



groupassets

EDITOR'S NOTE



Karen Travis,
LCSW, BCD, CGP, FAGPA

Greetings to each of you. Yes, a new face as Group Assets Editor. With just 10 months out as Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health Chair, I begin a new adventure in publishing. When Darryl Pure, PhD, ABPP, CGP, FAGPA, current Chair of the Foundation called with a hard sale, with Diane Feirman, CAE, Public Affairs Senior Director, as his backup, I wasn't convinced. When I talked with Connie Concannon, LCSW, CGP, DFAGPA, outgoing Editor (please see Connie's story in this issue's Faces of the Foundation), it sealed the deal. I asked Connie to tell me about the job and she said, "it is easy." I am looking for something easy these days. We both agreed it is and will be delightful to talk about how the Group Foundation benefits people. Thank you, Connie, for the many years of easy work you did as Editor.

Fundraising is a vital part of what the Group Foundation does to ensure the success of our ongoing mission to support the group therapy field and to assist AGPA. This issue highlights our recent fundraiser with Playback Theatre, who received the Group Foundation Aaron Stein Award in 2016 for its creative use

of groups in non-clinical settings. I want to thank Christine Fitzstevens, LCSW-R, CGP, FAGPA, and Maryetta Andrews-Sachs, MA, LICSW, CGP, FAGPA, Chair and Vice Chair of the Education Committee respectively, Board Member Mary Nicholas, PhD, LCSW, CGP, FAGPA, and Diane Feirman, for their work in making this event happen. I would also like to thank our generous sponsors, listed in the article, for their generous support.

We wanted to offer a fun fundraiser and something AGPA members, family, and friends could tune into and all relate to—a Sunday matinee at the theater. It was fun, funny, serious, sad, mad, the full range of emotions. Playback Theatre helped the virtual audience build cohesion and create some sense of safe space, where we could share our stories of COVID times. The audience also celebrated hope and gratefulness. We present in this issue two experiences from the afternoon, so you, the reader, will have your own experience internally as you read the article.

We are considering another event in the spring and welcome suggestions on what would be a valuable experience for our community. Please reach out to me at karendotcom@prodigy.net on this and any other issues relating to the Foundation and Group Assets.

Virtual Playback Theatre Raises Money and Experiences

Mary Nicholas, PhD, LCSW, CGP, FAGPA, Member, Group Foundation Board of Directors

Back in the late 1970s, my late husband, Gene Eliasoph, and I were attending a large psychotherapy conference in Washington, DC. One morning, Gene told me he was going to a workshop with Playback Theatre and that he had been asked to play the clarinet. I thought that sounded intriguing, but I went to another workshop, saying I would see him later. After my workshop finished, I got some coffee and sat down. A woman rushed up to me and looked at my nametag. "Mary, I thought that must be you!" I was startled. (She actually looked like me.) "I just played you at your wedding, and Gene played the clarinet." For the rest of the conference, people were telling me how much fun they had at my wedding.

That was my first experience with Playback. Years later in 2007, I was on the Conference Committee at the Eastern Group Psychotherapy Society (EGPS) when we invited Playback to perform. I got to be a storyteller, and the troupe poignantly enacted the recent loss of my dear friend and co-therapist, Jim, who was known and loved by many at EGPS, in a piece called *Missing Jim*.

Enticed by the above stories, the Education Committee of the Group Foundation sponsored an unusual fundraising event on Zoom. A group of approximately 60 AGPA members and their family and friends participated in a group theater activity presented by Playback Theatre. A troupe of five actors and dancers with a musician, each zoomed to us from a different part of the country, was led by a magical master of ceremonies, Hannah Fox. Hannah began by bringing the audience into the show by asking us questions that would illuminate who we were as a group. (Who here is a therapist? Who is/ or is not looking forward to the holidays?) Next, she invited audience members to tell us a brief tidbit about how they were feeling, e.g., relaxed or stressed.

