



Bridge is a quarterly journal designed to provide Bay Area professionals with up-to-date articles and resources to help us help others.

For more information, contact this publication at [bridgeinfo@hotmail.com](mailto:bridgeinfo@hotmail.com)

**Katie Cofer, MFT**  
415-826-2951  
[www.katiecofer.com](http://www.katiecofer.com)

**Kirsten Krohn, MFT**  
415-646-0789  
[www.kkmft.com](http://www.kkmft.com)

**Kate Northcott, MFT**  
415-249-9277  
[kate@mindfulnesstherapy.org](mailto:kate@mindfulnesstherapy.org)

**Samantha Zylstra, MFTI**  
415-585-3132  
[www.samanthazylstra.com](http://www.samanthazylstra.com)

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Stress: How it Affects Us, cont. by Katie Cofer 2

Body Aware, by Samantha Zylstra 3

Problem Solving, cont. by Kirsten Krohn 4

Mindfulness by Kate Northcott 5

Professional Focus 7

## ∞ Problem Solving ∞ *A Recipe for Marital Success* By Kirsten Krohn, LMFT

"When you choose your partner you are choosing a set of problems." Andrew Christiansen, a researcher at UCLA, said this. All relationships have problems. What separates a supportive relationship (one that encourages growth) from a stifling one (one that encourages fighting) is how couples handle their problems. There are some basic steps to problem solving that are common across many therapies. John Gottman highlights the differences between perpetual and resolvable problems as well as common male and female roles in problem discussion. Finally Harville Hendrix's imago therapy highlights what each of us can learn from the complaints we have about our partners.

### The Recipe

All marital therapies have some recipe for problem solving because all marriages have problems. Here are some common ingredients in these recipes.

1. **Problem discussion**-Clearly identifying the problem, labeling it for what it is and is not, separating it

from any person as their problem. Identify the problem as a separate entity to be tackled together as a team. This is a great time to use Reflective listening (see Winter Bridge 2006 for more information on this.)

2. **Brainstorm possible solutions** – List any solutions already tried and consider why they didn't work. Generate new and creative solutions. This is a time to be non-judgmental; all suggestions are to be considered, even seemingly ridiculous or silly solutions. (Humor does not hurt when trying to problem solve.)

3. **Now is the time to evaluate.** Can you tweak a previously attempted solution and try it again with more success? Did some of the silly suggestions help you to see the problem in a different light and come up with different solutions? Look at your list, discuss the options, and narrow them down to one or two you both think might work.

4. **Choose a solution** and create

an implementation plan. This is where you think of potential obstacles to implementing this solution. These are not reasons to not try but challenges to be addressed. If you think through obstacles ahead of time, your solution is more likely to work. Decide who will do what, and when. Check in to make sure each of you (or everyone, if this is a family problem-solving session) is really ready to try this solution.

When the plan is laid out make sure to include a scheduled follow-up meeting to check in about how the implementation is going and to make any adjustments that might be needed. This could be in a few days or a week later. If things are going well set a date in another month to see if things are still cooking.

### Resolvable or Perpetual Problem, which is it?

Gottman talks about resolvable and perpetual problems. What differentiates these types of problems is what they each represent.

*Please turn to page 4*

## ∞ Stress: How it Affects Us and What We Can Do ∞ By Katie Cofer, LMFT

### Part Two of a Two-Part Series

In Part One of this series we explored the physiological impact of stress – how external stressors act upon our brains and bodies to trigger the fight-or-flight response that represents our organism's instinctive attempt to survive danger. We noted how chronic

stress has created a host of physical, mental and emotional problems.

We also began to take a look at different ways of managing stress from a Mind/Body perspective. In Part Two we will examine these more closely and try to identify what we can really do to "undo" stress.

