



Northern Virginia  
Clinical Psychologists

# NVCP NEWSLETTER

NORTHERN VIRGINIA CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

FALL EDITION 2023



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## WE NEED YOU! HELP THE NVCP BOARD! A Message from NVCP President

BY LAURENTIA RUBY, PSYD

The Board needs new members, new ideas, new energy! Joining the NVCP Board is the best way to have a hand in shaping your professional organization. It is a great way to contribute to the field, to get to know colleagues better, and to develop a strong referral network.

We have increased the size of the Board in past years. Now, the time demand on each member is quite reasonable, but we have more frequent openings to fill!

Treasurer (desperate need!): This position has become simpler, as life gets progressively more automated. So it's a really good position for someone who is concerned about time commitment. Ann O'Malley has done a wonderful job for more than 10 years! It's time for someone else to step up. Ann will guide you every step of the way.

Webmaster: Tiffany Duffing has updated our website very recently, so we now need someone to maintain and update content. With our site now running under the VACP website, the VACP office does much of the hands-on work. (See Tiffany's great article in this issue for more information on the website format.)

Continuing Education Chair: I'm so pleased that Mike Schaub has expressed willingness to take on the role of president! However, that means we need someone to take over the critical CE Chair role he serves in currently. Tiffany and Mike have streamlined the program logistics, so it's much more highly automated and time efficient. Serving as CE Chair is a great way to contribute and help shape the content of our excellent CE programming.

Please consider filling any of these roles. Joining the Board is a terrific way to serve the profession at an important, regional level. You will have a formal role and voice in your professional organization and new opportunities to develop deeper connections with your colleagues. Please reach out to me to learn more and/or to lend a helping hand!

[laurentia.ruby@gmail.com](mailto:laurentia.ruby@gmail.com)

## WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!

Sarah Haug, PsyD  
Leesburg, VA

Sara Kim, PhD  
Potomac, MD  
[sarachokim@gmail.com](mailto:sarachokim@gmail.com)

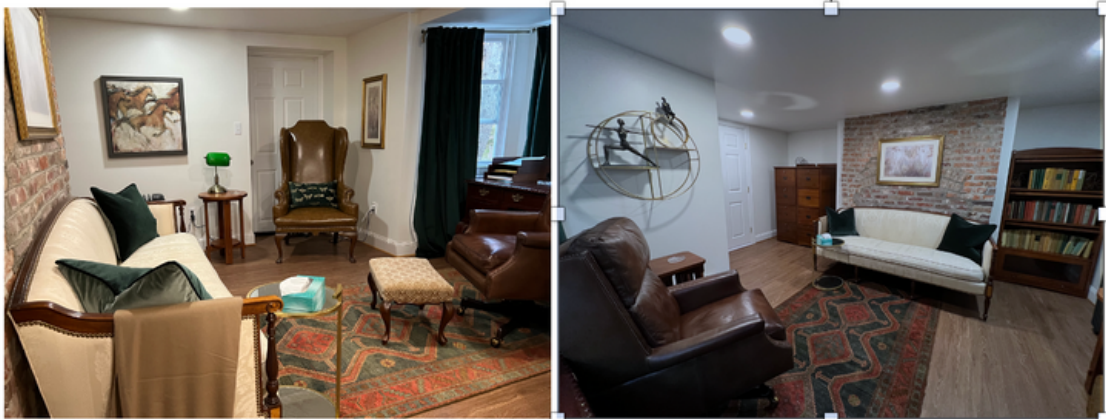
Christina Rock  
Dumfries, VA

Heather Sheets, PsyD  
202-768-2921  
[dhs@drheathersheets.com](mailto:dhs@drheathersheets.com)  
<https://www.drheathersheets.com>

Jordan William, PsyD  
Fredericksburg, VA



Office available for full-time lease in heart of Old Town Alexandria. 168 Sq ft space in historic town house. Office features fireplace, closet, and bay window looking out onto courtyard. Other offices on the same floor occupied by mental health professionals. Shared waiting room and kitchenette with hot water machine, microwave, and fridge. Entire property has recently undergone a major restoration bringing back the beauty of the 200-year-old historic structure. 3-minute walk to King Street, 9 minute walk to the waterfront, 17 minute walk to metro station. Email Dr. Naheed Saleem at [naheedsaleemmd@gmail.com](mailto:naheedsaleemmd@gmail.com) or call/ text her at (757) 343-4848 for inquiries.



