

# CNΨPA SCOPE

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## President's Message

Hello CNYPA colleagues! Now that we are fully into Fall, I hope everyone has had a chance to pick some fresh apples and enjoy the season's bounty. That's one thing I love about CNY – the changing seasons and the changes in food, activities, etc., that are brought about by the seasonal changes. For CNYPA, fall means membership renewals and planning for a changing of the guard.

Let's address the renewals issues first and consider what CNYPA has accomplished thus far this year. First, thanks to our fearless CNYPA representatives to NYSPA Council (Chris Allen, CNYPA Rep to NYSPA Council and Rene Wilett, Clinical Rep to NYSPA Council) the regional psychological associations are gaining more and more stature and prominence in Council decision-making. Our concerns are being raised and addressed in Council meetings, and consideration of regional affiliates is being incorporated on a systemic level. As a case in point, regional presidents now participate with NYSPA leadership through a bimonthly conference call with the NYSPA president. In addition, recent cross fertilization initiatives have involved efforts to bring downstate training opportunities upstate through teleconferencing technology. We will be working on this training initiative in the coming year.

Other accomplishments this year include publishing a CNYPA provider directory which was sent to hundreds of primary care physicians throughout CNY, as well as filling key positions including David Stang as Insurance Chair, Tanya Gesek as the new Program Committee Chair, Lisa Delameter as Recording Secretary, and a complete newly formed Ethics Committee comprised of Martha Viglietta, Tom Griffiths, Sandy Smith, Jay Land, Stephen Maisto, Joseph Himmelsback (as Chair), and alternates Jill Thomas, Jim Mikesell, and Ron Fish. On the Legislative front, Dominic Carone continues to be a force in corralling our legislators and forwarding the interests of our profession. I truly thank all of you for your service to the profession. Updating our website with member profiles for lay access is in the works, and we hope to host a prominent CE activity in the coming year.

So, there are some very good reasons to continue your membership in CNYPA, and I would love to take this renewal issue one step further. Please copy this issue of the Scope, and give it to a psychologist colleague who is not a CNYPA member, and ask him/her to consider joining. There is a membership application on the website: CNYPA.net. Even occasional happy hours can allow lone rangers in practice to meet each other and informally connect, share referral information, and experience a shared community. Currently, there are 291 licensed psychologists in CNY, and 153 CNYPA members, which is a decent percentage, but I think we could collectively spread our tentacles and bring in more members.

In terms of planning for the changing of the guard, the Elections and Nominations Committee is comprised of me as current president, the president-elect, July Hayman, and past president, Maxine Block. We are seeking nominations for 2 Board member seats (2 year terms), membership chair, and president elect. If you would like to nominate yourself or another member, please email me at [Rothenberg@roadrunner.com](mailto:Rothenberg@roadrunner.com). In addition, we are seeking nominations for annual awards to be given at our December annual meeting which is open to all members. In particular, we are looking for nominations for the Psychologist of the Year and/or Lifetime Achievement awards. I hope you all will consider attending the **December 4<sup>th</sup> annual meeting** at my home in Skaneateles (date to be confirmed via listserv). Good food, wine, and a chance to meet and connect with your colleagues. Let's celebrate a great year.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Beanne O. Rothenberg, Ph.D.



## Save the date! CNYPA Annual Meeting

Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>.

More details to follow in November

### NYSIPA Council of Representatives Meeting Highlights September 11, 2009

1. NYSIPA Bylaws revisions will be completed for review in the November, 2009 meeting.
2. NYSIPA still needs a new Membership Chair or Co-Chairs since Josie Minardo resigned.
3. The first virtual NYSIPA Council meeting was held in August, in order to try to act quickly on the Council's prior endorsement of a plan to explore real estate options. A specific property was researched and Council voted in the August meeting to offer up to \$275,000 for the building. It appeared that NYSIPA was moving forward towards buying the building, but needed to go back to Council to see if the Council would still support the offer if the interest rate increased by a percentage point or two. What ensued was that Council voted to rescind its previous decision to buy this specific building and to set up a "task force" to look at whether NYSIPA should buy or rent.

Many people, including our President George Northrup, felt that our organization is moving backwards (in that we re-vote on things we have already agreed upon). Others (including me) felt that the original process of voting on a building (with many people not being able to participate easily in the web-based meeting due to technical problems) was sufficiently flawed that it was important to give Council a new opportunity to vote on the issue of real estate more broadly.

