



## Managing Your APPT E-mail

### The Listserv Survey: Results and Future Directions

By Terry Moore & Adrian Martin

We've been listening to your concerns about the APPT listserv for some time. The recent survey that about 50 members responded to helped us more completely understand your thoughts about this feature of APPT membership. We are going to summarize the survey results, and offer an action plan for all of us.

#### Survey Results

Overall, members like the list just the way it is — but a significant number of people  
*continued on page 8*

## New Tax Law Information

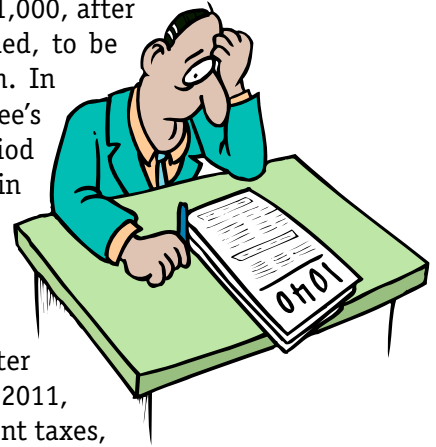
By Adrian Lape-Brinkman, CPA

Over the past year we have seen several new tax laws. The following is a brief summary of a few of the most recent tax issues that may be applicable to you and your private practice. Please keep in mind this is not an all-inclusive list of the recent tax laws that may be applicable to you, but instead is an overview of some of the tax issues.

### Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act

This law exempts any private-sector employer that hires a worker who had been unemployed for at least 60 days from having to pay the employer's 6.2% share of the Social Security payroll tax on that employee for the remainder of 2010. If you hired an employee that qualified for this credit and you did not claim the credit on your Form 941, you may amend your Form 941 to claim the credit.

As an additional incentive, for any qualifying worker hired under this initiative that the employer keeps on the payroll for a continuous 52 weeks, the employer is eligible for an additional non-refundable tax credit of up to \$1,000, after the 52-week threshold is reached, to be taken on their 2011 tax return. In order to be eligible, the employee's pay in the second 26-week period must be at least 80% of the pay in the first 26-week period.



### One Year Self-Employment Tax Break

For tax years beginning after Dec. 31, 2009, but before Jan. 1, 2011, when calculating self-employment taxes,

*continued on page 6*



## Calendar of Events

### Friday, Dec. 17, 2010

RETIREMENT PARTY FOR JACK WINEMAN  
Location To Be Determined

**Note: There will not be a Peer Consultation meeting in November or December.**

### Friday, Jan. 14, 2011 • 11:30 a.m.

APPT MINI-SERIES WORKSHOP (LINCOLN)

**Topic & Presenter To Be Determined**  
The Lighthouse • 26th & N Street

### Friday, Jan. 28, 2011 • 11:30 a.m.

APPT PEER CONSULTATION GROUP\* (OMAHA)  
Adlerian Center • 11911 Arbor St.

Visit [www.privatepractice.org](http://www.privatepractice.org) for details about these events.

\* Peer Consultation groups are open to Traditional APPT Members only. RSVPs are handled by online invitation through Socializr. Questions? Call Bridget at (402) 393-4600.

## IN THIS ISSUE...

**From the President's Desk:  
Get Involved in APPT!**

- Page 2 -

**Book Review:  
THE POCKET THERAPIST**

- Page 9 -

**Survey Results:  
Subleased Office Space**

- Pages 10-12 -

## From the President's Desk: Get Involved in APPT!

By Shari Conner, Ph.D.

Well, it's finally fall, the kids are back in school, and the Huskers are doing well ... what's not to be happy about?

It is again my privilege to compose a President's Message to the members of APPT, so let me begin by expressing my hope that all of us will take some time to enjoy this crisp air and gorgeous scenery that only comes around once a year. Sometimes we have to be reminded to practice what we preach to our clients!

Next, I am going to shamelessly take this opportunity to again address one of the most urgent needs of our organization: Volunteers. As I stated in a letter sent out via e-mail on Sept. 8, APPT has a small but determined band of private practitioners who serve on the board of directors. The board conducts the organization's business, plans mini-series and conferences, manages elections, handles electronic issues such as the website, oversees the production of *The Compass*, sends representatives to several monthly multi-disciplinary meetings, and does a mountain of additional miscellaneous work.

We need your help. Really. If you have any interest in participating on one or more of our committees, we will gladly take whatever time you have to spare...from as little as a few minutes to an hour or so per month.

Just as a reminder, here are some of the exciting leadership opportunities from which you can choose:

### Legislative Committee:

Contact: Shari Conner at [shari.conner@gmail.com](mailto:shari.conner@gmail.com)

Members of this committee discuss upcoming legislative issues, stay abreast of those that might impact private practice, determine how best to communicate these issues to the membership, and spearhead grass-roots advocacy when appropriate.

### Communications Committee:

Contact: Terry Moore at [terrance.moore@gmail.com](mailto:terrance.moore@gmail.com)

Members of this committee are responsible for various record-keeping and outreach tasks, such as compiling the minutes of the board meetings, overseeing the writing of articles and assisting with the publication of *The Compass*, managing the E-list and website, and researching tele-conferencing and other options for outreach to members in rural Nebraska.

