

# Hudson Valley Interest Group

of the New York Mental Health Counselors Association

January 5, 2007

## Greetings.....

From the members of the New York Mental Health Counselors Association (NYMHCA) Hudson Valley Interest Group (HVIG). Our mission is to come together for education, connection, support, and networking. Specific goals include the advancement of master's level therapy in the field, providing professional education and connection, helping with mentoring for internships, supporting new counselors in the field, and aiding career building and networking. We meet every six weeks on the campus of Marist College, Poughkeepsie, New York in the beautiful Hudson Valley. Marist College is near the Mid-Hudson Bridge, and is centrally located for our group meetings. The NYMHCA is an advocacy organization representing the clinical counselors of New York State. The purpose of this newsletter is to keep our members current with information relating to mental health counseling, keep our members united, bring information to our members about local training and seminar opportunities, and to expand our group through email information. For a complete listing of meeting dates and agendas, visit the [HVIG website](#). This newsletter is sent out to any current members together with anyone interested in the profession of mental health counseling.



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## HVIG LEADERSHIP

Group Coordinator	Yvonne Poley
Director of Training	Suse Volk
Membership Chair	Craig Debinski

Treasurer	Rick Scott
Webmaster	Craig Debinski
Secretary	Tammy MacBrien
Outreach Director	Kristen Fortuna
Public Relations	Jon Petersen
Newsletter	Cynthia A Canaday

## IMPROVING YOUR SERVE

*Beyond the Bridge of Symbolism*  
Exploring the Spiritual Side of Handwriting Analysis

by: Jo Coppola-Griffiths, GHA, MA, LMHC

This is a new age, and as people seek a more holistic approach towards personal growth and well-being, there is emphasis on an awakening of the human spirit, exploring self-growth, feeling alive, uncovering the soul.

The soul is the dance of life, the subtle reminder of life work, the realizations of lessons left to learn, healing, and wholeness. Most importantly, the soul is our total personality. As handwriting is a manifestation of the self, the soul is present in handwriting. The graphologist sees the "markings of the soul" on paper. The handwriting sample is complete with symbolic forms that express the inner life of the personality. The graphologist uses his/her intuition which serves as a unique skill that uncovers the psyche of the writer based on the images the writer creates. In this context, graphology is very much an intuitive science. As the paper represents the world the writer is positioned in, the symbolic writing represents all those behaviors representative of the total personality. The writer's essence of spirit is captured as frozen emotions and soul space. The energy of soul and the dynamics of unconscious are a unique living picture of the total personality.

Just as dreams are able to transmit unconscious reactions to the conscious mind, handwriting expresses spontaneous expressions of the mind's activity. C. G. Jung has been my inspirational teacher throughout my career. Jung was a founder of the mapping of soul psychology. He felt that the observer/healer/teacher has to be able to see things from all angles. As a dream analyst, he understood that dreams are a window to the unconscious and are classically described as roads to the unconscious. Dreams are a lot like handwriting in terms of symbolism and the soul. They

create a knowledge of self that may seem rational but places more intrigue on the soul aspect of personality. The graphologist is much like the dream analyst who has the task of uncovering each shape of the handwriting sample to interpret the meaning behind the symbols.

Teillard (1948/1993), in her classic work *The Soul and Handwriting*, describes how graphology and the soul are connected. Delamain (in Teillard) reveals the soul as “the mysterious core of the person, the warm, dynamic center of the psyche, the dwelling place of the fundamental sensibilities of the living being: his feelings, his memories....his wishes and desires, even his thought processes” (pg 11) As Teillard delves into the psychology of the personality, Delamain describes her work as “constantly holding open doors that enable the soul and the handwriting to communicate” (pg 14).

My years of teaching various handwriting analysis topics have helped me to further master my skills as a therapist, making me a more grounded graphologist. I am considered a trained listener, able to give feedback when it is appropriate. In teaching handwriting analysis, I have the opportunity to give my participants some background of the science that explores soul. This is a different approach to self discovery than many are used to. Many of the people I have worked with come into the classroom with a sense of anticipation over what they may hear about themselves. They have no idea that their soul is on the discussion panel. Soul psychology studies the creative process. It describes the effects of the individual patterns of self-awareness and it intrigues people. As a tool for self-discovery based on observation and analogy, people are interested in a definitive way they can visualize their unique form of brain writing.

