

# GROUP SPACE

Official newsletter of



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Do you have a story  
you'd like to tell or  
someone in mind to  
feature for the next  
newsletter?

Contact us.

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HGPS IS THE  
ORGANIZATIONAL AND  
PROFESSIONAL VOICE FOR  
THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY  
MENTAL HEALTH  
COMMUNITY TRAINED IN  
THE PRACTICE OF GROUP  
PSYCHOTHERAPY.  
WHILE ADHERING TO THE  
HIGHEST STANDARDS OF  
EXCELLENCE, HGPS  
OFFERS UNIQUE  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
EDUCATIONAL GROWTH  
AND FOR EXPANDING  
KNOWLEDGE OF THE MANY  
FACETS OF GROUP  
PSYCHOTHERAPY FROM  
FUNDAMENTAL GROUP  
CONCEPTS TO ADVANCED  
PRACTICE SKILLS.

## Save the date!



**FREE Brown Bag “The Unsayable and the  
Unknowable: Non-ordinary Moments in  
Psychotherapy” with Nanine Ewing, Ph.D.,  
CGP, FAGPA, BG-DMT & Alan Schneider,  
LCSW, LPC, CGP, LMFT, BC-DMT**

**July 13 11:30—1:00**

The Council at **303 Jackson Hill** off Memorial  
CEU 1.5 hrs.

This Brown Bag Training will focus on the unusual and non-ordinary events and experiences that happen in the inter-subjective space between the therapist and the client. These events can be expressed in experiences in the room or in the mind of the therapist or the matrix of the relationship as presented in dreams or intuition. The presenters will share extraordinary and non-ordinary moments in their private practices as a teaching experience to open up a discussion with HGPS members about the mystical or unconscious collective experiences that create moments of meeting that often seem weird or bizarre. How we make use of this associational and indirect material allows us to see it as reverie to catch the drift of the unconscious. This discussion is to help us understand our work as a mystical and spiritual practice. Please contact Constance Moore, M.Ed., LPC, CGP at 713-961-5055 or mcamtexas@yahoo.com with any questions.

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



## Hallelujah!

*How one therapist instills hope in her clients through music and animal-assisted therapy*

**S**ometimes destiny is impossible to deny. For HGPS member Ariela Alpert, giving her first talk to the New Dimensions Day Treatment Center was one of those moments. Scheduled months before, her talk took place at the Clear Lake Baptist Church on Friday, May 18, coincidentally, the same day the Sante Fe, Texas school shootings had occurred just a few miles away.

Ariela, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in practice since 1998, planned to talk about the role of music and her dog, Allegro, in her therapeutic work with trauma. She did not know she would be moving into action that day as she had both her pet and her instrument with her.

Many of the therapists who had planned to come to the talk were school counselors and were summoned to their schools to help students cope with the devastating news. Those who were able to stay were reeling

from the thought of what had just happened. Ariela's host, Rebecca Rucker, began the presentation by asking for a moment of silence. Ms. Rucker, LPC-S, LMFT is the Director of Organizational Development at New Dimensions.

Allegro sat next to Rebecca; then he visited each group of clinicians at their tables, and the comfort he provided was immediately apparent. "They needed him," Ariela said.

Instead of talking, Ariela played her violin. A special adaptation of Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" by Lindsay Sterling was like a prayer of hope for the audience. The audience cried silently in mourning together. Ariela then spoke of the tragedy that had just occurred and expressed the shared grief they were experiencing. "Our clients come to us to borrow hope. Now, we also need it."

Rebecca said the music was "very uplifting and hopeful. Her skills came into play because

she took what she was observing in the room and used her music to address the sadness and heartbreak of the moment."

Ariela's talk reverberated with what was happening in the room. . . She explained that her violin was a family heirloom in hiding during World War II . Her mother's cousin, aunt and uncle hid in an attic for 20 months in Amsterdam during World

*continued on page 3*



Allegro was found roaming the streets when he was 6 months old. Since that time, he has endeared himself to hundreds of clients over the years and assists Ariela in creating a non-judgmental environment with lots of unconditional love.

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

*continued from page 2*

War II. Dutch families had taken care of the violin, along with other belongings and returned them after the war. Her cousin is now 86 years old. He decided to give the instrument to Ariela, and it was shipped to Houston in 2014.

