



The Monterey County Chapter
California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists

March / April 2024 Newsletter



Benefits to MC-CAMFT Membership:

- Reduced fees at our events
- Invitation to our Members only annual gatherings
- Access to Members only Salons, which are intimate workshop offerings taught by fellow Members
- Periodic Newsletter with relevant CAMFT information and Member created writing
- Opportunity to contribute your writing to our Newsletter, including things such as a column, book review, workshop or conference review, poem, opinion piece or article
- Free advertising in our Newsletter and "Classifieds" section of our website
- Inclusion in our "Find a Therapist" website directory
- Access to Member and Announcements Forum on our website where you can seek feedback from other members and post things to the community
- Opportunity to submit a proposal to host a Salon for our Members
- Option to join us on the Board as a volunteer committee chair or ad hoc committee member
- Opportunity for MC-CAMFT to co-sponsor your workshop, so you can offer CEUs to your attendees
- Free Mentoring by experienced clinicians
- Invitation to suggest any member activity you find interesting, and we'll consider it!

Benefits to MC-CAMFT Website:

- ◇ Current Member Directory
- ◇ Classifieds Page for Members
- ◇ Chapter Board Contact
- ◇ Specialized Forums
- ◇ Online Newsletter
- ◇ Networking Opportunities
- ◇ Chapter Documents Access
- ◇ Sponsorship Opportunities
- ◇ Membership Information

MC-CAMFT CALENDAR

CONVERSATIONS

Event: *Conversations Amongst Therapists*
Host: *Michael Guichet, LMFT*
Date/Time: *Tues. March 12th, 6pm-8pm*
Location: *Fieldwork Brewery*
More Info: <https://www.mccamft.org/event-5631229>

CE EVENT

Event: *"Running is my Therapy"*
Presenter: *Kjersti Nelson, LMFT*
Date/Time: *Sat. March 23rd 9am - 12pm*
Location: *3756 The Barnyard, Suite H23*
More Info: <https://mccamft.org/event-5640729>

WEBINAR

Event: *Law & Ethics Webinar: Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act*
Presenter: *TBA*
Date/Time: *April 17 9:00am-12:00pm*
More Info: *3 L&E CEs Offered*

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2024 MC-CAMFT Board Roster

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amy@heartsinline.com

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therapy@rebelheartscounselinginc.com

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olivia.stadler@yahoo.com

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patmcdermft@comcast.net

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rossfarleyiii@gmail.com

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blaze@blazelazarony.com

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susan.valkenaar.lmft@gmail.com

Programs (Co) Chair:

Susan West, LMFT
Susanwest.lmft@gmail.com
&
Michael Guichet
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Website

Paid IT Consultant
Katie Dutcher
katiedutcher@gmail.com

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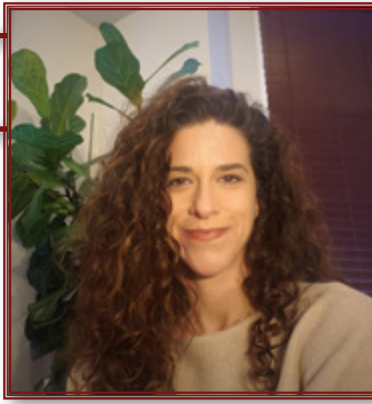
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CAMFT Facebook page.

Amy Snyder



2024 Board President

Dear Esteemed Members,

I trust this message finds you well and inspired as we dive into the opportunities of this season.

We began our year with profound soul work. Our inaugural workshop of the year, "Grief Medicine for Heartbreaking Times," received resounding acclaim. Amy Hyun Swart, LMFT, delivered a captivating experiential presentation that delved deep into the human experience, leaving us enriched and reflective. Our heartfelt gratitude extends to the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula for graciously hosting this transformative event.

Additionally, we've launched our new networking initiative, "Conversations Amongst Therapists," spearheaded by Michael Guichet. This monthly rendezvous offers a relaxed setting for members to engage in meaningful discourse about therapy practice, business insights, and resource sharing. Stay tuned as we rotate through various times, days, and locations each month. In March, mark your calendars for our gathering at Fieldwork Brewery on March 12th at 6 pm.