## NVCP WEBSITE

**WORKING TO MAKE IT EASIER AND MORE FUNCTIONAL. GO AHEAD - TRY IT OUT!  
FEEDBACK REQUESTED!**

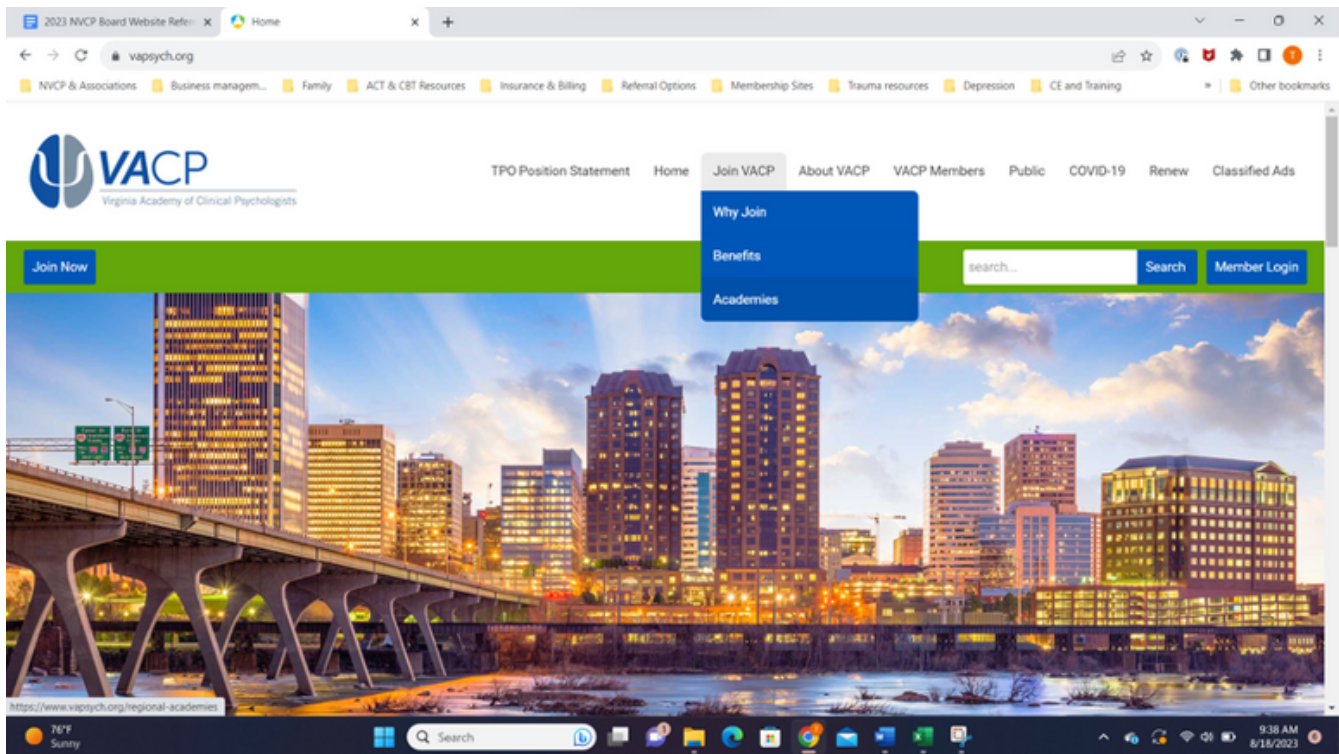
BY TIFFANY DUFFING, PHD

The NVCP Board has been working closely with VACP to update and streamline our NVCP website, while minimizing costs and demands on volunteers' time. We have discontinued our old NVCP website (<https://www.nv-cp.org>) and are now housed under the VACP website, with special NVCP sections (<https://www.vapsych.org/regional-academies>).