### Programming Committee:

Contact: Glen Fineman at [gfinemancubfan@yahoo.com](mailto:gfinemancubfan@yahoo.com)

Members of this committee are tasked with planning the mini-series presentations, fall and spring conferences,

*continued on page 3*



**ADDICTION & RECOVERY SERVICES**  
**Steve Brownrigg**  
 MS, NCC, LMHP, LADC

*Substance Abuse, Addictions,  
 Co-Dependency & Co-Occurring Disorders*  
 •EMDR Therapist-Certified by EMDRIA

7602 Pacific St., Suite 304  
 Omaha, NE 68114

**(402) 510-1754**  
[ARS101@cox.net](mailto:ARS101@cox.net)

[www.addictionandrecoveryservices.net](http://www.addictionandrecoveryservices.net)

**D&D BUSINESS SERVICES, INC.**  
 Digital Dictation  
 & Transcription Services



**Dee Fogarty**  
 402-333-7485  
[ddbinc@cox.net](mailto:ddbinc@cox.net)




17503 Walnut St.  
 Omaha, NE 68130-1258  
[www.summit-edge.com](http://www.summit-edge.com)

**Mental health billing solutions**  
*In house grat cut source solutions*

Innovative programs: Nebraska based Great support  
 Affordable and no up-front costs

Call Kim French - (800) 401-9720



© 2010 • Image Building Communications

*The Compass is published by the Association of Private Practice Therapists (APPT) in conjunction with Image Building Communications.*

Editor ..... Bridget Brooks  
 Publisher/Newsletter Advisor ..... Shari Conner, Ph.D.  
[www.PrivatePractice.org](http://www.PrivatePractice.org)

## From the President's Desk (continued)

*continued from page 2*

and member retreats, as well as administering APPT's continuing education scholarships and managing our professional peer consultation groups.

### **Nominations Committee:**

Contact: Adrian Martin at [Adrian@adrianmartin.info](mailto:Adrian@adrianmartin.info)

Members of this committee meet once or twice per year and are in charge of managing the upcoming election of board members.

### **Membership Committee:**

Contacts: Jasmine Hermanek at [jhermanek@midtownmind.com](mailto:jhermanek@midtownmind.com) and/or Connie Lofgreen at [connie@omahatherapy.com](mailto:connie@omahatherapy.com)

Members of this committee facilitate recruiting, retention, and communication with new APPT members and newly-licensed mental health providers, as well as outreach to existing and potential new members. In addition, this committee is in charge of compassionate outreach to members and members' families when spe-

cial circumstances arise (e.g., sends a token of sympathy, when appropriate, following a death).

### **Lincoln Advisory Group:**

Contact: Kathy Dombrowski at [kadombr@aol.com](mailto:kadombr@aol.com)

Tasked with establishing a stable core group of APPT members in the Lincoln area in order to facilitate networking, programming, and planning for local member needs.

I would like to heartily thank our hard-working board as well as our hard-working associate, Bridget (Weide) Brooks. I personally am very grateful for their help and guidance over the last few months as we have attempted to "re-vamp" our organizational structure.


Although you may not be aware of it, APPT's board spends time every year reviewing the mission and purpose of the organization. We then ask ourselves whether we are on-course or whether changes need to be made. At our last such "board retreat," we targeted a number of areas for improvement. For example, we are now maintaining a year-long calendar on our website that lists all APPT events as far in advance as possible, so that mem-

*continued on page 4*

## MENTAL HEALTH BILLING SERVICES

Specializing in the mental health field, **EEM Management** has extensive experience providing billing services for psychologists, counselors, therapists and psychiatrists. These services ensure accurate electronic claims filing, insurance claims follow-up, statement processing and patient billing records.

In business since January 2001, **EEM Management** staff has over 35 combined years of billing experience. One of our greatest assets is our extensive knowledge and experience working with insurance companies. Our dedicated team is confident in its abilities and is eager to put them to use for your practice.

**EEM  Management, LLC**

1919 S 40th St., Suite 213 - Lincoln, NE 68506

**call:402/483-1848 or email: [eemmgt@msn.com](mailto:eemmgt@msn.com)**

## From the President's Desk (continued)

*continued from page 3*

bers will have more lead-time for events they wish to attend.

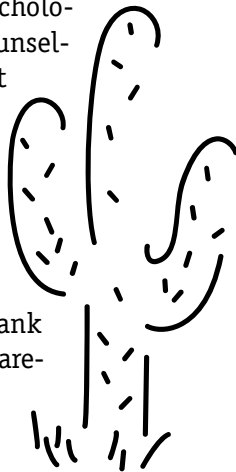
We are also working to expand our offerings to Lincoln and surrounding areas, to reach out to even more rural parts of the state via available technology, and to address member requests for collegial groups focused on effective practice management. Also, in response to member feedback, we are changing the venue for the Omaha mini-series. More information will be forthcoming on this, but please know that we have not discontinued the program! It will be resuming early in 2011.

