



Volume 24, Number 2, July, 2011  
E-Newsletter Edition

## The INTERNATIONAL CONNECTION

# 2012 World Family Therapy Congress in Vancouver

## Former Olympic City to Host IFTA's 25th Anniversary



Vancouver, Canada, will be the host for IFTA's 20th World Family Therapy Congress March 21 - 24, 2012. "A beautiful city and a stimulating program—what more can you want for the 25th Anniversary of the Founding of IFTA?" asked a veteran of many IFTA congresses. A Pre-Congress Family Therapy Research Forum will open the event on Wednesday, March 21, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM, with the Congress Opening and Welcome scheduled for Wednesday at 5:30 PM.

With an outstanding lineup of major presenters—John and Julie, Gottman, Susan Johnson and John Banmen—already scheduled, the Program Committee, Chaired by Lee Bowen, has begun reviewing proposals from around the world to fill openings in workshops and other types of program slots with important and relevant contents. The 2012 list of topics for which abstracts can be submitted for consideration offers more opportunities than ever before to extend sharing among colleagues.

Theme of the congress is "Couples Therapy: Advancing the Profession." The focus will be on sharing findings, approaches to problems and ways of coping with them. The Congress' goals is to provide avenues that heal hurting families, couples, and children in various cultures, and fostering mental health and growth in challenging times. Communicating and networking among therapists, researchers, teachers, and mental health administrators both during the time in Vancouver and after returning to home and community will be a significant part of the congress process. The congress is expected to enhance a participant's awareness of how the development of family therapy is rapidly becoming a mutual back-and-forth process in which new ways can and are found from all parts of the world.

Hundreds of participants from scores of countries will gather to learn about old, familiar problems and needs and novel, unfamiliar challenges they have not been faced previously. Therapy, education, training, supervision, and personal growth and development emphases will be offered for the enrichment of clinicians, academicians, and administrators and managers, as well as for students, in mental health fields.

The Call for Proposals is open now through September 15, 2012 ([www.ifta-congress.com](http://www.ifta-congress.com)).

### KEY DATES FOR VANCOUVER CONGRESS

- Hotel Special Incentive ends July 30
- September 15th – Deadline for Proposal Submission
- December 1 - Early Registration Ends

## Keynote Speakers for the 2012 Congress

Florence Kaslow  
Doug Sprenkle  
Julie Gottman  
John Gottman  
Susan Johnson  
John Banmen

Details on page 3



# IFTA OFFICER AND BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

As a result of the Officer Election, Lee Bowen, Ph.D., USA was elected to the post of President-Elect and David McGill, Ph.D., USA, was elected to a second 3-year term as Secretary. On July 1, 2011, Fatma Torun Reid, M.S., Turkey,



**Fatma Torun Reid**

became President and William Nichols, Ed.D., became Past President. Judith Landau, M.D., completed her 6-year term on June 30 having served two years as President Elect, two as President and two as Past President. Their election to officers resulted in their two board slots becoming vacant. IFTA officers are elected by the Board of Directors.

Elected to the Class of 2014 were: Kenneth Hardy, Ph.D., USA; Joyce Ma, Ph.D., Hong Kong; and Jaakko Seikkula, Ph.D., Finland. Hardy is returning for his first full 3-year term after serving a one-year appointment to complete

the unexpired terms of a previous board member. Seikkula is returning to complete another 3-year term and Ma was elected to her first three-year terms.

Elections for Members at Large for the Board of Directors is held each spring for a 3-year term beginning July 1 of each year and ending three years later on June 30.



## Landau Completes Presidency Service to IFTA

Judith Landau, M.D. began her work in the presidency in 2005 when she was elected to position of President Elect. In 2007, she assumed the presidency of IFTA and served for two years. In 2009, she became Past President. On Thursday, March 31, President William Nichols presented her with a plaque in honor of her many hours of distinguished service

to IFTA and the development of family therapy around the world. "Thank you for your tremendous efforts on behalf



of IFTA and family therapy," said Nichols during the presentation.