Please review the website, using the guides below. We welcome your ideas for making these pages even better for our members and will try our very best to implement all functionally possible requests!

### HOW TO GET TO THE NVCP WEBSITE

1. Enter <https://www.vapsych.org> in your internet browser, to go to the VACP website. Hover your cursor over the words "Join VACP," to the right of the VACP icon at the top of the page. Hovering will reveal a drop-down menu. Scroll down to the third sub-menu called "Academies" (Image 1).

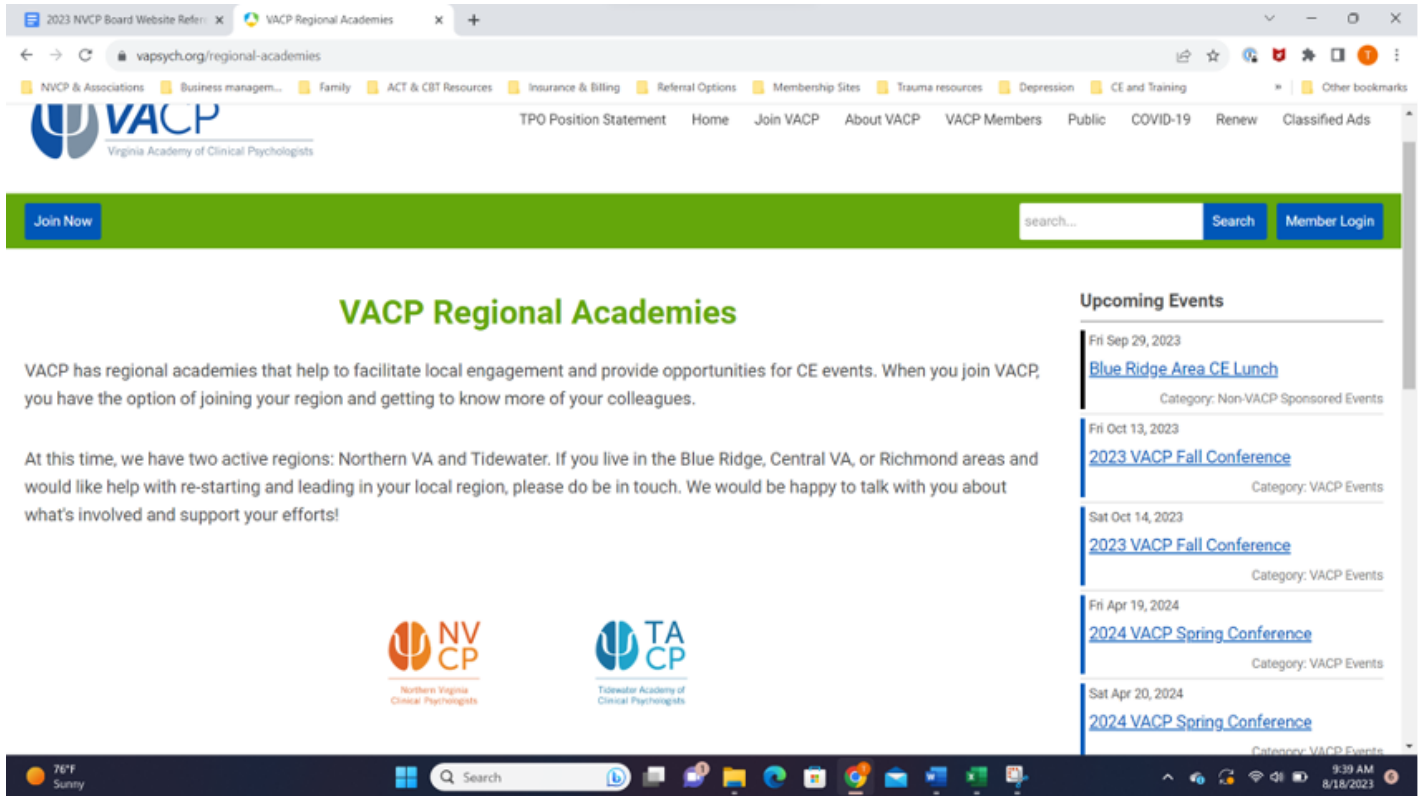


(Image 1: VACP Home Page)