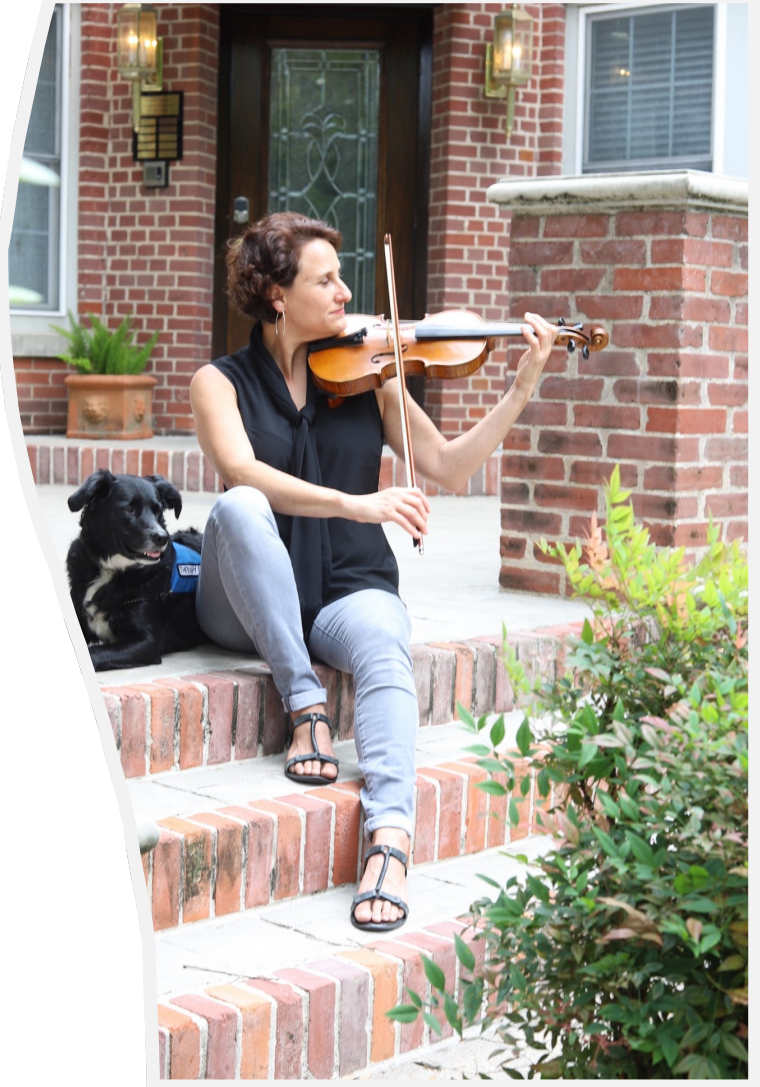
The violin was mute when she got it, damaged, but she took it to the Amati Violin shop, where it was healed with a new bridge and pegs, new strings, cleaning and adjustment. The final source of new life for the violin was to be played.

Ariela has played this violin for a few years and its authentic voice is now resonating strongly and confidently. It is a gradual process, as healing from trauma always is.

Just six months before she received her violin, Ariela found Allegro, a stray dog with a chain around his neck, hungry and lost, roaming near an elementary school. She took him home to begin his own journey of healing. She takes Allegro to her office every day, and he is present in all her therapy sessions. He has an instinct for when to approach and support her patients and when to sit quietly nearby. Now, both her violin and Allegro are instruments of hope and healing.

Ariela does not usually use her violin in therapy sessions, but she does play with the Houston Orchestra on Call. Established in 2014, Houston's Orchestra On Call (HOOC) is a 501(c)(3) organization that brings live orchestral performances to patients, families and caregivers in various health care institutions and retirement communities throughout the Houston area. Ariela and her cousin, Carlos Guillermo Jung, formed the orchestra in collaboration with Debakey High School to provide musical experiences that are therapeutic.

These concerts may relieve emotional and mental stress, help decrease anxiety, aid in expressing emotions, facilitate nostalgic melodies that serve to calm and soothe, help improve communication and provide a meaningful learning experience for both the target audience and the musicians. ■



*“Her skills came into play because she took what she was observing in the room and used her music to address the sadness and heartbreak of the moment.”*



# HGPS IN THE COMMUNITY

## Members Marched Together for NAMI

**N**AMIWalks are an annual event hosted in cities throughout the United States. Supporters are there on behalf of the estimated 60 million Americans affected by mental illness. The NAMI movement celebrates recovery from mental illness, honors those who have lost their lives and to help raise funds, combat stigma and raise awareness.

The 2018 NAMIWalks of Greater Houston was held on May 5, 2018 at Sam Houston Park. HGPS was one of numerous organizations that showed their support. HGPS was represented by Aaron Fink, Elyssa Fink, Jessica Bacon, Allison Glenney, Jennifer Markey and Valorie George, who all participated in the 5K. ■



Top Right: HGPS Members (pictured left to right) Allison Glenney, Valorie George, Aaron Fink and Elyssa Fink, at the starting line ready for the 5K.

Bottom Left: Theresa Fassihi, Jessica Bacon, Elyssa Fink, Valorie George, Aaron Fink, Jennifer Markey, and Allison Glenney huddled together to represent Team HGPS.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## HGPS Meet & Greet— A Success!

The party was held on May 18th at Boheme in Montrose. Approximately 15-20 HGPS members attended where they enjoyed drinks and appetizers together.



Some members pictured: Jana Rosenbaum, Elizabeth Haberer, Ariela Alpert

### OFFICERS/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

PRESIDENT – Helen Chong, LCSW, CGP  
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