

# Connections

The Newsletter of the Connections Program

A Partnership Between the Health District of Northern Larimer County and SummitStone Health Partners

## What is Emotionally Focused Therapy?

Submitted by: Jonathan Zalesne, MA, LPC

When explaining what Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) is, I usually start by explaining what EFT is not.

There is a lot of great research out there about how couples who are in secure and healthy relationships behave with each other. They speak to each other without contempt. They have healthy sex lives. They turn towards each other instead of away. They manage conflict well. They create shared meaning. They trust each other and they are committed to each other.

Most traditional couple therapies are behavioral in nature and strive to help couples learn skills so that they can behave in a manner consistent with all that great research about how healthy couples interact with each other. And it often works... for a while. Couples entering couples therapy generally feel good because they are doing something together to strengthen their relationship. And many love the idea of trying all these great techniques. However, I am unaware of any research that demonstrates that these behavioral techniques improve relationships in the long term. In fact, what tends to happen is that couples eventually fall back into their old negative patterns, which is what had caused them to turn away from each other in the first place.

Emotionally Focused Therapy takes a different approach. EFT practitioners believe that couples' negative patterns come from a place of insecurity in their relationship, and that only when people feel fundamentally safer in their relationship will those patterns change over the long term. So the EFT practitioner does not try to teach clients to behave differently, instead they help their clients get underneath their negative patterns and change them from the bottom up. During session, each person explores the emotional and body responses that they have when certain triggers are present. Practitioners then help each person put words to the thought patterns they have in those distressing situations, help them each identify their own behaviors, and help them feel the connection between their inward emotional experience with their

outward behaviors. These explorations are deep and slow, so they have great resonance with both partners. EFT research shows that when couples do this over and over in the therapy room -- notice their triggers, feel their emotions, connect their emotions with their thoughts, tie it all to their action tendency, and then turn and tell their partner about it from that place of emotion -- they stop blaming themselves and their partner for these "bad behaviors" and they start to learn, on their own, how to interrupt their negative patterns. This, in a nutshell, is Stage 1 of EFT. It is creating a deep understanding of the negative cycles that drive couples apart, and then interrupting those cycles.

Stage 1 of EFT, which generally takes up approximately 70% of the therapy, sets us up to do the deep explorations of self and other that we do in Stage

2. Once couples are better able to slow themselves down and interrupt their negative patterns, we find that they have enough trust in their relationship and their partner to begin a much deeper exploration into their working models; their core beliefs about themselves, about their partner, and about their relationship. Practitioners help them find their longings and feel their own fear of vulnerability, reaching to their partner to ask for their needs to be met. Then, with that fear alive in the room, we prompt them to reach towards their partner. And if we have done our work well in stage 1, their partner shows up for them and responds differently than they expected; and that is a jarring experience. Their brain had been conditioned to expect one thing, and when it gets something different, something better, something safer, it must rewire itself to account for these new experiences. These are the change events of EFT. Research shows that when clients have these new experiences with each other, they start to feel less anxious and depressed, and they start turning towards each other more vulnerably, on their own, long after therapy is over. In short, they start to naturally behave the way we would have tried to teach them. But now these new behaviors stick because they are rooted in safety.

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We encourage you to submit short articles (50-600 words) on therapeutic approaches, mental health topics, case studies, or therapeutic book/movie reviews, etc., and will publish them as space allows. We reserve the right to edit all submissions.

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Submissions printed in *Connections* do not necessarily reflect the views of the Connections Program. Our editorial staff do not check the credentials of individuals wishing to submit groups or other listings. If you have concerns regarding credentials or other issues, please contact the group leader or author of the article directly. The purpose of the newsletter is to offer information on community happenings of interest to mental health and human services providers and updates on services available through the Connections Program. Thank you.

## What is Emotionally Focused Therapy?

(continued from page 1)

Though EFT seems simple and easy, it turns out that it is very hard to learn and even harder to get good at. However, the process of learning this model is often transformative for the therapist.