## Pamela Lessing, IFTA Photographer, Honored in Holland

After six years of faithful service as IFTA's photographer and hundreds upon hundreds of IFTA photographs, Pamela was presented with a plaque of appreciation for her services by President William Nichols. In his remarks, Nichols said, "What presenters say at Congresses may not be remembered but Pam's work lives on into the future in a recorded archive." However, the picture of her receiving the plaque from Nichols was not taken by her but by a mysteriously placed undercover photographer. Her photographs of previous congress can be seen on smugmug.

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### IFTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS JULY 1, 2011 – JUNE 30, 2012

#### OFFICERS

**President**, Fatma Torun Reid, MS, Turkey 2011-2013; **President Elect**: Lee Bowen, PhD, USA (2013-2015); **Past President**, William Nichols, EdD, USA (2009-11); **Recording Secretary**, David W. McGill, PhD, USA (2011-13); **Treasurer**, Barbara Warner, CQSW, UK (2009-12)

#### DIRECTORS AT LARGE

##### 2009-2012, Term ends June 30, 2012:

Khwala Abu-Baker, PhD, (Israel); Lee Bowen, PhD, (USA); Lia Fernandez, MD, (Portugal); and Roxana Zevallos, Lic. (Peru).

##### 2010-2013, Term ends June 30, 2013:

Charlotte Engelbrecht, MCur, (South Africa); John Lawless, PhD, MPH, (USA); Martine Nisse, MS, (France); Maire Stedman, MSC, (UK).

##### 2011-2014, TERM ENDS JUNE 30, 2014

Ken Hardy, PhD, (USA); Joyca Ma, PhD, (Hong Kong) and Jaakko Seikkula, PhD, (Finland).

**GENERAL SECRETARY**: William Hiebert, DMin

**CONGRESSES CFO**: Fred Jefferson mailto:fredlhjefferson@yahoo.com, +651-340-616

# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS FOR VANCOUVER



## SUE JOHNSON

Sue Johnson is a clinical psychologist, researcher, professor, author, popular presenter and one of the leading innovators in the field of couple therapy. She has an active media presence.

Sue is one of the originators of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy (EFT), a powerful, tested intervention to help repair and build strong loving bonds. She has received numerous honors for her work, including the Outstanding Contribution to the Field of Couple and Family Therapy Award from AAMFT, the Research in Family Therapy Award from AFTA, and is an invited Fellow of the APA.

One of her books is: *Hold Me Tight, Seven Conversations for a Lifetime of Love* (Little Brown, New York).

## FLORENCE KASLOW

Florence Kaslow will open the 2012 Congress and help us celebrate IFTA's 25th Anniversary. She was the founding and first president



of IFTA and served on its Board for 16 years. Her distinguished career includes being Past President and on the editorial boards of many important organizations that have influenced the history of Family Therapy. She has conducted workshops in over 50 countries.

Currently Florrie is President of Kaslow Associates, a consulting firm; Director of the Florida Couples and Family Institute; and a Distinguished Visiting Professor of Psychology at the Florida Institute of Technology.

Dr. Kaslow is co-author of *Painful Partings: Divorce and Its Aftermath* (New York: Wiley, 1997) with Dr. Lita L. Schwartz. Most recently she wrote a chapter for the *Handbook of EMDR and Family Therapy*

Processes (co-edited with F. Shapiro and L. Maxfield, Wiley, 2007).

## JOHN GOTTMAN

John Gottman is world renowned for his work on marital stability and divorce prediction, involving the study of emotions, physiology, and communication. He was recently voted as one of the Top 10 Most Influential Therapists of the past quarter-century by the PsychoTherapy Networker publication. His 30 years of breakthrough research on marriage and relationships has earned him numerous major awards. He is the Executive Director of The Relationship Research Institute.



