

ASCHP May 2020 Circular



Dear member,

Contemplating our role anew as wellness counsellors

We trust that you and your family have been keeping well during this lockdown period. Although it was taxing, many of our members applied for permits to continue with counselling as essential mental health services as it seems that the need is now more pressing than normal. All hold our thumbs to be able to enter stage 3 that could afford more freedom.



We believe that counselling is a one of the noblest professions on the planet; if you are a counsellor, you continue to play crucial role in the harmony of the communities, the upliftment of society and the empowerment of the individual. But, if we only practice counselling for the sake of client survival or problem solutions, then counselling is universally irrelevant. If, on the other hand, we understand and practice the helping professions to support people to live, learn and work effectively in their own worlds, the relevancy of counselling becomes self-evident. This is what I termed *counselling beyond point zero*.

What is meant by point zero? It is the neutral point where there is no evidence of symptoms or signs of disorders, pressing problems and/or ailments. The prime objective of psychotherapy is to counsel a patient from a disorder or problem back to a neutral point of his/her initial health status. Although this brings relief, nothing is gained. In this regard the policies of the WHO spell it out, that we should not think about health as the absence of disease, but rather as a positive state of overall wellbeing. This takes us beyond point zero to high level wellness where development, growth, fulfilment and self-actualization become possible. If this is acceptable to you as a counsellor, it implies that

1. Your work as wellness counsellor never stops (trust this is good news and not a burden).
2. That every person, irrespective of current health status, is a potential ongoing client
3. That although the immediate goal of counselling is remedial, the universal work of counselling is not only to solve problems or rectify conditions, but to empower, and enhance wellbeing.
4. That wellness counselling is counselling beyond point zero in the domain of unlimited human potential – imparting life, work and relationship skills.

This is why we see wellness counselling as one of the noblest occupations in this day and age. Trust you may agree.

Mental health awareness week

Mental health week in SA is scheduled for October 2020 and the focus will be on mental health problems in the workplace. We will provide you with more information in due course. In the meantime the Mental Health Foundation (UK), hosted the Mental Health Awareness Week in the UK this month from 18th to 24th May and the theme was *kindness*. The rationale behind this is that

research shows kindness and mental health are deeply connected. Counsellors are invited to become involved and you may download a supporter pack from their website at the Mental Health Foundation: https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/MHAW20-Supporter-Pack_Final.pdf. Please check it out if you have time. We do feel that our members may also benefit by participating.

They recommend the following acts of kindness:

- Call a friend that you haven't spoken to for a while
- Tell a family member how much you love and appreciate them
- Arrange to watch a film at the same time as a friend and video call
- Tell someone you know that you are proud of them
- Tell someone you know why you are thankful for them
- Send a motivational text to a friend who is struggling
- Send someone you know a joke to cheer them up
- Send someone you know a picture of a cute animal
- Send an inspirational quote to a friend
- Send an interesting article to a friend
- Send an inspirational story of kindness people around the world are doing for others to someone you know
- Contact someone you haven't seen in a while and arrange a virtual catch up
- Make a cup of tea for someone you live with
- Help with a household chore at home
- Spend time playing with your pet

This could serve as a platform for marketing your services.

You may also link up with the SA Federation for Mental Health at <https://www.safmh.org.za/> Networking is now more necessary than ever before with the Covid restrictions. Children will be going back to school and anxiety will rise for them as well as parents. This opens up vast opportunities for us to become involved on a wider scale.

Covid compliance. Please ensure that when your practice opens again, you meet the Covid compliance regulations, i.e. file a Covid plan and put all visitors through the sanitising protocol, e.g. hand sanitizing and temperature monitoring, etc. in term of government regulations.

Remember: "Think well, Act well, Feel well, Be well!" Clifford N. Lazarus, Ph.D

Kind regards



Liezl Herholdt

CEO

