

## **PROFESSIONAL STATEMENT**

### **EDUCATION:**

My undergraduate degree was obtained from Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, West Virginia in 1986. Subsequently, I earned my MS Degree from Frostburg State University Frostburg, Maryland in 1991. While at Frostburg I received a research assistantship during my last year. My internship was at the Thomas B. Finan Center in Cumberland, Maryland, which was a psychiatric inpatient treatment facility for adolescents, adults, and geriatric populations. As an intern, I rotated among the various cottages, providing individual and group counseling, psychological testing, and psychodrama. The internship provided me an opportunity to work closely with psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, recreational and art therapists as well as support staff. This networking experience helped me to understand mental health from a systems perspective. Most of my research was done in Allegany, Washington and Frederick County, Maryland. It involved the comparison of tree drawings of developmentally impaired adults and similarity chronically aged adults.

### **CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES:**

I have a wide range of life experiences, both personally and professionally. I have been influenced by many people in my life and have generally been encouraged to grow and develop professionally and as a person. I believe that this has helped me to develop a strong desire to broaden my knowledge base and stay enthusiastic about working with people in the mental health field. My parents were children during the depression and always stressed the importance of hard work, fostering of friendships, trust, and service to those in need.

### **PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS:**

I am a West Virginia Licensed Professional Counselor and was licensed in 1994. I am also a Licensed Approved Professional Supervisor with the State of West Virginia. I have worked in a community mental health center crisis unit. Later I began seeing individual, marital, and couples in counseling. I was part of a local Critical Incident Management team, where I did debriefings for first responders, i. e. fire and rescue workers. I have worked with a wide range of mental health issues, substance abuse, and developmental disabilities. I have been trained in hypnosis and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, commonly referred to as EMDR.

### **THERAPY EXPERIENCE:**

I consider myself fortunate in having worked with a wide array of clients, ages, racial, and ethnic minorities since becoming a mental health therapist. I am especially grateful for the experience of having worked at the local Veteran Administration Hospital. While there I worked on the brain injury unit, doing psycho-neurological testing, Individual and Group Therapy. My experiences also included process groups, educational groups, life skills, and Anger groups. I have been self employed since February 2004. In my private practice I see children, adolescents and adults in individual and group therapy. I see people for a wide range of mental health issues, including but not limited to serious mental illness, drug and alcohol problems, marriage therapy, family therapy, and sexual

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issues. I am a nationally certified gambling counselor (NCGC). I have experience working with children and adults with Aspergers Disorder and find this service quite rewarding. Additionally, I have worked with the Department of Corrections, local attorneys, and physicians in the provision of services to teenagers and adults.

**THEORETICAL INFLUENCES:**

I generally refer to my theoretical approach as Integrated and use counseling techniques material from various well know approaches. Albert Ellis and his Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy have influenced me, and I use many of his ideas and techniques in treatment. When working with families I will use Strategic Family Therapy, Structural Family Therapy, and other systemic models. Dependent upon client needs and preferences, I also work within a psychodynamic context. Because of societal, economic, and personal preferences I also do Brief therapy as well, such as Solution Focused Psychotherapy. I enjoy the opportunity to assist people in their exploration and search for meaning for ultimate life issues. I provide therapy of faiths other than Christian, and to those who do not belong to any particular religion.

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Revised 10-24-2011