## JULIE GOTTMAN

Julie Gottman is a licensed Clinical Psychologist, recently named Washington State Psychologist of the Year. She has been a frequent guest on radio and TV talk shows. Julie is co-founder and Clinical Director of The Gottman Institute, and Clinical Director of The Relationship Research Institute. In addition to other books she has authored, Julie co-designed a curriculum for couples suffering from effects of poverty titled, *Loving Couples Loving Children*. Julie has a private clinical practice on Orcas Island, where she conducts intensive therapy and retreats for individuals and couples, specializing with abuse and trauma survivors, and cancer patients and their families.



## JOHN BANMEN

John Banmen, is internationally known as an author, therapist and educator. His training programs take him to over a dozen countries in Asia, Europe, South America and North America. Dr. Banmen was recently, for four years, honorary Associate Professor at the University of Hong Kong and was on faculty at the University of British Columbia for 21 years. He is currently the Director of Training for the Satir Institute of the Pacific.

Dr. Banmen is founding president of the BC Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and former board member for AAMFT, as well as the BC Psychological Association, and IFTA.

John's recent books are, *Applications of the Satir Growth Model* (2006), *Satir Transformational and Systemic Therapy* (2007) and *In Her Own Words* (2008).



## DOUG SPRENKLE

Doug Sprenkle, the Moderator of the Pre-Congress Research Forum, is highly recognized for his scholarly and professional contributions to the field of Family

Therapy. He has been given many career awards, including the AAMFT Culmulative Career Contribution to Marriage and Family Therapy Research award, and the Significant Contribution to Family Therapy Award. He is also reknown as a co-developer of the Circumplex Model of Marital and Family Systems. During the past 10 years he has devoted much of his scholarly attention to common factors in marriage and family therapy interventions, and is the first author of a book on this topic that is under contract with Guilford Press.

# 2011 Keynoters Deliver at Holland Congress

Once again—in the Netherlands this time, the IFTA World Family Therapy Congress delivered on the theme for the March 2011 meeting. Three outstanding keynoters highlighted the theme, “Family Therapy: Coming Together for Peace, Justice, and Healing.” In different and complementary ways Monica McGoldrick, John Shotter, and Thomas Sexton fulfilled the promise that the congress would “**focus on presenting approaches for coping with problems and helping to heal hurting families, couples and children in various cultures.**” Each made a significant contribution to the creation of what was generally acknowledged to be a rare ambience of warmth and learning.

Noting that “our clinical work must address clients in context,” veteran clinician **Monica McGoldrick, MSW, PhD** (h.c.), a leading pioneer in multicultural and cross-cultural understanding and therapy and exponent and developer of genogram usage, provided a graphic illustration of how the use of genograms can connect context and transforming life narratives in a plenary session. Highlighting the value of the idea of “home” where one can be oneself and have a sense of belonging, she presented ways of relating to families that affirm their sense of belonging to the past, the present, and the future, and their empowerment to liberate themselves from invisibility and oppression. McGoldrick’s warm and lively presentation illustratively covered a variety of topics including conflicts and cutoffs in family relationships, siblings, friendship, un mourned losses, family secrets, and traumatic



legacies. In a sub-plenary workshop later in the program, McGoldrick, Director of the Multicultural Family Institute and Professor of Clinical Psychiatry, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, in New Jersey, USA, followed up with “The Genogram Journey: A Clinical Illustration of The Use of Genograms.” Declaring that the genogram is not simply a graphic illustration of a family’s cast of characters, but also the repository of an extraordinary amount of vital clinical information, she led an exploration of innovative ways to use this tool in therapy, cultural, racial, and spiritual legacies through the use of family play genograms. All in all, this was vintage McGoldrick in an update of work useful to clinicians from around the world.

