



The Monterey County Chapter
California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists

September / October 2022 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

September - In-Person CE Event

Event Type: *CE In-Person Luncheon*
Title: *The Art of Integrating Expanded States of Consciousness*
Presenter(s): *Cristin DeVine, LMFT & Jennifer Allen, LMFT, ATR-BC*
Location: *Hilton Garden Inn 1000 Aguajito Road Monterey, CA 93940*
Date/Time: *Friday, Sept 30, 11:30 AM-2:00 PM*
Schedule: *11:30-12:00 Registration, Lunch, Welcome & Announcements; 12:00-2:00 Presentation*
Number of CEs: *2*

Pricing Categories/Respective Prices:
Licensed MC-CAMFT Member \$28
Pre-Licensed MC-CAMFT Member \$20
Non-Members & Guests \$35

October - Save the Date!

Event Type: *In-Person CE Salon*
Date/Time: *Saturday, October 15th, 1:00pm-3:00pm*
Title: *An Introduction to Narrative Therapy & Narrative Practices*
Host: *Chad Dispenza, AMFT & Brian Wainwright, LMFT*

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2022 MC-CAMFT Board Roster

2022 Board of Directors - Officers -

President:

Jennifer Farley
jennifer@shamanhealingmonterey.com

Treasurer:

Susan West
831-206-7639

Secretary:

Rochelle Hall
rochellehall.consult@gmail.com



2022 - Committee Chairs -

Membership Chair: OPEN
Public Relations: OPEN
Programs Chair: OPEN
Continuing Education Chair: OPEN

Legislative & Ethics Chair:
Michael Newman

Mentorship Chair:
Pat McDermott, LMFT
patmcdermft@comcast.net

Newsletter Editor:
Ross E. Farley III
rossfarleyiii@gmail.com

Hospitality Chair:
Olivia Fae Stadler
olivia.stadler@yahoo.com

Pre-Licensed 3,000 Hr. Club Chair
Catherine Rodriguez

Member-At-Large:
Carmen Martin, LMFT
lovehealing@me.com



Like Us on Facebook!

Connect with your colleagues
through the Monterey Chapter
CAMFT Facebook page.

Jennifer Farley



2022 Board President

Hello MC-CAMFT Chapter Members!

I have some stark news to relay, and I also have some really good news.

At the end of July we held a State of the Chapter event. It was a lovely, sunny Saturday morning in Veteran's Park. We spent some time in the beginning simply having some breakfast and connecting with one another. It was wonderful to welcome a few new members to our chapter; as well as see lots of familiar faces. However, the main purpose of this event was a serious one. I, on behalf of the board (and with the support of other board members present) sought to more deeply understand what members value about the chapter, and to check in to see if in fact the chapter is still something that is important to our membership. I was happy to get a resounding "yes" from those who were present. People shared that they value the opportunity for connecting with one another, along with meeting new colleagues. People also expressed that they value the opportunity to continue their education in the context of a local community.

With this common ground of valuing our Monterey County Chapter, I then began to report on the reality of our chapter status. The main points I shared were that we have had vital roles on the board vacant- Programming Chair has been vacant for 2 years and CE Chair has been vacant for over a year. Additionally, we have people on our board who have dedicated their time for a stretch, and they are ready to move on- Myself as President, Susan as Treasurer and Rochelle as Secretary. These 3 positions are part of the executive leadership, and thus, they MUST be occupied in order for a chapter to exist according to our by-laws. This means that if no one is inspired to take on these positions by Nov 1st in order to be on the chapter ballot and confirmed to start in the new year, our chapter will be inactive and possibly move towards dissolution.