### The Relaxation Response

Reduced to its most basic level, managing stress is about telling the brain that the danger it has perceived, and mobilized the organism to defend against, is past. Sending this "all-clear" signal is the job of the parasympathetic nervous system –

*Please turn to page 2*

# Stress and How it Affects Us and What We Can Do

*Continued from page 1*

the part that lets us relax, as opposed to the sympathetic nervous system, which transmits the brain's danger signals to the rest of the body and prepares it for action. In the 1970s, stress researcher Herbert Benson coined the term "relaxation response" for this physiological process.

Mind/Body approaches to stress management utilize the body's natural relaxation response to quiet the nervous system and reduce a host of stress-related symptoms, such as muscular tension, high blood pressure, anxiety, irritability, and so on.

## The Two Core Skills

The two core Mind/Body skills for inducing the relaxation response are:

- Deep breathing
- Mindfulness

**Deep breathing:** Most of us have experienced how relaxing it is to slow down and deepen our breath. This is because deep, abdominal breathing is characteristic of the parasympathetic nervous system. Thus, by imitating the slower breathing pattern of the part of the nervous system responsible for sending the "all-clear" signal, we can "trick" our body and brain into calming down.

**Mindfulness:** A number of research studies have shown very clearly that regular practice of mindfulness – the age-old meditative technique of detaching from the mind's usual preoccupations and focusing on the present moment in a nonjudgmental way – has many measurable, positive effects on physical and emotional well-being (see "Mindfulness in Psychotherapy," by Kate Northcott, *Bridge*, Summer 2006, Volume 1, Issue 4).

In fact, leading stress specialists, particularly Jon Kabat Zinn, have made mindfulness the core of their stress-management program.

## Working from the Body

The most important ways of managing stress through the pathway of the body are also the simplest:

- Getting enough sleep

- Eating healthily
- Exercising regularly

**Sleep:** When we're stressed, tense muscles and stress hormones in our bloodstream make it difficult to sleep well. Thus, relaxing activities before bedtime such as stretching, hot baths, meditation, listening to soothing music, etc., will give our bodies more opportunity to rest and recover.

**Nutrition:** Overeating is a common response to stress. Quantity and type of food, as well as the consumption of stimulating substances like caffeine and sugar or alcohol can definitely play into the body's stress response.

**Exercise:** The benefits of exercise for stress reduction cannot be overemphasized. In addition to the well-known, endorphin-driven "runner's high", exercise also helps the body to eliminate the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol, which, over time, take a toll on all the systems of the body.



Mind/Body approaches to stress management utilize the body's natural relaxation response to quiet the nervous system and reduce a host of stress-related symptoms.

## From Body to Mind

A method that bridges body and mind is **body scanning/progressive muscle relaxation**. Basically, body scanning is about bringing mindfulness to physical sensations and phenomena such as muscle tension or breathing patterns. Progressive muscle relaxation takes this observation one step further by systematically bringing attention to different parts of the body and relaxing them.

This method is closely related to techniques of **Yoga**, a very comprehensive Mind/Body system of personal and spiritual development with considerable stress-reducing benefits. Other integrative practices that enhance physical/mental/

spiritual well-being are **Tai Chi** and **Qi Gong**. Regular practice of any one of these age-old systems is one of the best things a person can do to manage stress.

## Working from the Mind

We have seen how stress gets into our very brains. Beyond the all-important practices of mindfulness and meditation, we can learn to work with our minds to actively adjust our thoughts and beliefs. This helps us to create the new neural pathways that can transform our perspective and help us to create different experiences for ourselves. Cognitive-behavioral therapy and the new Positive Psychology movement have given us many techniques for creating more positive mental states. Some of them are:

- Gratitude and appreciation
- Focusing on the positive
- Reframing negative experiences
- Refuting automatic negative thoughts
- Thought stopping
- Worry control
- Using affirmations
- Visualization
- Acceptance
- Prayer

Details of all of these skills can be found in the books listed at the end of this article.

