

NEWSLETTER



Mission Statement

The New England Society for the Treatment of Trauma and Dissociation (NESTTD) is a nonprofit organization devoted to providing professional training and education for the effective treatment of psychological trauma, complex trauma and dissociation.

Founded in 1984, NESTTD is incorporated as a nonprofit organization. The society has its headquarters in Massachusetts and has members from Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

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Wendy Forbush, LICSW &

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Letter from the President

“Pretend Normal”

Spencer Nineberg, LICSW



Houston, Trump, Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, “repeal and replace”, North Korea, Trump, Las Vegas, Charlottesville, Trump, Iran, “the calm before the storm”, California, the list of traumas goes on. What is that like for us? For you? What is happening in our work with clients around this? So many of us have childhood parts that are triggered. So many of us are in a state of freeze or “collapse” at this point. Our minds can’t take it all in and make sense of it. And so we live a double life, knowing about the natural disasters, Trump’s tweets, massacres, but going on with life “as normal”. The horror, the helplessness, the terror, the anger is dissociated.

Our recent speaker Anna Salter called the urge to go on with normal life an instinct and used it to explain “victim counterintuitive behaviors” such as not fighting or resisting during an assault, not escaping when there was an opportunity, delaying disclosure, and seeming “fine”. She called it “Pretend Normal” and gave the example of a child who has been sexually assaulted for the first time by a parent and comes down to breakfast where everyone is acting like it is just a regular day and so does the child.

And yet things are not normal. Little signs have begun to appear in my neighborhood, taped to streetlights, that say NOT NORMAL. They wake me up and remind me of the truth as I am going about my errands. They are a call to come out of our dissociated state, to reclaim exiled terror, helplessness, anger and make room for them, welcome them. We need to listen to those parts.

What we learn from them can move us to the next step where we don’t freeze them out but speak and act on their behalf from a more centered, clear and awake place. When we do, we become aware of some of the gifts coming out of this bad time- the power of the “Me too” movement, Black Lives Matter, the Resist movement, and the increased awareness of what it is like to be non-privileged, not white . . . We need to continue to work for what is true and morally right. There are a lot of us and we are not powerless.

A NESTTD Endorsement:

By Janina Fisher



I first joined NESTTD back in 1989 or 1990, desperate to find support and wisdom from others after unexpectedly finding I had DID clients. We were a small group back then, but over the years, I had the pleasure of watching NESTTD grow from what a colleague once called “the MPD society” to a respected professional society for trauma therapists working in a wide array of modalities.

What NESTTD offers is very special: the opportunity to build one’s referral base by networking with a large and skilled group of fellow professionals, the feeling of being part of something larger than the 1:1 relationship with one trauma client in an isolated office, and a schedule of excellent continuing education offerings that rival those in any city in the world.

Even when NESTTD could only afford to pay speakers \$100 for a Saturday morning, we put on programs that were stimulating and clinically useful in a warm and welcoming collegial environment. All these years later, NESTTD still offers the same benefits—but now in a professional environment that accepts trauma as a common occurrence and has developed an array of well-accepted treatments to address its effects. I always tell people that NESTTD is the best professional society of which I’ve ever been a member.

Letter from the Editor

Swimming in a Sea of Whiteness at NESTTD

Barbara Phillips, PhD, LICSW



In these times, we are met with challenges that bring uncomfortable issues to the forefront in our own lives and in the lives of our clients. We are faced with arrogant posturing by our government officials that may serve to perpetuate

misrepresentations and (mis)assumptions of our position(s) to the world. We are faced with challenges to scientific fact regarding the climate, threats to repeal the rights of transgendered children and adults, threats to repeal the right of women to decide the fate of their bodies, as well as walls, boundaries, and the trauma endured by immigrants, undocumented residents, and families harboring the fear of being torn apart. The fears are represented at the forefront of our daily lives.

What is not at the forefront of our daily lives is the trauma of race often endured on a daily basis by people of color. What may also not be at the forefront is for White people to acknowledge what whiteness is, where whiteness is in our lives, and what we each may knowingly or unknowingly bring to the perpetuation of whiteness in our professional organization of NESTTD.

We, at NESTTD, are committed to look deep within and bring to light that which has stood in the way of making a place for diverse others to join us. With an eye towards moving forward, we are pleased to let you, our membership, know that we have our sights set on offering opportunities for us to work together towards this goal.

UPCOMING EVENTS!

