Letter from the President

It is almost hard to believe that we are heading into the final months of the 2017 year.

This October I had the opportunity to attend the annual EAPA Conference in Los Angeles. If you have not attended the annual EAPA Conference, I would highly recommend trying to work it into your schedule. It is a great opportunity to see many interesting seminars, meet old friends, and a chance to meet fellow EAPs from around the country and from other countries as well. It was very interesting to talk with others to see what they are doing in their programs. Here is the information for the 2018 Conference. It is never too early to look at your schedules for planning purposes.

EAPA 2018 Conference & EXPO Minneapolis

Conference dates: October 11-13, 2018
Pre-Conference Training Courses:
October 9 - 10
EXPO: October 10-12

One Lucky Winner...
...will receive the Grand Prize to attend the EAPA Conference! Winner drawn at the NIEAPA Conference on June 5th

Prize includes the following:
• Registration  • $100 Gift Card to cover meals & incidentals
• Hotel  • Round trip airfare

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Our last Chapter meeting for 2017 is coming soon. December first is the date and the location is the University Club of Chicago. The topic is Leadership Development and Bob Carty is the presenter. Here is the information since it is important that you remember they do have a dress code.

**Location** - University Club of Chicago, 76 E Monroe St, Chicago, IL 60603 - 7th Floor  
**Dress Code** - Business Casual Attire is defined as a collared shirt, dress slacks, dress skirt with blouse and dress shoes. Appropriate business casual attire does not include denim, tennis shoes/sneakers or flip flops/sandals.  
**Location & Food Sponsor** - Rosecrance  
**Networking Lunch** - The Village (part of Italian Village) - 71 W Monroe, Chicago, IL

The conference planning committee is starting to plan for the 2018 June Conference. If you want an early save the date, the conference is Tuesday June 5, 2018. They are starting to take proposals for our program. Please see the NIEAPA website for the information and proposal forms. Presenting at the Conference is a great way to share your knowledge with other EAP professionals.

As way of a reminder, the Board decided to eliminate the fee for students attending our Chapter meetings. This started with our October meeting, so if you have students at your location, have interns, and possibly have contacts at schools that may be preparing students for a counseling career, please invite them to come to our Chapter meetings. Bringing young professionals to our profession is a priority for myself and the Board.

Lastly, I hope you and your families have a fun, safe, and happy holiday season.

Charley Galassini, LCPC, CSADC, CEAP, LAP-C  
NIEAPA President

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**Important Dates**

- December 1, 2017 - Chapter Meeting - University Club  
- June 5, 2018 - NIEAPA Conference - Drury Lane, Oakbrook  
- October 9-13, 2018 - EAPA Conference & Expo - Minneapolis
EA Field and the #MeToo movement – Caught by Surprise?

by Paul Fitzgerald, Psy.D., LCPC, CEAP
NIEAPA Chapter Vice-President

Many of us in the EA field have been delivering sexual harassment training since the 1990s, and we may have assumed that our advice was having a positive effect. The annual sexual harassment training became routine, and even the subject of some snarkiness (I know I’ve made remarks at times about that Weyerhauser video from the 1980’s, and the warnings about the tool calendars in the machine shop). We focused on the responsibilities of employees and management, the rules, and the definitions of quid pro quo and hostile environment; and many of us may have felt that these measures, plus good HR practices, were all that were needed.

Now, in recent weeks, the occasional news of a high-profile person in a position of power behaving in terrible ways toward employees or others has increased to a torrent. And the feelings of shame, anger, betrayal, and hurt have become painfully obvious as the #metoo movement has brought a new focus to the under-reporting of gender-based abuse and harassment, both inside of and outside of the workplace.

All you need to do is search for “#metoo” on Twitter to see heart-wrenching reports from women who had previously chosen to keep their experiences to themselves, and now may in fact now feel some guilt that they didn’t make a more vocal complaint in order to help prevent someone else from being mistreated. In addition to breaking through the silence, shame, and secrecy of sexual abuse and harassment, this recent movement has led to calls for change, a welcome development.

As with our belief that we were moving toward a world freer of racism and prejudice, this opening of new wounds has brought feelings of disappointment, surprise, and professional embarrassment over the realization that we in the EA world have become too complacent about the challenges we face in making the workplace a more humane and respectful place. (I’m talking primarily here about male harassment and abusive behavior toward female employees, but as we know, the problem is not limited to that).

So how did we in the EA world miss all of this, and what do we do now?

