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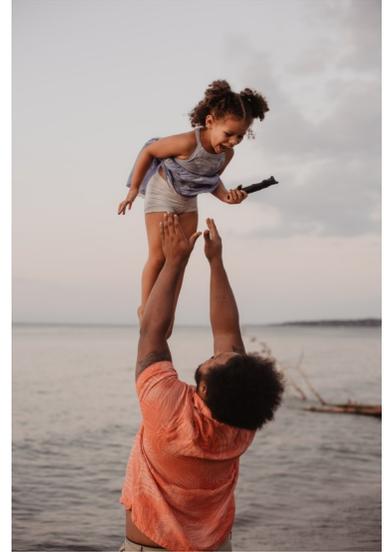
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## Knowing Our Strengths

One of the strengths of Samaritan is that we are available to help people in an ongoing way with the problems that inevitably arise in life. Created in 1960, with therapists who stay with us for 10, 20, and 30 years, we serve families in a variety of ways—often beginning with individual or couples therapy, sometimes including additional family members, and when it's indicated, referring them to another therapist with specific expertise. Clients sometimes come with a specific issue that is resolved in a few sessions, but frequently they find that the issues are more complicated and they engage in deeper, longer-term work.

An example of Samaritan as an ongoing family resource is a couple in their mid-40s who came to Samaritan for the first time 10 years ago. The problem was the “out of control” behavior of their two teenagers. They wanted to know how to set limits and provide support for their adolescents, both of whom were

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*Peggy Hansen and Deb Thomas*

## Saturday in the Park

It was not the Fourth of July. But it was a real celebration. The Samaritan faithful gathered—in person—at Green Lake park on Saturday, August 26, for a picnic and gab-fest. It was also a chance to honor the dedication of those all across the agency and its board who have seen us through to what feels like a new beginning for Samaritan Center.

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# The Samaritan Community

## Clinical Staff

Kay Abramson, MS  
 John Baumann, MA, MDiv  
 Mary Kay Brennan, MSW  
 Grace Carpenter, MS  
 William Collins, MS  
 Robert Erickson, MS  
 March Gunderson, MDiv, MEd  
 Dan Kujawinski, MSW  
 Natividad Lamug, MA  
 Isaiah Lin, PsyD  
 Heather Macdonald, PsyD  
 Kristen Moss, DMin  
 Matthew Percy, PsyD.  
 Jim Ramsey, MA  
 Beverley Shrumm, MC  
 Kimberly Snow, PsyD  
 Mary Stanton-Nurse, MA  
 Gary Steeves, MEd  
 Eric Stroo, MA  
 Tita Subercaseaux, MS  
 Neal Teng, PhD  
 Deb Thomas, MS  
 Carl Hilton VanOsdall, MA, MDiv  
 Nathalia Mora Worms, MSW  
 Katherine Yoder, MA

## Counseling Locations

With the arrival of the Covid 19 pandemic, the majority of our counseling sessions have moved to our secure online platform. As conditions improve, in-person appointments may be available at these locations:

### Seattle

Main Office (Green Lake)  
 Rainier Beach Presbyterian Church

### Bellevue

Bellevue Presbyterian Church  
 St. Andrew's Lutheran Church

### Bainbridge Island and Kitsap

Rolling Bay Presbyterian Church  
 Poulsbo First Lutheran Church

### Spokane

First Presbyterian Church of Spokane  
 Opportunity Presbyterian Church

## Board of Directors

Leland Seese, Chair  
 Douglas Farnham, Treasurer  
 Doug LeRoy, Secretary  
 Liz Covey  
 Scott Anderson  
 Rob Caudillo  
 Deborah Masten  
 Richard Weyls

## Administrative Staff

Beverley Shrumm, Executive Director  
 Jesse Dobner, Admin Supervisor  
 Somaya Frotan, Accountant  
 Leslie Pfau, Accounts Receivable  
 Hayley Frost, Accounts Receivable

## Consultants

DeAmber Clopton,  
 Consulting Accountant  
 Jeffrey Sung, MD,  
 Consulting Psychiatrist  
 Jim Furrow, PhD,  
 Clinical Consultant

The main office of Samaritan Center of Puget Sound is located at 564 NE Ravenna Blvd, Seattle, WA 98115.  
 We can be reached by calling 206-527-2266.  
 More information about therapists, locations and programs can be found on our website at [www.samaritanps.org](http://www.samaritanps.org).