Each audience offering was followed by a skit by the actors and the musician.

For example, a woman stated she had been working, sleeping, eating, and playing all under the same roof since March and had totally lost track of time. Then the players, each in their own box, illustrated what she said—one eating from a bowl while standing at her computer; another yawning and stretching; others wordlessly working, dancing, wandering, fretting—all somehow totally in sync with each other.

Next Hannah invited longer stories. Commensurate with these dark and difficult times, some of the stories were about loss and deep anxiety about the future, depicted with great empathy and a kind of gentle precision. Others shone with hope about what might come next after the awful 2020 year. Each story was fully enacted in about three minutes. Some were moving and sad; some were hysterical. Each storyteller chose a specific actor to play him, her, themselves, which Hannah said was an important part of the "tele" (connection) that the troupe has with the storyteller and the audience.

Indeed, the connection among all of us in attendance transcended cyberspace, and we were, indeed, a group, thanks to the creative and inclusive magic of Playback Theatre. Let's hope we can all see them in person some day!

Maryetta Andrews-Sachs, MA, LICSW, CGP, FAGPA, Vice Chair, Education Committee, and Member, Group Foundation Board of Directors

The Education Committee of the Group Foundation is specifically tasked with helping to create our important fundraisers. Christine Fitzstevens, LCSW-R, CGP, FAGPA, Chair, and I were excited to hear about the Playback Theatre from fellow Group Foundation Board Member Mary Nicholas, PhD, LCSW, CGP, FAGPA. This was my perspective following the performance, held in December.

FACES OF THE FOUNDATION

Connie Concannon, LCSW, CGP, DFAGPA

Over the last eight years as the Editor of Group Assets, I have shared the stories of the supporters and the work of the Foundation. I have felt inspired, moved, and grateful for the generous spirit of those who have contributed and supported our work.

As I retire from the editorship and hand it over to the very capable hands of Karen Travis, LCSW, BCD, CGP, FAGPA, she has asked me to share my story of commitment to the Foundation.

My story has a generational theme. My father Joseph Concannon was an active member of AGPA and part of the post-World War II generation of mental health professionals that were challenged with the care of returning veterans suffering with PTSD. The sheer number of vets to be served necessitated the need to see them in groups. This was fertile ground to develop group theory and research and understanding the power and the efficacy of group psychotherapy. My father was captured by what he experienced in the groups, and he passed this enthusiasm on to me. The emphasis on the importance of group went beyond clinical practice into every other aspect of life. We grow up in our family group; we live in community groups; we are educated in groups; and many of us work in groups. Learning this at a young age guided me in the way that I understood life, others, and myself.

When I began my professional career, I had the benefit of knowing where I could get training and support in preparing me for my life's work. That place was AGPA. It has been my professional home and continues to be a place where I am both challenged and supported in my personal and professional growth and where I have made life-long friends. Along the way, I also learned about professional organizations and what makes them thrive, grow, and be resilient in an ever-changing world.

To be sustainable, successful organizations like the Group Foundation need a secure financial base to support the goals of the group and to be prepared to navigate the often-unforeseen challenges that we have to face. What we are experiencing now is one of those challenging times. The Group Foundation allows us to see our way through a bad storm until we can reach safe waters.

It's hard to believe what we have all gone through since we met together last year at AGPA Connect in New York City. What we came back to after that meeting rocked our world personally and professionally. It's changed the way we do our work, the way we live, and the way we see each other. The issue of personal safety is magnified at multiple levels for our clients and ourselves. Just as my Dad's generation learned so much about group therapy when facing the shared trauma of a war, this past year is our shared trauma, and together we will learn from it.

I continue to contribute to the Foundation because I value the safe harbor that it provides for our beloved organization and the door that it opens for the next generation of group therapists.

I will miss my work as the Editor of Group Assets and the privilege of working with Diane Feirman, CAE, Public Affairs Senior Director, during these years. Most of all, I will miss seeing all of my friends and colleagues up close and personal at AGPA Connect 2021.