As I continue on my path as teacher, counselor, and graphologist, I am conscious of my desire to continue to do soul work. It is not a question of the venue or the population of people I work with. It has become for me the linking of my soul with the souls of others, reaching out, connecting, sharing knowledge, truths. We are all together. We are all learning. We are all divine.

#### References

Teillard, A. (1993) *The Soul and Handwriting*. (E. O'Neill, Trans.). London: Scriptor. (Original work published 1948)

*(All information expressed herein is from the training and opinion of its writer(s). All counselors utilizing this information, esp. students, should seek out clinical supervision and not rely on the information in the "Improving Your Serve" column as a sole directive of how to proceed in therapy.)*

Jo Coppola-Griffith will be the presenter at our January 12<sup>th</sup> HVIG meeting. For a copy of the *In the Margin* newsletter published by the American Handwriting Analysis Foundation, complete with handwriting samples with their analysis, contact [Jo Coppola-Griffith](#)

## New Year's Resolutions

By: Cynthia A Canaday

This January, many of us will see clients coming through our doors with “New Year’s Resolution” proclamations. If they have been with us awhile, we will probably remember, or have notated, the resolutions, commitments, goals, or plans they have previously made, oftentimes ones that have not been followed through on or realized.

As mental health professionals, we work to facilitate change in the thinking, feeling, and acting of those who seek our help. We work with them with insight assistance, goal setting, the making of plans, helping with decisions, we gain their commitments, we give assignments, etc. and we walk along side of them as they make their way to fulfill the “resolutions” they have set with us in counseling.

Clients that have experienced some success through seeing their own ability to make changes or complete a resolution are the most empowered clients to have. Once a person sees and realizes that they can make positive adjustments in their thinking, feelings, behavior, and/or relationships, or can, in fact, complete a resolution or therapy task, they are a force to be reckoned with! But this success takes real work, and there are usually many ups and downs, forwards and backwards in the process of truly meaningful, purposeful change.

The making of New Year’s resolutions is not bad. The problem arises from the magical thinking that change is possible or sustainable, without any true adjustment to the way a person has habitually thought, felt or acted. This and the making of too many or too grandiose of resolutions can set a person up for failure. This further causes damage to a person’s belief that they can change when, year after year, they fail at their resolutions. Guided resolutions, appropriate resolutions, resolutions with attainable results are great, most resolutions, however fall into the magical thinking of our culture, or the “bigger is better” mentality of goal setting. Why then, do so many people time and time again make New Year’s resolutions?

New Year's is the only holiday that celebrates the passage of time. Perhaps that's why, as the final seconds of the year tick away, we become introspective. Inevitably, that introspection turns to thoughts of self-improvement and the annual ritual of making resolutions, with the cultural and personal hopes of something “new.”

The following list is the result of extensive surveys. It is the ten most popular resolutions made each new year.

1. Lose Weight and Get in Better Physical Shape
2. Stick to a Budget
3. Reduction Debt
4. Enjoy More Quality Time with Family & Friends
5. Find A Soul Mate
6. Quit Smoking/Drinking
7. Find a Better Job
8. Learn Something New
9. Volunteer and Help Others
10. Get Organized

When our clients (or we) make resolutions, Dr. RachBeisel and Dr. Dubin psychiatrists from the University of Maryland give us these suggestions:

**Avoid perfectionist thinking.** While we certainly always want to better ourselves, it is healthier to think in positive terms than it is to focus on how much we fall short of our aspirations. Inexample, students should view the grade of an A- as better than a B, rather than not as good as an A.

**View setbacks as lessons for growth.** Mistakes can be and usually are opportunities for learning. If you fall short of your goals, ask yourself what kept you from achieving them and then try to make corrections. People who like to sail understand this navigational concept. You almost never go directly from point A to point B. You set a course and periodically take readings of your position then make adjustments as you go along.

**Don't make absolute resolutions.** Keep them realistic. For example, Dubin suggests that instead of saying you won't yell at your kids anymore, resolve to yell at them less often.

**Don't keep your resolutions to yourself.** Tell someone you trust about your resolutions. Dubin said that it helps to share your goals with friends, who can gently nudge you in the right direction when you veer off course.

**Give them some meaning.** According to RachBeisel, people sometimes make goals that aren't necessarily meaningful to them. Your goal should be something you really desire to change or achieve, not something that society says is good for you to do or your family members would like to see you do. If you don't have strong, internal motivation within yourself, you won't be successful.

