

Fall 2009

Samaritan

Center of Puget Sound

formerly Presbyterian Counseling Service

Providing high quality, faith-integrative, affordable counseling for individuals, couples and families throughout Puget Sound since 1960, as well as consultation, mediation and educational services for churches and organizations.

Living Well In Times of Uncertainty

There are certain questions that echo through our lives -- sometimes arising in the comfortable abstract of a retreat or group discussion but often surfacing when we're in the grip of some unwelcome change, feeling anything *but* comfortable. The questions go something like this ... *In times of uncertainty and distress, how do we live out -- or into -- what we hold as our core values? How do we stay in touch with our moral compass—the principles that we use to guide our lives?*

For us, at Samaritan Center, the question is often framed in this way: *How do we, as individuals and as a faith community, continually reorient ourselves to do this healing work?*

The answers we seek can be as elusive and complex as the questions themselves. We look for them in scripture and prayer, in conversations and relationships, in silence and meditation, in our work and our play.

We all have our individual touchstones. A former board member, for example, tells us that she relies on a favorite scripture, Jeremiah 29: 11, which says: "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." Holistic physician and author Rachel Naomi Remen says in her book, *Kitchen Table Wisdom*, "...after all these years I have begun to wonder if the secret of living well is not in having all the answers but in pursuing unanswerable questions in good company."



This past year, we at Samaritan have engaged in a process similar to the one Remen describes – examining our mission statement and weighing the words crafted earlier against the times in which we now live. We began at a day retreat where board members and staff together sought to put into today's words our core values and our vision for the future, stating as clearly and simply as we could what we seek to do in the lives of those we serve.

What has emerged from this year-long conversation is our "new" mission statement which revisits and restates our guiding principles -- the moral compass we follow. It is a document in which we make visible *our commitment* to live in congruence with our core values and *our intention* to continually be attentive to seeking the spiritual resilience that will allow us to do this healing work well. On page 7, you'll find our mission statement.

-- Peggy Hansen

The Samaritan Community

Clinical Staff

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Marti Aitken, PhD
James Aultman, MSW
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Elizabeth Mackend, Kelley Nay,
Leslie Savage, Maria-Jose Soerens,
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Tita Subercaseaux,

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Seattle

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Beacon Hill Presbyterian
First Presbyterian
Woodland Park Presbyterian
West Seattle

South

Family of Grace Lutheran (Auburn)
Wabash Presbyterian (Auburn)
Lake Burien Presbyterian
Steel Lake Presbyterian (Federal Way)
Washington Baptist Convention (Kent)
Renton First Presbyterian
First Presbyterian (Puyallup)
Immanuel Presbyterian (Tacoma)

North (Shoreline)

Trinity Presbyterian
St. Luke Parish

West

Rolling Bay Presbyterian
(Bainbridge Island)

East

First Presbyterian of Bellevue
St. Andrew's Lutheran (Bellevue)
Newport Covenant (Bellevue)
Overlake Park Presbyterian (Bellevue)
Redmond Presbyterian (Redmond)
Sammamish Presbyterian

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Bethany Presbyterian Church
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First Presbyterian of Bellevue
First Presbyterian of Kent
Lake Burien Presbyterian
Lake Washington Methodist Women
Maple Valley Presbyterian
Maplewood Presbyterian
Mt. Baker Park Presbyterian
Newport Presbyterian
Northminster Presbyterian
Overlake Park Presbyterian
Presbytery of Seattle
Rolling Bay Presbyterian
Southminster Presbyterian
University Presbyterian
Wedgwood Presbyterian
Woodland Park Presbyterian

The main office of Samaritan Center of Puget Sound is located at 564 NE Ravenna Blvd, Seattle WA 98115. We can be reached by phone at (206) 527-2266. For more information about Samaritan therapists, counseling office locations or programs, please call us or go to our website at www.samaritanps.org.

From the Samaritan Board of Directors

Using Our Often-Overlooked Resources

by Rev. Lee Seese

Samaritan Board Chair and Pastor of Mount Baker Presbyterian Church

In many churches, the readings selected for Sunday worship come from a schedule called the Revised Common Lectionary. During the past few months, the lectionary has focused on the life of King David as recounted in the First and Second Books of Samuel. Among the stories told is one of the most well-known: David and Goliath.