THANK YOU TO OUR PLAYBACK THEATRE SPONSORS!

The Group Foundation gratefully thanks our sponsors of the Playback Theatre Event for making this afternoon of theater, storytelling and connection possible.

BENEFACTORS

Maryetta Andrews-Sachs
Molyn Leszcz
Phyllis Hochberg Siegel

PATRONS

Marsha Block and Leonard Walter
Cheryl and Robert Kalter
Mary Nicholas and Richard Jennings
Kathy Rider
Lorraine Wodiska

LEGACY SOCIETY

We appreciate the provisions these planned gift donors have made for the Group Foundation.

Ramon Alonso	Jeffrey Hudson & Robert Blodgett
Shari & Allan Baron	Cele Keeper
Patricia & Merle Barth	Barbara Keezell
Richard Beck	Lisa Mahon & Philip Flores
Marsha Block & Leonard Walter	Jan Morris
Trish Cleary & Diana Kunkel	Jeanne & Matt Pasternak
Phyllis Cohen	Rhea Pledger
Eleanor Counselman	Keith Rand & John D'Amico
Jerry & Nancy Gans	Kathy Reedy
Martha Gilmore	Kathy Rider
Katie Griffin	Joseph Shay & Laura Zimmerman
David Hawkins	Karen Travis
Barry Helfmann & Susan Marx	Lorraine Wodiska
Sally Henry	Elliot Zeisel & Mary Sussillo

2020 Contributions to the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health

GIFTS ACKNOWLEDGED HERE ARE FROM JANUARY 1, 2020 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2020

Leaders

(\$10,000 and above)

Ramon Alonso
Barbara Dazzo
Heartfelt Wings Foundation
Lisa Mahon & Philip Flores
Giesela Mischke
Kathy Rider

Benefactors

(\$7,500 - \$9,999)

Cheryl & Robert Kalter
Phyllis Hochberg Siegel
Karen Travis

Sustainers

(\$5,000 - \$7,499)

Anonymous (1)
Maryetta Andrews-Sachs
Austin GPS
Patricia & Merle Barth*
Aaron & Lara Black
Marsha Block & Leonard Walter
Robert Hsiung
Jeffrey Hudong & Robert Blodgett
Gloria Kahn
Molyn Leszcz
Mary Nicholas & Richard Jennings
Jeanne & Matt Pasternak
W. Keren Vishny
Elliot Zeisel & Mary Sussillo
Gloria & Henry Zeisel

Explorers

(\$2,500 - \$4,999)

Khleber Attwell
Kathleen Ault
Gary Burlingame
Connie Concannon & John Rochios
Eleanor & Chuck Counselman
Hank Fallon
Shelley Firestone
Christine & Mark Fitzstevens
Les Greene & Michelle Collins-Greene
Justin Hecht & Erik Hjorth-Reider
Houston GPS
Barbara & Fred Ilfeld
Jeffrey Kleinberg
Elizabeth Knight
Janice Morris
Rhea Pledger
Margaret Postlewaite & Gerard Kiernan*
Andrea Pully
Darryl Pure & Raquel Corré
Keith Rand & John D'Amico
Joy Segal
Joseph Shay & Laura Zimmerman
Gil Spielberg
Kathleen Ulman
Lorraine Wodiska

Facilitators

(\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Stewart Aledort
Sally Barlow
Robert David Bennett
Gail Brown
Nina Brown
Jeanne Bunker
Mary & John Dluhy
Matthew Edwards
John Fitzstevens
David Flohr
Martha Gilmore & Haim Weinberg