## Bringing It All Together

A number of stress experts have integrated these methods into comprehensive systems for managing stress. One is the 8-week program used at Jon Kabat Zinn's stress clinic in Massachusetts, where participants commit to practicing 45 minutes of mindfulness meditation a day, as well as yoga, body scanning and exercise.

The improvement rates for serious stress-induced conditions such as heart disease, repetitive stress injuries and panic disorder, are impressive.

Stanford doctors Fred Luskin and

Kenneth Pelletier have developed a system of 10 easy-to-learn “LifeSkills” purported to conquer stress in moments. The central skill is deep breathing, augmented by other body/mind practices including relaxation, slowing down, visualization, appreciation, assertiveness and acceptance.

New York psychologist Richard O’Connor offers a comprehensive wellness program that targets mind, body, emotions and spirit and aims to “rewire” the brain. His ideas offer a critique of the stress culture of our age, and the healing he envisions represents a kind of emotional intelligence that encompasses social connectedness. O’Connor recommends a commitment of at least an hour a day, to allow for exercise and mindfulness meditation – a hefty chunk of time for most of us. But the payoff is a real recovery from the Perpetual Stress Response – the ability to “survive and thrive in the world,” the building of “a stable self that can stand up to stress, a self that has integrity.” (O’Connor, p. 412)

The principles of his “12-step” program, which he explains in great detail in the last chapter of his book, are:

- Get good at mindfulness.
  - Use mindfulness to develop a deeper awareness of your feelings.
  - Use mindfulness to recognize the limits and biases of your assumptive world.
  - Build willpower, self-control, and self-respect.
  - Control the effects of stress.
  - Be skillful about your body.
  - Learn to appreciate your symptoms.
  - Think with your whole mind.
  - Construct and reinforce your support system.
  - Learn intimacy skills.
  - Learn how to be happy.
  - Practice, practice, practice.
- (O’Connor, p. 413f)

John O’Connor’s intention goes beyond mere stress reduction to true transformation: “It’s quite possible (...) to make of ourselves what we want, something stronger and more resilient, someone able to recognize and overcome the effects of perpetual stress, someone loving, wise, productive, and

healthy.” (O’Connor, p. 454) ∞

**Sources and Resources:**

Note: More information on all the above-described stress-management skills and techniques can be found in the following books:

Davis, Martha, et al. The Relaxation & Stress Reduction Workbook.

Groves, Dawn. Stress Reduction for Busy People.

Luskin, Fred and Pelletier, Kenneth. Stress Free for Good.

O’Connor, Richard. Undoing Perpetual Stress.

**Katie Cofer**, MFT is in private practice in San Francisco. She specializes in work with stress, anxiety trauma and depression. She is trained in the Hakomi Method and EMDR. Katie can be reached at **415-826-2951** or **www.katiecofer.com**



**Are you trapped in the prison of a negative body image?**

Do you constantly worry about the size and shape of your “wobbly parts?” Do these thoughts prevent you from fully expressing yourself and living as a confident and whole you? Expressive arts therapy may be the

experience you need to break free of your body image prison.

A healthy body image is achieved when you have feelings for your body that are positive and confident and include self-care. Your body image then influences your ability to fully express yourself, be confident in your abilities and feel comfortable with who you are. By creating symbol and metaphor, expressive arts therapy makes room for our bodies to engage with deep issues that hinder our ability to live peacefully within ourselves.

You Can:

- **Become a whole self by identifying thoughts, feelings, judgments, physical sensations and behaviors associated with a negative mental body image.**
- **Develop outlets for self expression and confidence in your physical abilities.**
- **Redefine values and begin life with a healthy body image that allows you to be confident and care for yourself.**
- **Be comfortable in your own skin.**

**Samantha Zylstra** offers individual and group therapy addressing the challenges of daily life with a negative body and self image. She uses expressive arts therapy to empower her clients to integrate their desired body with their actual body. If you desire to break free from your prison contact her today at **415-585-3132** or **www.samanthazylstra.com** (For more information on eating disorders and Samantha’s work please visit her website.)