***SAVE THE DATE:**
Anne Westcott, LICSW,
FULL DAY PROGRAM
03 Feb 2018 9:00 AM •
Scottish Rite Masonic
Museum & Library (National
Heritage Museum) 33 Marrett
Rd. Lexington, MA 02421

***Coming in March:**
Fundamentals of Complex
Trauma and Dissociation
01 Mar 2018 9:00 AM • TBA

***SAVE THE DATE:**
Dolores Mosquera, MA,
FULL DAY PROGRAM
14 Apr 2018 9:00 AM •
Scottish Rite Masonic
Museum & Library 33 Marrett
Road, Lexington, MA 02421

***NEW FRIDAY**
AFTERNOON SERIES:
"Three Therapeutic Models:
Concepts and
Demonstrations of Working
with Trauma: IFS, EMDR,
AEDP (2CE)
27 Apr 2018 1:00 PM • Farr
Conference Center at the
Scottish Rite Masonic
Museum & Library
(National Heritage Museum)
33 Marrett Rd. Lexington, MA
02421

Meet our New Members!



**Gail Hardenbergh, LICSW,
Member-at-Large**

Having been a longtime member of NESTTD, I know how valuable the organization is in supporting and educating the therapeutic community about the treatment of trauma. Our modern treatment approaches are bringing relief to so many who have

lived with little hope.

I have had a practice in Sudbury for 30 years and have grown significantly in my expertise in these treatment areas. I never even heard the word “trauma” in grad school many years ago! I work full time with adults and couples and my enthusiasm for my work is as strong as ever using these approaches. It is a privilege to support the organization in any way I can so that we might continue to bring gifted and wise speakers to New England.



**Carol Lambert, LICSW,
Member-at-Large**

As a psychotherapist, I’ve been in private clinical practice for over 30 years in Belmont and Concord, MA. As a staff member at McLean Hospital, I conduct domestic violence consultations. In 1993, I co-founded and continue to

facilitate recovery groups for women with controlling partners. In December 2016, I published a self-help book based on this successful recovery group model titled, *Women with Controlling Partners: Taking Back Your Life from a Manipulative or Abusive Partner*.

NESTTD is a wonderful resource that provides current knowledge and training to mental health professionals. In my clinical work, I have personally benefitted from rich workshops and conferences. I appreciate that I can be part of an organization with such an important mission and have an opportunity to contribute to its continual growth.

Meet the NESTTD Board!



**Spencer Nineberg
President**



**Carolinda Sterczala
President Elect**



**Jessica Reed
Treasurer**

Meet Our New Student Member!



**Apexa Patel, MSW Candidate, 2018
BC School of Social Work
Member-at-Large, student seat**

I am currently an MSW candidate at Boston College with a concentration in Mental Health, having received my bachelor's degree in Psychology at Boston University in 2015. Most recently, I held a work-study position

towards completion of the Level 1 Sensorimotor Psychotherapy Trauma training. My specific interest is in intergenerational trauma and the effect of culture as a preventative and risk factor.

Over the years, I have held a number of different positions in a variety of disciplines: Emergency Medicine, Maternal and Child Health, General Medicine, Pediatrics and Social Work. This multidisciplinary experience has taught me that the most successful professionals are those who collaborate with their colleagues to create a safe and supportive working environment in combination with a commitment to life-long learning towards personal and professional growth.

It has been a great privilege to be part of the NESTTD learning community the past couple of years. I have enjoyed my involvement on the OP (Outreach and Publicity) Committee. In this capacity, I have provided outreach to BC students in terms of keeping them abreast of the opportunities for professional training via the workshops offered, both through posting flyers and also via email. I have also collaboratively represented NESTTD by means of the Information Table at Bessel van der Kolk's International Psychological Trauma Conference in 2016.

As Member-at-Large, I hope to offer a diverse perspective and most importantly, I am dedicated to advancing the collective knowledge of clinicians whose focus is trauma. As a graduate student, I am aware of having less formal clinical experience than a traditional member of the Board. However, I have a clear vision for my career path and the contributions I want to make in the field. Given my career goals, I believe my position on the Board will provide me with an invaluable learning and networking experience. I am confident that I will be a positive addition to NESTTD. I am organized, hardworking, and passionate about the NESTTD mission of providing training and education in the treatment of trauma and dissociative disorders.

Meet the NESTTD Board!