Here is where the good news comes in! From this event, a committee was formed. The aim of this committee has been to reach out to each member, and engage in conversation similar to our large discussion inquiring about whether each of you still values the chapter. Again, the feedback has been a resounding "YES!" So, from there our committee then asked for willingness to take on these vacant positions. I am happy to report that members of our chapter have stepped up to take on most of these roles! That being said, we are still in the process of confirming their interest, so if you have been considering offering your talents to the board, there is still plenty of opportunity to do so. Please reach out to me and let me know: jennifer@shamanhealingmonterey.com

I'd like to take a moment to specifically thank the members of our committee who dedicated their time to individually reaching out to our membership: Mary Sue Abernethy, Meg Grundy, Pamela Hughes and Catherine Rodriguez. Making those calls was no small task! It also demonstrates that one can contribute time to the chapter in important ways even without fully taking on a board position, and I hope that as future opportunities to support our chapter arise, others are encouraged to help in a similar way! I'd also like to extend sincere appreciation to everyone who participated in our conversation at the State of the Chapter event, as well as each person who took the time to respond to our committee calls. Thank you! Thank you! If you haven't received a call yet, you will. If you have received a call but haven't had a chance to respond, please still do so!

Lastly, I am also really excited that we are moving forward with our first in person CE luncheon since January 2020!! Our own local clinicians, Cristin DeVine and Jennifer Allen are presenting on the Art of Integrating Expanded States of Consciousness at the end of this month- Sept 30th to be precise. You'll find more information about that event in this newsletter and registration is open on the website! I hope to see you there!

May you be well,

Jennifer Farley

Events & News

September 30th, 2022

Event Type: CE In-Person Luncheon

Title: The Art of Integration Work

Presenter: Jennifer Allen, LMFT, ATR-BC & Cristin DeVine, LMFT

Date/Time: Friday, Sept 30, 11:30 AM-2:00 PM

Schedule: 11:30-12:00 Registration, Lunch, Welcome & Announcements; 12:00-2:00 Presentation

Number of CEs: 2

Pricing Categories/Respective Prices:

Licensed MC-CAMFT Member \$28

Pre-Licensed MC-CAMFT Member \$20

Non-Members & Guests \$35

Description:

Clinicians - get ready! With Micheal Pollen's recent Netflix documentary on psychedelic medicine and MAPS research showing consistently promising results using MDMA for PTSD, more people are seeking these experiences to ease suffering and expand consciousness. As a clinician, it is important to be familiar with the basics: Set, Setting and Integration. This workshop is focused on Integration because it is most likely what your clients will need from you, whether they call it that, or not. Using case examples, experiential learning and powerpoint visuals, we will provide an orientation to the art of integrating expanded states of consciousness (ESC) for both the clinician's personal development and to better serve their clients.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the 3 basic phases of the Art for Access process for Integration:

Re-entry via Shamanic drum journey

Creative window

Stream of Consciousness writing process

2. List 3 differences between talk therapy and integration

3. Describe 3 aspects of the Inner Healer:

Arises from within the client

Incorporates wisdom/new knowing/intuition

Is often blocked by Default Mode Network

Incorporates Soul/Self vs Ego

4. Describe 5 differences between mythology vs "woundology":

Transformational tension vs anxiety

Spiritual emergence vs pathology

Expansion vs contraction

Metaphor vs literal

Resourcing the whole vs fixing what's wrong

Holding the big picture vs tracking content

Presenter Bios:

Jennifer Allen:



For over 20 years, Jennifer has practiced psychotherapy and art therapy in a local private practice. Simultaneously, she has been on an earth-based spiritual path including being a student of Shamanism. In 2018, she received her certificate in Psychedelic Therapies and Research from CIIS (California Institute of Integral Studies) and in 2019 she pursued training for Ketamine Assisted Psychotherapy from the Ketamine Training Center. She has been practicing both ketamine assisted psychotherapy and psychedelic integration since these trainings. Jennifer also co-leads (with Cristin) Clinician's Experiential Integration Training/Retreats to help practitioners develop skills and orientation to working with clients who are using psychedelics. Additionally, Jennifer has developed Art for Access integration process that uses shamanic drum journey, art and stream of consciousness writing. She has presented on this process, integration and psychedelics at conferences in New York and LA, for life coach trainings in Russia (virtually), numerous CAMFT chapters, Breakthrough Men's community and the Monterey Psychedelic Association.

