

# The Therapy Connector

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## Jottings from the Director's Pen

Looking forward to celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of service next year, we asked Nancy Reiber to reflect on connections in counseling from her perspective of 21 years of service with PCC, as she retires. [p.2] We will miss Nancy's compassionate, caring services. We are excited for her as she plans to travel and spend time with family. She is also supporting the educational mission of her local congregation in retirement.

The working title of "The Therapy Connector" reflects our perspective that connections are healing and generate relational, emotional and spiritual health. Dr. Steven Stosny in his email newsletter July 12, 2007 comments on this healing dynamic of connection:

The key to lasting positive change lies in the mental state of connection. ... it doesn't even require that another person create it with you ... you choose to feel connected or choose to feel disconnected. When you choose to feel connected and forsake excuses to feel disconnected ... You see then that there is enough power in the human heart to light up the world.

At PCC, we want to improve strengthen our connections with the community, with those who support financially and refer clients. We endeavor to provide an atmosphere that fosters connections in the therapeutic relational process. My personal goal is to create a connection with my clients so they experience feeling, in the words of one client, "just as though I shared with a dear friend over a cup of tea!" This is our mission "to provide professional, Christian counseling within a caring environment at an affordable cost."

We continue to plan a weekend premarital seminar. We did not have enough interest to begin in August. In the interim, we continue to provide premarital counseling that focuses on fostering healthy relationship connections for couples.

Sarah Crowder [p.4] reflects on the process of building bridges of connection with clients in her "Teen Spotlight" page.

Arthur Scott [p.3] provides another reflective perspective on transitions in life.

PCC faces *positive* challenges. When we receive calls for service, our goal is to meet with clients as soon as possible, usually within one week. With our increase in adolescent services and current economic concerns, the need to supplement fees for clients is higher than ever. We are grateful for these challenges! We give thanks to those who support us financially and through prayers, and referrals!

Our counselors are available to speak for ministry groups, to make presentations for teen groups, or to bring greetings and information about our services to your congregation or organization. We will be delighted to provide .pdf files of inserts for you to include in bulletins or newsletters. Please contact us at 301-863-9333 for additional information or resources.

Betty Joanne Scott, Executive Director



Member Agency

## REFLECTIONS ON A CAREER IN COUNSELING...

At the end of August my tenure at the Pastoral Counseling Center will be over. I have spent 21 years counseling here and 12 of those years were spent as the Director. My love for the Center and specifically its mission has been the reason for such devotion. It all boils down to people.

Counseling is an amazing, awesome and fearful privilege. As counselors we come alongside someone who is hurting and in need to connect with them in a healing way. We are privileged to enter into the private, deep emotional places that are at the very center of a person. Often times, we have done little to earn that kind of trust. So, what we bring with us as people into the counseling room is critical to the process of soul searching, recovery and change.

First and foremost, I brought Christ with me. I believe in Pastoral Counseling for the reason that God is honored and the spiritual life of persons is validated. For me as a therapist that meant that I never stepped into the counseling room without prayer for myself, my client and for the process we were about to engage in. As I leave, I must give all glory and honor to God for any growth that took place over a span of 21 years. I can no longer even remember all the names and faces, but He does. I was merely His vessel.

Secondly, I brought a sincere love for people. Healing can only take place in an environment of love, care and respect for the person. You don't fake that. As a young therapist I stepped into the role with a strong desire to help and anxious to use my newly acquired skills. I walk away with a deep sense that as I worked for change in the lives of others I was deeply changed myself.



As therapists, we are tested and pushed to look deep inside ourselves as well. I am humbled by this knowledge and grateful for what I have learned about people and about myself.

Lastly, I brought a healthy fear with me. Counseling is an awesome privilege and a fearful responsibility all at the same time. We deal in people's lives. This fear was healthy for me because it kept me on my toes. This fear resulted in prayerful consideration and thoughtful preparation for each session. It also drove me to desire professionalism and to always continue the pursuit of knowledge. There is nothing trivial about what we do.

I began work as a counselor when my second and last child was 1 year old and I finish as he graduates from college. Family has always come first for me. I was able to raise my two children and help out financially at home all the while doing therapy. I believe it made me a better wife and mother. I go now to pursue a new phase of my life taking with me all that I have learned from a career in counseling. My strong desire is to continue to strengthen families and marriages wherever God allows. An ending is just another beginning.