**Isa Mattei
Secretary**



**Roberta Fortgang
Past President**



**Roger Abdell
Member-at-Large**



**Debbie Hughes
Member-at-Large**

Committee Updates

Program Committee

As we anticipated, attendees' response to Dr. Anna Salter, the first event of our calendar year, revealed the diversity of experiences, psychological orientations, and professional development wishes of our membership. The 69 CE evaluations, with accompanying comments, reflected a difference of opinion that was evident during the event itself. She received very high marks for her presentation.

Nonetheless, a few attendees expressed dissatisfaction that, despite the expressed distress of some attendees, Salter had not presented the material they expected.

To accommodate to concerns of some who believed Anna Salter's material would be "too triggering", the Program Committee requested she avoid certain materials. Salter did so. Even with this, some in audience voiced difficulty or triggering with the audience's examples of cases, so she then added even more restriction. The post-event comments revealed that consequently some others felt deprived of information they had hoped to obtain from Salter to better work with their clients.

Despite these differences, the vast majority of attendees found Salter to be an excellent presenter and her information valuable. In the evaluations, several expressed appreciation that Salter listened and then flexibly adapted her planned talk to meet the range of needs. In the audience, there was respect by all for all in an effort to find compromise. As Salter left she commented to a few of us about how strong a sense of "community" she felt at the event.

A different, more typical, fault line between attendees emerged in the evaluations.



Co-Chairpersons: Wendy Forbush, LICSW and Rina Dubin, EdD

Significant numbers wished Salter had taken fewer questions and allowed for less audience input and sharing. In advance the Program Committee always informs presenters that across the years the majority of our participants have stated this preference. On the other hand, when some presenters do comply with this request, they often receive negative comments from a minority for not being adequately "relational".

Under *Upcoming Workshops* on the website you will find the rest of our calendar. We have programs focusing on child treatment, on a systemic approach to complex trauma and family violence, and on how to treat dissociative phenomena. For those interested in spreading the word to those new to trauma and dissociation, please read about the March *Fundamentals* event. From the suggestions you have given us, we are busily seeking presenters for the '18-'19 season.

Rina Dubin, EdD and Wendy Forbush, LICSW

Committee Updates

Membership Committee



Sandrine Aegerter,
LMHC
Chair, Membership
Committee

Dear Members, If you are interested in taking part in small or bigger ways in the organization of the wonderful presentations NESTTD is offering, now is the time.

We are looking for any volunteer among you who would be willing to take on

some small and fun tasks like helping distribute the lunch boxes, and/or checking the mics at our presentations so we can keep offering a smooth experience to all participants. It is a fun way to get to know NESTTD better and make new friends in the community.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Membership Committee and contribute in more significant ways to the mission of the NESTTD, please let us know. We will be happy to share information and welcome you on our team.

Please contact us with any interest at sandrineaegerter@tryadcounseling.com

Nomination Committee

The Nomination Committee is grateful for your participation in our Special Election this past September at Anna Salter's presentation. Your unanimous vote approved an amendment to our by-laws

permitting the inclusion of graduate students as eligible candidates for our 5th Member-at-Large position. As a result, we are excited to put forth an excellent nominee for this position: Apexa Patel, an outstanding MSW student at Boston College.

In addition, we are pleased to report that Carol Lambert, LICSW, was elected to the position of Member-at-Large. Carol has a great deal to offer us and will be a wonderful addition to our Board.

*Roberta Fortgang, LICSW
Chair, Nomination Committee*

Friday Afternoon Series Committee

Our new Friday Afternoon Series got off to an auspicious start on October 13, when Lana Epstein, MA, LICSW contributed her informative and engaging presentation on Sensorimotor Psychotherapy. Lana has been a member since NESTTD's early days, and has become an internationally known trainer in this modality. We were gratified that this initial forum was extremely well attended and reviewed.

We hope you will consider joining us for our Spring Program on Friday April 27, from 1:00 to 3:30 pm in the Farr Conference Center. The program is entitled *Three Therapeutic Models: Concepts and Demonstration of Working with Trauma -- IFS, EMDR, AEDP* (2 CEUs are available.) Further information will soon be available on the NESTTD website.

*Roberta Fortgang, LICSW
Chair, FAS Committee*

Committee Updates

Outreach and Publicity Committee

Our wish is to continue to bring the educational experience we offer to a wide range of clinicians by means of increased visibility and increased membership numbers. The following are some ideas we have put to action:

NESTTD Newsletter

We greatly appreciate the efforts of Apexa Patel, our newest Member-at-Large and “OP” committee member. Apexa has assumed responsibility for formatting our NESTTD Newsletter. In addition, the Member News Area has been added to our newsletter content. This is where members will be able to introduce themselves and their clinical involvements, as well as to learn about the involvements of other NESTTD members.

