

# THE CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST



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## CONTENTS

- 01 President's Column  
 04 Discussion and Debate:  
 Prescription Privileges  
 10 Letter to the Editor  
 13 Division 12 Program  
 19 Empirically Supported  
 Therapy Relationships  
 John C. Norcross, Ph.D.,  
 Clara E. Hill, Ph.D.  
 25 Evidence-Based  
 Clinical Assessment  
 John Hunsley, Ph.D.,  
 Rebecca Crabb, Ph.D.,  
 Eric J. Mash, Ph.D.  
 33 Book Review  
 34 Board Meeting Minutes

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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

**Nadine J. Kaslow, Ph.D., ABPP**

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have become more actively engaged in the Division during the past few months and express my appreciation to board and committee members for their active service to the Society of Clinical Psychology. I hope that my monthly listserv announcements help you feel more up to date with divisional events and happenings. In this President's Column, I have decided to focus on two topics near and dear to my heart: becoming and being an effective leader and welcoming students and new professionals, our future leaders, into Division 12.

### Leadership

During the past year, I have been fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in two leadership fellowships, the Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine (ELAM) program and the Woodruff Leadership Academy (WLA). These fellowships have underscored to me that fact that leadership is a competency, with its attendant knowledge, skills, and attitudes. One of the most useful aspects of these leadership development programs is the networking they afford. Another extremely useful component of these programs is the chance to participate in a 360 degree evaluation process in which people systematically receive feedback from their boss or bosses, peers, subordinates, and self. I recommend that we each engage in such a process every five years, with self-assessment being an ongoing part of our professional and personal lives. And I believe that 360 degree evaluations should occur in graduate school, internship, and postdoctoral training programs. Receiving comprehensive input about our strengths and areas for growth facilitates our own capacity for self-reflection, helps us function more effectively in our current roles, and provides a platform for us to become stronger leaders.

I would like to share some of the key points that I have learned about leadership in the hopes that more Division 12 members will consider leadership roles, that Division 12 members who are leaders can be more effective in their roles, and that we consider teaching our students about leadership in a more systematic and coordinated fashion. It is important to remember that leadership is an action, not a position. It is a process, not a task.

Effective leaders have vision and good strategic planning abilities; they are knowledgeable about themselves, the people, the politics, and the issues; they are intelligent, creative, and have a strong work ethic; they have a high degree of emotional intelligence; and they demonstrate a sense of humor. Able to inspire, motivate, and lead others, they are attuned to new opportunities and willing to take on novel challenges. They surround themselves with smart, dedicated, and capable people and make a commitment to retaining and developing them. These interpersonally skilled, versatile, and accessible individuals hold onto their own values and high ethical standards and maintain their integrity and honesty. They demonstrate loyalty to people

*(continued on page 2)*

and ideas. Capable leaders manifest wisdom with regards to their ability to see and understand issues, set priorities, and act prudently and courageously. Fair, reliable, consistent, and sensitive in their dealings with others, they are tenacious, motivated, and take a lot of initiative. Competent leaders are able to on the one hand be reasoned and thoughtful, and on the other hand, display passion. These individuals model values and behaviors, focus on group and team building, develop consensus, are inclusive, share power, delegate well, and are competent at conflict management. They create relationships that generate clarity, commitment, and engagement. Effective leaders distinguish themselves as mentors; they are long-term oriented, advisory by nature, impart wisdom, care deeply about the career development of others, facilitate political navigation by their protégés, can serve as objective consultants, and celebrate and reward their protégés successes. People who are considered to be effective as leaders are good communicators and they engage in all forms of communication at every opportunity with those internal and external to the organization. They have the knack for avoiding mistakes that will haunt them forever, and when they do make mistakes they acknowledge and learn from them. Exemplary leaders challenge the process by search-

ing out opportunities and experimenting and taking risks. They fundamentally grasp the concept that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

There is burgeoning evidence that a collaborative approach to leadership is optimal in the majority of settings and situations. Collaborative leadership means creating a supportive and positive workplace environment, inspiring and communicating a shared vision, openly providing information, conveying the rationale for decisions (e.g., why they say yes or no), valuing and respecting others, enabling others to act, strengthening people, and sharing power and leadership. Collaborative leaders master the art and craft of empowerment. They empower their team by actively listening to others, valuing the viewpoints of others, developing people and organizational capacity, looking for ways to advance the careers of those who work with them, and putting themselves last. They encourage the heart by recognizing individual contributions and celebrating team accomplishments. They know that they gain power by giving it and that the more people feel power, the greater their satisfaction in the workplace. They build teams for the future.