GPA of Los Angeles
Bill Haydon
Sally Henry
Illinois GPS
Paul Kaye
Barbara Keezell
Nancy & Jerry Kelly
Leo & Sharon Leiderman
Mid-Atlantic GPS
Marcia Nickow
Northeastern SGP
Northern California GPS
NSGP Foundation
Patty Olwell
Dan Sack
Ed & Karen Scharf
Ben Sever
Deborah Sharp
Tony Sheppard
DeLinda Spain
Ryan Spencer
D. Thomas Stone
Barney Straus
Rick Tivers
Steven Van Wagener
Marsha Vannicelli
Joanna & Eric Weber
Molly Donovan & Barry Wepman
Nancy Wesson
Westchester GPS
Martina Windler

Sponsors

(\$500 - \$999)

Joseph Acosta
Geraldine Alpert
Katharine Barnhill
Shari & Allan Baron
Bonnie Bernard
Richard Billow
Li Brookens
Carolinas GPS
Kirsten Chadwick
Cathi Cohen
Scott Courkright
Travis Courville
Mark Cutler
Eastern GPS
Laura Ebady
Sara Emerson
Aaron Fink*
Chera Finnis
Darlene Ford
Four Corners GPS
Jerry & Nancy Gans
Cara Gardenswartz
Arthur Gray
Katie Griffin
Thomas Hallinan
Benjamin Hammett
Deborah Healy
Russell Hopfenberg
Earl Hopper
Alison Howard
Priscilla Kauff
Darryl Pure & Raquel Corré
Robert Klein
Lawrence Kron
Kathryn Leslie*
Hilary Levine
Ronnie Levine
Beatrice Liebenberg
Ellen McCoy
Anne McEneaney
Jeffrey Mendell
Jamie Moran
Stephen Murdoch*
Michael Ostrower
Jordan Price
Joanne Rosen
Liz Rosenblatt
San Antonio GPS
Marie Sergent
Alberto Serrano*
Siddharth Shah
Karen Gail Shore
Judith Simon
Joan-Dianne Smith
Jonathan Stillerman

Alyson Stone
Ginger Sullivan
Carol Vaughan & Gar Willis
Lawrence Viers
Supporters
(\$250 - \$499)
Anonymous (1)
Alexis Abernethy
M. Sophia Aguirre
Gaurdie Banister*
Robert Berley
Mitchell Berman
Sue Bernie
Melissa Black
Linda Blume
David Cantor
Trish Cleary & Diana Kunkel
Arnold Cohen
Suzanne Cohen
Karen Cone-Uemura
Blake Davis
Patricia Florence
Myrna Frank
Lynn Friedman
Joel Frost
Don Fuhrmann
Eva Fyer
Robin Good
David Griffiths
David Hawkins & James Boyles
Cindy Hearne
Judy Hess
Mike Hessdorf
Edward Hunt
Thomas Hurster
Mary Ivy
Vann Joines
Ann Koplow
Joel Krieg
Mary Krueger
Allan Lambert
Charleen Lewis
Leslie Lothstein
R. Tracy MacNab
Stanley Masinter
Christopher Moore
Marian Moore
Joseph Moreno
Leon Paparella
Scott Phillips
Suzanne Phillips
Charles Pohl
Andrew Pojman
Lisa Powell
Cordelia Price*
Jeffrey Price
John & Hilde Pully
Britt Raphling
Dan Raviv
Michele Ribeiro
Harold Rice-Erso
Anna Rickell
Tamara & Jeffrey Roth
Jennifer Ruiz
Michael Russo
J. Scott Rutan
George Saiger
Judith Schaar
Judith Schoenholtz-Read
Marc Schramm
Rosemary Segalla
Allan Sheps
Bettsie Specia*
Stamelman/Hocky Family Fund of the Philadelphia Foundation
Katie Steele
Esther & Walter Stone*
Patricia Tollison
Ronald Vereen
Gianna Viola
Lisa Wallace*
Annie Weiss
Ellen Ziskind

Contributors

(up to \$249)

