



## Psychological Counseling Services, Ltd. Newsletter

February/2009

### Marilyn Murray interview by: Stacy Hall

Excerpts from Stacy Hall's interview with Marilyn Murray, former PCS therapist and author of Prisoner of Another War. During the interview she recounts her remarkable story of how she found healing from her own childhood trauma to the development of her groundbreaking therapeutic intervention tool called the Scindo Syndrome. Finally, she shares about her current project in Russia involving training mental health professionals in her therapy intervention tool. Marilyn Murray has currently trained over 1600 therapists in Russia on the Scindo Syndrome (a therapeutic modality used for treatment of severe trauma, neglect and deprivation).

Hall: Would you describe how you developed your theory and treatment model, The Scindo Syndrome?

Murray: The theory and method that I now teach was certainly was not anything that I intentionally sought out - but I fully believe that God orchestrated my healing and that He is able to take any bad thing and make something good to come of it.

Over the past 27 years as a psychotherapist who has specialized in the treatment of trauma and abuse, I have found that violent traumas often become released violently in therapy. As I said previously, I was very resistant to the concept of therapy and definitely did not go searching for anything in my childhood. So, when my childhood gang rape came literally roaring to the surface like a volcano it was more than devastating - it was like a giant infected wound that you barely touched and it exploded. It left me feeling much like an eight-year-old for about six weeks. I could not read not write beyond the level of a third-grader; could not drive a car or wear make-up, jewelry or a bra; even the hair on my arms and legs stopped growing. I went from a professional business woman carrying a briefcase to an eight-year-old child carrying a coloring book.

During this time I really couldn't use adult terminology very well and in trying to explain to my therapist, Dr. Peter Danylchuk (who was a pastor with a doctorate in psychology), what was happening with me, I simply said, "It feels like when God created me I was this Original Feeling Child, this feeling person, not just the thinking adult that I have been. But when my abuse happened I became this Sobbing Hurting Child - but in order to survive it was like being that hurting child was not okay, I just couldn't deal with that. And so it felt like I then became this Controlling Child who took both the hurting child and also the original child and put them into a box and buried them in the ground - then this Controlling Child took over my body and walked me home."

As the months went by I started using those terms to try and describe to Dr.

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Power of Two:

Four couple's retreats scheduled quarterly that focus on couples with a desire to enhance intimacy in their relationship. This experience concentrates on improvement in both emotional and physical intimacy through a venue of sharing within the coupleship and with other couples.

February 27-29, 2009

May 1-3, 2009

August 7-9, 2009

November 6-8, 2009

**DIALECTICAL  
BEHAVIORAL  
THERAPY (DBT)  
SKILLS TRAINING  
GROUP**

Danylchuk what was happening in my sessions. I also realized that God wanted me to become a healthy adult person not just a thinking adult but also a feeling adult. Obviously, this was an extremely traumatic time for me, and for my family back in Arizona because no one could really comprehend what was actually happening. It seemed like every day something new and major was unfolding.

I prayed constantly and depended upon God to guide me regarding where each therapy session would lead. Years later (after I had received my degrees in psychology and was an active therapist) Dr. Danylchuk and I were speaking at a conference together years later in Hawaii ( Dr. Earle also was speaking there.) Dr. Danylchuk and I gave a case study presentation with two of us as therapist and client. At the end, someone from the audience asked Dr. Danylchuk, "How did you know where to take Marilyn next in the therapy." And he replied, "I never did. It seemed that she directed her own therapy and knew where she needed to go. I just followed along and was supportive of her." Of course his wise decision was exactly what I needed and gave me permission and support in order to listen to God's leading. I was doing very intensive therapy 4-6 hours every week day and I usually stayed in the therapy room over the lunch hour and rested - and prayed. It seemed very clear to me each day that it was almost as though God was writing on the ceilings saying, "This is where you need to go next and this is what you need to do."

I know it sounds strange as I speak about it now but it was a most unique time and space. As I mentioned before, I did want to go to therapy and certainly never sought out the opportunity to be involved in anything so extraordinary. But, after several months of this intensive, I began to realize that something really unusual was happening and that for some reason God had placed me right in the middle of it. And no matter how much I would have preferred to stop and go home, I also knew for certain that if I did not stay and "reach the bottom" I never would be healthy - physically, emotionally, or spiritually.

During the time I was literally "stuck at age 8," I could not write well but I was able to borrow an old manual type writer and I could type with one finger. So I started writing journal notes of my sessions. I taped some but it was very hard for me to talk. Whenever I talked about anything that had to do with the attack I stammered and stuttered like an extremely terrified child, so it was easier to do the typing which I did for quite a long time resulting in many pages describing my sessions.

When I first started dealing with my sexual abuse I thought that I needed to "kill off" this terrified hurting child and that I only needed to be the original child but I began to see that this Sobbing Hurting Child was the part that gave me empathy and compassion and I needed to keep her. From the time that I was eight years old I had been actively involved with helping others - not just with my church but in many kinds of community services. Also I worked with a pastor in Czechoslovakia for 30 years and visited him being the Iron Curtain several times in rather dangerous situations. I began to realize that that caring, compassionate part of me came from my Sobbing Hurting Child and thus was something I needed to persevere and nurture.

