



The Northwest Catholic Counseling Center

Volume XXIII

Summer 2020

Number 2

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The Time is Right

Sr. Sarah Deeby, one of our founding sisters, had her office not far from mine. Sometimes when I went to speak to her about something, I picked up a jar from her bookcase. It was filled with blue tinted water and had glitter in it. When you shook it up, the glitter went every which way and jar was chaotic and cloudy. Sr. Sarah said she used the jar to help her young (and not so young!) clients focus and calm their minds as they watched the glitter settle.

I feel like we are all living in a glitter jar where the glitter never settles and is constantly shaken. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought illness, financial disaster, even death, to our families, friends, and communities. Celebration and grieving alike have been put on hold. We want desperately to know when the glitter will vanish and we can go back to our "old" lives. And the brutal death of George Floyd and our country's long-overdue reckoning around racial inequality, systemic racism, and police brutality add to the disorienting swirl.

The past few months have shown, like never before, the injustice all around us. The pandemic and protests have focused a bright light on how far we have to go in fighting poverty, racism, discrimination, and inequality, and the vast disparities in healthcare, pay, education, and housing. The glitter in our collective jar will never truly settle until we take real and sustained action on these difficult issues.

At NCC we want to help create a better future. Our value of Justice states "receiving health care is a basic right," and we know we can be stronger advocates for that vision. We strive to be anti-racist, and understand we haven't lived up to that ideal. We reach out to those who are suffering and need mental health care, and we know there is more, much more, work to do.

Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "The time is always right to do what is right." As we live through these next difficult months, we can all do the next right thing, both for ourselves and our communities. Sometimes it's hard to know what that next right thing is. But if it's led with love, caring, and compassion, it can't help but bring some calm to that swirling, chaotic jar.

-Erin Peters, Executive Director



Providing Help . . .
Creating Hope

Please call if you or anyone you know needs help with depression, anxiety, grief, or any other mental health issue. Our sliding scale goes as low as needed to ensure everyone gets help. We take most insurance. Our counselors can provide therapy both by phone and video, and in some circumstances, in person with proper social distancing. Don't suffer alone.

FOUNDERS

Sarah Deeby, OSM, LPC
Barbara Kennedy, OSM, LPC
Lisa Sheridan, OSM, LIMHP

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Erin Peters

CLINICAL DIRECTOR

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OFFICE HOURS

9:00am – 5:00pm

*Evening and Saturday
appointments available*

nwcounseling.org

Meet Our New Staff!

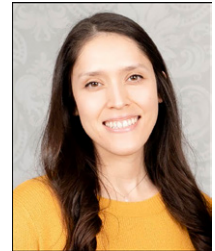
Mark Walker, LPC

Mark has worked as a professional counselor since 1994. He uses solution-focused therapy as his primary method of treatment. He adds Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) and an eclectic mix of other therapies to achieve the results his clients are seeking.



Lucia Aguirre-Montana

Lucia is a graduate student intern completing her Master of Arts degree in Marriage, Couples, and Family Therapy at Lewis & Clark College. She is bilingual, and has experience working with children and the Latinx population. She incorporates solution-focused, emotion-focused, contextual, and cognitive behavioral therapies.



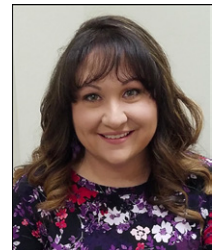
Marti Diaz-Domm M. Ed., MA

Marti was our graduate intern this past year, and we are thrilled to hire her as our new **Levantar Program Director!** Along with her recently completed Master's of Mental Health degree, Marti also holds a Master's of Education, and has nearly two decades of experience as an educator. Marti is fully bilingual in both English and Spanish, and brings cultural competency to the program.