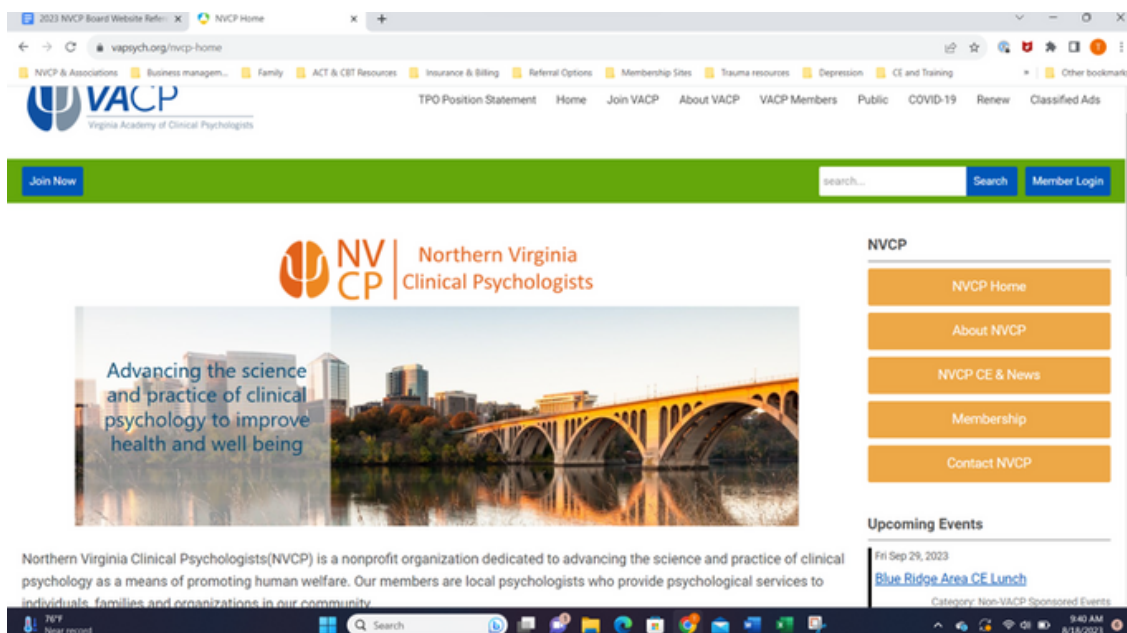
## NVCP WEBSITE

2. Click on “Academies.” Doing so will take you to the “VACP Regional Academies” page (Image 2), giving you the option to select the **orange** “NVCP” icon.



(Image 2: VACP Regional Academies Landing Page with orange NVCP icon at bottom)

3. After clicking on the NVCP icon, you will be directed to the NVCP page (Image 3). Note: **You can also start on this step by saving this web address: <https://www.vapsych.org/nvcp-home>**

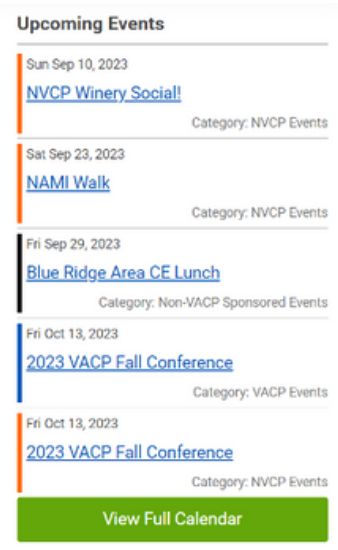


(Image 3: NVCP Landing Page)