### Helpful links:

- For more information on EFT research, visit <https://iceeft.com/eft-research-2/>.
- For more information on what it takes to become a certified EFT therapist, visit <https://iceeft.com/road-to-certification/>.

### Interested in becoming an EFT practitioner?

Attend an EFT externship, which is a four-day introductory training. For more information, and to register for the Fort Collins EFT externship from February 5<sup>th</sup> through February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021, visit <https://drobertallan.com/new-events> to learn more.

Jonathan Zalesne, MA, LPC provides couples therapy at Colorado Center for Couples and Families with locations in Denver, Wheat Ridge, and Fort Collins. If you are interested in learning more about EFT or have questions regarding this article, Jonathan can be reached at [jonathan@coloradocouples.com](mailto:jonathan@coloradocouples.com). He can also answer questions about the EFT externship referenced above.

## Meet Connections' New Team Members



Kathy Forrest, LPC, CACII is a Behavioral Health Provider on the Connections Adult Team. She helps community members get connected to a variety of services and most recently is co-facilitating a free Anxiety Education and Support Group via Zoom. Kathy has a long history of working with Adults to overcome both mental health and substance use disorders. She obtained her Master's degree in Community Counseling from Georgia State University and is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Certified Addictions Counselor II. She specializes in crisis management, grief counseling, group therapy and loves to expand her professional knowledge.

Kathy has lived in Fort Collins for the last 30 years and has collaborated with many local agencies on mental health issues. Over the years she has volunteered her time with the Alliance for Suicide Prevention of Larimer County, TRU Community Care Hospice and is an instructor for Mental Health First Aid. When Kathy has any spare time, she spends as much of it as possible with her two grandchildren, ages 5 and 3.

Kathy is excited to work at Connections because she loves meeting and serving so many remarkable individuals. Kathy values the Health District's commitment to the mental health of every person and is happy to be part of a team that is addressing this critical need in her community.

## Meet Connections' New Team Members



Andrea Caggiano, LCSW, LAC joined the CAYAC team in March 2020 as a Behavioral Health Provider with a focus on Adolescent Substance Use Disorder. Andrea received her Masters of Social Work from Stony Brook University in New York in 2009. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a Licensed Addiction Counselor. After beginning her practice in New York, she moved to New Mexico and practiced both mental health and addictions work in rural communities just north of the US/Mexico border. She moved to Colorado in 2014 and has spent the last 6 years in a variety of clinical settings, working mostly with adolescents and kids. Andrea also supervises new social workers and addiction counselors in the community who are working toward licensure. She is passionate about connecting with and supporting the next generation of mental health professionals as they launch into the field.

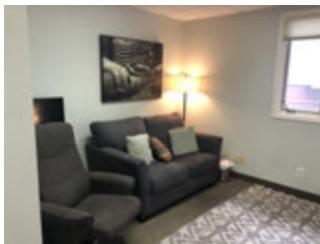
Outside of work, Andrea enjoys spending time with her family, including her two young kids, soaking up time in the great outdoors, paddle boarding and yoga.

Though Andrea has only experienced the CAYAC team, and the Health District at large, via zoom, she is appreciative of their stability, comradery and strong bond within the team. Andrea enjoys participating in the crisis response work due to COVID-19 and helping to support our community through this unprecedented time. She is excited to work with clients, and their families, to get them connected with resources that will help improve their mental health and wellbeing.