NESTTD Streaming

Most recently, thanks to Roger Abdell’s efforts, we are hard at work to bring about a new aspect to our programs: STREAMING!

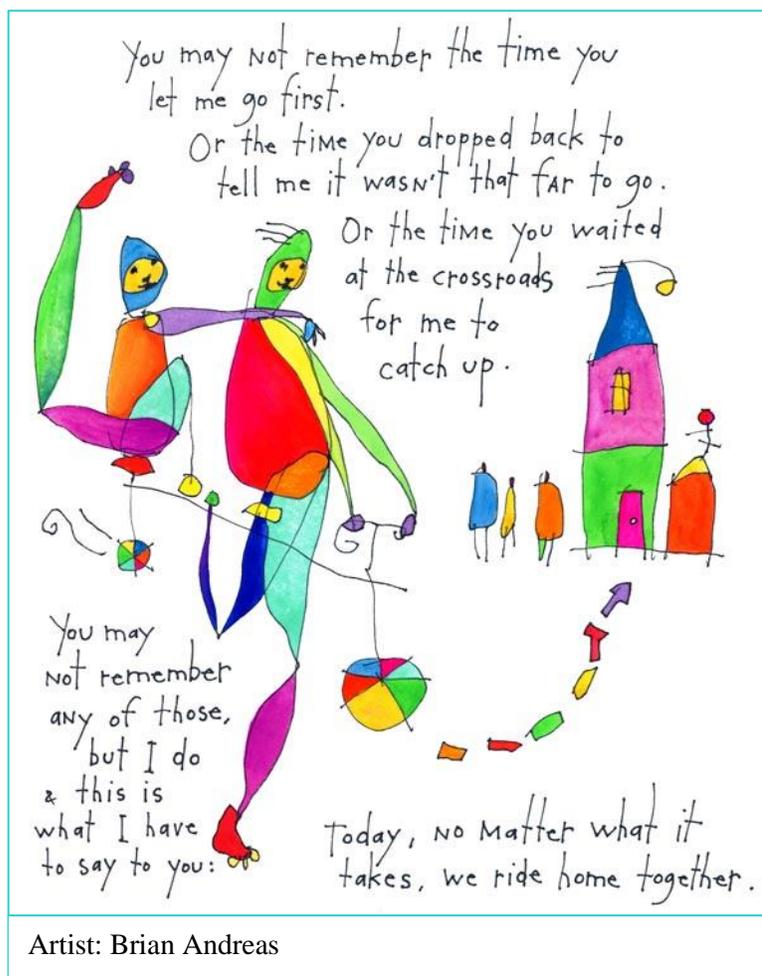
NESTTD Endorsements

We have sought NESTTD endorsements from leaders in the field, as well as presentation reviews from local members. *Please note Janina Fisher’s endorsement and Jean Rossner’s review of Anna Salter.

Innovations to our publicity

We are happy to announce additions of Color to our visual communications, which include flyers and emails.

*Thank you in advance,
dear members, for
helping to spread the
word of NESTTD*



Member News

Welcome to our newest addition to the NESTTD Newsletter: Our MEMBER NEWS Area!

This is where members will be able to introduce themselves and their clinical involvements, as well as to learn about the involvements of other NESTTD members.

Paul Neustadt

Together with my colleagues Beth Davenport and Corky Becker, we created a workshop for the public called "Answering the Call of Activism: Discover and Engage Your Inner Activist". This workshop combines inner reflection and dialogue to support people in overcoming their inner obstacles and finding a form of activism that can be sustained over time.

I have also created a workshop called, "The Gifts of Our Exiles: Connecting with Our True Self". This workshop applies the IFS approach to guide people to recognize how the vulnerable, wounded, and traumatized parts of ourselves carry gifts for us. Recognizing these gifts becomes part of the healing and unburdening process. And when our vulnerable parts are healed, they help us reconnect with our True Self.

Caitlin Williams

I look forward to presenting "Fundamentals of EFT" (Emotional Freedom Techniques) at the NESTTD Fundamentals Conference in March. I am also continuing my use of weighted blankets. My clients use them in the office and many have purchased them for their use at home. I continue to be impressed by how helpful they are for reducing activation so that the frontal lobes can come back online.