Anonymous (20)
Bruce Aaron
Stephen Abraham
Mitchel Adler
Marydale Allen
Sherri Allen-Reeze
Ariela Alpert
Linda Alpert-Gillis
Safiah Amara
Julie Anderson
Claudia Arlo
Cindy Aron
Seth Aronson
Brian Ashin
Willard Ashley
Jeffrey Axelbank
Kelsey Balaban
Marcus Barnett*
Sue Barnum*
Heather Baron
Annalucia Bays
Ariadne Beck
Diane Bellas
Shoshana Ben-Noam
George Bermudez
Bruce Bernstein
Adrien Berthaud
Alfred Bertoline
Ann Betz
Seamus Bhatt-Mackin
K'Andrea Bickerstaff*
Marie Blaine*
Brenda Boatswain
Christine Boie
Sharon Bolin
Chris Bowlay-Williams
Virginia Brabender
Jeff Brand
Stephanie Brandt
Catherine Brennan & Paul Cox
Suzanne Brennan-Nathan
Simon Bresler
Phil Broemel
Michael Brook
Alice Brown
Jessica Buchholz
Karolina Burda
Arthur Byk
Claudia Byram
Alice Byrne
Matthew Calkins
Carlos Canales
Thomas Carter
Michael Cascio
Janet Castellini
Alec Cecil
Christine Chamberlain
Stavros Charalambides
Gregory Chlenski
InRay & Han Chong*
Angelo Ciliberti
Douglass Clark
Yoon Im Kane
Brian Clougherty
Jane Cobb
Theresa Cohen
Sandy Colbs
Michelle Collins-Greene
Joanna Colrain
David Cooper
John Cooper
Dave Cooperberg
Rufus Cormier*
Tivoli Cousineau
Marcia Cox
Patti Cox
Victoria Cravens
Maggie Shaver
Percy Creuzot*
Greg Crosby
C. Deborah Cross
Virginia Cruse
Caroline Culverhouse
Carol Dallinga
Sandy Demopoulos

Meenakshi Denduluri
Jennifer DeSouza
Michele Downie
Rita Drapkin
David Dumais
Karen Eberwein
Victor Echeandia
Linda Eisenberg
James Ellis
Alaa Elnajjar
Phyllis Epps*
Nanine Ewing
April Fallon
Monica Farassat
Diane Feirman
Jeffrey Feirman
Lorraine Feirman
Barbara Feld
E. Feldman
Linda Ferguson
Marian Ferguson
Jason Few*
Mark Fitzstevens
Bernard Fleming
Dennis Foley
Rosalind Forti
Michael Frank
Susan Frankel
Randy Frazier
Robert Fredrick
Wendy Freedman
Lena Friedman
Susan Gantt
Aviva Gaskill
Jeanne Gavrín
Marcia Geller
Albert Gentle
Valorie George
Cheryl Gerson
Kristin Gill
Macario Giraldo
Shirley Girouard
Paul Gitterman
Dale Godby
Tim Goetz*
Ryan Goldsberry*
Wesley Gosselin
Judith Gotlieb
Warren Gould
Enod Gray
Anna Graybeal
Frances Griffiths
Josh Grossman
Dominick Grundy
Nancy Hafkin
Betsy Hague
Nathasha Cole Hahn
Suki Hall
Carol Hallowitz
Lynn Hamerling
Daniel Harrop
Michelle Harton*
Kimberlee Hedrick
Steven Henne
Ann Horton
Oliver Huber*
Yoon Im Kane
Jacinto Inbar
Miriam Iosupovici
Erica & Steve Itzkowitz
Angela Jaramillo
Thomas Johnson
Jennifer Joseph
Anthony Joyce
Judy Judyantk
Francis Kaklauskas
Ikar Kalogjera
Nick Kanas
Geoffrey Kane
Marvin Kaphan
David Kaplovitz
Mary Ann Kassier
Margean Kastner
Margaret Keeler
Joseph Kobos
Revaz Korinteli
Yair Kramer
Stewart & Carol Kriss
Seth Labovitz
Allen Lambert
Capi Landreneau
Thomas Large
Beverley Larkam
Richard Lautenbach
Amy Lawch*
Dorothy Le Pere
Elaine Leader
Jonathan Lebolt
Victoria Lee
Kamila Lepkowska
John Levenson
Mindy Levine
Allen Levy
Jill Lewis
Jonathan Lewis
Miguel Lewis
Larry Liebgold
Xiulan Liu
Rudy Lucas
Gregory MacColl
Rebecca MacNair-Semands
Lilia Macon
Michelle Maidenberg
Lawrence Malcus
Marcio Marchezi
Marian Margulies
Donna Markham
Suzette Marriott
Liz Marsh
Jennifer Martin
Mark Mason
Amy Matias
Linnea Mavrides
Gilbert McCurdy
Susan McGowan
Robert McLaughlin
Judy McLaughlin-Ryan
Charles McMurrey*
Joan Medway
Thomas Meiring
Kenneth Mellor
Pamela Menter
Lisa Mersky
Oona Metz
Stanley Meyers
Jeff Middleton
Lois Miller
Rachel Miller
Pamela Millis
Peter Millis
Frank Mischke
Katherine Mitchell
Nancy Moos
Colby Moss
Lise Motherwell
Yara Moustafa
Eric Mullins*
Val Murphy
Stacy Nakell
Dayne Narretta
Arlene Neuman
Richard Newman
Toby Newman
Susan Nicholas
Ronaldo Nierman
Daniel O'Brien
Libby O'Connor
Ann O'Malley
David Panzer
Brian Patino
Anthony Patterson
Lynn Pearl
Ilka Peck
John Peloian
Jill Penaloza
Mary Pender Greene
Robert Pepper
Richard Pessagno
Bruce Pickle
Charla Piper
Robert Polishook
Ashley Powell
Alice Powsner
Charlene Pratt
Mary Quigley
Thomas Quinn
Arnold Rachman
Lisa Rakusin