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First, as one tweet by actress Alyssa Milano pointed out, we all (not just employment professionals) may have avoided confronting these issues because to do so makes things very messy, where we had hoped they had been made smoother, and were moving in the right direction: “They want us to believe #metoo is fragile. It’s not. It will be messy. It is not linear. S*** will get broken…. “We have been talking about gender equality since the 1960’s, and it’s discouraging to think that progress has been this slow. It’s even worse to think that ground has been lost.

But rules, awareness campaigns, and training do little to help when the problem has been systemically swept under the rug despite all our efforts. There is also a certain element of privilege in this, particularly for male EAPs like me, and that – it has become obvious – must be confronted and deconstructed. In addition, the temptation to make it a purely political issue, where right and left each accuse the other of being the cause and the enabler of these behaviors, or the ones exploiting it for political gain, must be resisted.

So as to what to do… The Thanksgiving edition of the podcast “Pod Save America” dealt with this, and the hosts’ response to a listener’s question provides a great summary of what needs to be done, particularly from the perspective of a man trying to help. The female listener suggested that one answer is to have more women in positions of power, but asked what else the hosts thought could be done until we get there. Dan Pfeiffer, a former advisor to President Barack Obama, suggested, “Part of it is get out of the way. Listen. Believe the women who come forward. There are going to be changes, cultural changes in how workplaces operate, and men need to be partners in supporting those efforts. But we need to let women lead the conversation…. One of the reasons we’re in this position in society, where these things are happening in the workplace… men have not been listening to their female colleagues. And we have to do that, and support them, and then back the changes that need to happen.”

I believe our employee assistance profession should lead the way in empowering women among us, and women in the workplace, to tell us what needs to happen. It’s not enough for it to be about rules and regulations; nor politics, nor training, nor punishments for bad behavior. The lived experience of employees needs to be held up as the primary determinant of policies, education, and training. Then, at some point, we may have enough women in positions of power – acting as empowered women, and leaving behind the old mindsets and ways – so that real changes in our unspoken attitudes and beliefs may take place.
by Orlando Orduno, E.A.P
Representative
NIEAPA Labor Committee
Transport Workers Union of America
Local 512

Ever since I remember I’ve always wanted to be a super hero because they have the power to defeat evil and save the world. I myself always wanted to help out people going through tough times. The first time I realized something was wrong in this world was when I arrived at Benito Juarez International Airport in Mexico City. I noticed a young boy with poor hygiene and ripped clothing approached my mother trying to sell her gum, and she refused and the young boy walked away upset. Ever since that moment I realized that living in the United States as a kid is easier than children living in Mexico. My mind began to run nonstop about why the boy was selling gum and why his clothes were ripped. Who knows? The child could have been homeless due to parent’s struggles that couldn’t support him, so that is why the young boy was trying to make money by selling gum, but I was not able to find out.

If a coworker comes up to me and asks for help, I’ll not judge, I will help with the right materials and if I don’t have right answer, I’ll ask for help from my network. Together we can assist our coworkers with their situations. We can give them the right tools for them to help themselves. Also, informing our coworkers with available resources can benefit their quality of life. I took Intro to Addiction in College, the course made me realized that an addiction can happen to anyone. And I finally understood why in every family party there was always more alcohol than drinks for children. Being part of a Mexican Family that was always the case. Noticing that there were few alcoholics in the family and their habits were ignored, they were noticed until something went wrong, such as being hospitalized or facing the law. I became an E.A.P member for The Transport Workers Union Local 512 because with the tools I gained in College, in my personal experience, and with the tools I will gain in the future, I will give our Union Brothers and Sisters the proper materials to surpass their obstacle through life. My service will always be available at any given moment because helping is what we do.
This is YOUR Chapter...

Join us at our next Chapter Meeting, December 1, 2017. Our chapter meetings not only cover some of the hottest topics in the EAP industry, but are also your chance to network with industry professionals and share a few stories and laughs. Bring a Guest!

Reminder: Students can attend Chapter Meetings for FREE.

Post Your Event to the NIEAPA Calendar on our website.
  ● Events must be related to EAP, Behavioral Health, Work/Life Health, or Home Health. Posting to the calendar is FREE to Members and non-Members alike!

Take advantage of the Online Resource Directory.
  ● This directory is an outstanding resource for a wide variety of EAP related services. Secure your listing here.

Post EAP and EAP related Job Openings.
Download the FORM and follow the instructions.

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