I was intrigued by a particular feature of this brilliantly crafted story – David's preparation to face Goliath. Initially, King Saul outfitted David in a bronze helmet and chain-mail, and gave him a heavy sword and shield to carry into the duel. The 12-year-old David could barely take a step in this heavy, grown-man's get up.



Shedding all the armor, the sword, and the shield, David selected five smooth stones for the sling he was accustomed to using to ward off lions and bears that attacked his family's sheep. Armed with these familiar tools, David could face Goliath and defeat him.

Individually and collectively, we, like David, face Goliaths in this life: illness, death, job-loss, divorce, economic recession, depression, addiction, violence in a variety of forms. Often, we face these opponents with ill-suited armor. This might take the form of well-meaning but misguided advice. It might take the form of a stoic effort to ignore what is happening. It might be that the only tool in our kit is the white flag of surrender to defeat.

And yet, also like David, we have often-overlooked resources that are just the tools we need. With the right encouragement, we can access these tools in surprising ways, and face our Goliaths with an inner courage and strength we might never have known we had.

I am so grateful for the gifts and dedication among the staff members at Samaritan Center of Puget Sound. These men and women, like that inner voice David trusted, daily give their all to help men, women, and children facing all kinds of Goliaths to discover and use the tools that are right for them. The results, as Samaritan Center's mission statement declares, are transformation, hope, and reconciliation in countless lives.

To see the complete mission statement of Samaritan Center of Puget Sound, please go to page 7.

Plan to Save This Date for a Little Light Holiday Shopping

A pre-Christmas event that's found its way into the Samaritan fun- and fund-raising tradition is an evening at the Ten Thousand Villages shop in the Roosevelt district of Seattle, located very close to our main office.



TEN THOUSAND
VILLAGES®

On Thursday evening, December 10, between 6 and 9 pm, fifteen percent of every purchase – large and small -- will be donated by Ten Thousand Villages to the work we do at Samaritan Center.

We promise you a warm welcome from the members of our staff and board who have come to look forward to this event, light refreshments, and the fun of finding unusual gifts from the array of fair-traded goods from around the world. Please join us and contribute to the sustaining of our mission to provide much-needed counseling for those who might not otherwise be served.

Therapist's Perspective

Reflecting on Pain as Part of the Healing Process

by Elizabeth Mackend, MS



It was a day like any other. I had my dog, Max, out for a walk. Suddenly, Max lunged forward and pulled me off my feet. I fell onto the pavement and dislocated my right shoulder. The E.R. physician reset my arm that evening, but five and a half weeks went by before I could have corrective surgery. During those weeks I thought a lot about the accident and the pain I was experiencing. I couldn't write, I couldn't drive, and I couldn't do many of my normal day-to-day functions. I was shocked, frustrated and even angry that this had happened to me.

I discovered that the biggest challenge to my recovery was the pain. Often I found myself instinctively guarding my shoulder in fear of the pain. But I began to see that there comes a point where our guarding instincts are no longer beneficial.

Pain can be therapeutic – a part of the healing process – an open door, a spiritual journey of learning, listening and suffering. For me, this therapeutic pain provided an opportunity for self-discovery. I learned that I had choices as to how I was going to manage my pain, and I turned my focus towards recovery.

Regaining my strength and returning to normal functioning through physical therapy is a slow process, and it has had a major impact on my work as a therapist. I've learned that people respond to pain in different ways based on their life experiences, and that the level of tolerance to pain can affect their motivation to change. Physical and emotional pain can be equally challenging. The healing process cannot be rushed. I've learned to slow down so that I can be attentive and empathetic to my client's needs, while normalizing pain as part of the healing process.

Embracing pain, no matter how difficult that may be, can lead us to gather new information and make choices based on that information. My own recent experience with pain has helped me begin the slow walk back to health and, most importantly, it has taught me that I can face pain and overcome my fear.

Elizabeth Mackend completed her master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at Seattle Pacific University in 2006 and came to Samaritan Center of Puget Sound as an extern in July of 2008. She sees clients in the Low Income Clinic at the Ravenna office.

Looking Ahead: Samaritan Prepares to Celebrate A Golden Anniversary

Plans for celebrating Samaritan's 50th anniversary are in motion. This year-long commemoration of the counseling center's history—and our vision for the future-- will begin in the Spring of 2010 and culminate in a dinner event in the Spring of 2011.