## Introducing Daniel Kujawinski



As of midsummer, the agency was fortunate to hire a new therapist, Daniel Kujawinski. He is a licensed clinical social worker, having worked previously at the 45<sup>th</sup> Street Clinic with Neighborcare Health. With Neighborcare, he worked as a Behavioral Health Consultant and Social Work Supervisor. Dan gained prior professional experience, primarily in Chicago, providing outreach services to a largely unhoused population. He comes aboard with Samaritan Center with an interest in working with both adolescents and adults.

Educationally, Dan achieved a BA from Connecticut College and, in 2007, a Master of Social Work degree from Washington University in St Louis. He and his family moved to the Seattle area in 2015. He is currently empaneled with a number of insurance providers as well as Medicare.

Dan's practice is already growing, especially to include individuals dealing with depression, anxiety, or stress. He can also serve as a support around transition and grief, and a resource for assessing one's coping mechanisms.

## Reflection

### When is the Right Time for Couples Therapy?

**My partner and I argue frequently, sometimes bitterly. I think some arguing is normal, right? Yet I do worry that it's become a problem. When is the right time to start couples counseling?**

Thank you for this question! It is such a common one for many couples who are trying to decide what is normal and what is a serious warning sign. The first thing I would say is that couples therapy does not have to be a last resort. It can greatly ease difficulties in relationships, even longstanding ones. And it is a resource that many people avail themselves of proactively—to nurture generally healthy bonds.



*Eric Stroo*

You are correct, of course, that some amount of conflict in a couple's relationship is to be expected and even healthy. For it to be submerged or circumvented routinely would be troubling in itself. Couples can engage in conflict in constructive and beneficial ways. Or quite the opposite. When argument becomes the norm, especially when it feels hurtful or even abusive, an outside resource such as therapy can be critical.

For couples who identify their fighting as a problem, the right time to start is, well, before it's too late. That sounds glib, and it is, but it is also completely true. Therapy generally proves useful in identifying deeply ingrained patterns that have a way of taking over a couple's interactions. Each partner can benefit from seeing the patterns clearly on their many levels: behavioral, perceptual, and emotional. With help from the therapist, partners can explore their contributions to these patterns and can support one another in their growth and change.

So why do people resist therapy, given the potential benefits? The reasons are many and are understandable. As already mentioned, expense is often one factor. For another thing, therapy can be intimidating. It opens a couple's private life to a stranger, which can feel unwelcome or even shameful. Many people find that vulnerability even more distasteful than the strains and discontent of the ongoing relationship.

In addition, there is simply the complexity of a relationship, especially one that has evolved, however unhealthily, over many years and changes and cycles of up and down. Sometimes the memories of better times early in the relationship create a false sense of hope that a healthy state will surely somehow return on its own. If only circumstances—infants or adolescents in the household, or bouts of illness—would change, then the relief would allow the relationship to recover.

In fairness, this is not without validity. Circumstances can be a big factor in couples' difficulties, and their skills and capacities for resolving the distress in their relationships can prove adequate for the necessary healing and resolution. Or they can be adequate in some circumstances but not in others.

