership expires on the yearly anniversary date of their original membership. You will receive notices 90 days prior to your membership expiring. If you do not pay within that month, you will receive a 60 day, and then a 30 day notice. After the passing of your anniversary date, your membership will expire. Please let us know if you are having any problems with this system.



Insoo Kim Berg July 25, 1934 - January 10, 2007

Insoo Kim Berg passed away suddenly and peacefully in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on January 10, 2007. She was 72 years old.

Berg was, along with her husband, the late Steve de Shazer, a primary developer of the Solution Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) approach. A world renowned psychotherapist, lecturer, and author, she was co-founder and Executive Director of the Brief Family Therapy Center (BFTC) in Milwaukee, and trained therapists all around the world in the SFBT approach. A prolific writer, she authored numerous articles clarifying the SFBT approach, and 10 ground breaking books elucidating its application to a wide variety of clinical, social service and other settings. Her books, which have been translated into many languages, include among others *Interviewing for Solutions*, *Tale of Solution*, *Family Based Services*, *Solutions Step by Step*, *Children's Solution Work*, *Brief Coaching for Lasting Solutions*, and most recently, *More than Miracles* (currently in press).

Berg served on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, *Family Psychology and Counseling Series*, *Families in Society*, and *Family Process*. She was a Founder of the Solution-focused Brief Therapy Association, a Clinical member and Approved Supervisor for the American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy, and was also active in the Wisconsin Association for Marriage & Family Therapy, the National Association of Social Workers, and the European Brief Therapy Association. She was a frequent key note speaker at international conferences and regularly conducted seminars and workshops on Solution-focused Brief Therapy throughout the U.S., Canada, South America, Asia and Europe.

Born and raised in Korea, Berg studied at Ewha Women's University in Seoul, Korea prior to coming to the United States to study in 1957. She earned B.S. and MSSW degrees at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, completed post graduate studies at the Family Institute of Chicago, the Meninger Foundation and the Mental Research Institute in Palo Alto, CA where she was mentored by the late John Weakland. It was at MRI that she first met Steve de Shazer. She worked at the Milwaukee Family Services in the early years of her career.

A complete obituary can be found on the IFTA web site: <http://www.ifta-familytherapy.org>

Recent Book Releases

Derek Ball, Ph.D. Book Review Editor

Fascism and Democracy in the Human Mind: A Bridge Between Mind and Society

Israel Charney

What would you have done if caught up in the events of the Holocaust or Rwanda? How can humans commit these acts of violence, on a large and small scale, and how were they allowed to happen? This book suggests the answer can be found inside each of us, in the different ways in which we organize our minds. The author defines two paradigms of cognitive organization, democracy and fascism, and shows how both of these systems can determine behavior in personal relationships and on a broader social level. New directions for treatment of violence are discussed as well as new understandings of terrorism and genocide. A call for democratic thinking, which recognizes complexity and embraces responsibility is just what this world needs.

I.W. Charney is the editor in chief of the Encyclopedia of Genocide and executive director of the Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide in Jerusalem. As a practicing family therapist and past president of the International Family Therapy Association, he is professor of psychology and family therapy at Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Lyman Wynne, Family Therapist and Leader in Research on Mental Illness Dies. For further information, read the obituary on the web site: www.ifta-familytherapy.org

Reflections From a Life in Psychotherapy:

Some Often Controversial Things

From Frank Pittman to Other Therapists

1. The Sane versus the Insane: Insanity is real and its causes may be chemical, social, and/or psychological.
2. Conscious versus Unconscious: I believe Freud was wrong about many things, centrally the unconscious.
3. Nature versus Nurture: Both, obviously.
4. Psychiatric Hospitals. Family therapy is an effective alternative to psychiatric hospitalization.
5. Family as culprit. Families teach dysfunction, maybe inadvertently, usually without malice.
6. Double Binds. Families may non-specifically increase stress and thus cause symptoms.
7. Structural versus Strategic. Tricks and shame can work, but most change is the outgrowth of natural crisis.
8. Gender and Feminism. All males and females are victims of gender training.
9. Victims. Traumas are hurdles to be survived.
10. Repressed and recovered memories. This theory seems to be nonsense.
11. Neutrality. Nobody is really neutral, or should try.
12. Values of therapists, not demographics, fuel therapy.
13. Brain Chemistry versus Medication. Sex, exercise, play, music, and movies affect brain chemistry too.
14. Happiness versus Unhappiness. Therapy must teach happiness rather than justifying unhappiness.
15. Character. Psychotherapy is one of the ways in which we therapists teach character.
16. Instruction book. We spend adulthood correcting the instruction book on life we got growing up.
17. Messages from the culture. Garbage in, garbage out.
18. Research versus Faith versus Experience. Research may not be nearly as valid as vast experience.
19. Divorce and Happiness. Divorce may be preferable to suicide and homicide.
20. Brain chemistry of infidelity and marriage. Romance is a chemical state that won't last.
21. Homosexuality. We have decreed that homosexuality is normal. (For some? For any of us? For all of us?)