

Gil Institute News – Update from Dr. Eliana Gil

Gil Institute continues to grow and evolve in response to community needs. Growth is occurring two-fold: New programs are being offered and new therapists have joined our group private practice!

Our new programs were developed as a result of current community needs. There appears to be growing concerns about measuring the impact of trauma on children who have multiple and chronic traumatic experiences, or those that suffer from single traumatic events. Our way of assessing the impact of trauma (Trauma Assessment and Intervention for Children and Youth, TAICY, Gil) takes a look at different domains associated with trauma and consistent with the research findings on short-and long-term effects of early trauma.

Another popular referral topic is reunification services (Therapeutic Parent-Child Sessions after Separation, TPCS-S, Gil) that go beyond the traditional supervisory role of a supervisor. We have designed a program that allows us to accomplish some important therapeutic goals in cases where parents and children have been separated for a number of reasons. Sometimes there have been allegations of abuse that were unproven or remained vague or unconfirmed; sometimes parents were convicted of wrongdoing and have been incarcerated; other times parents and children are separated when some family members immigrate to this country while others are left behind. In most of these situations, parent and children must become reacquainted and have new opportunities to understand their past separations and what lies ahead. What makes our reunification services unique is our focus on negotiating difficult and complex memories and ensuring that a narrative satisfies the child's curiosity and allows him or her to move forward with a greater understanding of what caused and sustained a separation. Check our Gil Institute website for more information on all our programs and services (www.gilinstitute.com)

Our therapists continue to prepare themselves to the best of their abilities. In the past quarter, Dr. Rise van Fleet provided a one-week training to our staff on Filial Therapy. In addition, most of our staff are now well into their Theraplay advanced training, with Myriam Goldin about to be fully certified. Dr. Jodi Cobb, who has decades of experience in working with children on the autism spectrum, begun an in-depth training program with our therapists to better prepare them to provide integrated services to children on the spectrum.

Not only do our therapists immerse themselves in their own learning experiences, they are currently providing workshops locally and nationally. Dr. Jennifer Shaw, Myriam Goldin, Andrea Driggs McLeod, to name a few, provide intensive trainings through Starbright Training Institute. They also travel to other states to provide

regional and national trainings on trauma-related topics to a wide variety of child-serving professionals. We are quite proud of our growing team of seasoned trainers.

We have hired a number of new staff to augment our ability to provide services in a timely fashion. Recently we have welcomed Alison Ritchie, Courtney Glickman, Tanne Gabler, and Francine Ronis.

Gil Institute also co-sponsored our 3rd National Mid-Atlantic Play Therapy Institute in June 2016 and we had 10 countries represented (launching us into the new status of *international conference*). There were many highlights this past year, especially a wonderful presentation of Playback Theater using a cast from DC and Boston. Everyone who attended was mystified and energized by this wonderful creative process that has great therapeutic potential. Dr. Sue Bratton presented the Keynote address on Child-Parent Relationship Therapy and several other renowned play therapists were stellar additions to our program.

The dates for the **4th Annual Mid-Atlantic Play Therapy Institute** have been set for **June 9-11, 2017**. Highlighting this year will be three amazing keynotes: Dr. Terry Kottman, Dr. Jeff Ashby, and Scott Reviere!!!! There will also be other remarkable presenters on a wide array of topics. Your feedback for topics/speakers is always appreciated. Once again, we have secured the Crystal City Gateway in Arlington, VA.

We will welcome back the Self-Esteem Shop as their presence at our conferences greatly add to a joyful educational experience.

I have updated two new websites: www.starbrighttraininginstitute.com as well as www.elianagil.com Please feel free to check in and check them out.

This summer in Florida was very warm and enriching. I have started an acting class, continue to play tennis, and have started more and more Pickleball. My four grand-children visited this summer and I went to Disney twice, in two consecutive weeks. Yikes. Fatigued R Us!! I love being at Disney, it's such a happy place, and it's so international... We stayed at a Disney resort and the kids had a memorable vacation. I'm learning more and more about all the attractions in this area. My grand-kids thoroughly enjoyed Busch Gardens and I must say, I was enthralled with all the animals that wonder around the park, happily co-existing.

I just attended the KY APT conference this year and gave the Keynote address. I consider this a great honor and I only wish I could be as entertaining and wise as Dr. Jeff Ashby was last year. I spoke about the "Highs and Lows, Ups and Downs" of being a play therapist. In addition, I had another great honor: I provided a workshop with Garry Landreth, J.P. Lilly, and David Crenshaw. We spoke about the heart and science of play therapy and hope to stimulate discussion about the value of depth psychology and the import of emotional connection and meaning in therapy.

I finished another book this year that will be published in January, 2017. It's called *Post-Traumatic Play in Children: What Clinicians Should Know*, which is based on decades of experience working with traumatized children. This feels like it will likely be my last book. In many ways, I feel like I've said everything I needed/wanted to say. I have a few chapters in the works but this may be the last one, and if so, I'm very happy with the outcome.