## NVCP WEBSITE HOW TO VIEW NVCP INFORMATION

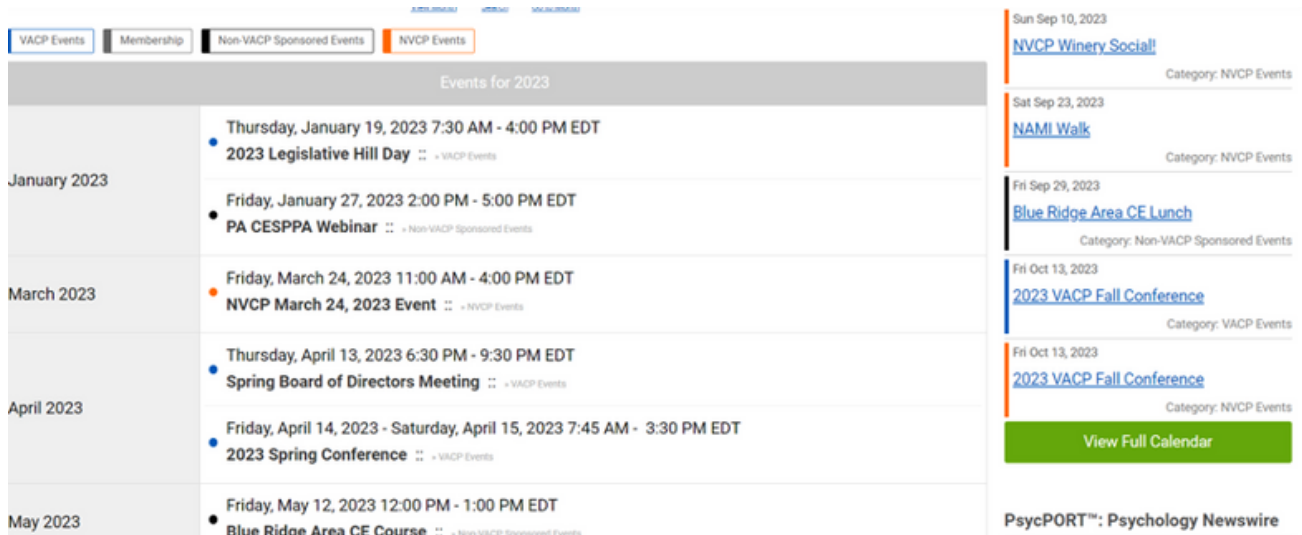
1. On the NVCP page (Image 3, above), you have the option to navigate to the sub-menus featured in orange, on the right (Home; About; CE & News, Membership, and Contact). Be mindful that entering some of these sub-pages will require login. (Although we are working to resolve the need for multiple logins, it is possible that you will have to login again when moving to a different sub-page.)

2. In addition to the NVCP-exclusive information on these sub-pages, our events are also featured on the centralized VACP Calendar. See “Upcoming Events” on the right of each page (Image 4).



(Image 4: Upcoming Events featured on right side of each page)

3. Scrolling to the bottom of the Upcoming Events, you will see a green block titled “View Full Calendar.” Clicking on that will bring up a list of all events for the year (Image 5).



(Image 5: View Full Calendar)

## NVCP WEBSITE


4. Please note that NVCP specific events have an orange dot next to them. You can also select the orange/white rectangle category, which appears near the top of the page and is labeled “NVCP Events” to restrict your view to only NVCP events (Image 6).

Category: ● NVCP Events  
[View All Categories](#)

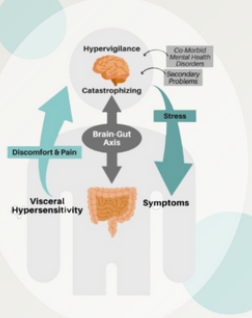
| Events for 2023 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| March 2023      | Friday, March 24, 2023 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM EDT<br>● NVCP March 24, 2023 Event :: → NVCP Events         |
| June 2023       | Friday, June 09, 2023 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM EDT<br>● NVCP CE: June 9, 2023 :: → NVCP Events              |
| September 2023  | Sunday, September 10, 2023<br>● NVCP Winery Social! :: → NVCP Events                                  |
|                 | Saturday, September 23, 2023<br>● NAMI Walk :: → NVCP Events  |
| October 2023    | Friday, October 13, 2023 - Saturday, October 14, 2023<br>● 2023 VACP Fall Conference :: → NVCP Events |

(Image 6: View when selecting Category “NVCP Events”)

The evolution of NVCP web pages will continue over this next year. We welcome your feedback about what is helpful, what is unhelpful, and/or what you would like to see added. You can send your feedback to [nvcpwebsiteandsocialmedia@gmail.com](mailto:nvcpwebsiteandsocialmedia@gmail.com).