Other presentations applicable to people from across the globe dealt with our dealing with making sense of our feelings and interactions of our bodies and language. Speaking with great clarity and erudition, **John Shotter, PhD**, explained how “we come to an understanding of what is going on around us,” drawing heavily on the work and thinking of the late Tom Andersen, M. M. Bakhtin, and Ludwig Wittgenstein. In our dialogically structured exchanges something uniquely new is, sooner or later, created that is intricately related to features within which it is created. Thus the happening of a “therapeutic moment” occurs when that uniquely new something opens up previously unnoticed new ways into the future. Shotter, an emeritus professor of communications, argues that these uniquely new events stem from the way in which the spontaneous responsiveness of our bodies work to give “expressive shape” to our feelings “as we body them out into the world.” Particularly for therapists seeking to understand change was his declaration that “What changes within is in such encounters is not our learning of new facts or bits of information but our learning new ways of relating ourselves to



the others and otherness in the world around us, ways more appropriate to our neediness and to our human flourishing.” In addition to the plenary presentation, Shotter addressed the topic of “Making Sense of Moments of Feeling: ‘Withness’ Thinking and the Dialogical in Practice” in a sub-plenary session rich with illustrations and image guided explorations aimed at helping to arrive at an “intouchness” with the living situation itself, and finally getting to a sense of our situation that allows us to invent new metaphors as required.

Focus on a specific treatment approach—Functional Family Therapy, a research-based practice system for the treatment of at-risk adolescents and their families — was provided in a plenary session by **Thomas Sexton, PhD**, an Indiana University psychology professor and active national and international consultant who also is affiliated with FFT Associated in The Netherlands. FFT has demonstrated that family-based approaches can engage “at-risk” adolescents in the juvenile justice, mental health, and child welfare systems and others who often have high rates of behavior problems, mental health disorders, criminal behavior, and related issues. and their families in therapy and significantly reduce adolescent behavior problems. The plenary contribution by this practitioner, social scientist, and model builder, titled Functional Family Therapy: Healing Families and Promoting Social Justice, gave clear and helpful descriptions of his recently developed training and implementation procedures for moving evidence-based practices (FFT) into community



based clinical settings. Besides his work in the Netherlands, Sexton also is involved in consulting on implementing FFT in the Ireland. Sexton and Astrid van Dam, a highly experienced clinician in The Netherlands, collaborated in a sub-plenary presentation that provided therapists with a relational map to follow and practical interventions and skills to guide their way through the difficult powerful emotional and behavioral experiences of youth and families “in the room.” The most effective of these family-focused therapeutic interventions focus on engagement and motivation as primary early goals when working with at risk youth. The presenters made the significant point that FFT as an evidence-based systematic intervention program might inform the broader question of how to successfully engage, motivate, and empower youth and families.

Those who were not fortunate enough to attend the presentations in The Netherlands may wish to go Online and find information on recent books by the presenters—all three have recently published books dealing with the matters addressed in their congress presentations.

## **Denitza Bantchevska Received Best Student Abstract Award at World Congress**

A Bulgarian native who is pursuing graduate work at The Ohio State University was announced as the winner of the International Family Therapy Association’s Best Student Abstract Award for the 2011 World Family Therapy Congress. Denitza Bantchevska presented the content of her abstract, “Some Predictors of Change Among Substance-Abusing Adolescents and Caregivers,” at a Poster Presentation during the congress at the NH Congress Centre in Noordwijkerhout, Holland, March 29-April 2. The presentation



reflected her strong interest in research with marginalized families, especially with the amelioration of suffering among families experiencing homelessness, substance abuse, and other mental health issues.

Bantchevska moved to the United States in 2001 and presently is a candidate for a doctoral degree in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at OSU in Columbus, Ohio, where she also has been serving as an assessor, therapist, and project coordinator on several clinical trails in funded projects involving the kinds of marginalized families in whom she is interested. To date she has six manuscripts in print or in press and others in preparation.

She was recognized at a plenary session during the 2011 Congress and received a \$1000 check.