Finally, a note about a very important event coming up on [Friday, Dec. 17](#)...an APPT social event that will allow us all to mingle, network, and enjoy a little holiday cheer together. The location will be announced soon. However, I must take this opportunity to let everyone know about our guest of honor: Dr. Jack Wineman, clinical psychologist, founder of Woodhaven Counseling Associates, and most importantly, founder of APPT.

After many years of service to his clients and to the private practice community, Dr. Wineman and his wife are retiring to Arizona.

Please join us in saying thank you and in bidding them a fond farewell.

They will be sorely missed.



**James T. Kappen, ED.D., ABPdN, ABPN**  
Board Certified Neuropsychologist

*Evaluations • EEG Neurofeedback • Hypnosis*

702 N. 129th Street, Suite 101  
Omaha, NE 68154  
Phone (402) 829-8482  
Fax (402) 431-1535

## Welcome New Members

### July 2010

Leslie Epstein, MA, LMHP, CPC  
Healing Journeys Therapy, LLC  
11912 Elm Street, Suite 109  
Phone: (402) 517-0533 / [L-epstein@msn.com](mailto:L-epstein@msn.com)

### October 2010

Catherine S. Bloom / 7602 Pacific Street, Suite 205  
(712) 621-0803 • [katiebloom2@yahoo.com](mailto:katiebloom2@yahoo.com)

If you have questions about your APPT membership, call Bridget at (402) 393-4600 or e-mail [appt@ibc.omhcoxmail.com](mailto:appt@ibc.omhcoxmail.com)

### ADVERTISE FOR THERAPISTS HERE

Do you have office space available for rent?  
Looking to reach more than 200 members of the  
Association of Private Practice Therapists?

*Call Bridget at (402) 393-4600  
for advertising rates and deadlines.*

## Free Legal Consultation for APPT Members.

Each Traditional APPT member is entitled to a free legal consultation with an attorney from Erickson & Sederstrom, P.C. (up to one hour) per year.

Contact Bridget at the APPT Office at  
(402) 393-4600 for access information.  
If you use this service, please give us feedback.

## OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT (Omaha)

### TWO PRIVATE OFFICE SPACES AVAILABLE

at Aspire Counseling Services  
in the Terrace Plaza Building:  
11414 West Center Road  
Suite 233

*For more information,  
call Deanna, Mary,  
or Tracey at 502-5030.*

# – MEMBER NEWS –

**Steve Abraham, MS, CGP, LIMHP** — and several therapists in practice with him — have relocated to 7602 Pacific Street, Suite 205. You can reach Steve at (402) 398-9055.

**Resa Mallett, MS, LIMHP** has moved her office to 13504 Stevens Street, Omaha NE 68137. You can reach her at (402) 894-9805; fax (402) 894-1015. She also has a new website, [www.mallettcounseling.com](http://www.mallettcounseling.com).

Lincoln APPT member **Jerene Leslie Bishop, MS, MA, LIMHP** died of brain cancer on July 15. She was diagnosed in April and lived just over three months.

**Jodi Petersen, MS, LMHP** has closed her private practice, Bethesda Place, formerly located at 113th and Q Street.

Therapist **William Holtmeyer, MS, LPC**, has closed his practice, formerly located in Bellevue, and has moved out of state.

**Kevin Fitzmaurice, MS, LIMHP** has closed his practice, A Counseling Center. He will be moving to and practicing in Oregon.

He writes, "I am now licensed in Oregon...a process that included fingerprinting, criminal checks with the FBI, verification of all courses from university catalog records, test verification, licensure verification, credential verification, education verification, and a mountain of other paperwork that I am happy to have done."

**John Lindsey, MS, LPC**, who was previously affiliated with A Counseling Center, is still working for Open Door Mission and can be contacted at (402) 422-1111. He is in part-time private practice.

As of Sept. 27, 2010, **Kevin Kaminski, MS, LIMHP** is no longer with Inroads Counseling Services. He can be reached at [kevin.kaminski@cox.net](mailto:kevin.kaminski@cox.net).

## MIDWEST MEDICAL BILLING

*Full-service medical billing*

**"Tired of navigating authorizations and benefits? Let us handle the headaches."**

Phone 402.709.0063      Jeanne Horseman  
or 402.332.3960 *Owner/Billing Specialist*  
[Midwestmed@cox.net](mailto:Midwestmed@cox.net)



Laura Haberman



Bill Hehner

**Laura Haberman, LMHP** and **Bill Hehner, LMHP** have recently opened Healing Tree Counseling in downtown Omaha at 1018 Dodge Street, Suite 7. They specialize in treating children and adolescents. You can reach Healing Tree at (402) 614-4870 or by fax at (402) 614-4873.

Their website is [www.healingtreeomaha.com](http://www.healingtreeomaha.com).

E-mail Bill at [bhehner.healingtree@gmail.com](mailto:bhehner.healingtree@gmail.com) or Laura at [lahaberman.healingtree@gmail.com](mailto:lahaberman.healingtree@gmail.com).