Cristin DeVine:



Cristin DeVine has been a student of wellness for most of her adult life. In her early twenties, she taught in a Yup'ik village in the bush of Alaska and learned to live a subsistence lifestyle. Living in the wilds of Alaska with native people, in connection and reciprocity with the land, gave her a perspective on health, contentment, and well-being that has informed her life.

From Alaska she went to the deserts and mountains of the lower 48, working in the field of wilderness therapy and training as a Soulcraft and wilderness rites of passage guide with Animas Valley Institute. She received her Masters in Counseling from Pacifica Graduate Institute with an emphasis in Jungian and depth psychology. Cristin has an additional certification in psychedelic assisted therapy and research from the California Institute of Integral Studies and an emphasis in Ketamine assisted therapy from Polaris Insight Center. She has been a student of mindfulness with the

Diamond Approach and shamanism with the Andean Research Institute. As a farmer, homesteader, licensed psychotherapist, NIA instructor and Reiki practitioner, Cristin brings a unique perspective on wellness through a variety of modalities. She currently specializes in Ketamine assisted therapy and the art of integration of expanded states.

MC-CAMFT ANNOUNCEMENTS LISTSERV VIA TOPICBOX

Welcome to our new announcements forum!

This replaces the old forum on our website.

Enjoy a wider outreach, as every active member can now access this listserv.

As a chapter member, you are automatically enrolled in this listserv so that you can easily communicate professional announcements with fellow members.

How it works:

To send a message to everyone in the group, use the email: mccamft-announcements@mccamft.topicbox.com

You'll receive a copy in your email, or you can view it online at <https://mccamft.topicbox.com/groups/mccamft-announcements>. You can write new messages or responses there too.

- An acceptable announcement is any referral, event, group, office space available/wanted, supervision wanted/offered, trainings, etc. This can include both offering or looking for a service, a resource, or information.
- Examples of announcement topics are: looking for referrals, office space, internships, supervisors, etc.; starting a peer consult group; forming special interest group; practice announcement or openings; donating books; referral questions for clients; questions on resources, or services, etc.

HOW TO MANAGE YOUR NOTIFICATIONS FROM TOPICBOX

When someone makes a post, you will get an email notification. If you'd like to adjust things so that you get a daily summary (rather than potentially multiple emails a day), or to remove yourself from all notifications, here is how to do it:

Click this link: [delivery options](#)

It will ask you to put in your email address. Enter your email.

It will then send you a code to type in. Type in that code.

Now you are in Topicbox.

On the right hand side, you'll see a section called "Delivery options" and then a link that says "edit delivery options". Click on the link that says "edit delivery options"

From there, there are 3 options and you can pick which is best for you, including an option to no longer receive emails. If you'd like to not be active in this forum, you'd pick that option.

Please note that there is also an option to receive a "daily summary". This would allow you to get ONE email per day with a summary of all messages sent, so if you are overwhelmed by messages coming in as they are posted, this can be a great way to still stay engaged, but not get too many emails.

Couple's Corner

Couples Corner

-offered by EFT trained therapist Amy Somers

One of my husband's favorite ideas that I champion with our couples is subtitles. Do you know when you watch a foreign film, or someone you watch movies with is hard of hearing and turns on the subtitles (first my dad now my mom)? The subtitles cue the watcher to "birds singing" or "heavy sigh," "laughter" or even "grunt." I always love these because they state the obvious. But to someone who cannot hear or does not know the language, these are social cues for the collective experience. Using the EFT lens in my own relationship, I began to subtitle with my partner when I could not find the words to explain my inner state eloquently.

As a Withdrawer, my go-to is to say nothing, to wall up. Instead, I chose to narrate my subtitles after we experienced a rupture. As in: "I really want to run away and hide right now, but I am choosing to stay. Your energy is extremely high (my husband is a Pursuer), and I am afraid to reach out. I am going to do it anyway. Here I go, reaching out towards you to give you a hug because I know down deep, we are connected, it's just on the surface that we feel disconnected." Sometimes I exaggerate for effect and make silly faces like I am deathly afraid, all squinched up in terror. This narration pulls up my inner world and explains it to him in simplistic, almost child-like terms, as well as my request/intention. The first time I did it, he was downright quizzical. The subtitles dissolved our Negative Cycle, our dance we call the Storm. Subtitling was a new behavior to an old problem that usually evaded us. He was interested, even baffled, and resisted for a moment, returning to his normal dance steps. I tried again (we call him the Bear when his raw spots get rubbed up against): "I am afraid of the Bear, but I will hug the Bear. I love the Bear, here I go..." he eventually gave in and even chuckled. We hugged. It felt so good. Not just physically but ending the hateful dance.