I think it is great that we had a web-based Council meeting (even though it went to 11 o'clock at night, I could participate in my pajamas!), but there are obviously many bugs to be worked out. It did not make sense to make such an important decision as whether to buy a building when so many people felt unable to participate fully or at all in the meeting.

4) Financially although NYSIPA is still down, as are most organizations in terms of their investments, overall we are not down for the year as much as Eric Garfinkel, our Treasurer originally predicted. We are holding our own in terms of dues-based revenue. We continue to try to develop other revenue streams and Herb Gingold's ad hoc Fundraising and Marketing Committee is busy and engaged in many creative ideas for increasing revenue. So far they have raised several thousand dollars, but hope to put into place longer term ways of making money for NYSIPA.

5) NYSAN and NYSIPA have been working together with NYS SED to develop a letter amending or reversing the letter issued by SED in 2003, which eliminated the use of neuropsychology technicians. This route if successful would not require legislative action. NYSIPA had participated in the writing of Draft 11 legislation and wanted to ensure that this language is referred to as faithfully as possible in any letter that SED issues. SED meanwhile decided that its authority does not extend so far as to define the education and training requirements of "qualified individuals" who might assist in neuropsychological evaluations. The Council approved at the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting the wording suggested and approved by NYSAN:

"It is the responsibility of the licensed psychologist to ensure that qualified individuals are appropriately educate and trained to be utilized for the administration and scoring of psychological tests" to replace the original language listing specific educational and training requirements."

Since then, there has been a strong backlash from some members of NYSIPA, particularly from the Clinical Division, who believe that (although there were no regulations at all before 2003), this makes us worse off as  
(continued next page)

a profession and that neuropsychologists will use people who have less than a bachelor's degree to be psychology technicians. They are writing a letter to SED and trying to get a petition to stop the reinterpretation from going forward.

I have not been as involved in the process as some, including Dr. Dominic Carone, but it seems to me that the letter from SED is a reasonable compromise and an interim step. In the long run, it would be wise to have the regulations specify the minimum of a bachelor's degree. However, any legislative attempts will fail for the foreseeable future because of the severe budgetary issues and other pressures on the legislature. If Dr. Doyle had not issued the original letter in 2003 banning the use of technicians, none of this would have been debated to the current extent.

6) Council approved a slate of candidates for President-Elect: Drs. William DiScipio and Donna Raisin-Waters. Please stay tuned for opportunities to get information on each of these candidates.

7) The Task Force on Representation which was developed in 2008 is still wrestling with proposals to try to balance power on Council between the Divisions (which continue to increase in number) and the Regions, which by their nature cannot increase. The Task Force had narrowly voted to support a proposal that a Region would acquire a second seat on Council if it is able to raise the number of NYSPA members who live in that Region to one-third of the licensed psychologists in that region. In CNY, for example, there are 291 licensed psychologists, 153 CNYPA members

and 58 NYSPA members. If CNYPA could get roughly 30 more NYSPA members (and hopefully also more CNYPA members), we could get a second seat on Council.

Given that it was a very poorly attended meeting over the summer (maybe not a quorum), the Task Force withdrew the motion. Dr. Wilett submitted a motion that Council reaffirm its commitment to the Task Force, which it did (34 yes, 2 abstain).

So the Task Force continues to meet, which I and Dr. Wilett are both on. I know many people on our Board are less concerned about the issue of representation on Council than they are about other tangible issues of support by NYSPA Central Office. I think the Representation issue is important, especially because downstate the Divisions are much more influential, but that Representation is not the only important issue. Some of our colleagues from Rochester and Buffalo, however, feel the representation issue is THE critical issue and are very distressed that the influence of Divisions continues to grow.

8) Council approved revised language for the Child Custody Evaluation Bill (which will help to protect psychologists against frivolous lawsuits). The wording was changed per Dr. Kathleen Doyle's requirement that the bill cover "health care professionals", not just psychologists.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Allen, Ph.D.  
CNYPA Representative to NYSPA Council  
NYSPA Executive Committee, Member-At-Large

## PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY COMMUNITY CORNER

**Some of our CNYPA members have been very busy recently – take a look!**

### **Tanya Gesek, Ph.D.**

**In the spirit of Dr. Rothenberg's discussion of passages, Tanya Gesek, Ph.D. is making some professional transitions this fall. She is a full time visiting professor at SU in the Psychology Department teaching Behavior Disorders in Children and Educational Psychology to Psychology Majors and Clinical Techniques to School Psychology doctoral students.**

**She is also launching a new private practice, sharing space in Lyndon Office Park. She is open for business and will be working with children and adolescents with an emphasis on parenting techniques, anxiety, depression, and psychological evaluations. (315) 430-8040!**



**Legislative Committee Meeting  
New York State Psychological Association  
September 12, 2009  
Meeting Minutes**

**I. Welcome and Announcements**

This was the first legislative meeting of the legislative calendar year and also the first meeting at the Barclay Hotel.