**Don’t Wait!**

**Release yourself from your prison today and begin to live the free and peaceful life you deserve.**



# Problem Solving: A Recipe for Success

*Continued from page 1*

A resolvable problem is an everyday challenge that is common. It is a situation that requires some discussion, brainstorming, possibly compromise and implementing a new solution using a recipe like the one above. For a resolvable problem this will be all you need to do. By definition, the problem will truly be solved and will not reoccur.

A perpetual problem, on the other hand, has deeper roots and is only temporarily addressed by attempts at problem solving. In general these problems are about fundamental differences in personality or style. An example would be of one partner who is generally neat and another who is usually messy. Neither partner is likely to change their basic way of being. For this type of problem, the solution involves understanding, acceptance, flexibility and creativity. In order to address a perpetual problem, one partner needs to bring it up so that you both can address it. Both partners can brainstorm, the way they would about a resolvable problem, but the solution is likely to be less permanent and require more acceptance of personal differences. The ideal, albeit difficult, outcome is for a partner to actually be attracted to their partner's differences-although simply not wanting to wring your partner's neck is progress.

Gottman also makes some important observations and suggestions regarding the nature of problems in relationships. Women are often the first to notice problems in a relationship. This does not mean that they are being overly sensitive or creating problems where there are not any. It generally means women are more tuned in to how the relationship is going. Since this is often the case, women are also usually the ones to call attention to problems in the relationship. This can leave many men feeling that they are being picked on, thinking things like "she's never satisfied", or "nothing I do makes her

happy". To avoid this, Gottman suggests that women use a softened approach. This includes using "I" statements rather than "you" statements. "I feel overwhelmed and tired when I come home to a messy kitchen." Rather than, "You never clean up the kitchen, you're such a slob!"

The man's responsibility in this situation will be to be open to what his partner has to say. It might help for him to realize that she most likely has a valid point and if she's trying to bring it up in a positive way, now is the time to listen. Here's your chance to use reflective listening, "So, you feel really exhausted when you come home to a messy kitchen and you'd like for us to find a way that that doesn't happen?" Now you are on your way to problem definition and can follow the recipe for problem solutions.

If this is a perpetual problem than the solution you agree on is not likely to last for the long term. It might last weeks, months, or even years, but eventually the problem will resurface. This does not mean that you have failed, or that your relationship is a failure. It simply means that this is an area where you have fundamental differences, and it's time to come up with a new solution. At this point, the problem might look slightly different or one of you might feel less strongly about your position. Whatever the circumstances, it is time to renegotiate.

## **The secrets your problems reveal....**

If you find that you and your partner are really stuck in a particular problem you might try a different approach to break free of it. The first step is for your partner to acknowledge that there is some truth to your complaint. Even if your partner cannot do this for you, you can acknowledge this for yourself. Now it is time to look deeper. Look at the complaint about your partner's behavior and see what role this behavior plays in your life. Is it a problem that you

have too? For example, your partner might always be late, and this particularly bothers you because you too are usually late. Or you are at the other extreme; you are always early and are easily upset by the lateness of other people. Maybe you are jealous of your partner's relaxed attitude about time. Or, you could benefit by giving other people a break for being late. Lastly do you think that you are always on time, but really you always have "a good reason" for being late?

The problems that bother you the most in your partner are often problems that you struggle with yourself and do not realize it, you struggle with but deny it, or you are too hard on yourself or others about it.