Now I try the subtitles apart from rupture because they work so well. I remember when things are going well, and I feel connected, to let him know: "I feel connected." Sounds obvious to my movie watcher self but then I realize how not obvious it might be to him, and how this might be interpretative and helpful. "I really love the way you left me a note today, or it feels so good when you hold me like that." It is a mistake to think that just because we have been together for 30 years now, I know what he is thinking, feeling. I ask him to subtitle also, describe his inner state. Oftentimes I assume I know and am totally wrong, or he is wrong, when I use my subtitles. "I would have never guessed that" he says.

It's not rocket science. Not even a little. But the results of subtitling can be earth shattering, I promise. Try it, see what you notice. Invite your couples that you work with to use them as well, during session. See what happens and report back. Emotions are under resourced and under rated, can pull a couple into the heart of the matter and identify what each partner needs: "I feel scared" is asking for safety. What does that mean in this moment? For me as a Withdrawer, it might mean asking my Pursuer partner to bring down the energy in the room. "I'm sad" needs comfort. To me that means a hug.

It is never about avoiding the rupture; rupture is guaranteed between two humans. It is about the repair. Subtitles are a way to bring repair into the conflict sooner, or to strengthen connection between already connected partners. Both instances are a tweak that bring connection to the forefront. More frequent repairs bring less ruptures. Proof's in the pudding. Give it a shot!

The Road to Licensure

Road to Licensure / Phase 2: Upon Graduation

Welcome to the MC-CAMFT Road to Licensure article series! I'm Catherine Rodriguez, your 2022 Pre-Licensed Board Chair.

This series is adapted from the latest version (2022) of CAMFT's Master Checklist for MFT Licensure as well as other BBS resources for MFTs, PCCs and MSWs. Be sure to check with CAMFT and the BBS often to ensure you have the most current information, as it is an ever-evolving process. We'll do our best here to provide you with the most up-to-date information on the Road to Licensure. On the BBS website, you will notice the phrase "Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the applicant to comply with all requirements for licensure." While this is true, there is plenty of support available for you. My goal in this series is to empower you to know where to go for resources and support.

On the CAMFT website <https://www.camft.org> under the Pre-Licensed Corner, you'll find The Master Checklist for MFT Licensure (updated for 2022). You must be a member to access this, but it's an invaluable resource along with many other resources available from CAMFT for Pre-Licensed members.

Over the course of the year, these articles will address these 6 topics in the Phases of Licensure: 1) Grad School & Traineeships, 2) Upon Graduation, 3) Gaining Hours of Experience, 4) Application for Licensure and Exams, 5) Licensure and Beyond and 6) Therapist Self-Care. These articles will have links to websites that you can access for the specific support that you need. Please feel free to contact me for guidance or to give feedback on how we can best serve you.

Now that you've graduated with your master's or doctoral degree, congratulations! Now what? Applying for your Associate Registration number with the BBS is next whether MFT, PCC or CSW. To ensure that you can count the supervised hours of experience you gain between graduation and the issue date of the registration number, you must apply within 90 days of the date your degree posts.

In addition, to count those supervised hours during the 90-day period, you must complete Live Scan fingerprinting for both the BBS and your employer. Once you complete the "Request for Live Scan Service" form for your employer, be sure to obtain a copy to submit with your application for licensure once you have completed all of your supervised hours.

As you approach your graduation date and complete your traineeship / internship, you are likely to be looking for your next position to obtain all the supervised hours you need for licensure. How do you go about doing that? There are many different places to conduct your job search.