## **Van der Pas Honored for Career Achievements at 2011 Congress**

Pioneering and ongoing contributions and service to families and family therapy have earned The Netherlands’ Alice van der Pas, PhD, MSW, the Lifetime Achievement Award of the 2011 International Family Therapy

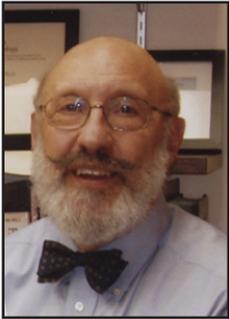
Association’s XIXth World Family Therapy Congress. The presentation was made during the opening ceremonies of the congress at the NH Leeuwenhorst Conference Centre in Noordwijkerhout, Holland, on March 29. IFTA has a history of honoring those who were instrumental in bringing to attention in their country the importance of families.

Dr. van der Pas was selected from among a list of distinguished professionals recommended by their peers in the Netherlands as one of the pioneers who have promoted the value of family relationships. Her honors already include being selected as a Knight in the Order of Orange Nassau, Honorary Chairperson of the Organization of Parent Counselors, and an Honorary Member of the Dutch Association of Marital and Family Therapists (NVRG). After more than three decades as a parent counselor and family therapist, she began writing fulltime in 1992. She completed a 10 volume handbook of professional work with parents in 2008 and has had extensive experience in founding and editing journals, supervision, teaching and training clinicians in The Netherlands and abroad.



# Report of the Office of the Secretariat

General Secretary: William Hiebert, DMin



## 2012 World Congress Website Open for Proposals and Registration

The World Congress website is now operational. You can find the Congress website at: <http://www.ifta-congress.org/>. The website contains all of the information necessary for registration, abstract submission, and other details

for Congress planning.

## Journal of Family Psychotherapy Now Live

Taylor and Francis' new online platform replaces access to the 1,600 Journals and Reference Works previously hosted on informaworld. The new site can be accessed at [www.tandfonline.com](http://www.tandfonline.com).

Taylor & Francis Online has been designed with your needs in mind and offers:

- A clean, intuitive user interface
- Enhanced discoverability for our Journals and Reference Works
- Knowledge on the move with our Blackberry, iPhone and Android Applications (coming soon)

## Getting Started

Taylor & Francis invites you to visit their new site. If you had an account on informaworld then the email address and password associated with it will automatically provide access on Taylor & Francis Online. Once signed in, you can take advantage of many of the platform's tools including saved searches and marked lists. Taylor & Francis have a host of online tutorials as well as print training resources to help you get started. There are over 35 online demonstrations guiding you through the features of the new website. They can be found at <http://resources.tandfonline.com/tutorials/>.  
HELP

If you have any questions about Taylor & Francis Online, please contact our dedicated support team at [support@tandfonline.com](mailto:support@tandfonline.com). They will be delighted to assist.

## Online Renewal of Memberships Tips

When renewing online, some members have had their credit card declined because of mistakes in entering the information.

Here are some tips:

- Be sure that the name on credit card that you place on the bottom of the application is exactly the same as the name that is actually on the credit card.
- Be sure that the Billing Address is exactly the same as the address where the bill arrives from the postal service.

- If you are using someone else's credit card, be sure you have the above information accurate, i.e., their complete name and billing address.
- Click the Submit button ONLY once. If your card is declined, wait 24 hours and try again.
- If you have difficulty with the application not moving correctly and being able to view if correctly, your browser probably needs to be upgraded.

If you wish to renew both your IFTA membership and your Training Division membership online (the fastest and easiest way to do it), simply go to [www.ifta-familytherapy.org](http://www.ifta-familytherapy.org) and click on Application/Renewal and follow the instructions.

## Online Renewal of Training Division Membership

Training Division members may renew their Training Division memberships online at the same time as their IFTA membership is renewed.

## 2012 Congress Operating Structure Comes "Home"

The 20th World Family Therapy Congress of the International Family Therapy Association in Vancouver will be handled by a newly formed corporation and subsidiary of IFTA, World Family Therapy Congresses, Inc. (WFTC). This will be the first time in 8 years that IFTA has created its own entity to organize and administer its own congress through WFTC. The Congress Administration and a separate Congress Program Committee have clearly defined roles for making the 2012 Congress a success.