IN HONOR OF CONTRIBUTIONS

(donor is listed in parentheses)

AGPA Staff (Leo Leiderman, Charles Pohl)
Black Lives Matter Projects (Jill Penaloza)
Marsha Block (Eleanor Counselman, Jeffrey Kleinberg)
Nina Brown (Toby Newman)
Steve Cadwell (David Griffiths)
Daniel DeJulio (David Flohr)
Hylene Dublin (Katie Steele, Lawrence Viers)
Stephen Ellis (Janet Castellini)
Susan Gantt (Dayne Narretta)
Dorothy Gibbons (Neal Spivack)
Josh Gross (Michele Ribeiro)
David Hawkins (Russell Hopfenberg, Ronald Vereen)
Priscilla Kauff (Xu Yong)
Robert Klein (Leo Leiderman, Leslie Lothstein)
Molyn Leszcz (Eleanor Counselman)
Anne McEneaney (Michele Ribeiro)
Janice Morris (Marian Moore)
Ryan Oehl (Kristin Gill)
Suzanne Phillips (Heartfelt Wings Foundation)
Keith Rand (Joanne Rosen, Ryan Spencer)
Cristina Secarea (Myrna Frank)
Alberto Serrano (Dorothy LePere)
Elizabeth Stewart (Margaret Postlewaite)
Anne Teachworth (Michael Cascio)
Karen Travis (Darlene Ford, Ronald Nierman)
Lorraine Wodiska (Michelle Collins-Greene, Joan Scherf, Barbara Wood)
Irvin Yalom (Molyn Leszcz)

IN MEMORIAM CONTRIBUTIONS

(donor is listed in parentheses)