Another framework that I have found useful is that of appreciative leadership. This approach, which represents a paradigm shift, is based on the

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construct of appreciative inquiry, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential (David Cooperrider). Appreciative leaders encourage others to tell their story. They focus on the system at its best; they see the good. They see the positive behavior they want to develop, they track the positive, and they fan it across the organization so people want to do more of it. Appreciative leaders convey hope by creating inclusive communities; searching for positive examples (best practices); and creating, validating, and spreading the message of hope (James Ludema). These individuals combine effective management and leadership skills with high emotional intelligence. In other words, they put it all together.

Institutions that value highly effective leadership frequently underscore the importance of performance management. Leaders in these settings typically espouse a well-articulated vision and associated goals and ensure that bidirectional feedback processes are in place. They provide feedback that is direct, specific, developmental, and positive and presented in an appreciative fashion. In addition, they are receptive to receiving feedback from their colleagues, subordinates, and superiors.

General Electric (GE) has a superb model of leadership (John Rice). This leadership model is based on the principle that optimal results occur when integrity and quality lay the foundation for all aspects of the organization's functioning and when the people and processes in the system facilitate the creation of high quality products. To support optimal results leaders in the system must engage in the five Es: energize, energy, edge, execution, and empathy.

The following are some of my favorite quotes about leadership.

- *Leadership is like beauty—it is hard to define but you know it when you see it.* (Warren Bennis).
- *If you are not coaching and teaching, you are not leading.* (Jack Welch)
- *There is no limit to what a (wo)man can do or where (s)he can go if (s)he doesn't mind who gets the credit.* (Robert W. Woodruff)
- *If you want to do more with less, work together.* (Lynn Epstein)
- *Imagination is more important than knowledge, for knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there will ever be to know and understand.* (Albert Einstein)
- *The best way to predict the future is to invent it.* Remember, of course, there is a kind of growth in the

leadership domains that only comes with being a leader—in your work setting, in your community, or in another context. One way that we have as a Division to acknowledge the leaders within our Division is through Fellowship status. The past 40 years has witnessed a significant decline in the percentage of fellows within our division (from 30% in 1960 to 13% in 2003) and thus I encourage everyone who meets the criterion for Fellow to submit their application this year. Materials can be obtained from Lynn Peterson at [lynnadmin@comcast.net](mailto:lynnadmin@comcast.net), or 303-652-3126.

### Students and New Professionals

Our future leaders are our students and new professionals. How can we foster leadership in our junior colleagues? Our first step is to welcome them into the Division and it is imperative that we do so. The mean age of our members, according to a recent survey, is 53 years (S.D. 10.3, range 29-89). So, I encourage each of you to invite a student, new professional, or more junior colleague to join Division 12. How can we engage more students and new professionals into our Division? The following are some strategies that the Division leadership have put into place or plan to implement. We have instituted a committee on students that includes an equal number of division members and students (graduate students, interns, post-doctoral fellows), as well as new professionals. We have added a student onto each committee and our website features these students. At the upcoming convention in Hawaii, we have invited luminaries in our field to host conversation hours with students in the Division 12 Hospitality Suite. We are in the process of setting up a student listserv (students also are welcome on the division listserv) and of enhancing our website for students. We hope to start a student honor roll for members who sponsor students. We are putting into place a mechanism to pair students with mentors at convention and in the Division. Over time, we would like to have a fund that provides awards for students in the areas of research, service, and community action. Please email me with other suggestions about involving students and new professionals into the division or if you are a student or new professional and would like to become involved yourself ([nkaslow@emory.edu](mailto:nkaslow@emory.edu)).

**I look forward to seeing you and talking with you at Convention. I hope you will join us for our postdoctoral institutes, divisional programming, and our special activities (e.g., awards ceremony and talks, social hour, presidential address).**