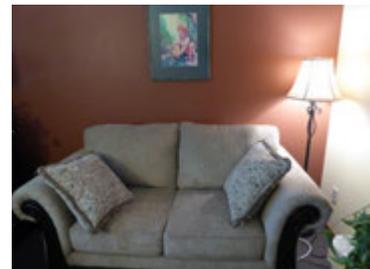
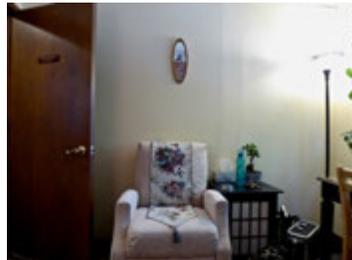
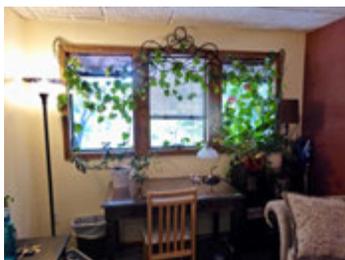
## Resources for the Professional

### Office Space Availability

Furnished office space available for 7-month sublease during maternity leave. Great old town location at 211 W. Myrtle Street on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Available Mondays, Tuesdays and weekends beginning August 2020 through February 2021 for \$280 a month. Possibility of taking over in July at no extra charge. Monthly rent includes wi-fi, utilities, conference room that can be used for groups, full shared kitchen, multiple waiting areas, and private parking lot for you and clients. Please contact Amanda Haygood, MA, LMFT, LPC at 720-563-9315 or [amanda@amandahaygoodcounseling.com](mailto:amanda@amandahaygoodcounseling.com) if interested.



Beautiful, small office available half-time from 2:00-10:00pm Monday through Friday - prime therapy hours. \$250 a month. Call Elizabeth Brandon, LMFT at 970-305-1505 for more details and to schedule.



## Resources for the Professional

### Office Space Availability

Office space available in Loveland. One office in a suite of 3 is available for \$300 a month plus shared expense for wifi (average \$15 a month). A welcoming space with natural lighting on the second floor of the Palmer Gardens Shopping Center in central Loveland. Shared waiting room and work space with wonderful associates. Flexible days and times available. ADA compliant. Please email [jessica@anlcounseling.com](mailto:jessica@anlcounseling.com) for more details.

### Virtual EMDR Basic Training

Janet Wright, LCSW is offering EMDR Basic Training online. Virtual EMDR training is now EMDRIA approved and meets all requirements for completing Basic Training. Clinicians will learn to practice EMDR therapy both in person and over telehealth. Janet provides the only regional training in Colorado that is approved by both the EMDR Institute and EMDRIA (the EMDR International Association.)

**When:** July 31st—August 2nd  
September 18th—20th

See her website for more information at [www.emdrfortcollins.com](http://www.emdrfortcollins.com).

### Job Openings

#### Licensed Psychologist

Established and successful group private practice in Fort Collins is seeking a licensed psychologist for full-time inclusion in an equal partnership opportunity. Retention of 100% of your profit with shared costs. Well-connected referral base. Weekly partner consultation. Design your own practice according to your specialty and clinical interests. Ability to work with children and adolescents is a plus, but not required. Private, professional and spacious office. Flexible schedule. Full staff support for scheduling, billing and telehealth practice. We welcome applicants who are interested in building a long-term clinical practice. Colorado licensure or eligibility necessary.

Email a cover letter and CV to [jenny@stressmanagementfcc.com](mailto:jenny@stressmanagementfcc.com).



#### Family-Support Coordinator

*Estes Valley Investment in Childhood Success (EVICS) Family Resource Center*  
Part-time Position (20-30 hours per week/\$20 per hour)

This position provides oversight to the Parent Education/Family Support Program, conducts home visits, organizes group events, and collaborates with the team in providing information, support, and encouragement to families to help young children develop optimally during the critical early years of life. Bachelor's Degree preferred; knowledgeable in child development and experience in working with families. Must be team oriented. Bi-lingual is a PLUS!

For full job description, visit [www.evics.org](http://www.evics.org). Please submit letter of interest and resume to EVICS, PO Box 3373, Estes Park, CO 80517.

For more information, contact Nancy Almond at 970-586-3055  
or [nalmond@evics.org](mailto:nalmond@evics.org).