Your graduate school career center will often have job search resources available to you. In addition, there are many websites to search for placements. Some of the more popular websites are www.indeed.com, www.simplyhired.com, www.linkedin.com, and www.prelicensed.com. Also, state CAMFT and CAMFT regional chapters will often post available jobs.

When seeking out Associate site placements, keep in mind the populations and issues you might prefer to work with. Typically, you'll be able to gain a range of mental health experience working with children and teens, families, couples and individual adults.

Be sure that your work setting meets the BBS requirements. It must "lawfully and regularly provide mental health counseling or psychotherapy," generally in a mental health non-profit community agency. Your work setting must provide you with appropriate supervision as well as the required documents (<https://www.bbs.ca.gov>). As an Associate, you are required to have one unit of supervision each week (1 hour of individual or triadic supervision or 2 hours of group supervision) for every 10 hours of direct counseling experience.

Once you receive your Associate Registration number, you are now permitted to work in a private practice or professional corporation. This may mean that you will advertise your services to gain your clientele. You must be "truthful and not misleading" about your status as a pre-licensed therapist.

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You must use an appropriate title, such as Associate MFT Registration Applicant or Registered Associate MFT, as well as disclose the name of your licensed supervisor and employer or work entity.

Completing your 3000+ hours of supervised experience could take a minimum of 2 years but could also take longer depending on your own life circumstances. You have six years to complete your hours of experience under one Associate Registration number. If you don't complete those hours within that time, you will need to reapply for a Subsequent Associate Registration number. After the initial six years, you won't be able to work in a private practice setting or a professional corporation.

Other BBS considerations to keep in mind include ensuring that you complete required documentation with your job site such as the Supervision Agreement, Weekly Summary of Experience Hours and In-State Experience Verification (<https://www.bbs.ca.gov>).

Again, supervision is a key component in the quality of your pre-licensed work experience. In addition to meeting the necessary BBS supervision requirements, WHO your supervisor is, matters. You may not have a choice in who your supervisor will be, so how do you ensure that you get the best supervision possible? How can you be an empowered trainee? If there is something that isn't working for you, speaking up about what you need is critical to your professional development. Here's some things to consider about your supervisory relationship.

- What is your supervisor's primary theoretical orientation? How well does this match yours?
- What is the supervisor's approach to supervision? Do they have a coaching / mentoring approach or a teaching / telling approach (or both)?
- What important qualities does a potential supervisor bring to supervision?
- What is their communication style?
- What do you want from supervision? Ideas include getting feedback on cases, learning about theory, exploring countertransference, gaining tools or techniques, engaging in roleplays, defining your professional identity, etc.
- What are your professional goals? How might this position contribute to those goals and how can the supervisor support you?

As a Registered Associate therapist, it is your responsibility to track and document the hours you gain through your pre-licensed period. You can do this directly using BBS forms or you can use a web-based program, such as Track Your Hours <https://www.trackyourhours.com/features/>. It is a paid service, but can be an invaluable support in tracking, documenting, and validating your hours gained. It can help you to ensure that you are counting your hours properly and getting the proper ratios of clinical hours to supervision, as well as making sure you meet the requirements for the different types of experience you need. It can bridge across your traineeship to your Associate hours, as well.

Last but not least, be sure to sign up for membership in state and local CAMFT, for resources, information, community and support on your Road to Licensure. Check here <https://mccamft.org> for member benefits on the MC-CAMFT website. See you in the next article, and good luck on this phase of your journey!



Guest Article

Difficulties Come and Go, so Accept Difficulties
Fighting with the hard things in life just makes them worse.
by Rick Hanson Ph.D.

KEY POINTS

Not all difficulties are equally problematic, and life contains unavoidable challenges.

To feel more peaceful, try the attitude of accepting difficulty instead of getting aggravated by it.

Difficulties come and go. Meanwhile, your good qualities and the good things in life persist and remain.

Sometimes things are difficult. Your legs are tired, and you still have to stay on your feet for another hour at work.

You love a child who is finding her independence through emotional distance from you.

A long-term relationship could be losing its spark. It's finals week in college. You're trying to start a business, and it's struggling.