I also went through a stage of thinking that I really needed to rid myself of this demanding Controlling Child who was accustomed to "sitting on the throne" and being in charge of my life. But I gradually began to understand that she represented a very important God-given defense mechanism and thus I should never be without her. Also, if she was healthy, she would be the part that helped

This group is based on Marsha Linehan's DBT model and is an accelerated five-week course. Each five-week course covers one DBT module and will include Mindfulness, Distress Tolerance, Interpersonal Effectiveness and Emotion Regulation.

Day: Tuesday  
Time: 4:30-6:30 p.m.  
Cost: \$375 for five-week module  
Led by Stacy Hall, MC, LAC, NCC

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**Ralph Earle, Ph.D** was recognized for a **Gratitude - Lifetime Achievement award at Sierra Tucson's "Gratitude for Giving" Breakfast** on December 12, 2008. The event was held at Montelucia Resort and Spa in Paradise Valley. Twenty -two of his close colleagues, friends and family showed up to surprise Ralph with the award!

me to set healthy boundaries and also to keep me responsible. Without her, my Sobbing Hurting Child would always be so empathetic and compassionate that I probably would die a martyr at age 44 because I wasn't taking care of myself.

Read More at <http://pcsearle.com/PDF/marilynMurrayInterview2-12-09.pdf> or [www.pcsearle.com](http://www.pcsearle.com).

## Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) skills to cope with Rising Economic Anxiety:

By: Stacy Hall, M.C., L.A.C., N.C.C.

The economic situation is hitting people hard across all corners of the country. Most everyone is being impacted at some level and is experiencing widespread distress regarding a number of concerns ranging from a shrinking retirement savings to those losing jobs and homes. Although some are hit harder than others, the situation is certainly permeating all levels of our society. Whether you are petrified of opening your 401 (k) statement or simply unable to make your mortgage payment, fear and anxiety about finances are prevalent for many people.

Anxiety symptoms can distort reality. Many people are reacting to distorted realities and to the "what ifs" about some horrible future scenario. You may find yourself obsessing incessantly about the worst-case scenario. You may be experiencing catastrophic thoughts that do nothing but perpetuate your negative emotions and thoughts, sending you into a tailspin of anxiety and panic.

Certainly, there is such a thing as productive worry - acknowledging the reality of the situation and doing what you can to change it. Focus on what you have direct influence and control over and then let the anxiety motivate you to take necessary actions. Conversely, unproductive worry is that overflowing, self-created anxiety that is directly linked to our internal thoughts and emotions. This type of worry will ensure even more distress and is not based out of the reality of the situation.

Of course, it is important to not stay stuck in denial by sticking your head in the sand and avoiding the problem. You want to be systematic about your worry and do something about it, such as problem solving if possible. Whether you find yourself suffering as a result of the financial situation plaguing the country or from another devastating and painful event in your life, I want to offer you some anxiety reducing techniques based on Marsha Linehan's work of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT):

1. Solve your financial problem (end the painful event or change the situation).
2. Figure out a way to take a negative in your life and make it into a positive.
3. Accept the problem.
4. Stay miserable.

If you have already taken all of the necessary steps within your control to improve your financial situation (or the situation is currently unchangeable) and you cannot figure out a way to turn it into a positive, then you can choose to practice Radical Acceptance. The definition of Radical Acceptance is "complete and total accepting from the mind, heart and body." It is about acknowledging and recognizing your current reality as it is in the moment and having the perspective that "everything should be as it is." Accepting is not the same as approving, nor does it mean being resigned or passive. You must be able to accept a situation before you can change it. In other words, if you are in denial of your present reality, lacking awareness or stuck in a place of high anxiety, effective change will not be likely. When you get pulled back into worrisome thoughts and anxiety, remind yourself you have already worried and have taken appropriate actions. Notice when you are getting caught up in the cycle of anxiety and bring your focus back to the present by practicing a technique called "Turning the Mind."

In order to practice turning the mind toward radical acceptance, the first step is the awareness that you are not fully accepting your situation or that you are engaging in unhealthy worry and anxiety. The second step is to make an inner commitment to accept your situation. The last step is to just continue going within and turning your mind toward the acceptance fork in the road over and over again. Turning the Mind involves refocusing your attention on your present reality and accepting what is. It might be helpful to practice turning the mind toward the positives in your life. You might simply refocus your attention toward your breathing for a few minutes and then return to your day. It is also helpful to just notice that your worrying is not effective and to ask yourself "What is most effective for me in this moment?" You might also ask, "Is it effective for me to worry right now?" The idea is to work on being unmindful of worries- reminding yourself that you do not have to believe nor get caught up in the content of your thoughts.