Harville Hendrix suggests in his imago therapy that we are each attracted to the person who can help us to grow and to learn about ourselves. Often you hear people say "What I used to love about him/her drives me crazy now." This statement is manifestly true. It is the characteristics of our partners that attract us from which we also need to learn. Learning and changing ourselves is never easy. Instead it is easier to try to change our partners. Ultimately though the only person you can successfully change is yourself. Use those perpetual problems to learn more about yourself and to grow in your relationship. Follow these guidelines and you are sure to cook up a delicious marriage. ∞

**Kirsten Krohn, MFT** works with couples to help them improve communication and problem solving skills. She can be reached at 415-646-0789.



## **Integrative Psychotherapy Connecting Mind, Body, Emotions and Spirit**

*"An opening to deepening layers of integration between two people, and within each individual, can create a renewed sense of vitality and enhance the journey of life."* Daniel Siegel

Integrative Psychotherapy draws on a variety of therapeutic methods to increase awareness and integrate aspects of the self.

I work with the Mind/Body connection, the Hakomi Method, Expressive Arts Therapy, and EMDR to help clients to resolve old pain and foster aliveness.

For more information please contact Katie at 415-826-2951 or [www.katiecofer.com](http://www.katiecofer.com)

Katie Cofer, MFT, 1465 Church Street, San Francisco, CA 94131

# ∞ DBT: Mindfulness Therapy for a Better Life Worth Living ∞

By Kate Northcott, LMFT

“What on earth is DBT?” “DBT – I would never want to do that!” “DBT is only for Borderlines”, “DBT is behavioral – ugh!”

As DBT takes on a bigger and bigger presence in the psychotherapy community, many psychotherapists and clients ask these questions. This short and informal article is a very, very brief description of a simple, complex, easy, difficult, fun, hard, highly effective approach to learning how to live a better life. (The previous sentence used some examples of dialectics.) Dialectical Behavioral Therapy is a validation, mindfulness, and skills-based psychotherapy method. *The DBT philosophy, approach and interventions can be helpful to any client and to any psychotherapist.*

**A history:** In the late 1970s, Marsha Linehan, a behavioral psychologist based at the University of Washington, was simultaneously studying and practicing Zen Buddhism and working with adult women with chronic suicide attempts, suicidal ideation, and urges to self-harm. She began to wonder whether the awareness practices in Buddhism would be helpful to her clients, since she believed that a client has to be aware of the problem in order to understand and change it. She was also noticing that her patients who were receiving standard Cognitive Behavioral Therapy found the constant focus on change in CBT to be invalidating. Her clients needed validation for their “problem behaviors” – these were behaviors developed in an attempt to be effective, not problematic.

She began to experiment with teaching her patients the non-judgmental stance, attention to the present moment, and focus on effectiveness found in mindfulness practice. Mindfulness creates, among other qualities, a uniquely validating atmosphere and environment in psychotherapy.

**DBT is for BPD:** Linehan was also noticing that most of her patients met

the criteria for Borderline Personality Disorder. Linehan evolved and refined a bio-social theory of BPD that postulates that people who have significant difficulty regulating emotions often have a history of growing up in an invalidating environment. (Linehan sees an “invalidating environment” as spanning the spectrum between abusive on one end and, on the other end, a mis-match between a sensitive child and a well-meaning parent who doesn’t know how to cope with that child.) Linehan theorizes that many of the extreme behaviors associated with BPD are attempts to validate and regulate emotions. Linehan began to see that her patients didn’t have effective life skills in many areas.

**But DBT is for everyone!:** Dialectical Behavioral Therapy was designed for the severe and chronic multi-diagnostic, difficult-to-treat patient with both Axis I and Axis II disorders. However, DBT is NOT just for people with BPD. DBT focuses on identifying a problem and *identifying effective solutions and behaviors*. For example, substance abuse, eating disorders, inappropriate anger, over-sleeping, suicide and parasuicide are ineffective solutions to problems. People with depressive disorders, Bipolar Disorder, anxiety disorders, BPD, OCD, PTSD and ORDINARY LIFE PROBLEMS often use ineffective solutions to their problems.

