COMPASS

The Newsletter for the Association of Private Practice Therapists

– WINTER 2009 –

Helping Clients With Job Transitions

By Bridget (Weide) Brooks, Certified Professional Résumé Writer

Do you have a client who is one of the 750,000+ Americans who has lost their job this year? Or has a spouse who lost his or her job? Or are they anxious that they will lose their job?

You are in a unique position to help them be successful in their job search (whether it's an active job search or simply being prepared in the event they lose their job) — because one of the biggest keys to success in a job search is planning your job search strategy — and the second is accountability. You can help your clients in both of these areas: developing a strategy for their search and holding them accountable as they work their plan.

Research shows that an average worker spends only 4 years in a job — and will have 12 jobs, in as many as 5 career fields — during his or her working life. *(Source: The Five O'Clock Club)*

There are five basic ways that individuals can find a job. If your client creates a plan that addresses all five areas, they will find a job faster than if they conduct their job search without a plan.

The five basic ways to find a job include: newspapers, the Internet, recruiters/employment services, networking, and what I call "direct contact."

Many people look for their next job in the newspaper and, while it's true that some people do find their dream job listed in the classifieds, the reality is that only about 20 percent of job seekers are successful using this method.

The newspaper *can* be a useful tool, however, for finding job "leads" — that is, companies that hire people to do the kinds of job they want. In addition to looking for companies that are in "growth mode" in the classifieds, job seekers should also read the Business section, where promotions and new company announcements are listed, usually once a week.

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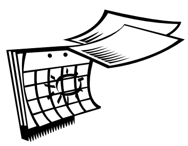
If Your Client Has Been Fired

"Downsized." "Rightsized." "Let go." Companies have lots of names for what really happened — your client was fired.

In today's economy, chances are your client's work performance had very little to do with their current unemployment. Instead, companies are looking to cut costs, and personnel is a big expense.

The average time it takes a dislocated worker to find a new job is six months. Advise your clients that the sooner they start looking for their next job, the faster they will be back to work. It is important to work on their job search right away, or they may become discouraged.

- First, they must update their résumé. Although a résumé isn't required for every job, the process of developing one (or updating it!) requires the client to quantify his or her skills and accomplishments, which can focus the job search.
- Advise them to get their network in place. One of the best sources of jobs leads is from the people they know.
- Consider taking a part-time or temporary job to help get through this time. Depending on their financial situation, they may need the income to supplement their unemployment or severance pay. It can also be important for them to work just so they stay in a "work routine" and get out of bed each day.



Calendar of Events

Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009
APPT Mini-Series Workshop • "Charity Clauses"
Adam White, Erickson & Sederstrom
Olive Garden Restaurant, Omaha

Friday, March 27, 2009 (Half-Day)
APPT Conference: **Sex: Addiction & Dysfunction**
Mahoney State Park; Ashland, Neb.

IN THIS ISSUE…

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

By Pam Feldman, LIMHP

I like to keep members abreast of the direction of APPT. Your APPT Board has been very active this year in thinking ahead of how we might manage our practices during these tough economic times.

As you know, accepting insurance reimbursement carries with it responsibilities about collecting copays and deductibles and setting consistent rates. Yet, we anticipate more clients will have economic hardships or lose their insurance altogether. Our legal advisors at Erickson & Sederstrom are preparing a presentation for Feb. 17 to help us do things properly through the use of a charity clause as part of our practice policies. I hope you can join us for this program.

We continue to look for ways to make your membership work for you. A focus this coming year will be exploring other professional organizations. Our board has liaisons with NPA, NAMFT, NCA, and NASW. In future issues of *The Compass*, each liaison will let you know of their specific organization, its goals, and benefits. In addition, we will be exploring lesser-known professional organizations that provide a different role. Look for these articles as a way to stay informed of what goes on and who is involved.