The Congress Administrative Office for Vancouver Congress consists of the General Secretary William J. Hiebert; Congress CFO, Fred Jefferson; Congress Program Director, Lee Bowen; Congress Information and Marketing Director, Gay Patton; and the Congress Manager, Doug Tschopp and the Augustana College Web Guild. The WFTC Board of Directors is comprised of Fatma Reid, William Nichols, Lee Bowen, Barbara Warner, Fred Jefferson, William Hiebert and Doug Tschopp.

The Congress Program Director will oversee the development of the overall program for the congress, the selection of plenary presenters, the schedule, the abstract selection process, and the final program. The Administration team will manage the operation of the congress, including negotiation with the congress meeting place (hotel) and the tourism board of the host country. Working with the Administration and handling the Proposals and Registration systems will be the Augustana Web Guild directed by Doug Tschopp.

This arrangement will allow some congress tasks to be performed much faster and more efficiently with the Secretariat staff responsible for the administration and practical details of the congress from the outset. Second, instead of essentially starting over each year with new persons from a different country each year, this new structure makes continuity and long range planning possible.



## TRAINING MATTERS

*Phoebe Prosky, Coordinator/Secretariat*

KOSOVA, CHINA, UGANDA, GHANA – these are all countries in which our Training Division's Traveling Trainers Program is involved in planning family therapy training programs. The Traveling Trainers Program makes available faculty who are willing to volunteer their time to teach in parts of the world in need of assistance in developing family therapy training. The Kosova program is being carried out in conjunction with the Kosova Health Foundation, an NGO there. After completing the first year it has been funded for a second year of a projected four-year family therapy training. Participants are psychiatrists and psychologists. Three Traveling Trainers have traveled to Kosova in the course of this last year, and in the coming year two others will be involved to round out the curriculum. The China program is being planned for the spring of 2012 in conjunction with the Women's University in Beijing. The duration and curriculum of the program are under discussion. The projects in Uganda and Ghana are in the very beginning stages with people in those two countries coming together to form a base for training. If you are in a country in need of assistance with family therapy training, usually category II or III countries, please contact the Training Division Secretariat at [pprosky1@comcast.net](mailto:pprosky1@comcast.net).

The Traveling Trainers Program stands to benefit greatly by the expressed interest of several of our senior IFTA members who, on contemplating semi-retirement, would like to volunteer their time providing training with the Traveling Trainers Program. This is a resource the program had not anticipated, and it constitutes a very exciting new aspect of its development.

In each issue of *The International Connection*, the Training Division will profile one member of the faculty of the Traveling Trainers Program. In this issue please look for a profile on Shlomo Ariel, author of the curriculum for the above-mentioned Kosova program.

The Division is always on the look-out for used training materials that it can recycle at its table at IFTA Congresses. We also are making a call to those authors among our membership who might be willing to donate a couple of their books or CD's to the Division for distribution to areas of the world in need of materials. Materials in languages other than English are especially in demand.

If you have any questions about the Division, please contact Phoebe Prosky at [pprosky1@comcast.net](mailto:pprosky1@comcast.net).

Phoebe Prosky, Secretariat for the Training Division, can be contacted at 143 Flying Point Road, Freeport, Maine 04032, USA. [pprosky1@comcast.net](mailto:pprosky1@comcast.net).

## USED TRAINING MATERIALS NEEDED

If you have used books or CD's or if you yourself are an author or producer of books or CD's and would be willing to donate a copy or two to the Training Division, we will see that they get loving homes in areas of the world in need of training resources. Materials in languages other than English are especially needed.

## SEE YOURSELVES AND YOUR FRIENDS IN ACTION AND AT PLAY AT IFTA CONFERENCES!

Photographs of IFTA International Congresses are available for viewing. There are two ways to access the photographs on the web. Smugmug photos will be available in August.