You've got a chronic health problem or a disability. Sometimes people don't appreciate your work.

You're being discriminated against or otherwise treated unjustly.

The body ages, sags, and grows weary.

Plus, there are all the little hassles of everyday life. You're in an airport and can't get Wi-Fi (the injustice!).

You're at home looking for the ice cream, and someone ate the last of it.

You're talking to your partner and realize they aren't really paying attention.

Not all difficulties are equally difficult. And to observe that life contains unavoidable difficulty is not to minimize its impacts or to suggest that we should give up trying to make life better. But people—me included—add a lot of unnecessary frustration, anxiety, and self-criticism by resisting difficulty—often with an underlying attitude of “it shouldn't be this way.”

Try the attitude of accepting difficulty instead of getting aggravated by it. It's a lot more peaceful.

The Practice

In the moment, start by acknowledging any stress, weariness, frustration, anxiety, or pain. Open to the impact on your body and mind of whatever is difficult. Let the experience be whatever it is. Try to step back from it and observe it. Let it flow—through you—and out the door.

For sure, have self-compassion, the simple wish that a being not suffer applied to yourself. Say to yourself things like, “ouch, this hurts, I wish it didn't . . . may I not suffer.”

Then step back. See if there is any resistance to things being difficult, and see if you can let it go. Perhaps there's a belief deep down that life should be fulfilling, peaceful, and buffered from pain. Keep softening around the inherent difficulties in living, dealing with them as best you can but not struggling with them. Notice that when you stop resisting a difficulty, it starts feeling less difficult.

As appropriate, try on the attitude: I signed up for this. Not to blame yourself for things that have happened to you or to discount your stress or weariness, but to establish yourself in a relationship of choice toward whatever is difficult. For example, stuck in traffic toward work, remind yourself that this is part of making a living; awakened yet again by your baby, feel in your body yet again your choice to be a parent; under any conditions, you could recognize your ongoing choice again to be alive. Say to yourself, “this is difficult, and that's OK . . . I accept the difficulty here . . . yes, it's difficult, and so what?”

It's OK that things are difficult. That's part of what gives them their savor. Not all fulfilling experiences are grounded in some difficulty, but many are. Honor yourself for the hard things you're dealing with. And be aware of the things that are not difficult in your life, including those that support you.

In particular, keep up your personal practices during difficult times, such as exercise, meditation, moments of gratitude, protein at every meal, and doing things that nurture you. The more difficult your life, the more you need to take care of yourself.

Difficulties come and go. Meanwhile, your good qualities and the good things in life persist and remain.

RESILIENCE

How to 'Listen to Your Body' for Resilience

Learning to listen to your body can make you happier, healthier, and resilient.

Leigh W. Jerome Ph.D.

KEY POINTS

Sometimes we need to challenge ourselves but sometimes when we push through adversity, it is not in our best interest.

Listening to your body has tremendous benefits for improved health, satisfaction, and life balance.

Learning how to listen to your body is simple and doesn't take much time or effort.

Life is busy. We work hard, play hard, and each day try to pack in as much as we can, to fulfill education and career goals, nurture our families, accomplish our dreams, and respond to daily crises. Sometimes pushing our limits is a good idea. When we push ourselves, we are able to move beyond plateaus and reach long-standing goals. Challenging ourselves can lead to greater self-efficacy and success, stronger relationships, and novel opportunities for discovery and learning.

On the other hand, sometimes we force the effort, contriving inflexible routines or pushing in unhealthy ways, in order to accomplish what needs to get done. Sometimes we keep going when our bodies are signaling to us that we are fatigued, injured, sick, or otherwise in distress. Sometimes we push when what we really need is to relax, have a good meal, or have a conversation with a trusted friend. And, sometimes when our bodies are telling us what we need, we just ignore the messages entirely because they don't align with our plans.

To listen to your body means to really apprehend that the mind and the body are interconnected; that they work in tandem and are mutually reliant on one another to process the information that moves chemically between them. Your mind is finely attuned to perceive, down to the cellular level, all that's happening within your body. Meanwhile, your body is listening and responding to every thought and obsession rolling around in your brain.