**Take baby steps.** Set realistic goals that are attainable and then take small steps that are likely to be met with success toward those goals. Don't try to lose 10 pounds in a week or quitting smoking cold turkey with no preparation. Instead, try joining a weight loss program and try to lose a

pound a week, or join a smoking cessation group.

**Fine-tune your spirituality.** Dubin said that it is important to add a spiritual dimension to your goals. For example, if one of your goals is to get fit, you may also resolve to get outdoors more often instead of going to the gym. Time outside will help you get in balance with nature, and will honor both the physical and spiritual sides of yourself.

As mental health professionals, remember..truly resolute people are those who plan well, learn from their mistakes and continue to set new realistic goals within their reach.

*A goal without a plan is just a wish.*

- Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Plan well, and help your clients plan well for the new year, then we might truly have a "HAPPY NEW YEAR!"

*(All information expressed herein is from the training and opinion of its writer(s). All counselors utilizing this information, esp. students, should seek out clinical supervision and not rely on the information in the "Improving Your Serve" column as a sole directive of how to proceed in therapy.)*

Cynthia A Canaday can be reached at [cacanaday@optonline.net](mailto:cacanaday@optonline.net) or through her website [groupacademy.com](http://groupacademy.com)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

### MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATIONS



The Mental Health Association in Dutchess, Orange, and Ulster Counties can provide valuable support services for you and your clients. For information on services, programs, and additional resources available, contact the Mental Health Association in your county. Please see the "quick link" section of this newsletter for easy online access to the Mental Health Association website

### HUDSON VALLEY INTEREST GROUP



**MEETING LOCATION:** Our meetings are held in Room 113 in the Dyson building at Marist College.

**DIRECTIONS:** Come in the Main entrance (not the north or south entrance) and make the first right. Turn right again into the parking lot of the second building on the right. This is Dyson Building. Enter through the main entrance and follow the hall to the left. Room 113 is on the right hand side. **Get Directions**

The HVIG members offer refreshments, but participants will need to bring or buy beverages in the Dyson coffee

### Upcoming Training and Events:

**January 12, 2007**- *Handwriting Analysis*- Jo Coppola-Griffith, LMHC Presenting

**February 23, 2007**-9:30-11:30am *The Integration of Faith into the Counseling Process*-Presented by Lou Nielsen, LMHC

**March 4, 2007**-Open House For Graduate Students, 12-2pm. A time for graduate students to meet with, have a meal with, and ask questions of the HYIG members.

**April 13, 2007**, 9:30-11:30am *Identification and Treatment of Sexual Abuse Victims*-Presented by Jon Peterson

## INTEREST GROUP INFO

NYMCA Hudson Valley Interest Group chapter dues of \$20.00 for 2006-2007 are now due. You may send your check to:

Rick Scott-Treasurer  
68 Commonwealth Avenue  
Middletown, NY 10940

or, if you prefer,

You may pay at the next meeting. Any questions, call Rick at (845) 343-7060.

Don't forget to maintain your membership in the parent organization. In order for us to move from interest group status to full chapter status we need to be able to show that we have at least 25 members that are also members of NYMCA

## JOKES AND CARTOONS

Two senior ladies met for the first time since graduating from high school. One asked the other, "You were always so organized in school, did you manage to live a well planned life?"

"Oh Yes," said her friend.

"My first marriage was to a millionaire;  
my second marriage was to an actor;  
my third marriage was to a preacher;  
now I'm married to an undertaker."

Her friend asked, and "What do those marriages have to do with a well planned life?"

"One for the money, two for the show, three to get ready and four to go!"

### Magic of the Internet

My friend Nancy and I decided to introduce her elderly mother to the magic of the Internet. Our first move was to access the popular Ask Jeeves website, and we told her it could answer any question she had.

Nancy's mother was very skeptical until Nancy said, "It's true, Mom. Think of something to ask it."

As I sat with fingers poised over the keyboard, Nancy's mother thought a minute, then responded, "How is Aunt Helen feeling?"

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"Shouldn't I get an 'A' for being able to hack into the school's computer system?"

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"Oh, O.K. Well, when your family's all through bunkering down, then can Timmy come out and play?"