Kids Inc. is excited to announce the addition of **Dr. Steve Ryan**, Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist to their practice.

Dr. Ryan joins **Dr. Paul Fine** in seeing clients at their Omaha office as of Sept. 1, 2010. Dr. Ryan is Board Certified in Child Adolescent Psychiatry and has been practicing in Omaha since 2003. Previously he practiced in both Denver, Colo., and the Pittsburgh area. His interests include a wide range of behavioral and emotional issues in children and adolescents and their treatment. He is also involved in a research group at the College of Public Health at UNMC in Omaha. Dr. Ryan is taking new patients and would welcome your referrals and coordinating care with your therapy clients.

Contact Kids, Inc at (402) 330-4014 to make an appointment. Or visit [www.kids-incorporated.com](http://www.kids-incorporated.com).

Kids, Inc. also had the opportunity to participate in the training of two pediatricians who are studying to become child and adolescent psychiatrists. **Dr. Bob Ellis**, who retired in 2007 as an Air Force pediatrician, has been shadowing therapists in their office for several months. **Dr. Kathy Anderson** will be shadowing Kids Inc. therapists in the early fall. She has treated children for several years as a pediatrician in central Nebraska.

Dr. Ellis and Dr. Anderson were the first two pediatricians in the new Creighton-UNMC program that helps expedite the training for pediatricians becoming child and adolescent psychiatrists.

*continued on page 7*

## New Tax Law Information

*continued from page 1*

the deduction for health insurance costs of a self-employed taxpayer and their family are deductible in computing net earnings from self-employment. A self-employed taxpayer who earns \$100,000 annually and pays \$10,000 for health insurance premiums will save approximately \$1,500 due to this new law.

### **Accelerated Depreciation**

For any tax year beginning in 2010 or 2011, a taxpayer can elect to expense up to \$250,000 of qualified leasehold improvement property under Code Section 179. Also, depreciation deduction limits for passenger autos is increased for first year business autos to \$11,060 for vehicles that are qualified property for additional first year (bonus) depreciation purposes.

### **Additional 1099-MISC Reporting Requirements**

For payments made after Dec. 31, 2010, persons receiving rental income from real property will have

to file a 1099-MISC with the Internal Revenue Service and service providers reporting payments of \$600 or more during the year for rental property expenses.

For payments made after Dec. 31, 2011, companies will be required to furnish and file Form 1099-MISC for payments made to all for-profit companies regardless of corporate status. In addition all payments for goods, materials, merchandise, supplies, and other property will need to be reported as well.

This will require procedures to obtain W-9 forms for all vendors and adjusting your accounting program to include corporations, etc.

### **Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit**

This credit has been around for some time but many people are unaware it. The credit is for increasing investment or employment, for a \$10,000 maximum lifetime credit.

*continued on page 7*

## APPT Continuing Education Scholarship

The APPT scholarship program is a wonderful opportunity for you to learn and to share that knowledge with our membership.

The APPT Scholarship for Continuing Education is designed to help APPT members defray the cost of a workshop they attend (75 percent of the cost of the workshop, up to a maximum of \$100). Four scholarships are available annually.

Complete the form (at right) and submit it, along with a copy of the workshop brochure (if available). Your application/request will be reviewed by the APPT Scholarship Committee.

If selected, you will be reimbursed for the awarded amount after attending the workshop and sharing the information with APPT members, either through a presentation or by writing an article for *The Compass*.

### Application for APPT Scholarship For Continuing Education

*The APPT Scholarship for Continuing Education is designed to help members defray the cost of a workshop they attend. Submit this form with a copy of the workshop brochure.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Practice Location \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Conference Title and Location (please attach a copy of brochure, if available)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

I am willing to:

- Present a brief summary of the workshop at a mini-practice workshop
- Write an article for *The Compass* summarizing the content of the workshop.

*Please note: The maximum amount awarded is 75 percent of the cost of the workshop, up to \$100. If selected, you will be reimbursed the awarded amount after attending the workshop and sharing the information with APPT members through a presentation or article.*

**Submit completed application to: Pam Feldman, LPC**  
**2255 S. 132 St., Ste. 200, Omaha, NE 68144 or fax to (402) 334-8171.**

Applications will be considered and a decision reached  
 within 14 days of receiving your application.

## New Tax Law Information

*continued from page 6*

To be eligible for the credit, the following items must apply: (1) an individual who is actively engaged in the operation of the business must apply prior to the release of all of the funds for the year, (2) the business must employ five or fewer full-time equivalent Nebraska residents at the time of applying, (3) the business must be located in an eligible area, (4) the applicant must make a new investment or new employment, and (5) the business must utilize E-verify.

For more information about this credit, visit: <http://www.revenue.ne.gov/incentiv/microent/microent.html>.

For more information on these tax issues and the other recent tax laws visit <http://www.irs.gov>.

Contact Adrian Lape-Brinkman, CPA at Koski Professional Group, P.C., if you have questions or would like to schedule a meeting. He can be reached at (402) 445-4040 or [alapebrinkman@koskicpa.com](mailto:alapebrinkman@koskicpa.com).