## Resources for the Community

### Birthing Through Uncertainty

A teletherapy group for pregnant people focused on therapeutic group processing of prenatal experiences, birth expectations, and coping with stress. This group is intended to address normative uncertainties and anxieties about birth as well as the unique uncertainties birthing people are facing right now due to coronavirus restrictions.

**Facilitator:** Stephanie Rayburn, MS, MFTC

Group members are admitted on a rolling basis. An initial consultation is required.  
Contact Stephanie at 970-251-0987 for more information.



### Beyond the Mirror Groups

#### Women's Teletherapy Group for Mindful Moments of Compassion

It's an interesting time in the world. There is ample time to sit with ourselves. This can be hard to do in some moments. It can feel lonely in some moments. This is a group for women to connect with other women during this time that feels more isolative. We will talk about creating mindful moments of compassion in relationship with ourselves, our lives, and others.

This group is open to all Colorado residents. Takes place Wednesdays from 5:30-6:45pm.



#### Kidz Connection—A New Teletherapy Group for Kids

If you are in the 3rd, 4th, or 5th grade & you are looking for an opportunity to connect with other kids then this is the group is for YOU! Connecting with friends face to face may still be hard through the summer. This group is a place to talk with other kids your age, make crafts, play, and learn about the ups and downs of emotions.



#### Virtual Groups for Teen/Tween Girls

Group topics include mindfulness, trusting your intuition, increasing self-esteem, healthy communication, coping tools for hard times, sticking to your values, social media struggles, healthy relationships, healthy self-talk, and more.

High school group meets on Mondays from 5:00-6:30pm.

Middle school group meets on Wednesdays from 4:00-5:00pm.

To learn more, contact Beyond the Mirror at 970-413-2264.  
You can also visit their website at [www.beyondthemirror.org](http://www.beyondthemirror.org).

## Resources for the Community

### Dialectical Behavior & Expressive Therapy Group

**Art—Distress Tolerance—Emotion Regulation—Interpersonal Effectiveness—  
Mindfulness—Music—Movement—Stretching**

A group for girls that will offer creative modes of expression and behavioral coping skills.

**Facilitator:** Rebekah Knight-Baughman, PhD, Licensed Psychologist

**When:** Wednesdays, 9:00-10:30am  
July 15th-August 12th

**Where:** 1101 E. Elizabeth Street  
Fort Collins, CO

**Cost:** \$50/session (not including art supplies)



For more information, please contact Rebekah at [knight-Baughman@therapysecure.com](mailto:knight-Baughman@therapysecure.com).

### Youth Summer Enrichment Program

Join The Center for Family Outreach for fun learning activities for 12-18 year old's who can benefit from enrichment groups with peers. The goal is to have fun while doing art activities, making music, service learning, gardening and mindfulness; helping kids build self-esteem, social skills, and emotional regulation.

**When:** Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00pm  
Wednesdays, 10:00am-noon  
Thursdays, 1:00-3:00pm

**Where:** Matthew's House  
409 Mason Court, Unit 123  
Fort Collins, CO

This program will be led by 4 Poudre School Social Workers. Contact Tricia VanHorsen, LCSW at [tvanhors@psdschools.org](mailto:tvanhors@psdschools.org) or call 970-310-7271 if you have questions about this summer program.

To make a referral for this program:  
To reach a Family Intervention Specialist, leave a message on their direct line at the office.  
Please call Michelle Leschinsky at 970-698-7264 or Lauren Raver at 970-698-7273.

### Interpersonal Process Therapy Group

A weekly ongoing therapy group to be held online initially, with the plan to eventually transition to face-to-face group meetings in Fort Collins. This group would be ideal for anyone looking to improve the quality of their relationships, deepen their comfort with emotions, and develop healthy closeness and intimacy in their lives. **Facilitator:** Lee Land, PhD

For more information, please visit [www.landcounseling.com/group-therapy](http://www.landcounseling.com/group-therapy).