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## Staff Focus

### Change Your Mind

By Carl Hilton VanOsdall. LCSW, MDiv



A friend recently shared with me their copy of Nikita Gill's book, *Where Hope Comes From*. The first poem, entitled "And a Message from the Universe," goes like this:

*In every moment of your existence,  
Several realities  
Are bursting across the cosmos.*

*Planets explode.  
Stars burst.  
Solar systems dissolve  
Or welcome a new planet  
Into the orbit of their own  
Sun-like star.*

*The universe gives them life  
And says,  
Now help me live.*

*Listen.  
I am saying that if you change your thoughts,  
You, too, can change your universe.*

As I reflect on this, part of me is skeptical: Change your universe? Really? Another part of me nods along, "We CAN change our/the universe if we allow our "same-stuff-as-stars" cerebrums to shift. For there is a whole universe in there.

And, somewhere in my same cerebral space are swirling around words from the August 27 lectionary passage, the starting words of Romans 12:

*"Do not be conformed to this world, but be TRANSformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."*

*Perfect*—not meaning without blemish or error—instead *perfect* meaning whole and integrated. Such is God's good will for each of us, that we might find wholeness and healing in our holy lives.

Perhaps the Apostle Paul and Nikita Gill are onto the same thing. That by God or by grace, these mysterious and wonder-filled minds are key to our transformation, even the changing of our very universe. Which for us—and for those we hold in our hearts—begins right here... begins right now.

*Carl Hilton VanOsdall is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, with prior training and experience as a congregational pastor. He has a busy practice with individuals and couples at Samaritan Center, both in personal and via teletherapy.*

## Reconnecting

(Continued from page 1)



Lee Seese and Doug Farnham

The turnout was strong (nearly 40 strong) if not total. There was retired therapist Michael Rogers; there was Gary Steeves from faraway Spokane; there were Board Chair Lee Seese and two of his compatriots, Doug Farnham and Scott Anderson; and there were recently hired staff members who had never met many of their colleagues in person.



Isaiah Lin



Jim Ramsey and daughter

There were also family members, including children, there were games, and there was plenty of summertime picnic food.

Likely no one was happier to see the event come off than Executive Director Beverley Shrumm. In spite of only moderately healthy air quality and numerous folks with conflicting vacation plans, the gathering marked the end of a long dry spell for handshakes and hugs and shared meals and genuine face-to-face conversations. “It was deeply satisfying,” said a smiling Bev Shrumm, “to see people together again and to *hear all* the excited talking.”

**Who Commuted the Farthest?** Green Lake Park was full of activity. Parking was nearly impossible to find. But a scattering of picnic tables awaited us—a peaceful setting for our long-anticipated gathering.

Still, there were complications. For one thing, the Seattle air quality was approaching an unhealthy level due to Canadian smoke wafting into the Sound. And then there was Covid in the midst of a sudden increase. So the early morning hours were filled with email exchanges: Should we cancel? Should we meet indoors?

In the end, the leadership gave the green light to meet at Green Lake, and the word went out to confirm our gathering. That was a great relief for me, having driven the day before from Spokane to see longtime colleagues and friends. And many of them came: singly or with spouses and children. Newly hired staff were welcomed. Board members and a few retired staff joined in.

Usually we play all sorts of outdoor games. Not this year. Instead we engaged in nonstop conversations and reconnected. It was a joyous experience. I was aware how glad I was to have driven across the state to enter into this communion: Sacred Space, Sacred Time, and all the dear Souls that were present—and holding in my heart those unable to attend.



Gary Steeves

## Staff News

### Drawn to Samaritan Center



*Nathalia Worms*

What's the draw? In the last year or so, Samaritan has hired several new clinicians, people in mid-career who were looking for a professional experience and environment that they saw in the agency. Among them were these three: Nathalia Worms came to us in June 2022, Kristen Moss this last April, and Dan Kujawinski just this summer. All were living and working in the region already.

Among these three, there was a consistent observation that Samaritan offers a strong collegial environment. This impression came by reputation and word of mouth, but also, for Kristen, it was verified through her firsthand experience (some years ago) as an extern. In that role, she worked with an associate license at the agency, seeing clients and being supervised by agency staff. Nowadays, externs are included in collegial groups for peer consultation, training, and reflection. Engagement in these weekly groups has been a major factor in creating our strongly supportive and inclusive environment.