At Mindfulness Therapy Associates, my colleagues and I use many of the techniques, and certainly the stance of DBT, with *all* of our clients, who range from clients with ordinary life problems to clients with more extreme mental disorders. In our DBT Skills Training Group, Lori Schwanbeck and I often emphasize that, although we do not have BPD, we have grown and changed by using DBT skills and that we believe that anyone can benefit from these skills.

**What on earth are dialectics?:** A “dialectic” stance emphasizes the synthesis of opposites. For instance, one synthesis of opposites inherent in DBT is the combination of eastern mindfulness practices and western behavioral therapy. Multiple tensions simultaneously occur in

therapy with clients with difficult-to-treat disorders. Life is chaotic and contradictory. These conditions are often intolerable to those clients and often lead to ineffective attempts to tolerate the contradictions – self-harm and suicide, for instance. Dialectical thinking is a skill that can replace the rigid, argumentative and polarized position often taken by such a client – DBT teaches that life is full of opposites and that there are ways we can balance in the middle.

The DBT therapist holds a dialectical stance: non-judgmental and transparent *and* focused on insisting on change. The DBT therapist validates the reasons *why* her client is using certain (outmoded) coping strategies and behaviors – these behaviors actually make sense, in a way -- while pushing the client to develop and use more skillful, effective, coping behaviors. Many of the skills taught in DBT Skills Training have to do with recognizing and living with the fact that life is full of dialectics: two seemingly opposite truths existing in the same moment.

DBT helps clients to learn (and observe, through mindfulness), that their thoughts, feelings and behaviors are understandable and mostly normal, and that they are capable of learning how and when to trust themselves. DBT helps clients to learn that while accepting themselves in this way, they must change if they want to build a life worth living. Dialectics emphasizes holism and synthesis. Dialectics enables the therapist to accept, validate, encourage and insist on change. DBT, at its best, is a therapy with fluidity, speed and flexibility in every session, allowing acceptance and change to weave together.

**DBT is Warm and Relational:** Despite what many people (and maybe especially psychotherapists in the Bay Area) think, DBT and good behavioral therapy is not cold and distant. It is collaborative, transparent, irreverent, practical and effective.

*Please turn to page 6*

# Mindfulness Therapy: A Better Life Worth Living

*Continued from page 5*

Above all, DBT is validating. During my training with Marsha Linehan, she said that she suspects that DBT works because it's "validating therapy." The DBT therapist works within the relationship with her client, using the positive regard developed between therapist and client to reinforce the development of skills.

**DBT is not just Skills Training:** DBT is primarily an individual psychotherapy method that focuses on 1) increasing motivation, 2) reinforcing new skills (taught in a separate, skills training group) and 3) managing problem behaviors. Stage One DBT focuses on decreasing life-threatening behaviors, therapy-interfering behaviors and quality-of-life interfering behaviors. For the client with extreme and difficult-to-treat issues, Stage One DBT can be lengthy. For such a client, when skills are learned and integrated into life, Stage Two focuses on quiet desperation and increasing emotional experiencing. Stage Three focuses on problems in living, ordinary happiness and ordinary unhappiness.

For the less disordered client, the stages of treatment overlap and interweave but the early stage of therapy do focus on increasing behavioral skills to increase the quality of life.

**But it's also Skills Training:** Many people who've heard a little about DBT think of the DBT Skills Training Group.

Although skills training is only one piece of DBT psychotherapy, it is fundamental. When Marsh Linehan began to develop DBT, she noticed the deficit of life skills among her clients. Clients who have been significantly invalidated are clients who were never taught how to effectively and skillfully get their needs met. The skills most needed among her patients were: **Mindfulness** (awareness), **Interpersonal Effectiveness** (how to effectively tell people what you want and need), **Emotion Regulation** (how to understand and manage emotions) and **Distress Tolerance** (how to manage emotions in a situation you cannot change).