Either go to the IFTA website at: <http://www.ifta-familytherapy.org> and then click on the link "Photo Gallery" on the left side of the page, or go directly to the conference photo site [atifta.smugmug.com](http://atifta.smugmug.com)

Enjoy seeing images from the past conferences in Buenos Aires, Argentina (2010), Portoroz, Slovenia (2009), Porto, Portugal (2008), Iceland (2006), Washington, D.C. (2005), Istanbul, Turkey (2004); Bled, Slovenia (2003); Porto Alegre, Brazil (2001). Copies of many of the images are available through our IFTA photographer, Pamela R. L. Lessing (e-mail: [prlf@aol.com](mailto:prlf@aol.com))



# TRAVELING TRAINERS FACULTY PROFILE

This profile is the second in a series featuring members of the Training Division's Traveling Trainers faculty.

## Traveling Trainer Profile: Shlomo Ariel



### 1. HOW HAS YOUR WORK DEVELOPED?

My professional development has been progressing somewhat off the beaten track. I started my career in the Sixties as a lecturer of linguistics at the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London, where I

specialized in Chomskyan theoretical linguistics, semiotics, semantics and pragmatics, symbolic logic, philosophy of science and anthropological linguistics. I still find this extensive, solid scientific grooming invaluable as a basis for my current theoretical work and training activities in psychotherapy integration, family play therapy and culturally competent family therapy. Back in Israel in the early Seventies, I got involved in an exciting cross-cultural study of Kindergarten children's play and social activities, based on naturalistic observations. I came to see children's play as a language, a semiotic system, as well as a sub-culture. I sent my research papers to Professor Jerome L. Singer, then head of the clinical psychology training program of Yale University and a leading researcher of children's play, and he invited me to a year of post doctoral studies and research. There I started my training as a clinical psychologist, to be completed in Tel Aviv University.

I soon got interested in integrating my previous theoretical background and play research with systemic family therapy. This led to developing a systematic, rigorous model of family play therapy, surprisingly a non-existent discipline then. This model makes it possible to promote children to the status of equal partners in the family therapeutic process. This model was later published in a book, *Strategic Family Play Therapy* (Chichester, Wiley, 1992) and since the mid Eighties has been guiding full and partial training programs I conducted in Israel, various European countries and the USA.

During the Eighties I was also interested in explicating and systematizing basic concepts of family systems theory such as "homeostasis," "family structure," "family rules," "boundaries," "family dysfunction," etc, which seemed to me intuitively ingenious but too vague and ambiguous to my scientific taste. The results of these efforts have been published in a number of articles e.g. Ariel, S, Carel, C. and Tyano, S. 1984, A formal explication of the concept "family homeostasis," *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*. Ariel, S. 1987. An information-processing theory of family dysfunction, *Psychotherapy. Special issue on family therapy*, vol.24, no.35., 1987. Another major project was my

attempt to integrate sociological and anthropological studies of family culture and family therapy into a rigorous, systematic model guiding practice, again, surprisingly, a missing link in the field then. This was published in my book *Culturally Competent Family Therapy* (Westport, Ct: Greenwood/Praeger, 1999).

Simultaneously, inspired by the psychotherapy integration movement which I find the most important development in our profession, I began developing a rigorous, systematic model of integrative multi-systemic, culturally competent therapy, based on a unified theoretical language of information-processing, cybernetics and semiotics and on fundamental explanatory principles such as the scientific methodological principle of simplicity. I have been teaching and training therapists in practicing this model in Israel, various European countries and the USA.

### 2. WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF THE CURRENT STATE OF THE ART?

I see many exciting developments in the systemic family therapy movement, but also less exciting developments. Sometimes the field looks to me like a collection of isolated, competing medieval courts. Some brilliant but still half-baked ideas are declared obsolete before they have been taken ready out of the oven. Somebody believes he or she has a good idea, not necessarily really new, and declares "a paradigm shift," a "scientific revolution." Extremely vague and ambiguous catchwords such as "post-modern" become the new vogue. The field looks suspiciously like the Tower of Babel. That's why I think explication, systematization and integration should be the order of the day.