Celebrations are in order as well, as our chapter received two prestigious accolades at the CAMFT Leadership Conference. Amidst the return to in-person gatherings, our collective efforts were recognized with the Chapter Excellence Award for Best Membership Engagement. Furthermore, our fearless treasurer, Olivia Stadler, received the well-deserved "Outstanding Chapter Leader" award for her unwavering commitment and innovative contributions. Congratulations to us all on these remarkable achievements!

Looking ahead, Our chapter will be participating in CAMFT's 2024 Chapter Law and Ethics Webinar Revenue Share Program. This is a new program that will change the way we offer L&E CEs to our members and offset the financial impact of our in-person presentations. For every Monterey County Chapter member that registers for these webinars, the chapter will receive 60% of the proceeds. The following are the webinars included in the program.

-April 17, 2024: Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act

-June 5, 2024: Creating Clarity, Focus, and Reasonable Expectation at the Outset of Treatment and Beyond

-September 20, 2024: Working with Suicidal Clients

-October 23, 2024: Telehealth

-November 15, 2024: Subpoenas

Our commitment to enriching professional development continues with our next CE event, scheduled for March 23rd at The Community Shared Space in the Carmel Barnyard. Join us as Kjersti Nelson, LMFT, presents "Running Is My Therapy": a practitioner's guide to incorporating movement in mental health treatment plans and sessions. Prepare to explore the power of her very own treatment called Running-Based Stress Reduction™ (RBSR), encompassing polyvagal theory, mind-body synchrony, and "movement meditation." A light breakfast will be served (and coffee, of course). We are excited to have Kjersti join us next month!

If you are feeling eager to enhance your leadership skills and join a welcoming community of helpers, you can join our board of trustees and contribute to our community. We're actively seeking leaders to fill roles such as Secretary, Hospitality Chair, and Membership Chair. Additionally, assistance with our social media is warmly welcomed! If you're interested in joining our dynamic team, don't hesitate to reach out to us at mccamft@gmail.com. Trust me, we have a blast together!

Warm regards,

Amy Snyder, LMFT

Upcoming Events

Tuesday March 12th, 6pm-8pm



Conversations Amongst Therapists hosted by Mike Guichet

Come out and grab a drink or bring a bite nearby and chat with other therapists. Maybe bring along a resource and book to share about. This is an unstructured event and come on by and make conversation.

Saturday March 23rd, 9am-12pm



“Running Is My Therapy”

A practitioner’s guide to including movement in mental health treatment

Description:

Monterey County CAMFT hopes you will join Kjersti Nelson, LMFT, a distance runner and yoga instructor, as she shows us how to incorporate movement and other mind/body techniques in our work. Kjersti is the developer of Running Based Stress Reduction™(RBSR), an approach that facilitates change in the mind and body that promotes both physical and mental wellness.

This workshop will include information about historical and current research on how running and other physical activity improves treatment outcomes. Kjersti Nelson will describe, demonstrate and lead experiential activities in specific strategies and interventions—and how to implement these in our work. She will highlight how including running, walking, yoga, or other physical activities in a treatment plan aligns with a number of different theoretical lenses including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, Narrative Therapy, Psychodynamic Therapy, Eco-Therapy, and Polyvagal theory. This is an introductory workshop for all therapists - athletes or not!

Measurable Learning Objectives:

Therapists will be able to:

- Explain the theoretical basis and research that supports movement as a treatment intervention;
- Describe how including running, walking, yoga, and other physical activity aligns with their own theoretical orientation;
- Name and know how to implement 2-3 essential components of Running Based Stress Reduction™

Presenter Bio:

Kjersti Nelson is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, certified NAASFP “Marathon Coach,” and certified Yoga Instructor. She developed Running Based Stress Reduction™(RBSR), a comprehensive therapy that combines mindfulness, movement, meditation, breath work, immersion in nature, yoga/stretching/strength training and rest with inter- and intra-personal connection. She serves patients and communities in the San Francisco Bay Area.

2 CEs are included in the registration cost for this presentation

COST

Licensed MC-CAMFT Members: \$30

Pre-Licensed MC-CAMFT Members: \$25

Non-Members and Guests: \$55

Course meets the qualifications for 2 hours of continuing education credits for LMFTs, LPCCs, LEPs, and/or LCSWs, as required by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences.

FOR GENERAL INFORMATION, SPECIAL NEEDS, ADA ACCOMMODATION OR GRIEVANCES:

Please contact MCCAMFT at mccamft@gmail.com

Event Reflections

Grief Medicine for Heartbreaking Times - with Amy Hyun Swart, LMFT



We Are Winners!