For Dan and Nathalia, who came from multidisciplinary environments, an attractive feature at Samaritan is the focus on counseling. In previous, more hierarchical settings, their roles were considered “ancillary” to the dominant medical model. By contrast, here at Samaritan, the clear emphasis and core business is therapy. And the value of that emphasis is evident in the opportunities to move beyond “brief” treatment or case management. Samaritan has given each of them a significant opportunity to grow and develop in their professional skills and a supportive environment for evolving in directions that align with their passions and natural aptitudes.



*Dan Kujawinski*

All three therapists bring strong sensitivities to acute issues in our community: homelessness, domestic violence, refugee and immigrant struggles. All demonstrate this deeply held compassion in their commitment to clients and community. And at the same time, all have been drawn to the opportunity to explore the aspects of therapy that are central to our practice at Samaritan: insight-oriented treatment, spiritually integrative models, and a systemic, relational way of conceptualizing care.



*Kristen Moss*

*(Continued from page 1)*

taking risks that could have serious long-range consequences. Their therapist helped them examine and make changes in how they were parenting and, at the same time, focused on protecting and strengthening their marital relationship.

A second round of therapy occurred when one of their aging parents needed to move from home to an assisted living facility. The loss of independence was devastating for the parent and put our clients in the position of making hard but necessary decisions while being viewed as “the bad guys.” The therapy setting created space for them to voice their grief and frustration without appearing weak or unfeeling.

Later, health issues for each of the couple coincided with the husband’s planned retirement. It brought them face to face with questions of their own mortality and an urgent need to re-think their financial expectations. Again, having a therapist who could listen deeply to their fears, bringing both her history with the family and her training in life transitions, helped them move forward. The couple pulled together their considerable resources—among them their love for each other, their strong Christian faith, their experience of meeting adversity with determination, and a soul-saving sense of humor.

The belief that both the couple and the therapist held as they worked together, once again, to find a way through very difficult circumstances is what Samaritan has always offered our community. A belief in our ability to care for one another and to create positive change.

*(Continued from page 3)*

So the question of seeking counseling comes back to a couple’s own discernment. If a couple has sufficient resources and trust in the process, they might seek counseling to nurture an already secure relationship. If circumstances are distressing, it might be helpful to seek guidance simply to deal with the circumstances more effectively. If the patterns of dysfunction are hurtful, it is almost always better to seek help now if possible rather than allow the hurts to accumulate and compound.

The right time for couples counseling can be whenever there is a clear sense of opportunity or urgency. Couples do quarrel, some seasons of “coupledom” are inherently more challenging than others, and people and relationships do change, but couples are wise to assess their relationship health regularly and honestly—and even that assessment can be a short-term goal to pursue with a therapist.

*Eric Stroo is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor who has worked with Samaritan Center since 2009, initially as an extern. Prior to working at Samaritan, he was employed in computer book publishing at Microsoft Press. He is a deacon in the Episcopal Church.*

# Samaritan

Center of Puget Sound

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Contact [estroo@samaritanps.org](mailto:estroo@samaritanps.org).



Samaritan Center has maintained a strong presence for over 60 years, facing the headwinds that have challenged and grounded many nonprofit agencies in our community. That we continue and grow is a tribute to our clinical and administrative staff, and to the faithful support of our friends: clients, fellow professionals, donors, and volunteers. Thank you.

## Samaritan

Center of Puget Sound

### Regional Leadership in...

- Counseling That Integrates Mind, Body, Spirit, and Relationship
- Workshops for Clinicians and Non-Professionals
- Professional Training and Outreach

### With...

- Multiple Locations around Puget Sound and Beyond
- 31 State-Licensed Therapists