Also, we are updating the "job descriptions" of the various board positions. These will be posted before the Spring Conference (March 27) so that anyone interested in running for a position can apply. It is truly a wonderful opportunity to network with colleagues, participate in planning, and work collaboratively with some very dedicated professionals. I hope this year we can have a full slate to vote for at our Spring Conference. By the way, as usual, we will be at Mahoney State Park for that event, which will focus on Sexual Addiction and Sexual Dysfunction.

Keep using the e-mail to communicate. I appreciate it when you include your personal e-mail address for those matters when you alone are requesting feedback. It helps keep down the information overload.

Let's all have a healthy 2009!

COMPASS

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www.PrivatePractice.org

The Need For Disability Insurance

There's a lot at stake for your business.

As a small business owner, you know what it means to be responsible. In addition to the long hours and hard work, owning a business brings an array of other responsibilities, whether you're just opening your solo practice or running a long-time group with employees. Owning a business can bring you great success, but with great opportunities come great risks. Don't let your income or your life be at risk. Take the first step in your planning process: A review of your disability and life insurance needs to ensure both you and your business are protected.

Disability Insurance for Business Owners

As the revenue generator for your business, becoming sick or hurt and unable to work could be your business' worst enemy. Just think about it: How would you pay your monthly expenses, such as rent and utilities, if you were unable to work — not to mention the obligations you have with your family at home? The fact is, your business, employees, and family depend on you. The right disability insurance products can protect your family, protect your business, and even help you attract and retain quality employees.

If you would like more information about disability insurance, please contact: John Schraut, Registered Representative, with John Hancock Financial Network, at (402) 758-1313 Ext: 28. Or you can e-mail him at *jschraut@jhnetwork.com*.

Up to $100 Scholarship Available for Members' Continuing Education

It's a new year — and that means there are FOUR new opportunities for you to explore continuing education with APPT's help!

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).

Complete the form and submit it, along with a copy of the workshop brochure (if available). Your 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 10 days of receiving your application.

– Member News –

Associated Counseling Professionals has moved to a new location. As of Jan. 1, 2009, the office is located on the second floor of the Prairie Life Center at 2255 South 132nd Street, Ste. 200.

Affiliated therapists include: Pamela Feldman, LIMHP; Glen Fineman, LICSW; Terry Moore, LICSW; Julie Jurich, Ph.D., LIMHP; Laura Lentz, LIMHP; Linda Schaefer, LIMHP; Bette Tarrant, LIMHP; Sue Williamson, LIMHP; and Dr. Rodney Nitcher. Also, Scarlett Kay Shockley, LIMHP will join the practice in February.

Their website is *www.acpcounseling.com*.

Dr. Donyce L. Brenneman, Ph.D., PLP has joined Great Oaks Counseling, LLC, located near 140th and Center St. Dr. Brenneman's masters degree focused on Clinical Medical Ethics and included an internship with a Clinical Medical Ethics department at a Chicago hospital. Her Ph.D. is in Clinical Psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute, in Carpinteria, Calif. She accrued eight years of pre-doctorate clinical work across the U.S. before returning to Omaha to be near family.

Currently, Dr. Brenneman provides individual, group, couple, and family therapy. Her work focuses on the treatment of eating disorders, various forms of abuse, PTSD, relationship issues, depression, medical illness (both acute and chronic), and grief recovery. She is currently a Co-Director of the Nebraska chapter of the NEDA (National Eating Disorder Association). This organization strives to include eating disorders as an aspect of states' parity laws as well as increasing public education on eating disorder etiology, prevention, and treatment. Dr. Brenneman may be reached at (402) 932-6500, ext. 102.

As of Jan. 1, 2009, **John Campbell, LCSW, CGP,** has expanded his practice to full-time. At the Center for Psychotherapy and Counseling, John provides individual therapy, including depression, anxiety reduction, coping skills, self-esteem, anger management, and related alcohol and drug issues. He also works with couples around issues of communications, marriage skills, divorce, and family problems.

John worked with groups and individuals incarcerated at the correctional facility, including issues related to prostitution and abuse. He has a special interest in issues impacting the gay/lesbian/trans-gender community. John earned certification from the American Group Psychotherapy Association as a Certified Group Psychotherapist. He can be reached at 502-1024, ext. 292 or via e-mail at *growth8021@yahoo.com*.