Olivia F. Stadler, LMFT - Monterey County Chapter

When the chapter was tasked with nominating an exceptional leader, the choice was clear. Olivia embodies dedication, reliability, and unwavering determination (and as you can see here, she is fierce). Since joining the Monterey Chapter in 2020 as the Hospitality chair, Olivia has proven herself to be an exemplary member and leader.

Throughout the challenges of COVID-19, Olivia remained resolute in her commitment to the chapter's mission. Despite the need to restructure our activities, she went above and beyond to maintain the vibrancy of our community. Olivia hosted numerous welcome Zoom meetings for new members, ensuring that our chapter remains thriving.

Olivia's contributions extended beyond event coordination. She shared her expertise by delivering a captivating Continuing Education presentation on consensual non-monogamy, which was met with enthusiasm and appreciation from our membership. Her willingness to offer valuable insights showcases her commitment to the growth and education of our community.

This year presented an unexpected challenge when our chapter faced the departure of our treasurer. Without hesitation, Olivia stepped into this crucial role, displaying grace and poise under pressure. Her ability to adapt and take on responsibilities during challenging times has been invaluable to the chapter's success.

We consider ourselves incredibly fortunate to have her as a member of our team. We proudly nominate Olivia as an outstanding leader, knowing that her impact on our chapter and the broader community will continue to be both significant and inspiring.

Member Spotlight

Corrina Zandakis, LCSW



Hello! My name is Corrina Zandakis and I am a LCSW. I started my private practice just over a year ago. I work mostly with young adults who are navigating the transition from being teens to being adults. Many of the young adults I work with are also experiencing disordered eating and have poor body image. Currently, I only see clients over telehealth but have plans to expand to “walk and talk” sessions later this year to serve more local clients.

Before starting my private practice, I worked in many different settings including a queer resource center during my undergraduate time. During my MSW program, I interned and then worked for the Monterey County Rape Crisis Center wearing many different hats. The rape crisis movement will always have a special place in my heart and MCRCC was where I got my first experiences working with college students. I transitioned to working with students ranging from TK through community college at a few different local agencies and schools. I also spent a few years working at Alsana in all three levels of care (residential, PHP, IOP) that they provide.

I am not currently accepting new clients but I do keep a waitlist. Currently, I am paneled with Aetna, Anthem Blue Cross, Cigna, and United Healthcare. I also take private pay and keep a few sliding scale spots for those who need it.

Fun facts: I have 2 dogs and a cat. I taught myself about wood working so that I could build my cat her very own jungle gym on the walls of my home. I’ve also used my new skills to build my wife built-in bookshelves as we are both avid readers and always in need of more shelf space.

My email is corrina@zandakistherapy.com and my website is zandakistherapy.com

Couples Corner

offered by EFT trained therapist Amy Somers

I wondered what to write about all day, and it came down to connection. I probably wrote about this before, but wanted to reiterate, I guess. Being in a relationship is all about connection. I mean, that is the whole point, right? To feel connected to another person, our extremely basic, very essential attachment need. Remember the wire monkey and the cloth monkey experiment? The baby monkey chose the cloth (comfort, connection) over the wire mother (with a milk bottle.) That poor little baby would rather starve to death than go without connection. We are hard-wired for love.

I thought about EFT, and if I boil it all down to the basics, in a relationship, we either feel connected or not. Yes, our attachment needs have their own wiring, and yes, life happens, and trauma happens. All of these are true. But what if we put all that aside and just check in to see if we feel connected to our partner in the moment. If yes, great! You are conspiring with the universe and in tune with all things. If not, guess what the plan is? You got it: to connect. Here is an EFT cliff note: if you are feeling poorly, or overwhelmed by big emotions, most likely you are disconnected. From yourself, from your partner, from whomever you might be around or not around. Maybe the universe too, who knows. If you can identify that you feel off, most likely, yes, you are disconnected. The million-dollar question is, of course, how do you come back into connection?