### 3. WHAT DO YOU SEE AS YOUR PROFESSIONAL MISSION?

To contribute my share in placing the psychotherapy of the 21st century on a solid scientific basis. To train as many young therapists in various countries, especially in developing countries that have no systemic therapists (see Kosovo group picture), to practice therapy in a culturally competent way and to know what they are doing and why they are doing it.



Kosovo Group

# PSYCHOLOGY DAY AT THE UNITED NATIONS

APRIL 14, 2011

FLORENCE W. KASLOW, PH.D., ABPP

The American Psychology Association-NGO (Non Governmental Organization) Delegation UN organized Psychology Day at the UN. Although the APA-NGO delegation is the main sponsor for this event, there was fine collaboration from psychological organizations' NGO delegations and attendance by NGO's from other mental health and other family related organizations. Four years ago this event began as a half-day event with a small attendance has blossomed into a full-day event that was over subscribed in advance.

The theme of this year's conference was "Reach Them, Teach Them: The Role of Psychology in Achieving Universal Access to Education." Achieving universal education is one of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) that governments of the world agreed to reach by the year 2015. The event offers UN staff, ambassadors and diplomats, NGO representatives and students, the opportunity to learn what psychologists contribute to the United Nations, to exchange ideas and to establish multi-stakeholder relationships on global issues.

"Providing universal education is fundamental to solving global problems," said Deanna Chitayat, Co-Chair of the organizing committee for

Psychology Day. In her opening remarks she stated. "With 100 million children globally who are not attending primary school, psychologists must be in the forefront of finding out 'Why?' and answering 'How?'" Besides education, issues addressed by psychologists at the UN range from ageing and trauma to social development, peace, human rights, organizational effectiveness, and rights of women, children, families, refugees and the disabled.

The morning session constituted a briefing by the UN Department of Public Information (DPI). A Liberian refugee and current graduate student in the United States, Foday Sackor, shared his gripping personal experiences about education in war-torn Liberia and in a tent city he had lived in years ago, and Pamela Flattau spoke on National Educational Technology Plans and the use of broadband technology and fiber optics in providing access to education internationally.

I was privileged to be invited to do the Plenary address for the afternoon session. Entitled "The Pivotal Role of the Family in Their Child's Learning," I sought to relate the Educational Institution or Structure that is one of the essential component of the six basic Institutions in all societies to the others – family, economic (financial), political (governmental), religious, and health (physical and mental) as these are foundational and circumscribe what exists and what is possible in each of the other domains. I tried to encompass the MDG goals and the 2010 report by the UN Girls International Education Task Force as well as span the variegated socioeconomic strata within and between countries. At a

more basic level I looked at parent(s) role in developing attitudes toward education, and study skills; respect for teachers; safe learning environments at home, on the way to school and in school; forming parent-teacher associations; political advocacy; overcoming religious barriers to education for girls, viewing welfare/ poverty and lack of parents as major deterrents, and ever so much more that comprises the multifaceted global big picture. The questions that followed were all thought provoking and led to a lively discussion.

There were also three workshops in the afternoon: 1) Innovative ideas with presentations on projects in the Honduras, Madagascar and Uganda; 2) Innovative Technology in K-12 Stem Education and Leveraging New Technologies to Serve Diverse Populations; 3) Challenging Places and Situations: Education in Haiti, Abolishing School Fees in Africa and Educating Young People During and After Violence. These topics are also very relevant to family therapists.

After this jam packed day that took us on a rapid trip to many parts of the globe, there was an international reception by and for the NGO delegates of the various Psychology organizations involved, the student volunteers and the presenters. Interchanges were lively and spirited.

If I recall correctly, some years ago IFTA was approved to have an NGO delegation at the UN. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could reactivate that status and appoint such a delegation!

Florence w. Kaslow, Ph.D., Abpp., is the Founding President of IFTA and the Roving Reporter.



William Nichols and Fatma Reid



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