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JULY LUNCHEON REVIEW “MINDFULNESS INTERVENTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL AND COUPLES THERAPY” PRESENTED BY LISA DALE MILLER, MFT

— Robin Mullery

When you hear the term mindfulness in a psychotherapy context what thoughts do you come up with? Do you wonder how mindfulness practices can be used in a private practice setting? Do you think that mindfulness doesn't fit with your approach or modality? Lisa Dale Miller's July 24th, 2009, presentation provided an introduction to Mindfulness-Based Psychotherapy (MBP) and its uses in private practice through discussion and interactive case examples.

She began by saying that mindfulness tools can be used no matter what modality or techniques of psychotherapy we use and that they can be the most powerful homework we can give to our clients. Mindfulness is paying attention to the present moment with a compassionate, open curiosity. Mindfulness practices provide a set of skills that help clients recognize what is actually arising within and without, and realize they always have a choice in how they respond.

Miller read the poem *The Real Work* by Wendell Berry. She referred to the state of mind in Berry's poem as "don't know mind" and acknowledged that for many clients "don't know mind" brings up powerful feelings of fear. This fear often arises when the client thinks she knows what will happen and it is usually the worst-case scenario. Miller further pointed out that when clients voice fears of uncertainty, more often than not, they are fixated on an automatic, habitual form of catastrophic knowing and unwilling to directly experience not-knowing. Mindfulness is a set of skills to get the client focused on fear and boredom. It opens the door to what is really going on, not just what a client tells herself and provides a means to examine this from a calm and peaceful state.

Mindfulness has been linked with analytic psychology for almost 40 years, introduced by Jack Engler, Ph.D., and others. Jack Kornfield, Ph.D., Joseph Goldstein, Ph.D., and Sharon Salzberg studied Buddhist meditation in India, Burma, and Thailand and returned to the U.S. in the early 1970s to teach insight (Vipassana) meditation. Kornfield and Goldstein became psychologists and have spent many years training psychotherapeutic professionals in applying

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TEEN AND FAMILY COUNSELING CENTER IN CAMPBELL AT RISK OF CLOSING ITS DOORS

— Georgia Clarke, Executive Director of TFCC

Teen and Family Counseling Center (TFCC), a local, not-for-profit, mental health agency in Campbell, has been providing low-cost counseling services to children, teens, and families in the community for over 26 years. Hundreds of interns and trainees have earned their hours toward licensure by working with TFCC in their sliding-scale clinic or at the schools they served.

As a relatively small not-for-profit agency, TFCC has had its share of challenges. Five years ago they suffered a leadership crisis that, coupled with a move from Los Gatos to Campbell, almost did them in. With a new team in place, things quickly turned around. TFCC has experienced steady growth and earned an outstanding reputation with funders, supporters, interns, and the local universities who recognized TFCC for being an excellent training ground for their graduates.

The agency's greatest challenge faces it today. School contracts have been a significant source of revenue for TFCC. Yet, seemingly overnight, the schools suffered massive cuts to their budgets. TFCC didn't know until June that the schools weren't able to renew their contracts this year. TFCC went from its biggest year in 2008-2009 to one of its worst this year.

In order to survive, TFCC has had to cut costs. In spite of these

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Creating a Community and Culture of Connection