Yvonne Agazarian (Katie Steele)
Anne Alonso (Elizabeth Krainer, Leslie Lothstein, Nina Thomas)
Lawrence Bader (Howard Schnairsohn)
Stanford Bazillian (Francis Kaklauskas)
Tufan Bener (Lisa Mahon & Philip Flores)
Paul Brock (Justin Hecht & Erik Hjorth-Reider)
Donald Brown (Mitchell Berman)
Michael Brown (Nina Brown)
Cabaron Family and Biserka Kalogjera (Ikar Kalogjera)
Debora Carmichael (Chera Finnis, David Griffiths, Amy Matias, Scott Reinhardt, Marsha Vannicelli, Annie Weiss)
Ethan Cone-Uemura (Karen Cone-Uemura)
Jay Erwin-Grotsky (Jane Cobb, Rita Drapkin, Rhea Pledger, Britt Raphling, Monrovia Van Hoose)
Nancy Fawcett (Shayne Vitemb)
George Floyd (David Flohr)
Robert Gleave (Jennifer Martin)
Walter Goldstein (John Schlapobersky)
Sally Henry (Keith Rand)
Bonnie Jacobson (Suzanne Stutman)
Edward Karmiol (Thomas Hurster, Craig Stevens)
Robert Lipgar (Tamara Roth, Catherine Welfare)
Lou Ormont (Mike Hessdorf)
Scott Patterson (Lisa Mahon & Philip Flores)
Harris Peck (Ilka Peck)
David Perkins (Hank Fallon, Rebecca MacNair-Semands, Charles Pohl)
Miriam Polster (Miriam Iosupovici)
Cecil Rice (Penelope Moore)
Sheila Rogovin (Lisa Mahon & Philip Flores, Keith Rand)
Theodore Schramm (Marc Schramm)
Irv Schultz (Keith Rand)
Emanuel Shapiro (Arthur Gray)
Josephine Cunningham Tervalon (indicated with * in donor listing)
Marilyn Yalom (Molyn Leszcz)
Gloria Zeisel (Lisa Mahon & Philip Flores)

VIRTUAL PLAYBACK THEATRE Continued from front page

Last fall, I dreamed I was in prison. It was not a bad prison, but a prison, nevertheless. The pandemic imprisons each of us in different ways. But when audience members were asked to tell stories from their current lives, a Black member told his dream of being on death row. I was jolted once again with the realities of so many in our country. I was quickly aware of my great privilege, including the opportunity to see another way of offering healing to the world through the offerings of this unique theatre company.

This production was about stories—our stories—and how magical, soothing, and healing it can be to have them witnessed by others. As therapists, we do this daily. With this group of actors performing our stories, we saw a different way of using art and music to help us process human experiences. Many of the scenes felt to me like dream states, and I thought of how I often ask group members the following questions when a dream is presented in group: “Could you step into that story/dream and talk about it as if it was yours?” “What are the feelings in the story/dream?” “Are you passive or active?” “What metaphors come to mind?” “Where does the story/dream end?” “Is this where you are stuck?” In this format, I saw these stories acted out and address these questions. I saw how this witnessing moved the storyteller to a new place with their story, as well as touching the rest of us in the audience.

The existential themes I typically listen for were woven throughout:

Isolation—a relationship coach living alone with the loss of work, deciding to move to a new country for a place with little COVID and new opportunities.

Responsibility and Choice—an audience member currently stuck in terms of her clinical training being derailed. What to do?

Death—A widow grieving a partner's death. Our being with her in this felt very meaningful and important.

Meaninglessness—the fact that we joined together on Zoom on a Sunday to both be together with others in our AGPA community and to support something so many of us deeply believe in is a testament for our desire for meaning and connection.

So many of the stories were impactful to all of us in the audience. I am grateful for having been part of this venture.

“I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being.” Oscar Wilde

groupassets

EDITOR

Karen Travis, LCSW, BCD, CGP, FAGPA

MANAGING EDITOR

Marsha Block, CAE, CFRE

EDITORIAL/PRODUCTION MANAGERS

Diane Feirman, CAE, Nicole Millman-Falk

GROUP FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCING

MENTAL HEALTH

25 East 21st St., 6th floor, New York, NY 10010

212-477-2677; toll-free: 877-668-AGPA (2472)

fax: 212-979-6627; e-mail: info@agpa.org

www.agpa.org