Your thoughts, behavior, and beliefs trigger chemical responses that, in turn, trigger changes in your body. A stressful thought can trigger a fight-or-flight response that equals a real-life danger. When your head is full of agitation and negativity, it triggers a chronic state of fight-or-flight. The toll of habitual stress on your body, with the constant release of cortisol and adrenaline, may lead to a cascade of physical events that can predispose your body to illness.

When we are born, we instinctively know exactly what we need. As we mature, and become influenced by the demands and values of family, friends, and the mores and beliefs within our culture, we impose rules about what we should look like, how we should act, and in what ways we will be judged. In doing so, we may lose touch with our mind-body connection. Sometimes, we listen more to these social and environmental signals and less to what our bodies are telling us about what we really need to be happy, healthy, and fulfilled.

To listen to your body means to become more mindful and honest about the messages your body is providing to you. This can be easy, such as when the signal you receive is conveying something urgent, like the danger of a hot stove; or, in cases where the messages are consistent with what you want to hear. Information that is subtle or dissonant can be challenging and requires a bit more effort. Learning to listen to your body is always a good idea. Listening to imposed and unrealistic expectations can lead us blundering into exhaustion and negativity, and leave us feeling frustrated and sick.

Learning to listen to your body starts by un-learning counterproductive, socially imposed beliefs about self-image, performance, success, productivity, approval, perfectionism, and control. Each of us contains, within our body and mind, an exquisite and personalized mind-body wisdom. This wisdom becomes more available to us as we recognize that anything we are feeling in our body means something.

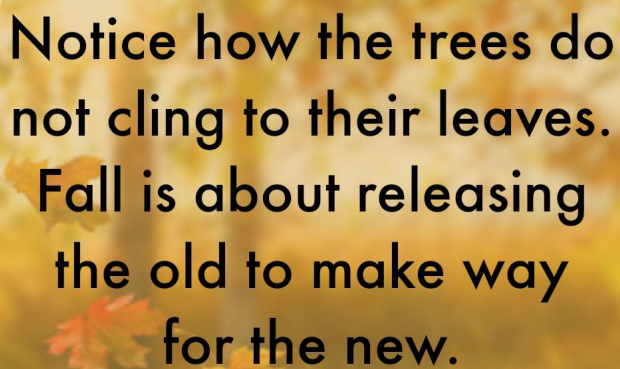
It's easy to get stuck in your head and tune out essential sensations; but, every butterfly in your stomach, every headache, tight muscle, surge of energy, and flood of emotion is there for a reason, providing gentle encouragement, danger signals, and constant feedback about what is needed to keep you comfortable and perfectly in balance.

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A primary element for understanding your mind-body communications is awareness. Developing awareness about what you are feeling and learning what the signals mean takes time and practice. But it's not difficult to listen to your body nor is it time-consuming to practice, and the payoff is enormous.

Simply take a moment here and there throughout your day to stop, close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and ask, "How do I feel right now?" Determine everything that you are feeling in that moment, such as hungry, tired, cold, energetic, etc., then ask what your body needs in that moment, perhaps (respectively) food, rest, a sweater, or activity. Next, honor your body's response by recognizing and believing the messages you receive. In other words, trust your gut, without judgment. In time, you'll learn to perceive and accept the feedback spontaneously, without effort, rather than ignoring your instincts or trying to wish them away.

The benefits of learning to listen to your body can be immense. It will allow you to make better decisions about your physical and mental health. Further, our mind's perception of events informs and guides our immune system to help us be better able to respond to future threats (Cook, 2016). Tuning in to your mind and body is the ultimate form of self-care. As you learn more about yourself, it will allow you to make better choices in general. You will become healthier, happier, and more resilient as you develop stronger intuition, self-efficacy, and autonomy.



**Notice how the trees do
not cling to their leaves.
Fall is about releasing
the old to make way
for the new.**

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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.

MC-CAMFT is pleased to acknowledge the service of its **PAST PRESIDENTS**

| | |
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