DBT Skills Training teaches people how to increase these skills and how to decrease identity confusion, emptiness, cognitive dysregulation, interpersonal chaos, fears of abandonment, labile affect, excessive anger, impulsive behaviors, suicide threats and parasuicide (self-harm). DBT Skills Training groups are psychoeducational: skills are taught, practice homework is assigned, successes applauded, failures are deconstructed, application problems are validated and solved, and, at every session, mindfulness is practiced.

**Don't be afraid of DBT – It's Fabulous!:** Anyone who's taken a DBT training with any of the senior DBT trainers will know what I mean by this.

For everyone else, let me say, it is! DBT is big, and effective, and, often, fun and funny. DBT therapists are real, they're disappointed by failures, optimistic about figuring out how to avoid future failures, and enthusiastic about success – thus, the fabulousness. DBT is not reductive or exclusive -- many other psychotherapies can be integrated into DBT, and vice versa. Above all, DBT makes life better, really, it does!

One of the great pleasures of being a DBT therapist is seeing how DBT Psychotherapy and DBT Skills Training can make a difference in the quality of a person's life in a relatively short period of time. DBT skills are easy to understand and easy to practice. Each client is better at some skills and has difficulties with others, as is human. Many clients, by changing their behaviors and practices, can begin a process of essential transformation that goes beyond behavior and problem solving. The combination of internal mindfulness practice and external living skills practice is powerful. For many people, DBT is an opening to greater access to spiritual and human connection.∞

Kate Northcott, LMFT, is an intensive trained DBT therapist who practices with Mindfulness Therapy Associates in San Francisco. DBT has made her life even better than it was.

## **DBT Skills Training Group for Men and Women** **Kate Northcott, LMFT and Lori Schwanbeck, LMFT**

Mondays, 12 noon to 2 pm

Weekly DBT groups are psychoeducational and utilize a step-by-step format to teach four sets of skills: **Mindfulness; Interpersonal Effectiveness; Emotion Regulation** and **Distress Tolerance**. The group is directive, reinforcing and warm. Originally devised as a treatment for Borderline Personality Disorder, DBT is helpful to all people coping with emotional dysregulation.

## **Advanced DBT Skills Training Workshop**

A unique opportunity to work with Kate and Lori in a two-part intensive workshop for DBT skills group graduates intended to **refresh skills and create an even more satisfying life**. \$125 for the workshop. Please call or email for dates.

Kate Northcott and Lori Schwanbeck are intensively trained DBT therapists who trained with Marsha Linehan. Kate and Lori have been leading DBT Skills Training Groups and offering individual DBT psychotherapy since 2001.

Kate Northcott (415) 249-9277 [Kate@mindfulnesstherapy.org](mailto:Kate@mindfulnesstherapy.org)  
Lori Schwanbeck (415) 835-2164 [Lori@mindfulnesstherapy.org](mailto:Lori@mindfulnesstherapy.org).

Mindfulness Therapy Associates 1480 Church Street, San Francisco, CA 94131

# Professional Focus



**Kate Northcott, M.A., M.F.A., M.F.T., (#38738)**, is a psychotherapist in private practice and Clinical Director of New Perspectives Center for Counseling. Her practice, *Mindfulness Therapy Associates*, was founded in 2003, with three other psychotherapists. *Mindfulness Therapy Associates* specializes in mindfulness-based psychotherapies, coaching and stress-reduction, including DBT, MBCBT, Hakomi and Ecopsychology. Kate also specializes in working with couples from an emotion and skills-based perspective. She is an intensively trained DBT therapist and DBT

Skills Training Group leader.

Kate offers **Mindfulness Based Group Treatment for Depression and Anxiety** on Mondays, from 12-2pm. The group approach is based on the innovative work of Kabat-Zinn, Segal, Williams, Teasdale (MBCBT) and also utilizes components of Linehan's DBT. Mindfulness based cognitive treatment has been clinically proven to bolster recovery from depression and to prevent relapse. Please contact Kate at 415-249-9277 or at [kate@mindfulnesstherapy.org](mailto:kate@mindfulnesstherapy.org) for more information about the group and about DBT treatment.