ADRIAN LAPE-BRINKMAN, CPA  
[alapebrinkman@koskicpa.com](mailto:alapebrinkman@koskicpa.com)

10616 Burt Circle Omaha, NE 68114-2062  
Bus: 402-445-4040 Fax: 402-445-4442 Cell: 402-657-6790

## PRIVATE PRACTICE OPPORTUNITY

Are you thinking of moving your practice in the near future? Great! Our practice group wishes to expand its affiliate staff.

Associated Counseling Professionals ([www.acpcounseling.com](http://www.acpcounseling.com)) is located in a comfortable setting [Millard area – along the West Center Road corridor], and offers superior administrative support for your practice so you can concentrate on your clinical work.

**Call 402-334-1122 or e-mail:**  
[terrance.moore@gmail.com](mailto:terrance.moore@gmail.com).

## – MEMBER NEWS –

*continued from page 5*

**Steve Brownrigg, NCC, LADC, LMHP**, has recently received his Certification in Eye Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing (EMDR). He is currently one of nine Certified EMDR Therapists in Nebraska, seven of whom are also fellow APPT members.

Steve has just returned from the EMDR International Conference that was attended by over 800 therapists from around the world, including 15 therapists from Nebraska. More than half of the Nebraska attendees were also APPT members, once again demonstrating APPT member's dedication to cutting-edge therapeutic approaches.

Steve is in his fifth year of private practice as Addiction and Recovery Services, and recently moved into his new office at 7602 Pacific St.

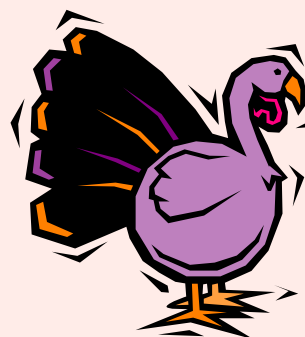
Steve specializes in co-occurring disorders and has found the treatment of sexual and physical trauma with EMDR to be a growing area of his practice, and an essential tool for achieving successful outcomes with addicts and alcoholics.

**Adrian Martin, MS** and **Stephanie Kutler, MD** have partnered in setting up a new practice location at 11225 Davenport Street.

"We're delighted with our new space. It's light, airy and all five offices are huge; all with windows," says Adrian. "We hope to announce soon the other clinicians who will be joining us, and we may still have an office available if anyone is interested."

Adrian continues to specialize in couples' therapy, and Dr. Kutler enjoys working with adults and older adolescents.

Adrian can be reached at (402) 577-0727 and Dr. Kutler at (402) 206-2306.



**Do you have Member News to share with other therapists?**

**E-mail**

[appt@ibc.omhcoxmail.com](mailto:appt@ibc.omhcoxmail.com).

# Managing Your APPT E-mail

*continued from page 1*

felt that a couple of tune-up options would be great.

The main option that members are eager for involves receiving a “Daily Digest” of the list’s postings. This means that you would receive one e-mail from the list daily with access to all the “conversation threads.” From there, you choose what you want to read. Very efficient, and preferred by many list users. We will tell you how to get it.

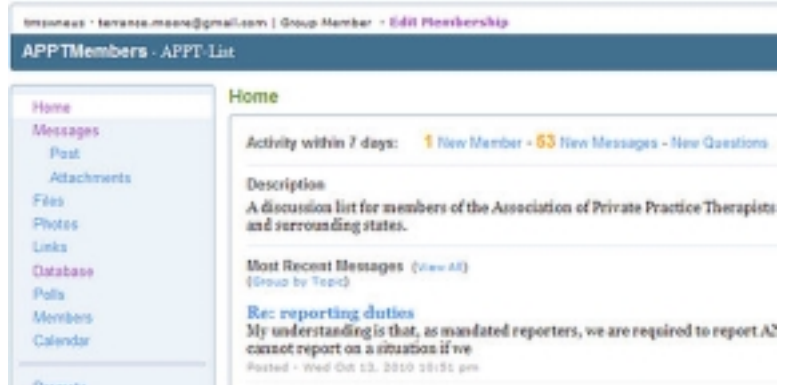
Of equal importance is the value in conducting ourselves professionally when we post, and what we might do with those posts after they land in our Inbox.

### Action Plan

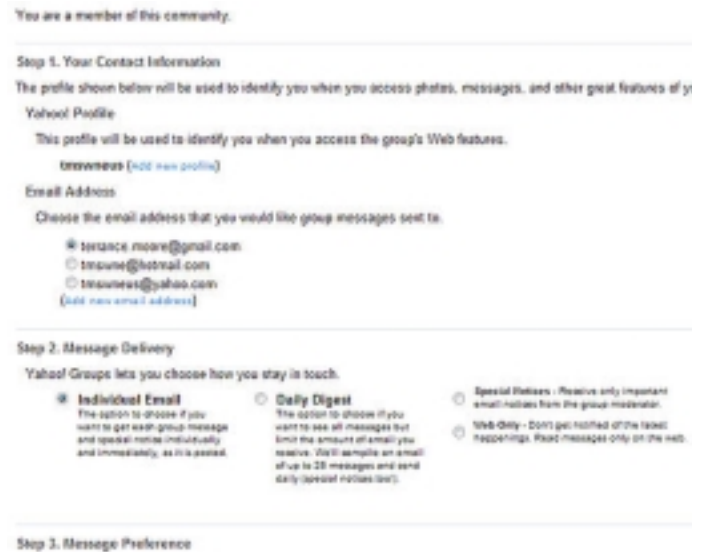
If you want to receive the Digest version of the APPT member list, there are two routes to take: If you already have a Yahoo! Mail account, go to [www.yahogroups.com](http://www.yahogroups.com) and sign in with your address and password. From this page, you will see a left-hand column, with a link to mail and other services. Groups should be there. Click that, and you should see something like this:



