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LACGS NEWSLETTER



Pictured above: Southern Rep Theatre, the location of Care For Creatives

Letter from the Editor

Dear Counseling Graduate Students,

We have been hard at work to provide meaningful experiences and opportunities for you this year. The executive board has decided that LACGS will host one Service Event and one CEU event per year to make the most out of your dues that you pay upon registering for LCA. This past month, we hosted our very first service event! With your dues, we were able to create care packages for the homeless at Ozanam Inn. LACGS would like to extend our sincerest gratitude for anyone who participated or helped to make this project come to fruition. In our next newsletter we will reveal details about our upcoming workshop expected to take place in May. As always, feel free to reach out to anyone on the executive board with ideas for workshops or service events you would like to see or make

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happen.

In this newsletter edition, we have a very special section entitled “Confessions of a Counselor Intern” dedicated to honoring and celebrating the many different types of mistakes and awkward moments had by counselor interns. Part of why we created this section was for pure entertainment. However, the other reason was to help create a sense of community around a special time in our lives — being novice counselors. Sometimes it can be hard to accept the fact that we’re newbies and not experts. Mistakes will be made and they’re probably more common than you think! If you don’t believe me, quickly refer to page 4 of this newsletter. Enjoy and be on the lookout for emails from your reps!

Sincerely,

Vinaya na Champassak

Secretary of LACGS (Louisiana Association of Counseling Graduate Students)



SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT



From left to right: Oriel Romano and Ida Ansell pictured with Vinetta Frie (LCA president) after receiving the Graduate Student Award at the Louisiana Counseling Association Conference for their development of Students Addressing Race and Privilege (SARP) at Loyola University New Orleans, research efforts and receipts of grant funding, commitment to multicultural issues, and overall dedication to their profession.

Upcoming Events



March 28-31

What: American
Counselling Association
Conference

Where: Convention Center,
New Orleans

February 19-22

What: Law and Ethics in
Counseling Conference

Where: Bourbon Orleans
Hotel, New Orleans

July 28-31

What: Louisiana
Association for Substance
Abuse Counselors and
Trainers Conference

Where: Crowne Plaza
Hotel, Baton Rouge

CREATIVE COUNSELORS

THE LAST FRONTIER

BY: LAUREN DAYAN

Think of a few of the most important people in your life and the special moments you have shared together. Think of your favorite things to do, things that make life fun living. Think of your most favorite places in the world and how wonderful, and powerful, it is to roam this special planet.

Now, imagine that suddenly all of your favorite people are gone. You are the only one left with the memories you shared together. Imagine that you can no longer do the things you have loved doing your whole life, like going on road trips or listening to live music. Imagine that your body is so fragile that traveling anywhere is hazardous.



We can have the special honor to share a moment in time with people whose lives will soon be forgotten.

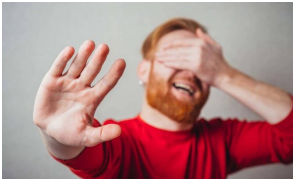
The Silent Generation, people who were born 1925-1945, notoriously do not complain about their situation even though they have experienced significant, life-altering losses. For instance, one of my clients is the last of his family of origin and another is riddled with arthritis and is no longer able to paint, an activity that brought her joy all her life. Yet, it seems uncomfortable for my clients to openly speak about these issues. It's easy to assume that if they don't bring any issues up then "they're fine" and ought not to be worried about. Therefore, when working with seniors, it is imperative to be aware of issues that accompany aging because most of the time seniors won't dote on all that they have been through.

Seniors are just like us, they are just a little further in the lifespan. Yet, western culture does not value age. We often get irritated with their needs, judge them for their habits, and send them away to nursing homes, secluded from life, so that we don't have to be bothered by them. As counselors, we can provide unconditional positive regard for a population that doesn't receive it anywhere else. We can have the special honor to share a moment in time with people whose lives will soon be forgotten. We can accompany this population in a moment in their life where time is very limited, and very valued, to work through any burdens they have.

Life doesn't simply stop, nor does one stop having problems, at a certain age. It is a privilege to work with people in the stage of life and the counseling work has the potential to be very meaningful for both client and counselor. Counselors have the responsibility, power, and privilege, to transform the final years of seniors.



CONFESSIONS OF A COUNSELOR INTERN



In the spirit of this year's LCA Conference theme, "Stronger Together", we wanted to put out a call for submissions of your MOST embarrassing mistakes with clients! We asked, and you delivered. Here are just a few of the anonymous submissions:

When you confuse your client for another client

I have lots of clients on my caseload, and when the semester began, I was getting to know so many new clients all at once! In my second session with a new client, we spent about 25 minutes talking about the client's family. I was really taking in her story, and I was piecing together her family dynamic inside my head. I asked her, "What's it like having been adopted into this family?" The client seemed taken back for a moment, so I clarified with a question like, "How do you think your adoption has impacted your family experience?" The client informed me that she was not adopted, and the two of us had to back-track for quite some time. I was mortified and was so afraid that I had ruined any chance of a therapeutic relationship. It turns out I was confusing her with another client who actually WAS adopted...



When you just have a downright awkward interaction



At my internship, our office phone is a cell phone, so I often carry it around with me. Additionally, I see my client's in their homes rather than a more traditional counseling setting. After a really great session, I walk back to my office and look in my bag and realize I left the phone in my client's apartment! It was SO awkward to have to go back to get it. The client was confused about why I was back so soon and it just felt like the good feelings that occurred after the session had evaporated.

When you change the subject because of your own discomfort

My client and I were getting into the depths of a heavy topic, the grief he was experiencing over his brother that had died several years ago. We were processing this grief and the conversation came to a standstill all of a sudden. Rather inappropriately after a few seconds of silence, I completely changed the subject and suggested that we get out the materials for a grief activity I had planned for the session! The worst part is when I went to show this moment in supervision I didn't even realize I did the same exact thing minutes prior when we were processing some other negative emotions he was experiencing. Needless to say this is a pattern I do my best to be more aware of now.



When you run into your client and they're not happy about it

I was seeing a little boy and girl (brother and sister) at the time. The boy did not like that I came to see them, but the girl love me. They lived with a guardian at the time that would "punish" him with my visits. I was sitting at Canes on my break eating. In walks that family and the little girl is screaming "(brothers name) look it's our counselor! Hey Ms (my name)!" They came over to the table and talked for a minute, the boy was mortified! In our next session we all talked (again) about confidentially and how others can break it and to be sensitive to not breaking others confidentially.

MEET YOUR EXECUTIVE BOARD



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