**Kirsten Krohn, MFT (#41953)** is a Marriage and Family Therapist whose work focuses on helping couples to grow in their relationships. She offers pre-marital counseling and couples counseling to improve communication, problem solving and goal setting. She has offices in the Laurel Village neighborhood of San Francisco and in Daly City. Kirsten believes in Growing Through Change. Change happens in your life: moving in together; marriage; a move; or the birth of a baby. In order to adapt to the new circumstances you are required to change. Sometimes people change in healthy

and adaptive ways and other times in unhealthy ways. Change does not guarantee growth, but it is an opportunity to learn more about yourself and to change in effective ways. Kirsten works with clients to use change as an opportunity to grow in their lives and their relationships. For more information or to schedule an appointment you can reach Kirsten at 415-646-0789 or [www.kkmft.com](http://www.kkmft.com)



Picture taken by [KarinaMarieDiaz.com](http://KarinaMarieDiaz.com)



**Katie Cofer, MFT (#35856)** is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice in San Francisco. Her work is based on a fundamental belief in the interconnectedness of mind, body, heart and spirit. She integrates relational talk therapy with somatic, transpersonal, and expressive arts approaches. She is trained in the Hakomi Method, an experiential, mindfulness-based and body-centered psychotherapy approach. She is also a

practitioner of EMDR, a powerful technique that facilitates the clearing of traumatic memories and emotional stuck points. Through these processes of self-discovery and healing clients may feel more connected with their core self and regain access to their innate vitality and creativity. Some of Katie's areas of expertise include trauma, depression, anxiety, phobias, unresolved grief, blocks to creativity, and cross-cultural issues. Katie also works with children and adolescents and is fluent in Spanish and German. She can be reached at 414-826-2951 or [www.katiecofer.com](http://www.katiecofer.com)

**Samantha Zylstra, MFT Intern (#46427)** has a private practice in San Francisco. She provides services for couples, adults, and children who desire healing in their lives. Samantha believes therapy is an opportunity for personal growth and lasting positive change.

Samantha's approach to therapy is informed by her desire to meet each client where they are at; creating space for them to strengthen their core self. Her role, as she sees it, is to listen deeply and responding empathetically to help facilitate opportunities for insight and client directed choices for change.

Samantha has a certificate of specialization in the treatment of eating disorders. Her next group, **Loving Your Body**, developing a healthy body image by empowering yourself through the use of expressive arts therapy will begin in January. The group runs from 6:30pm to 8:00pm and lasts for 10 weeks.

For more information regarding her therapeutic approach or groups please call 415-585-3132 or visit [www.samanthazylstra.com](http://www.samanthazylstra.com) Samantha is under the supervision of Lori E. Opal, MFT #35754.



◆ Katie Cofer

◆ Kirsten Krohn

◆ Kate Northcott

◆ Samantha Zylstra

**Bridge**  
*Connecting Bay Area Professionals*  
315 Sanchez Street  
San Francisco, CA 94114

**Bridge Quarterly Journal, Fall 2006 Issue**

Bridge is a quarterly journal designed to provide Bay Area professionals with up-to-date articles and resources to help us help others.

Please contact us at [bridgeinfo@hotmail.com](mailto:bridgeinfo@hotmail.com) or

Katie Cofer, 415-826-2951, [www.katiecofer.com](http://www.katiecofer.com)

Kirsten Krohn, 415-646-0789, [www.kkmft.com](http://www.kkmft.com)

Kate Northcott, 415-249-9277, [kate@mindfulnesstherapy.org](mailto:kate@mindfulnesstherapy.org)

Samantha Zylstra, 415-585-3132, [www.samanthazylstra.com](http://www.samanthazylstra.com)