Click on the APPTMembers name, which take you here:



See at the top of the screen where it says: Edit Membership? Yep, click there — which takes you to:



You’ll notice that Terry gets Individual E-Mail. If he wants the Digest, he would just click the ‘radio button’ next to that choice, and scroll down click “save changes.” You must do both things — change your selection and save it. You can always go back and switch your choice if you want individual e-mails in the future.

If you don’t have — and don’t want to sign up for — a Yahoo! Mail account, contact Bridget with a request to switch you. E-mail: [appt@ibc.omhcoxmail.com](mailto:appt@ibc.omhcoxmail.com).

The APPT communications committee [Terry is chair] will post (quarterly), the listserv code of conduct and a sternly worded reminder that there is little need to post comments that are best directed to an individual member. Violators will be subject to memorizing the Medicaid manual.



# Book Review: *The Pocket Therapist*

Review by: [Gail Olson, Ph.D., LIMHP, LADC](#)

Therapists are an unusual bunch. We spend all day listening, cautioning, affirming, and putting out fires with clients who are feeling loss of control, suicidal, despairing, or wildly stress-ridden. By the end of the day, the therapists' calm, soothing demeanor is being eroded by a bubbling caldron of others' feelings. We are containers for the stories we hear, even though our best intentions are to be a mirror that reflects back to the client. But traumatic stories get splashed daily on the mirror of our psyches, and a few handi-wipes or soft, soothing cloths are needed for our psyches too. Thus the need for "[The Pocket Therapist.](#)"

Author Therese Borchard doesn't hide her own struggles with mental health issues. Her self-deprecating yet brilliant openness relieves the rest of us as we face and overcome our own challenges while serving our clients at well. A delicate juggling act! One in which Ms. Borchard handles with humor, truth, and honest humility. Whew! What a relief! What a good guide she is. We're not supposed to be Sigmund Freuds nor Salvador Minuchins but rather our own experienced, broken, and healing selves. She offers encouragement, hope, and words of wisdom as we work with clients with all the same issues we face. That all human beings face.

The broken are not as broken as we think. They have insight (they know they are hurting and are seeking help for it!). They have courage (they are facing the darkness of their stories or their circumstances). They are vulnerable (they still have dignity although asking for help). They are wise-men or wise-women seeking the star to guide them out of their desert experience. When they finally reach a therapist, they may even think or hope we are the star. We're not. We're fellow seekers and sojourners as well. Our advantage: we've trudged the desert only a few feet ahead of them and have the benefit of knowing they are safe in their search. We know the star is just ahead.

We respect their feelings and accept wherever they are in the journey. As therapists, we're not the star, nor the savior, nor the wisest of the wise-men or women. We have them look up to a broader perspective, to see the star is still there, bright as ever, and welcome them to follow it. We still encourage their journey and point out that their seeking will lead them to a wiser place.

And amidst our stumbling, and their stumbling, and a few good hearty laughs, we see it isn't all the death-defying seriousness of death when we only fall in the

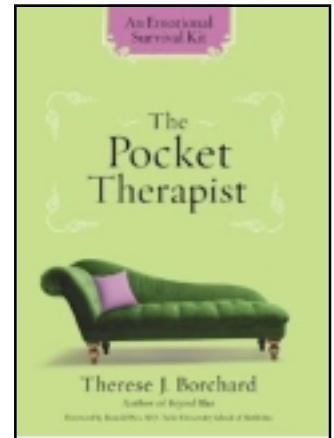
desert sand. We can get up again.

*"The Pocket Therapist"* does this by sharing several journeys, side-trips, falls, sinking in the sand, and laughing all the way to the destination of greater well-being. The author of the book allows the reader to find their way with the GPS of laughter, common-sense, strong insight, wrapped in a humor-filled, intellectual map of signs. A few of them are: "Don't mistake intensity for intimacy," "Do what's in front of you," "Act as if," "Build on your strengths," "Remember the first Noble Truth," "Get up eight times," "Greet your inner loser," "Don't forget to have fun," "Hang on to hope," and "Believe in redemption."

As the reviewer, I really appreciated her short bursts of insights, pithy sayings, wise statements, and humorous outbursts. Robin Williams (the well-known comedian) once said he had the attention span of a gnat on speed. Fortunately this book, with its brief paragraph chapters, keeps our attention. And when (because of mental health issues, high stress, distracting circumstances) we are unable to stay focused, we're done reading her "saying for the day" and we can actually remember it and put it into practice. In addition, we can go back, peruse the book, and find the thing that saved the day.