## NEW YEAR'S QUOTES

Youth is when you're allowed to stay up late on New Year's Eve. Middle age is when you're forced to. ~Bill Vaughn

An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves. ~Bill Vaughn

Many people look forward to the new year for a new start

on old habits. ~Author Unknown

A New Year's resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other. ~Author Unknown

Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each new year find you a better man.  
~Benjamin Franklin

No one ever regarded the First of January with indifference. It is that from which all date their time, and count upon what is left. It is the nativity of our common Adam. ~Charles Lamb

New Year's Day is every man's birthday. ~Charles Lamb

The merry year is born  
Like the bright berry from the naked thorn.  
~Hartley Coleridge

Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us. ~Hal Borland

New Year's eve is like every other night; there is no pause in the march of the universe, no breathless moment of silence among created things that the passage of another twelve months may be noted; and yet no man has quite the same thoughts this evening that come with the coming of darkness on other nights. ~Hamilton Wright Mabie

The Old Year has gone. Let the dead past bury its own dead. The New Year has taken possession of the clock of time. All hail the duties and possibilities of the coming twelve months! ~Edward Payson Powell

Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right. ~Oprah Winfrey

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.  
~Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1850

The proper behavior all through the holiday season is to be drunk. This drunkenness culminates on New Year's Eve, when you get so drunk you kiss the person you're married to. ~P.J. O'Rourke

Every man should be born again on the first day of January. Start with a fresh page. Take up one hole more in the buckle if necessary, or let down one, according to circumstances; but on the first of January let every man gird himself once more, with his face to the front, and take no interest in the things that were and are past. ~Henry Ward Beecher

New Year's Day: Now is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual. ~Mark Twain

The new year begins in a snow-storm of white vows.  
~George William Curtis

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## QUICK LINKS

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### [NYMHCA](#)

[NYMHCA Hudson Valley Interest Group](#)  
[New York State Education Department](#)  
[DC Mental Health Association](#)  
[UC Mental Health Association](#)  
[OC Mental Health Association](#)  
[DC Departments Online](#)  
[UC Departments Online](#)  
[OC Departments Online](#)

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## FEEDBACK/COMMENTS

- The NYMHCA Hudson Valley Interest Group continues to grow in membership. If you have not joined, or have any questions regarding membership, contact: [cdebinski@aol.com](mailto:cdebinski@aol.com)
- For general information about the HVIG of the NYMHCA, contact the Group Coordinator: Yvonne Poley: [Yvonne.poley@marist.edu](mailto:Yvonne.poley@marist.edu)
- If you are a member of the HVIG and would be interested in presenting at one of our meetings, contact our Director of Training: Suse Volk: [Suse@mindspring.com](mailto:Suse@mindspring.com)
- Questions for our Treasurer? Contact: Rick Scott: [Scottfam@citlink.net](mailto:Scottfam@citlink.net)
- Questions or suggestions for our Webmaster? Contact: Craig Debinski: [cdebinski@aol.com](mailto:cdebinski@aol.com)
- Questions for our Outreach Director? Contact: Kristen Fortuna: [ki2816@aol.com](mailto:ki2816@aol.com)
- Questions or requests for our Secretary? Contact: Tammy MacBrien: [macbrien@sunydutchess.edu](mailto:macbrien@sunydutchess.edu)
- Questions regarding Public Relations? Contact: Jon Peterson: [jonpeterson@rehabprograms.org](mailto:jonpeterson@rehabprograms.org)
- If you have comments, suggestions, or requests regarding this newsletter, or if you are a member

of the HVIG NYMHCA and would be interested in submitting an article for this newsletter, or have information for any of the columns ,or would like to have your profile highlighted in our “Focus on a Member” column, we welcome it!! All submissions need to be received two weeks prior to publication. The next publication date: February 9<sup>th</sup> , 2007. Please contact:[cacanaday@optonline.net](mailto:cacanaday@optonline.net)

- If you would like to be added to the mailing for this newsletter or would prefer not to receive this newsletter, please let us know:  
[cacanaday@optonline.net](mailto:cacanaday@optonline.net)
- Please feel free to forward this newsletter to anyone who might be interested in its content or interested in the Hudson Valley Interest Group of the New York State Mental Health Counselors Association
- NEXT NYMHCA newsletter will be published February 9<sup>th</sup> , 2007
- NEXT MEETING after this Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup> meeting , will be: Friday, February 23rd, 2007, 9:30am

**Hope to see you at the  
January 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting!**