Sarah Stewart

I recently enjoyed presenting with Rina Dubin at the annual IFS conference. It was an experiential workshop on Self-led activism entitled "What About This Don't You Get to I'd Like to Have a Conversation." I am looking forward to several IFS Trainings in 2018, in Boston and other cities. And I am very politically active at this time for protection of the Endangered Species Act and many additional, crucial animal welfare policies, which are being deeply threatened at this time.

Barbara Phillips

I am delighted to have been invited to participate in the SPI Approved Consultant (SPIAC) Program as a consultant. The program is designed for graduates who are Certified practitioners of Sensorimotor Psychotherapy and who wish, upon completion of the program and approval of SPI, to provide consultation to SPI alumni on the integration of SP interventions and concepts in clinical practice. I will be providing consultation-on-consultation for trainees participating in the Program.

Review

Anna Salter: “Understanding the Psychology of Offenders and Victim-Perpetrator Dynamics: The Importance to Clinicians and Clinical Work with Victims”

Jean Rossner, LMHC

NESTTD Member

On September 23, 2017, NESTTD presented an all-day seminar by Anna Salter, PhD. Dr. Salter is a clinical psychologist who specializes in research and treatment of sex crimes and a consult in a forensic capacity. Dr. Salter spoke on “Understanding the Psychology of Offenders and Victim-Perpetrator Dynamics: The Importance to Clinicians and Clinical Work with Victims.” With reference to the presentation, a colleague shared as we talked afterwards, that other clinicians with whom she had spoken did not attend the lecture for fear of finding themselves in too much sympathy with the perpetrators. My colleague and I did not find this fear to be well-founded; rather, Dr. Salter provided a context that could be helpful to clinicians in understanding ways that our clients may have been victimized, beyond the obvious physical facts of any case, by both perpetrators and the social/legal system in place purportedly to help victims.

Dr. Salter began by discussing “counterintuitive victim behaviors”: actions (or apparent failure to act) that are seen as unexpected or not making sense: for example, not fighting or escaping, maintaining contact after the assault with one’s assailant, or carrying on with one’s life. These, she explained, reflect the “faulty expectations” of people in general and those interacting with the victim, in particular. In actuality, however, there is no one “correct” way to respond to sexual assault. Victims themselves may believe myths about their behavior or may not have been in a position to respond in the way they “should” have done. Salter noted particular societal factors, both internal and external, that victims may contribute to the situation, including polarized expectations around sexual assault vs. social norms, as well as, offenders’ repertoire of techniques that manipulate a victim’s perception of events.

As clinicians are often aware, victims may experience themselves responding

sexually during an assault, which Dr. Salter identified as the “most counterintuitive behavior.” Many of us had been taught that, simply a matter of biology, sexual parts may respond to stimulation- independent of whether the stimulation is wanted by the recipient. To this, Dr. Salter provided a fuller explanation, citing research indicating that sexual arousal can be directly increased by anxiety via the process of “excitation transfer.” This information is offered to assist therapists to work better with victims who blame themselves and/or doubt the reality of an assault.

Dr. Salter also discussed the related issue of victims who recant, emphasizing the importance of good support for victims towards allowing retention of their own experience. She noted again the ways in which perpetrators may manipulate the situation to ensure self-blame (e.g. manipulated consent) and discussed the phenomenon of traumatic bonding, whereby a dysfunctional attachment to the abuser/attacker is created.

Whereas, the first part of Dr. Salter’s presentation had largely focused on adult victims of sexual assault and abuse, the focus of the second part was on the specific dynamics of child

abuse. From her specifically forensic perspective, Dr. Salter’s view is that “every sex offense comes down to bad brakes,” i.e. more people than we may suspect have desires or fantasies about offensive activities but only those with a certain level of impulse-control problems will act on such desires. She discussed the cognitive errors that can lead to deterioration of impulse control, including compartmentalization, lack of respect for consent, and lack of empathy, while noting that the more antisocial types of personality can also be excited by violence and/or control of others. She illustrated this part of the talk with some fascinating interviews, videotaped with permission to use them clinically, done with convicted perpetrators of sexual crimes. Finally, Dr. Salter discussed the clinical impact on child victims, including how this can play into further victimization as an adult. At one point, Dr. Salter mentioned that she also writes mystery novels whose protagonist works in forensic psychology. She was too humble to mention that one of her books was nominated for an Edgar, who is a major award in mystery publishing; I only learned this fact when I looked up her books online. Although I’m not much of a mystery reader, I plan to check these out!