When we're in emotional pain, the first thing that suffers is our sense of humor. It gets lost in the blistering rock in our shoe. We can't laugh, we can't dance, and we don't even want to keep walking forward. Ms. Borchard makes us laugh, smile, distract, and actually come up with solutions! Sit down, relax, take the rock out of your shoe, look up at the skies, find the fun in sun, take a deep breath, heal the pain, massage your soul, and use softer shoes...

Therapists as well as clients will deeply benefit from this book. It lacks lengthy diatribes, haughty intellectualism, or dry roadblocks. Instead it offers clear signs, maps to strength, and joy for the journey, and a continual pointing to the star of mental wellness. If you need to find your way and laugh along the way (as well as get to your destination), this book is for you!



# Survey Results: Subleased Office Space

By Bridget (Weide) Brooks

Are you a therapist who is interested in renting office space — or are you a therapist who has space available for rent? A July 2010 survey of therapists reveals pricing and amenity details, and participating therapists give advice on making an arrangement work for you.

The survey was completed by 39 therapists. Nineteen percent of respondents have rented space from a non-therapist landlord; 38 percent have rented space from another therapist.

To provide a balanced perspective, 32 percent are therapists who rent (or have rented) space to other therapists (a “landlord’s view”). The majority of responses (75%) came from Omaha-area therapists.

## Pricing and Amenities

When it comes to fees, it is difficult to compare apples to apples. However, from the information supplied, a few general conclusions can be drawn.

Part-time rentals generally are in the \$150 to \$750 per month range. Full-time rentals most often cost \$1,000+ per month. The overall average (including both part-time and full-time) rentals was \$726 per month.

Most space is rented for a flat fee, although a small percentage (25%) of respondents reported their rent is a percentage of the session fee billed or collected. These figures were more consistent — the most-often cited figure was 35% of the amount *collected*. Other options were 30% of the amount *billed*, and 1/3 of the total office rent.

There was insufficient data on hourly rental rates to draw any conclusions about that facet.

In exchange for the rent, therapists generally receive:

- Exclusive use of a private office (12%) vs. shared office space (5%)
- Copier/Fax (11%)
- Telephone (11%)
- Internet access (10%)
- Checking patient insurance benefits and/or securing insurance authorizations (9%)
- Consumables/supplies (8%)
- Participation in marketing/advertising (8%)
- Access to conference room/meeting space (8%)
- Billing services (7%)
- Administrative support (6%)
- Access to emergency coverage (5%)

Therapists are generally required to carry their own liability insurance when renting space. However, in some circumstances, liability/property insurance was included.

Some rental agreements offered some flexibility in services offered. One therapist reported their agreement was based on the “percent of overhead used,” what supportive services were included, and whether marketing was needed.

## Deciding Which Practice to Affiliate With

Therapists have a choice of where they want to rent space. Some factors cited in influencing their decision about where to rent space include:

- Location — interstate access; the part of town the office is located in, etc. — 15%
- Rental cost — 15%
- The therapists you would be working with — 14%
- The “general feel” of the arrangement/office — 13%
- Site accessibility (i.e., handicapped accessible) — 10%

- Layout of office — 9%
- Security — 6%
- Amenities available — 5%
- Reception area — 4%
- Marketing availability — 3%
- Availability of administrative support — 3%
- Availability of billing services/support — 3%

Most therapists choose to affiliate with other mental health practitioners. However, in addition to renting from other mental health therapists, a few therapists rented space from other types of practitioners, including a psychiatrist and a doctor’s group.

## Access to Referrals and How Emergency Coverage is Handled

One issue for contracting therapists is access to referrals, especially in a large practice. Unless the therapist has his or her own clientload — or can build one independently of calls into the practice, renting space can make it difficult to attract clients.

Forty-one percent of therapists renting space had access to referrals within the office as part of the rental fee. One-third of therapists surveyed did not have access to internal referrals. Another third received referrals on a case-by-case basis.

When asked about referrals, some responses included:

- “Referrals are not part of the rental fee. However, referrals are frequent.”
- “They go to partners first and then to contractors.”
- “Referrals (are) provided as appropriate for patients, not as part of fee.”

*continued on page 11*

# Survey Results: Subleased Office Space

*continued from page 10*

- From a therapist who rented space to other therapists: "If referrals were specifically for me, I kept them or referred them; other referrals were divided up by therapist/renter."

Another key issue is emergency coverage. In nearly three-quarters of the situations, no on-call services are provided for any therapists — each therapist provides his or her own emergency coverage. In 13% of the situations, renters serve as an on-call therapist for clients (all therapists in the office rotate providing emergency coverage).

Ten percent of therapists had access to emergency services through special arrangement:

- "My rent is adjusted slightly to include on-call service for my clients."
- "No coverage for purely renting space, but it would be possible if interdependence desired."
- "Phone coverage includes message service to contact each therapist in case of emergency."