**II. Minutes were approved from the June 12 meeting.**

**III. Status of Legislative Initiatives**

Dennis Butler, our NYSUT lobbyist was present to comment on current legislative initiatives. There was little positive update regarding the status of Albany. Denis feels this may have been the worst year he has seen. He is disappointed in what he calls dysfunction and underhanded politics.

A. Due Process: This bill requires hospitals to specify written reasons if they do not grant hospital access to psychologists. It passed the assembly without opposition and will likely head to the senate in January. There was discussion around initiating next steps to eventually gain more hospital access for psychologists. This was also part of a larger discussion about creating an action plan for all interested relative to psychology. It will be important for reps to legislative to survey their constituents regarding what topics of interest are so NYSPA can be a strong advocate for the needs of all psychologists.

B. Custody Evaluations: A reworded bill was offered to the Senate Higher Ed committee chair. The new language will cover all health care professionals who are assigned to custody hearings. This bill asks for a 60 day cooling off period after complaints against psychologists in custody evaluations in order to minimize trivial, nonsubstantive accusations. The new wording was added to offset the appearance that this was a guild issue and there was continued support for talking this up as a bill for children that inadvertently get stuck in awful custody situations while lawsuits are cleared.

The Senate is considering sponsorship with new language. If approved, the Senate will assist with Assembly sponsorship.

C. No Torture Bill: NYSPA members within police departments have taken exception to this legislation as it prevents them from the duties as written. Both assembly and Senate sponsors have been notified of opposition. A subgroup of the legislative committee has been going through the document to clarify concerns of police psychologists.

D. Managed Care: Provides enhanced consumer protection, limits denial of service. Includes "provisional credentials" for newly licensed and new to state health care providers.

E. Tech Issue. Council approved a version of the memo that hopefully will be re-issued and we will have a non-legislative resolution.

**Other Bills being tracked:**

- o Extending the statute of limitations on sexual offense against a minor
- o Restricting use of "doctor" in advertising – DEAD BILL
- o Extension of Timothy's Law passed both houses and signed by governor.
- o Inclusion of PTSD in definition of biologically based mental illness – was on the calendar for a return in August but nothing happened.

**IV. Grassroots Advocacy Initiative**

This now seems to be coming from central office. In the coming weeks, each committee member will receive a guide on how to meet and create relationships with local lawmakers. There will be talking points included and NYSPA is encouraging each region to select a group of people that will take on this role. It will be important to build a relationship with lawmakers prior to important legislation being discussed.

**V. New Business**

Early Career Psychologists would like NYSPA's support in approaching NY State regarding APA's recommendation to adjust its policies regarding experience needed for licensure. APA has recommended that each candidate may choose to do the two years post doc instead of having the second year occur post doc.

Sincerely,

Tanya Gesek, Ph.D.  
CNYPA Rep to NYSPA Legislative Committee

**The next CNYPA meeting will be Friday, November 13th  
at 1:15 PM in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Grand Rounds area of the  
Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences building at 713  
Harrison Street, Syracuse.**

**All CNYPA members are welcome!**

## Virtual Iraq – Robbi Saletsky, PhD explains.

Veterans who suffer from combat-related post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) now have the newest, research-validated method of treatment available to them through Upstate Medical University's Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences.

The treatment-called Virtual Iraq-uses components of the popular video game, Full Spectrum Warrior, as a way for patients to deal with the fears and anxieties resulting from exposure to the horrors of war.

"Service members who suffer from combat-related PTSD experience recurrent trauma associated memories, flashbacks, accompanied by extreme anxiety," said Robbi Saletsky, Ph.D., Upstate clinical associate professor and director of the Cognitive Behavior Program for Depression and Anxiety Disorders. "As a result, they tend to want to avoid this discomfort and any triggers that could elicit these memories.

"Unfortunately, attempts to reduce distress and painful memories, may result in substance abuse, numbing of emotions, social isolation, and depression. The effective treatment involves approaching their feared memories in a systematic and controlled manner," she added.