So many beautiful ways to choose from! The simplest is to seek out your partner and report, in a vulnerable way, and say, "I am feeling yucky. I feel disconnected. I need a hug (to hold hands, to hear about what I did right, our beautiful life together, a healthy warm meal, a cup of tea, to breathe together, to cry, to laugh, insert favorite co-regulation method here)." What if your partner is not around, or you do not have a partner? Yes, you got it. Connect with yourself! Take a moment, self-regulate (breathe, walk, run, jump up and down, downward dog, hold an ice cube, drink something sour, you pick)! Come into your body and connect with your heartbeat, your breathing, tight spots in your body, connect to your emotions (what is coming up for me right now?). Have compassion for yourself the way a secure attachment partner might. Give yourself the butterfly hug, tap on your arms, legs whatever. Speak kindly to yourself. "It is okay, take your time. Take a break and step outside. You are loved. You can do this." Treat yourself as nicely as you would a tantruming child. Speak slowly, calmly and kindly and give yourself some slack. Know that this too, shall pass. Get back in connection.

You see where I am going with all of this. Lather, rinse repeat: how am I feeling? Good, probably connected. Okay, could be more connected, probably. Bad, disconnected. When you take time to check in, you create a space. With this space comes a choice. Maybe you choose nothing. That is okay, but at least you know you have a choice. Maybe you make a different choice later. Maybe you choose connection right away. How brilliant, how empowering. To know you have the power to connect at any point in time, that you are not just blown about by the winds of life. What a revelation!

That is all I have to say about connection for now. Choose it! Or know that you are not in it and then decide what to do. There is no right or wrong answer, there is only awareness. As for me, I am trying to always choose connection, even when I need a moment alone. I say, "I am feeling awful, I love you and need a moment alone. I will come back to you but for now need to stew/cry/be pissed/hate my life." It feels much better to be connected when feeling awful, takes it down a notch or ten, then you know where to go when you are ready. Be well and continue to check in with "Am I connected?" See what you notice and report back.

Until next time.



The 3 Core Elements of Romantic Love

Love, theoretically—and love, actually.

Grant Hilary Brenner MD, DFAPA

KEY POINTS

Romantic love is of great importance, yet needs to be better understood.

While psychological theories and popular notions of love overlap, empirical research is less robust.

A recent study finds three elements of romantic love: responsiveness, connection, and stability.

Ongoing work is needed to further delineate romantic love, what makes it successful, and what gets in the way.

Love, they say, is a many-splendored thing. However, love is hard to define, and that's equally true for researchers as for the lay public. Aside from varying culturally,¹ psychological theories of romantic love abound, as described by Chen, Xia, and Dunne (2024) in their work on how everyday folks define amore.

Love, Theoretically

Some models of love, they note, emphasize aspects of friendship and sexual attraction; others focus on closeness and affection over passion, which tends to fade over time and be supplanted by a mellower “after-glow” for long-term partners. Sternberg’s widely cited model, for instance, highlights the interrelated role of passion, intimacy, and commitment; other models posit four dimensions of love.

The upshot is that current theories, while overlapping, do not achieve consensus. Empirical research is needed to understand how people actually conceptualize romantic love, the theme of art, literature, and music, and the cause of much intrigue, conflict, and even—in the case of the Trojan War—widespread mayhem and destruction.

From the Source

In order to better define love as it plays out in real life and relationships for real people, Chen and colleagues conducted a qualitative study with a group of university students and a separate group of adults in the community. They asked participants: “What are the essential components of feeling loved in romantic relationships, as perceived by laypeople?”

By using two different groups with diverse subjects and checking to see how much their answers overlapped, they explored the question, “How generalizable are the main components of romantic love across different demographics?” This second question is especially important in establishing whether any findings might be relevant beyond the current research.

Using a process of progressive synthesis, they analyzed narratives from over 500 people, first into concepts, then categories, and finally three core categories—positive responsiveness to needs, authentic connection, and a sense of stability. They found a high degree of agreement between undergraduate and community responses and consistency across gender, ethnicity, age, and socioeconomic status, suggesting these findings are likely to apply broadly; that is, they are generalizable. Core categories were made up of more specific subcategories, as follows:

Positive responsiveness (to needs). This was the strongest core category, discussed in various ways by 96.8 percent of participants. The underlying categories here were demonstrating affection, providing support, and enhancing sense of worth. Responses consistently covered notions like “caring for me,” “doing nice things,” “random acts of kindness,” and “treating me well” (through actions).