We look forward to marking this significant milestone with shared meals and memories, inspiring speakers, fund- and friend-raising, and prayerful dreaming for the future.

The spring edition of our newsletter will have all the information you need—please, stay tuned!

Toshio Hayashi Joins Staff

In September, ordained Presbyterian pastor and licensed social worker, Toshio Hayashi, will join the Samaritan staff. He will be seeing individuals, couples and families in the new counseling office space at First Presbyterian Church of Bellevue.



Tosh's background includes 20 years experience working in multicultural, educational, pastoral and mental health systems in Chicago, IL, in Hawaii and Vancouver, WA. What has brought him and his wife, Cathy, to the Seattle area at this point, he said, is their desire to be near their children and grandchildren.

We are delighted that he will be bringing his strong clinical skills and spiritual depth to our community.

Resource Center for Ministry

Upcoming Workshop: "Conflict in the Church: Entrusted with the Message of Reconciliation"

There is still time to register for an upcoming two-day workshop designed for clergy and lay leaders on understanding and working with congregational conflict. **On Friday and Saturday, September 25-26, Richard Blackburn, Executive Director of the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, will be the workshop facilitator.** Dr. Blackburn, who is an ordained pastor in the Mennonite Church, is known nationally and internationally for his work in conflict transformation and mediation. The workshop, which is sponsored by Samaritan Center and Plymouth Church (UCC), will be held at Plymouth Church in downtown Seattle.

Workshop topics include The Nature and Role of Conflict, Conflict in the New Testament: Finding Renewal in Conflict, Self-Assessment: Understanding and Improving Your Own Style of Response to Conflict, Interpersonal Peacemaking Skills: How to be Effective When People are Angry, and Congregational Conflict: Understanding Conflict in Groups and How to Manage It.

Registration deadline is September 17. The workshop fee is \$95, with a group discount of \$10 per person when a congregational team of three or more registers for the workshop together. For more information or the possibility of late registration if there is space available, contact Mary Denny, Coordinator of Samaritan's Resource Center for Ministry, at 206-527-2273 x 328 or go to our website at www.samaritanps.org

Mediation Services

Sharing Your Opinion? Try the "Goldilocks Test"

By Marty Hawkins, M.Ed., Certified Mediator

In recent days, communities across the USA have held town hall meetings to discuss proposals to reform our health care system. Many of us have been taken back by the hostility and vitriol expressed at these meetings -- we'd like to see a more civil, constructive dialogue about the issues facing us all. When you are in a group and have a viewpoint to share, what's the most effective way to express it? In their book, *Crucial Conversations*, Patterson, et al, suggest using the "Goldilocks Test."



You remember the childhood story about how Papa Bear's porridge was "too hot" and Mama Bear's porridge was "too cold" but Baby Bear's porridge was "just right." When entering into a discussion of controversial issues, there is a danger of stating your case too strongly ("too hot") or too timidly ("too cold.") How can you voice your opinion so it's "just right?"

The key to sharing your opinion so others are willing to listen? Be confident but tentative. *Confident* because you've done your homework, have thought the issues through and have something worthwhile to add to the conversation, and *tentative* because you are open to learning from others' perspectives and are expressing your *opinion*, not irrefutable *facts*. A "just right" statement invites others to test your ideas and add their own perspective which can lead to a constructive, problem-solving discussion.

Here's an example, using the current issue of health care reform:

Too hot: "You're a hatemonger! Why don't you just shut up and sit down!"

Too cold: "Maybe I'm overly sensitive, but your accusations and claims are hurtful."

Just right: "I'm suggesting that we avoid name-calling and focus on the issues."

Notice that the "too hot" statement invites an angry, hostile response and will generate more heat than light. The "too cold" statement invites the other side to dismiss you as weak or irrelevant. The "just right" statement invites a reasoned response that can move people in the direction of learning from one other and finding a constructive solution.

For more information about Samaritan's Mediation Services, call 206.597.4696.

Resource Development

Meeting Growing Needs with Shrinking Resources



What a position I find myself in with this newsletter. In the Annual Report included here, we give you--our supporters--thanks for your many gifts this past year. We couldn't have served our clients without you. At the same time, this letter is to let you know that the need for your financial support is still with us; in fact, the need is greater than before.