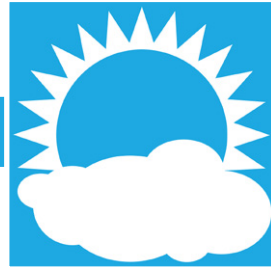
Marchelle Carl, MA

Marchelle has been connected to NCC since 1999 in various roles, including a graduate intern for the 2019-2020 school year. Having completed her Master's of Mental Health degree, we are excited to welcome her on as a staff member! Marchelle will be working with couples in the **Marriage Preparation Program**, particularly as the program moves to a virtual format.



A Year of Levantar

Levantar, meaning to *rise up* in Spanish, provides culturally-competent counseling to native Spanish speakers. This past year, two of our culturally-competent counselors provided 233 therapy sessions to 30 clients, a few of whom were adolescents. Studies show that people are better able to remember and recount trauma in their native tongue with someone who understands the culture of their community, and we've seen that ring true. Not only are clients finding therapy successful, but therapists are able to convey vital strategies to parents whose first language is Spanish so they can better support children at home. Thanks to the MJ Murdock Charitable Trust, we hired our new program director, Marti Diaz-Domm, who was one of the program's first therapists, and has been instrumental in its success so far. She holds both a Master's of Education and a Master's in Counseling, and is a native Spanish speaker, being an immigrant herself. As Oregon's Latinx population grows, so do the number of Latinx students in classrooms. We are excited to have Marti on our team, for with her experience in education and mental health, she will be able to connect with schools in new ways.



Client Story: Camila

Camila is a wonderful example of the difference culturally and linguistically appropriate therapy has made for our clients in the **Levantar Program**. Camila had been happily married to her husband for over 20 years, with two grown children. One day her husband came home from work and told her he wanted a divorce and would move out immediately. Camila was absolutely devastated – she stopped eating, and couldn't bring herself to go to work. A family friend suggested she go to NCC for counseling, since they had a new program that provided counseling in Spanish. Camila didn't know what to expect, but decided to give counseling a try. During her first visit, Camila felt instantly at home. Not only could she speak in her native tongue, but she also had a therapist who understood her culture. Slowly, Camila unpacked years of being stifled and not knowing who she really was. All of her self-worth had been wrapped up in her marriage. Her therapist guided her along her journey of self-discovery as a woman and individual aside from her husband. During a recent session, Camila told her therapist, "You get what a Latina Catholic mother is like. I would never have gotten this far without your compassion and understanding. You have given me my life back."

**Interested in
board membership?**

NCC is looking for individuals who care about the Center and its clients to join the board. Whether you are interested in the near or distant future, contact Erin Peters at erin@nwcounseling.org for more information!

Volunteer Spotlight: Larry Kirby



Long-time supporter Larry Kirby consistently goes above and beyond in his excellent graphic design work for NCC! For over 20 years, Larry has helped with our event programs, handbooks, and newsletters. He loves the creative process: the trial and error of finding what works and what doesn't, and the discovery that the input of others can make the final product even better than he had originally imagined.

Larry was first connected with the Center in 1989 when he sought out counseling at NCC. Reaching a burnout stage in his life and work, he needed a change, but couldn't figure out where to begin. He was afraid of facing the answers he might have found. Larry's counselor walked with him on the journey through his issues, gently challenging him to look deeper, to forgive himself and others, and to not be afraid of the changes he would need to make to become a healthier, happier person. Larry was so committed to his mental health, he drove nearly three hours to Portland every two weeks for his appointments, where he was able to pay a sliding scale fee for services. Larry says he still uses the tools his counselor gave him to this day.

When asked what Larry does to practice self-care, he gave this advice: "I have learned that we have a choice in how we respond to any event or circumstance. Choosing to have a positive attitude, choosing to be hopeful, and choosing to find the good in all situations can keep me from feeling overwhelmed by whatever challenges life may bring me."

Teletherapy Tips

As mental health services have gone online or telephonic overnight, it's changed the frontier of relationship between therapists and clients. As grateful as we are at NCC that we can still provide mental health treatment, it's important to acknowledge that these sessions don't feel the same.