Penny Cavender moved her practice from 5951 Ames in Omaha to 6324 Maple St., Suite 1 (Omaha, NE 68104). Her new phone number is (402) 916-9886 and her fax is (402) 916-9416. She writes, "I would be more than happy to show my new place to anyone. I am very proud of it."

After being in private practice part-time over the past two years, **Adrian Martin, LMFT** has left the Lasting Hope Recovery Center to focus solely on his private practice. "My practice is growing and doing both was becoming a bit of a stretch," he says. Adrian is downtown in the Paxton building and works predominantly with couples and families. He is currently taking new referrals; more information can be found at *www.AdrianMartin.info*.

Bette Tarrant, MSW, LIMHP, has joined Associated Counseling Professionals. Bette has over 30 years of experience in the mental health field, both as a psychiatric nurse and as a therapist. Over those years, she has had the opportu-

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TAKE OUR ONLINE MEDICAID SURVEY!

Last call – Let your voice be heard!

Do you currently accept Medicaid clients? Did you used to take Medicaid clients, but not anymore? Thinking about dropping out as a Medicaid or Magellan provider? We want your opinion! (Your response is completely confidential!)

http://www.tinyurl.com/5h7v5x

– Member News –

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nity to be trained in many approaches to therapy, including experiential therapies, Menninger Foundation Training in Marriage and Family Therapy, EMDR, and DBT. Her specialties are bipolar disorder, trauma, relationship and communication problems, mindfulness, and all anxiety disorders. Also, she treats test anxiety, performance anxiety, fear of flying, creative and professional blocks, and life transitions.

Cassi Wigington, PLMHP, NCC, has opened a new private practice, New Image, located at 13057 West Center Rd., Suite 25, in Omaha. Cassi is a recent graduate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha Counseling program. She has recently finished her training in Eye Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing (EMDR). Cassi specializes in medical psychotherapy dealing with behavioral symptoms as a result of, or related to, a serious medical illness or injury, such as HIV, cancer, heart disease, stroke, or chronic pain. She works with individuals, families, and groups. If you have any questions or referrals, Cassi can be reached at (402) 330-7502.

Do you have member news to share? Offering a new specialty? Featured in the media? Started a new group? E-mail *appt@ibc.omhcoxmail.com* (subject line: Member News). *

Marketing Your Private Practice

By Bridget (Weide) Brooks

A steady stream of new clients ensures the success of your private practice. But how do you get new clients? How do you get your phone to ring?

After delivering a workshop on "Marketing Your Practice" at the Nov. 7 APPT Fall Conference, I've talked with several therapists about strategies to market their practices. As I shared in my presentation, there is no secret formula or magic bullet in marketing your practice. The key to success is to select a few simple, effective tactics and ***do them consistently.***

One common mistake is to think that advertising and marketing are the same thing. They are not. Advertising will get you results, but it is not as effective as *marketing* your services.

In order to build your private practice, you need to cultivate *relationships* — with prospective clients, new clients, and referral sources (other therapists, members of the media, insurance company representatives, human resources professionals, etc.).

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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.

Call Bridget at the APPT Office at (402) 393-4600 for details!

The Medicinal Inquirer: Benzodiazepines

A series designed to help private practice therapists learn more about psychiatric medications and get their questions answered.

By Joyce Sasse, APRN

Benzodiazepines are in the class of Minor Tranquilizers or Anxiolytics. This class of medications was developed to act like or enhance the effects of a naturally occurring substance in the body called Gamma Amino Butyric Acid — GABA. GABA works in the brain and body as a natural inhibitor of neuronal activity. GABA slows things down and cools things off.

Medications such as Valium, Xanax, Librium, Tranxene, Ativan, and Serax are all benzodiazepines. These medications work by enhancing the effects of GABA receptors.

There are two types of GABA receptors in the body: one that responds for anti-anxiety and another that responds for sedation. The class of benzodiazepines and benzodiazepines-like drugs that is used specifically for sedation/sleep issues will not be discussed in this article.