## Advice From Other Therapists

The most useful part of the survey was the advice given by therapists about renting office space. Experience is the best teacher, and therapists participating in this survey have either rented space from another therapist, or are a "landlord" themselves, renting space to other therapists (or, in some cases, they have experience on both sides of the equation).

Therapists provided guidance for what questions to ask/issues to consider when subleasing space:

- What does my rental fee include? (Billing, scheduling, referrals,

consultation group, marketing, inclusion on practice website?)

- Ask about additional fees up front: Are any fixtures to be added or modified, and who will be responsible for paying this fee?
- Ask for a full disclosure of costs for the space and for how much profit the therapist will make from the rent/fees you will be paying them.
- "Consider sharing space with other independent therapists over renting space from a therapist. The costs can be cheaper, there is more equality in decision-making, there are no hierarchies, and there is full disclosure about what you are paying for and what you are getting."
- Will I be getting referrals?

A couple of therapists provided their ideas of a "model" situation:

- "I would want 100% of my counseling fees and pay a monthly rental fee. I would pay per referral, if referrals were given to me. I would not sign a non-compete, because clients ethically should not just be handed over to someone else if I decide to leave. I would want a very explicit plan for how call-ins to the office were handled, and how I would know that my calls would be mine. Personally, I would want my counseling philosophy to 'gel' with others in the office."
- "Try to get office/secretarial support, telephone, and a couple referrals per month."

"It may be helpful to start out renting space from another therapist when learning the ropes of private practice, but it is important to know exactly what is entailed in the contract, how decisions will be made, and what actions will be taken to address concerns about the space or services," one therapist wrote.

Others gave advice on which issues to focus on when selecting a practice to affiliate with:

- "Check for compatibility of clientele and for confidentiality issues."
- Look at the general style of the office (culture, feel, fit).
- "I have done a percentage before, but I believe a flat fee is best, because you know how to plan."
- "Each therapist should share either similar values, or be compatible. They should know the reputation of the persons they are renting with or to/from. When sharing with several people, they all should get a say about who might also join the practice."

It's important to examine the whole financial picture, not just the rental fee.

- "Private practice has many hidden and unforeseen costs: legal, accounting, consultation, and practice building. Consider these when choosing a practice as well."
- "Compare costs and what that cost gets you in amenities."
- "A private practice is a business, and to assume that one gets referrals just for being there is naive. Business development is complex, time-consuming, and costs money."
- "Remember that going out on your own can be challenging too. If you share office space or a building, you can share office equipment, phones, and Internet. This can save you a lot of money. Not to mention electricity and office materials, such as paper towels, etc. In the office I am in, I do not have to clean the office either, as this comes along with the rent."

*continued on page 12*



# SAVE THE DATE: Friday, Dec. 17

## *Retirement party for Jack and Sharon Wineman*

After many years of service to his clients and to the private practice community, Dr. Wineman and his wife are retiring to Arizona.

Join us for a special party to honor Jack for his service to APPT.  
*Location and time to be announced.*

## Survey Results: Subleased Office Space

*continued from page 11*

One therapist provided an innovative suggestion: "If you start with a percentage arrangement, make a cap and change to a flat monthly fee once the cap is consistently reached for six months to one year." This will help the renter decrease his or her overhead as he or she gets more successful.

Ask how referrals are handled.

One therapist noted, "I was fortunate to have a large referral base prior to coming to this office, and I had a lot of referrals that went directly to me. Sharing referrals can be challenging if you are just starting out, but as you continue to build your referral base, people will begin asking for you. In a shared office, this can be challenging, as everyone wants to have business."

One therapist recommends a careful self-analysis before seeking a practice affiliation. "Where are they in their profession? What is needed? How much time do they want to make available to do the

support work, marketing, and business development?"

Another therapist cautions peers not to simply limit their focus on the financial aspects of the selection process. "Far and away it is most important that you know and trust the personal and professional ethics of the other therapists in the office you are using. Everything else comes down to money, and that's not as critical."

Compatibility is key. "It is important to know the therapists, or at least talk to them in depth, to see if your personalities are a fit." Another therapist added, "Don't rent from a therapist who wants to tell you how to do therapy. I have never had that problem, but others have."

"Know the dynamics of the other partners with whom you share space. Seek quality, ethical concerns, and professional compatibility. Being picky is best."

Several therapists advised getting the contract terms in writing. "Read it carefully and compare it to either past contracts or standard ones," one noted.

Another added, "Get everything in writing, and have each therapist sign it. This prevents misunderstandings and complications at a later time." Make sure the contract notes the specific rights and responsibilities of each party. "Read the contract! Know exactly what you are getting."

And get everything hammered out up front, if possible. "Negotiate before signing; doing so afterwards gets thorny."

Even finding the perfect office sublease situation, getting into private practice can be difficult, one therapist says. "You need to be fully licensed, in network with many insurance providers, and have a good base of clientele you might bring with you. Even with that, it is difficult for about a year to make any money."

One concluded, "I've been very fortunate, but it's important to have a contract with those in the same office so that all expectations are understood by all."