- Though it is an adjustment to foster connection over a screen, therapists can still tune-in to when you are upset, stressed, happy, angry, and lonely. Don't give up on therapy!
- If you feel like your symptoms have worsened, it does not mean you are not progressing: it is a reflection that stress levels are having an impact on you. Bring that impact to your session.
- Tell your therapist when you feel disconnected or feel that your exchanges in therapy are forced. That could mean you need a shorter session for the time being.
- Share your struggles and what seems to be harder for you with your therapists. We may be facing restrictions on what tools we have, but there are still a lot of tools available.



Read the full article with the challenges and benefits of teletherapy on our website at nwcounseling.org/tel-umm-therapy

Circle of Strength is going VIRTUAL!

COVID can't bring us down – we are still having a virtually fabulous Circle of Strength in October! Moving it online allows us to reconnect with friends from near and far – so save the date **October 10th** for our first ever virtual Circle of Strength. Details are still being worked out, but here are a few options to be involved:



- Attend the LIVE virtual event on October 10th
- Host a small backyard or park party (*if it is safe to do so*)
- Host a virtual happy hour
- Do a letter, email, or Facebook fundraising campaign

Check our website for the most up-to-date information:
nwcounseling.org/circle-of-strength-virtual

Social Media

Find us on social media for mental health tips, event information, and client stories! Or visit our website for short, timely articles of interest written by NCC staff.



The Northwest Catholic Counseling Center



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nwcounseling.org

Creative Ways to Donate

We're always looking for innovative ways for donors to support us! Check out these cool "out of the box" ideas:

- Did you know the CARES Act includes a temporary, above-the-line deduction for total charitable contributions capped at \$300? This incentive applies to contributions made in 2020 and would be claimed on 2021 tax forms.
- Additionally, the bill lifts the existing cap on annual contributions for those who itemize, raising it from 60% of AGI to 100% – meaning high-income taxpayers could receive a full tax deduction if they donate all of their income to nonprofits. (*Source: Nonprofit Association of Oregon*)
- Earbuds with microphones are extremely helpful for teletherapy appointments. Help us distribute them to our clients!
- Card games like UNO and fidget toys help kids and adolescents focus during therapy sessions. They'll need their own personal packs for in-person therapy sessions.

Email donate@nwcounseling.org if you have questions or can help procure these items!

Help at Home

We have an ever-expanding digital library of articles, activities, tips, infographics, and community resources to help you and your family navigate the stress and challenges you're facing each day. We have digital jigsaw puzzles, timely articles, coloring pages, a video blog with mental health tips, and more!



Go to nwcounseling.org/help-at-home to check out our resources.

Special Support *Thank you to the following partners for recent grants:*

BP Lester and Regina John Foundation • Clark Foundation
The Oregon Community Foundation • PacificSource Charitable Foundation
Providence Health & Services • Maybelle Clark Macdonald Fund

MJ Murdock Charitable Trust • St. Martin de Porres Trust • 107 Independent Supporters Trust

These generous funders help subsidize the quality mental health care we provide to those affected by COVID and clients seeking culturally-appropriate therapy in Spanish.

On behalf of each of our clients, thank you for making our work possible!

The Northwest
Catholic Counseling Center
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Upcoming Workshops

All of our workshops will be virtual through at least September, and perhaps longer.
Get more information and sign up online at nwcounseling.org/services, or call 503-253-0964.

Anxiety: A Basic Management Guide – Virtual Workshop

Saturday, August 15, 1 pm – 2 pm

Marriage Preparation Workshop – Virtual Workshop

Friday, September 18, 6 pm – 8 pm and Saturday, September 19, 9 am – 11 am and 1 pm – 3 pm

Expanding Emotional Intelligence – Virtual Workshop

Thursday, September 24, 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Building a Grief Practice – Virtual Workshop

Friday, October 23, 1 pm – 3 pm

Mindfulness Mandala Workshop – *In-person attendance dependent on COVID-19 conditions*

Saturday, November 14, 11 am – 2 pm

Managing Holiday Stress – Virtual Workshop

Saturday, December 5, 1 pm – 3 pm