Virtual Iraq immerses the patient in computer-simulated combat situations similar to those that initially caused their fear and anxiety. After repeated and prolonged exposure to the scenario, the patient can experience the feelings associated with the trauma, organize and process the memory, express their thoughts and feelings to the therapist and then begin to heal.

As an example, Saletsky notes that while walking down a city street, a simple backfire from a car may stir a patient's memory of a comrade's death by gunshot, causing the patient to become fearful, anxious, avoidant and unable to function normally in daily life.

"With prompts from the patient, the therapist can recreate the sights, sounds and smells associated with the trauma memory, the comrade's death by gunfire" said Saletsky. "This allows the patient to better understand the source of the fear, talk about and experience, the trauma scene and ultimately reduce the intensity of the distress associated with the memory.

This also enables the patient to be less avoidant and begin to cope better in his or her every day life."

The Virtual Iraq system consists of two computers, each equipped with a 3D graphics card that allows the therapist to introduce several simulated scenarios of combat threats, such as roadside bombings and gun warfare, and display dozens of settings, such as soldiers in a Humvee as well as sights found in Iraq or Afghani-stan, including people in a marketplace, a desert or a mosque.



**Virtual Reality Exposure Program  
for Combat-Related Post Traumatic  
Stress Disorder (PTSD)**



The system also includes a device for olfactory stimulation, allowing the therapist to introduce odors associated with war, such as gunpowder, burning rubber, garbage and smoke; and a platform and seat that gives the patient the sensations of vibrations and jolts.

One computer is operated by the therapist who can select variables from a menu to accurately tailor the presented material to closely resemble the feared scenario. The second computer allows the patient to move through the simulated scenarios through special headgear and a joystick (to maneuver through the environment).

A Virtual Iraq treatment session can run anywhere from 40 to 50 minutes. The number of sessions depends on the patient's needs. The treatment is covered by most insurance.

Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a debilitating condition that can develop following a terrifying event. Often, people with PTSD have persistent frightening thoughts and memories of their ordeal and feel emotionally numb and disconnected. Other symptoms can include depression, anxiety, substance abuse, insomnia, agitation, and hyper-vigilance.

Virtual Reality Exposure has also proven effective for a number of specific phobias including fear of flying, fear of heights, fear of public speaking and fear of storms.

Contact the Virtual Reality Exposure Program for additional details at 315-464-3115.

Advertisement

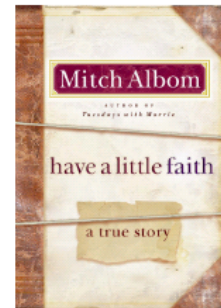


It's About Childhood & Family, Inc  
Welcomes

# Mitch Albom

Internationally Known Best-Selling Author

'Tuesdays with Morrie', 'For One More Day', & 'Have A Little Faith'



Mitch Albom has become an inspiration to millions around the world. His bestselling books, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*, and *For One More Day* are touchstones for people of all ages, reminding us of what truly matters in life. A columnist for the *Detroit Free Press*, Albom has been named America's best sports columnist 13 times in the last 15 years. He also hosts two radio shows that originate in Detroit on WJR-AM and reach 38 states.

His newest book, 'Have A Little Faith', will be released in September 2009. Expanding on the theme of his newest book, Mitch Albom talks about why faith is still needed and embraced in a modern world where we think we know all the answers. Rather than divide us, Albom found - through time spent with an inner-city pastor of a poor church and an aging rabbi of a wealthy suburban synagogue - that faith can pull us together. That it unites us in our humanity. Albom shares stories about faith amongst the poor, the well-to-do, the homeless, and those who once felt God did not exist. He addresses questions such as: What do we all have in common in our hearts - no matter what house of worship we attend? How does the belief in something bigger than us give us insight, wisdom and comfort? How does faith help when bad things happen? And what can we learn from each others' faith that can make the world, the workplace, our neighborhoods and our daily lives more harmonious?

Advance Tickets:

◀ [innerwealth.org](http://innerwealth.org)

◀ [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com)

◀ Natur-Tyme

\$25 (\$30 at-the-door)

**November 6 2009**  
**6:30-9:00 pm (doors open at 5:30)**  
 Lecture and Book Signing  
**Holiday Inn – Liverpool/Syracuse**  
 411 Electronics Parkway

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Tickets @ \$25 = \$\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Copies of Have A Little Faith @ \$20 = \$\_\_\_\_\_

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