*Gratefully,  
Nancy Reiber*

### How can I support the PCC?

**You may support Pastoral Counseling Center of St. Mary's, Inc. during the United Way Campaign. Please identify PCC on your pledge card. If you wish to contribute through the Combined Federal Campaign our CFC number is 32593. PCC is an active member of the United Way of St. Mary's County.**

Please call 301-863-9333 or email [pccstmary@verizon.net](mailto:pccstmary@verizon.net) regarding:

- ✚ Contribution of funds for resource materials or support for needy clients
- ✚ Requests for a speaker for your church or organization
- ✚ Comments on further ways in which the Pastoral Counseling Center may support and enrich your ministry

# Reflections on Transitions

Transitions are a part of life's package. The Pastoral Counseling Center is working through a transition. Nancy Reiber ended her time at the Pastoral Counseling Center. Nancy is transitioning into a new phase of her life. August 31, 2007 was Nancy's last day at PCC. Thank you, Nancy for providing a professional Christian counseling ministry to clients and for devoting your talents and energies to the Pastoral Counseling Center. Those of us connected with the Pastoral Counseling Center cherish Nancy's commitment to the center. Nancy devoted 21 plus years as counselor which included 12 years as Executive Director. We trust and pray that God will bless Nancy in her unfolding adventures in life.

As we encounter transitions, we develop responses to change. Developing our response to change is the work we do in a transition. In *GROWING THE DISTANCE*, Jim Clemmer says, we either change or life will change us. Examples of transitions are: starting school, going to a different school, leaving home to attend college, moving, changing jobs, marriage, birth of a child, separation/divorce or death. I heard a saying that went something like this: Good, better, best, never let it rest; until the good is better and the better is the best. Each transition is an opportunity to develop healthy and growing responses to change.

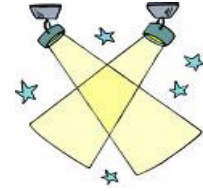
Jim Clemmer also suggests that constant growth prepares and empowers us to adjust to changes. Al Siebert, the author of "Resiliency Advantage" suggests continual growth enhances our ability to be resilient. Resiliency is a psychological process similar to the spiritual process of faith. Hebrews 11: 1-2 describes the faith and resiliency processes in this way: "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."

A transition may trigger changes that test our faith and our resiliency. In those times, we may need support and resources to strengthen our faith and to restore resiliency into our lives. Faith traditions, pastors, spiritual mentors and pastoral counselors provide significant support and resourcefulness. Continually growing our faith and resiliency responses empower us to adjust well to changes. I understand Isaiah 26: 3-4 to say, the resilient person experiences peace of mind because they trust in God.

The counselors and members of the Board of Directors at the Pastoral Counseling Center are working through the challenges of our current transition. Our goal is to grow in faith and resiliency personally, professionally and in our work with clients. In this process of transitioning, our vision enhances as we change and grow in faith. Input from pastors and congregations regarding counseling and educational resources will assist the Pastoral Counseling Center in designing programs to respond to your needs. Your suggestions are important information to us as we work through this transition. We look forward to transitioning into a mutually enriching ministry that honors God and adds value to the pastors, congregations and families of southern Maryland.

Arthur Scott, LCMFT, CDVC-III

## With a Relationship, the Work Can Begin



A parent calls in exasperation. Their teenager has driven them to levels of frustration they never imagined. Life seems like it's spinning out of control with no hope of upward movement.

The BEST thing the parent did was to reach out and contact supportive resources. There is no reason for a parent to feel helpless or alone in their efforts to raise their children. Now...it's in the hands of the chosen counselor. Where do we go from here?

First and foremost, in working with a teenager, an authentic, trusting relationship must begin to be built. There will be some initial challenges. Most likely, the teenager will be angry at their parent for making them attend a boring hour of counseling. Convincing a teen that this hour will be better than the hour they could be spending with friends is the first hurdle. Secondly, the teen won't know why they had to come to counseling. So, the counselor must be creative in their questioning to convince the teen there are issues to address.

Now that the foundation for effective counseling is understood, listening to, and really hearing what the teen has to say comes next. Placing any sort of judgment on what the teen chooses to share, would sabotage the counselor's efforts completely. Teens get advice from everyone whether they've asked for it or not. They are questioned by parents on the outfits they wear and labeled by their peers depending on their clothing choices. They are expected to "do what's right" by parent's standards but then pressured by peers to choose otherwise. For the counselor to remain non-judgmental, open to whatever topic may arise, and willing to listen and not give adult advice will allow the necessary relationship to develop.

Teens are in a critical transition period when guidance from adult role models is key in their lives. Their identity is beginning to blossom and form into who they will become as adults. As a counselor, you have the blessed opportunity to be on the front line with this teen who has come, seeking direction and understanding...so, sit back, and listen.

Sarah Crowder, LCADC, LPC

**"Where can you go on the Web?"  
For Parents and Teens**

**[www.parentingteensresourcenetwork.org](http://www.parentingteensresourcenetwork.org)**

**[www.justthinktwice.com](http://www.justthinktwice.com)**

**[www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com)**

**[www.freevibe.com](http://www.freevibe.com)**

**[www.angriesout.org](http://www.angriesout.org)**