Demonstrating affection included physical actions such as hugging and caressing, verbal expressions of love, little gestures like sending gifts, and showing positive regard. Support was provided via material resources like paying for meals; providing services such as cooking; and intangibles such as giving guidance, sticking up for one, giving encouragement, and supporting autonomy. Sense of worth was enhanced by highlighting one’s good qualities; complimenting directly or expressing pride in front of others; highlighting loved one’s specialness or importance; making them a priority; or asking them for help.

cont’d on pg. 9

Authentic connection. The feeling of togetherness was relevant for 71.5 percent of respondents. This included both physical and mental intimacy. Categories comprising authentic connection were mutual affinity and being in tune with one another.

Mutual affinity was expressed in wanting to be together in different ways, by doing things together, and very often via communication—including texting, calling, having tough conversations, talking about the future, and various other ways of sharing experiences and ideas. Being in tune was about being on the same page, “in sync,” and through being included, having others being receptive or open to oneself, being interested, paying attention, and through engagement and understanding.

A sense of stability. Coming in as the third most common, 34.5 percent discussed long-term consistency as a key component of romantic love. Distinct from the prior core categories, this component embodied the persistence of romantic love across longer spans of time and enduring through life’s ups and downs.

The underlying categories here were being dependable and unconditional. Dependability was about “always being reliable and trustworthy,” and being present in times of need by, for example, being a good listener, bolstering confidence, and checking in when things are hard. The unconditional regard of stability included doing what was needed without expectations, and acceptance, regardless of flaws, of who a person is without trying to change them.

Love, Actually

The three core categories and seven subcategories were 100 percent consistent across gender, ethnicity, and household income. The information derived from these interviews and the subsequent analysis was also consistent with many of the psychological frameworks theorized to capture overarching features of romantic love. While further research is needed to look at how love is empirically defined and experienced, given the exploratory nature of this study, the findings support the notion that romantic love may be grounded in highly generalizable factors.

Notably, positive responsiveness, authentic connection, and a sense of stability work together to define an interpersonal ecosystem of romantic love, within which short-, middle-, and long-term behaviors and communications build synergistically upon one another.

While the study did not investigate how love grows over time, it’s tempting to speculate that the most frequent core category, positive responsiveness, could be the foundation. Authentic connection could weave the relationship together more firmly, and, over time, a sense of stability would build upon and consolidate those elements of the relationship into one of enduring union.

No doubt there is further nuance, as couples weather challenges with varying degrees of personal, relationship, and sexual satisfaction, and, given that more than 40 percent of married couples ultimately part ways, enduring romantic love may be easier said than done. Nevertheless, the three-fold conception of romantic love derived here is useful for both thinking about how we experience love in our own lives and providing a base camp for future research and clinical practice, and for couples to better understand their own path together.



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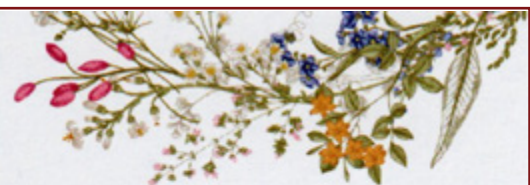
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Is it time to create or update your website?

MC-CAMFT webmaster, Katie Dutcher, specializes in creating beautiful and affordable websites with Square-space, and she's currently taking on a small number of new website clients.

For a free consultation, email Katie at:
hello@katiedutcher.com or visit
www.katiedutcher.com/design



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NEWSLETTER ARTICLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS INVITED

Make sure our newsletter reflects your experience as a clinician in our chapter. Contribute to your newsletter through book reviews, opinions, CEU experience, events, clinical expertise, announcements, successes or other relevant information.

Contact Ross Farley III, LMFT, newsletter editor,
rossfarleyiii@gmail.com, 831-313-4043

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING

Advertisements including classifieds and flyers must be placed prior to the advertising deadline. All ads must obtain approval by the Newsletter Editor, Advertising Chair and the MC-CAMFT Board President.

Advertisements should be submitted by email attachment as a Word document with the exact wording desired. Submission and approval for all advertisements, including payment, is due by the 12th of the month preceding publication.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

Newsletters are published at the beginning of the month, every other month (January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, November/December). Deadline to contribute articles and advertisements is the 12th of the month preceding publication.

MC-CAMFT **Mission Statement**

MC-CAMFT is dedicated to the advancement of marriage and family therapists, to the promotion of high standards of professional ethics and qualifications of its members, and to expanding the recognition and utilization of the profession in Monterey County.

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