For the first time in the history of our Low Income Clinic, we are faced with a waiting list. The Clinic serves people whose income does not permit them to pay even the lowest amount on our agency's fee-assisted scale. There are those who come to the Clinic able to pay only \$5 or \$10 a session and, for them, even that can be difficult.

Part of our difficulty is that the Samaritan Fund, which we use to help meet the cost of counseling for those whose incomes fall below \$35,000 a year, does not have sufficient funds to meet the demand. This year, we held a "silent" letter campaign instead of having a fund-raising luncheon to replenish the Samaritan fund and, unfortunately, the donations sustained the Samaritan Fund for only a few months. Those who would normally have drawn on the Samaritan Fund are now swelling the demand for services through our Low Income Clinic.

Two of Samaritan's core values, which you can see in our mission statement on page 7, stand out to me as I write this letter to ask for your renewed and/or continued support. As Samaritan staff, therapists, and board members,

- **we are responsive: We search for ways to care for those among us who are in financial need, making our services affordable and accessible.** While we always have and will continue to serve people who are able, through their insurance and/or their own resources, to pay the full fee for counseling, we are also called to respond to Jesus' command that we care for those in need with generosity and compassion. Additionally,
- **we are accountable: We are committed to excellence in all that we do, and we are faithful stewards of the resources given to us.** In asking you to send your financial support for the Samaritan Fund in the enclosed envelope, let me assure you that 100% of your gift goes directly to those who are in significant financial need.

Recently, I was introduced to someone who, when I told him where I worked, said, "I bet you're seeing a lot more people who need your help because of this recession." He was spot on, and I explained that it's ironic that the need grows larger at the very time people feel less able to give of their own personal resources.

As my husband and I prepare to make our gift to the Samaritan Fund, I'm reminded that God measures our gifts differently than our culture so often does. God is interested not in the size of our gift but in our capacity to give and the spirit in which we do so. God knows both our hearts *and* our checking account balances. **If each of us were to give with open hearts what we are able to, Samaritan would be much more able to respond to each of those who comes to find healing of heart, mind, body, and soul.** My prayer is that our gifts, no matter how large or small, will cause a compassionate ripple effect that allows us to welcome Samaritan Fund clients as we have in the past and see that those who come to our Low Income Clinic can be accommodated without having to be put on a waiting list. Will you join us in creating this ripple effect?

Gratefully,

Emily Kelly-Peterson, M.Div.
Director of Development

Samaritan Center of Puget Sound

Our Mission

As an expression of God's love and compassion, we seek to restore hope, reconcile relationships and participate in the transformation of lives. We provide counseling, education, consultation, mediation and other services for individuals, families, congregations and organizations.

Our Commitment

We dedicate ourselves each day to make this a more peaceful, just and compassionate world -- one intentional, healing encounter at a time.

Our Values

We are:

- **Holistic**
We believe healing takes place on many levels--mental, emotional, physical and spiritual--and in many ways--individually, relationally and in communities.
- **Faith-Respecting**
We are an ecumenical Christian community that respects the beliefs of all people.
- **Responsive**
We search for ways to care for those among us who are in financial need, making our services affordable and accessible.
- **Accountable**
We are committed to excellence in all that we do, and we are faithful stewards of the resources given to us.
- **Authentic**
We strive to be honest, self-aware and transparent in our work with others and in our community life.
- **Inclusive**
We recognize that each person is created in the image of God and that we need one another's diversity. We welcome all people in a spirit of compassion and justice.
- **Forward-looking**
We are innovative, attentive to life's opportunities and grounded in faith--ready to meet the challenges of this mission.



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Readers are welcome to reprint
newsletter articles. Please credit
our writers and Samaritan Center.

Coming Soon: Samaritan's E-Newsletter On-Line!

We know that many of you go to our website for the information you need -- about therapists, counseling office locations and upcoming events -- and many people find information about our services through dexknows.com rather than in their local phone books.

Our decision to create an electronic version of the Samaritan newsletter grows out of our wish to use our financial resources responsibly and to communicate effectively with you who use our services and support the Samaritan mission. (At the same time, we recognize that there are many among us who truly love paper, so we will periodically send out Samaritan news by mail and our number will still appear in area phone books.)

We hope that you'll want to read our brief, lively and useful e-newsletter on-line at your convenience. To receive it, go to our website at www.samaritanps.org and click on "Contact Us." Send us an e-mail asking to be put on our e-newsletter list. We'll take it from there.