Radical acceptance and turning the mind are intentional choices that require great effort. Turning the Mind toward Radical Acceptance is something you have to practice repeatedly throughout the day, hour or even minute. When you start to go back to unnecessary worry thoughts, notice that you are "faturizing" and gently turn your mind back toward the acceptance fork in the road. You can choose to begin the difficult process of learning to control the mind and to start replacing anxiety and fear with some degree of calm and peace Radical Acceptance frees up a person to become empowered over their lives as opposed to feeling trapped in their own suffering. These skills will not take away any pain or change the situation, but practicing these skills will decrease suffering. At the very least, you'll be better equipped to make decisions about your financial future so that you are not responding from a panic-induced state, but from a sound place of peace and stillness.

## CAN YOUR RELATIONSHIP SURVIVE THE FINANCIAL CRISIS?

Psychological researchers consistently report that money issues are among the most common causes of stress in relationships, and that these issues may result in significant damage to a relationship. During highly problematic financial times, relationship problems based on money issues become even more accentuated.

The current crisis is as much an emotional crisis of confidence as it is strictly a pure financial crisis. Rather than continue to follow a well-considered plan of action, many people respond out of fear, uncertainty and a sense of loss of control. Financial decisions become reactions, which can then exacerbate any relationship issues that already exist between people.

It is difficult to bring up the topic of money without myriad emotions entering the picture. However, there are a number of things that people can do to manage their emotions and reduce the fear and sense of loss of control.

Follow the adage: Think Globally, Act Locally. Stay aware of what is happening in the bigger picture, but focus on those things over which you do have control. Remember the wisdom found in the Serenity Prayer.

Don't change current investment plans if they were well considered. Keep your assets properly allocated.

Take stock of your expenditures versus your income. What expenditures can you temporarily postpone?

Educate yourself about what is happening. However, when watching the "experts," consider the qualifications of the person who is the financial pundit.

And finally, evaluate what is important in your life in addition to money. For example, don't forget

the value of family, friends, faith and your health.

Economic turmoil does not have to create turmoil in your personal relationship. Follow these steps and you can have a long, happy relationship, or at least have one less strain on that relationship.

David P. Linssen, CPA, LPC

## PCS Intensive Model

### **What are Intensives?**

The Intensive process at PCS involves anywhere from 1-4 week(s) of customized, coordinated and multi-disciplinary treatment in a nurturing environment. This process includes individual, couple, family and group therapy to acquire vital healing and the development of necessary skills. While most outpatient programs operate on an evening basis or do most of the work in a group format, the PCS intensive program emphasizes individual or couple therapy during a twelve-hour day. The Intensive also integrates psycho-education, experiential and process group work into the program.

### **Types of people who can benefit from the Intensive process:**

- Clients who are stuck in the recovery process or in crisis
- Clients who need more to complement their current treatment program
- Clients who want more than the traditional weekly one-hour session, but do not require inpatient treatment.

### **Additional Benefits:**

- Brings couples and families close together while also providing individual therapy.
- Utilizes skills and expertise of several therapists trained in prescribed areas of treatment.
- Clients learn skills they can effectively implement after returning home.
- Opportunity to concentrate entirely on therapy without the distraction of home or work.
- Client is not isolated during treatment from the reality of living life.

### **Making a Referral?**

Contact Dr. Ralph Earle or Dr. Marcus Earle or another PCS therapist at 480.947.5739. We encourage the primary therapist to be as involved during the Intensive as he or she would like. This may include participating in the process as co-therapist or participating by telephone during

their stay.

## PCS welcomes Mark Bell

"Life, so far, has offered me experiences which have taken me around the world and throughout the United States including stints in New Mexico, California, Utah, Mississippi, South Carolina, Arizona, Germany, England and Chile. My background is comprised of west-coast (mother) and southeast-coast (father) roots. As a boy I was raised as a "military brat", born in Germany on an American Airbase, and thus was fortunate to have diverse cultural experiences as a child. After the separation of my own parents as a kid I lived the remainder of my adolescence in California with one year of high school in London, England. After graduation and a couple years of college I served a 2-year spanish-speaking church mission in Chile and further developed a passion for spirituality, diversity and cultures. Upon completing undergraduate studies at BYU I met and married my wife. We are going on 5 and a half years together with two sons to sweeten the deal. Most recently we lived in Mississippi for my graduate education at the University of Southern Mississippi in marriage and family therapy. We decided to stay in Mississippi for post-graduate professional experience working with Dr. Patrick Carnes and an extraordinary clinical team treating people struggling with sexual addiction, relationship addiction and sexual anorexia in a world-renowned treatment program.

As a therapist at PCS I look forward to incorporating my experiences, education and compassion for people in my work. I am currently facilitating specialty-groups designed to address the growing struggle of sexual addiction and the resultant consequences that the compulsive sexual behaviors and tendencies inevitably produced for individuals and their families. I value the family unit and see it as a fundamental beneficiary of therapy and recovery work done with people in a group and individual process. It is my passion and intention to work with individuals, couples and families in addressing their most significant and concerning issues and help restore them to harmony and integrity."

Mark Bell, MS, LAMFT, ASAT