The benzodiazepine medications can be a helpful addition to use for short-term management of anxiety issues, short-term sedation, muscle relaxation (Valium), alcohol detoxification, or sleep induction.

But the key is *short-term* use. In the initial phase of treating an acute stress disorder, it may be prudent to use a month-long course of Ativan or Xanax while the patient is getting on Zoloft or another antidepressant with an anxiolytic feature.

The benzodiazepine will help the patient though the critical phase during the 3-4 weeks it takes the anti-depressant to get up to an effective level in the brain. Then the benzodiazepine can be tapered off.

While using benzodiazepines, the patient must be warned not to mix the medication with alcohol or any other drug that could depress the central nervous system — such as sleeping medications, pain pills, muscle relaxants, cough medications, etc.

Benzodiazepines are a mixed blessing because it is easy to develop a tolerance to them. Benzodiazepines are not considered to be a dangerous drug by many prescribers and they are easy for many people to get from their primary practitioner.

But there are some cautions. Before long, the patient may be taking more of the benzo than he or she ever thought they would need. In addition, these medications ***cannot be stopped abruptly*** if your patient has been taking them regularly for a month or more. One of the few fatal withdrawals is from benzodiazepines. A patient must be carefully weaned off of the benzodiazepine slowly by someone who is trained to do that.

Despite these issues, benzodiazepines have a real place in medical and psychiatric practice. However, there are many other medications that can be used for patients with long-term anxiety issues that do not have the obvious drawbacks that benzodiazepines can present.

— Joyce K. Sasse, MS, APRN-BC, CARN is a psychiatric nurse practitioner and clinical nurse specialist with Woodhaven Counseling Associates in Omaha.

Please send your questions about psychiatric medications to ***The Medicinal Inquirer*** and I will endeavor to answer them to your satisfaction. E-mail *joyesse1@cox.net* with your questions or call me at (402) 592-0328.

ARTICLES WANTED! We need your contributions for *The Compass!* Submit your article for the April 2009 issue by March 15. We welcome articles on clinical or practice management topics. Send articles via e-mail to Bridget at *appt@ibc.omhcoxmail.com* or via fax to (402) 393-4603. *

Helping Your Clients With Job Transitions

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In addition, business journals (such as the *Midlands Business Journal, Lincoln Business Journal,* and *Council Bluffs Business Journal)* can be a great way to find less well-known companies.

Another frequently-used technique is searching for jobs online, although the success rate of this approach is very low (with most estimates that 5-10% of jobs are obtained through online methods).

Nebraska's leading career website is Careerlink *(www.careerlink.org)*. In addition to a geographic site like Careerlink, job seekers should also consider the "Big Boards," like Monster.com and HotJobs.com.

My advice to clients is: If you identify an opportunity on a big board, go directly to the employer's website and see if the position is listed there as well. By applying through the company's website, you'll not only get a chance to research the company, you might be able to identify a decision-maker directly and avoid getting included in a jammed e-mailbox.

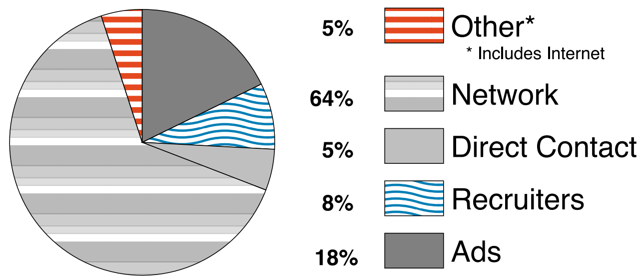
TIP: If your client finds a position online they're interested in, have them also follow-up with a résumé and cover letter by fax or mail.

A third strategy is recruiters and employment agencies. For certain kinds of jobs, companies pay third parties to screen and recommend potential employees. In exchange for finding candidates, an employer will pay a fee — usually equal to one-third of the employee's base salary for the first year — upon a successful hire. Because the job seeker doesn't pay for the service, sending a résumé to one of these companies is a good idea, but it won't always result in success — or even a return phone call.

Networking is the best way for your clients to find their next job. Have your client make a list of the people in their network. This can include friends, relatives, parents of children's friends, club members, cousins, neighbors, professional association contacts, and community connections (civic leaders, clergy, etc.)

Job seekers should assemble the contact information for these individuals and get their résumé to everyone on the list. They can also tap into their network for specific help. For example, if your client wants to work at a specific company, have them ask the people in their network if they know anyone who currently works for — or used to work for — "Company X." Then contact that person and ask about the company, culture, and hiring practices. The more people who know your client is looking for a job, the more eyes and ears that will be available to help.

Job Search Success Strategies



Source: National Business Employment Weekly

The final method is direct contact with prospective employers. Tap into the so-called "hidden job market" by having your clients identify companies they'd like to work for, even if they don't know if the company is hiring.

Companies hire people to solve their problems. These "employer buying motivators" (or "reasons a company might hire your client") include: To make money, to save money, to save time, to make work easier, to solve a specific problem, to be more competitive, to build relationships, to expand business, to attract new customers, and/or to retain existing customers.

If your client can do one — or more — of these things, they shouldn't wait for a "help wanted ad" to appear — they should approach the company directly.

How can your client do this? Use the other four methods:

- *Newspapers*. Identify companies that are likely candidates through their ads, profiles about them, or job listings that indicate a need. (For example, a company that is hiring a lot of production workers will likely need additional managers.)
- *Internet*. Research trends and companies online. Identify key problems from executive speeches, reports, or profiles, or read their news releases on their website.
- *Recruiters/Employment Services*. This is the ultimate direct contact. ("Hey, I don't know if you currently need someone with my skills, but here is what I have to offer your client company.")
- *Networking*. It happens all the time. Someone in your network says, "You know what? You should talk to John Jones at the XYZ Company. They could use someone with your skills."

How do you make direct contact? Call, use your network for an introduction, send an e-mail, or write a targeted cover letter and send it with your résumé. The key to a successful job search is follow-up. Help your clients by helping them formulate a plan and hold them accountable to following that plan.

— Bridget (Weide) Brooks is a Certified Professional Résumé Writer with Image Building Communications in Omaha. She can be reached at (402) 393-4600 or via e-mail at OmahaJobHelp@yahoo.com.

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Four-Step Process to Marketing Your Private Practice

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Tell people what you do — over and over again. And get your message to the *same people* over and over again — because consistency creates familiarity.

People do business with people they know, like, and trust.

And don't wait until things slow down before you market! It is better to be overbooked — especially if you are in a group practice. You want to consistently cultivate a pipeline of prospective clients.

I worked in the front office of two different private practices over the course of eight years, and I've spent the last 12 years helping therapists promote themselves. One of the most important things I advise is to track how you are getting clients. Are you asking clients how they heard about you? Are you compiling this information? What are you doing with this data?

I've developed a four-step process to focusing your practice-building efforts.

The first step is identifying your identity as a therapist. You'll hear that you need to develop your "brand." Basically, you are answering the question, "What makes you unique?" Do you work with certain client populations? Do you have specific training or credentials? Do you have personal experience that gives you insight into client issues?

Next, identify the target audience for your brand. Who needs your help? Describe your "ideal" client. What is their gender? What age? Work status (employed, unemployed, business owner, self-employed)? Where do they live? What do they read or watch? What other companies serve these clients (school counselors, clergy/churches, physicians, other therapists)?

Then, cultivate a list of outcomes these clients can expect — what are the results of working with you? These are your marketing messages. Decide on a message strategy (what tactics will you use to communicate with prospective clients and referral sources)? These can include direct contact and follow-up; networking and referral building; public speaking; writing and publicity; promotional events; and advertising.

Finally, develop your "product" — individual sessions, groups, phone coaching, onsite consultations, tapes, books/booklets, and/or follow-up coaching.

Want more ideas to build your private practice? Find more marketing ideas on the APPT blog at: **http://netherapist.blogspot.com.**