### GI SKILLS GROUPS FOR YOUNG ADULTS




**In these 8-week groups, participants will:**

- Learn how stress affects the body and how relaxation can help
- Develop an understanding of the brain-gut connection
- Practice mindfulness strategies
- Engage in focused attention exercises
- Learn cognitive strategies to facilitate stress management and emotion regulation
- Apply strategies to improve gut health

**Thursdays 8:15 AM-9:30AM**  
**Beginning November 2, 2023**

Scan the QR Code to Learn More about the Skills Groups GI Psychology current offers and will be offering in the future!

One-time \$800 registration fee includes all GI Psychology on-boarding support and 8 weekly group sessions



## "CLICK ON THIS"

Old-school bibliotherapy has a tried-and-true partner. Educational and self-help materials are easy “clicks” away for our clients (and for us practitioners, too) via websites, podcasts, and software applications. What are your favorite digital referrals? Here are a few gems you may want to check out!

“Mightier” app: Developed by Harvard Medical School and Boston Children’s Hospital, the app was designed for children ages 6-14, to help strengthen emotion regulation via game playing. It requires a paid monthly subscription, which includes an armband heart-rate monitor and supplementary materials.

“Hidden Brain” podcast: This podcast series requires a paid monthly or annual subscription after a free 7-day trial. (A spin-off podcast, My Unsung Hero, shares good news--something we are all hungry for! It features stories of lives changed by the kindness of others.) Evidence-based education and advice from a variety of guests, the content is curated and hosted by American Journalist Shankar Vedantam (formerly of NPR).

“Job Accommodation Network” website: This [website](#) offers a workplace disabilities accommodation “tool kit,” which can be helpful to providers and clients when considering needs for specific accommodations. Users can search by diagnosis, symptom, or need; explore guidance on requesting accommodations in the workplace; peruse listings of a range of disability-specific accommodations; and create a portal to organize disability-related materials. This “Ask Jan” resource is a service of the U.S. Department of Labor’s [Office of Disability Employment Policy/ODEP](#).

“5-Minute Break: Office Yoga”—a [quick video](#) of easy, stress-relieving stretches by Beyoutifulliving available on YouTube. You might need this right now...or maybe a client does!

Send your favorite resources to [NVCPNewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:NVCPNewsletter@gmail.com)



# LET'S GET TOGETHER FOR FUN AND ACTIVISM!

Fall Social at Paradise Springs Winery...Sunday, October 22 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM at Paradise Springs Winery, 13219 Yates Ford Rd, Clifton, VA 20124.



NAMI Walks Northern Virginia...Saturday, September 23 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, starting at Merten Hall, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA 22030. See [namiwalks.org/northernvirginia](https://namiwalks.org/northernvirginia)



The Out of the Darkness Walk (Fairfax Walk) ...Sunday, October 1 from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Fairfax City Hall, 3999 University Dr., Fairfax, VA 22030. See [afsp.org](https://afsp.org).



**American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention**



For more information, please contact Courtney Ferenz, NVCP Social Chair, at [drcourtneyferenz@gmail.com](mailto:drcourtneyferenz@gmail.com)



## PERMISSION TO DISCUSS (FINALLY!) ADDRESSING MENOPAUSE IN CLINICAL WORK

BY CAROLE W. SEBENICK, PHD

The “CE Corner” in this month’s issue of the *APA Monitor on Psychology* cites disturbing statistics about low numbers of patients who have discussed menopause-related symptoms with their physicians and disparate numbers of Black (compared with White) patients whose doctors inquired about symptoms and offered options for treatment (DeAngelis, 2023). The author of the article asserts that psychologists can and should play critical roles—as diagnosticians, educators, referral agents, and social-emotional supports—in addressing the unmet needs of clients dealing with peri-menopause, menopause, and post-menopause bio-psycho-social changes (DeAngelis, 2023).

Similarly, a recent conversation with Maryland-based clinical psychologist Robyn Miller, PhD, highlighted psychologists’ knowledge, resources, and access that fill an historic void for people dealing with life- and health-altering hormonal changes. The “menopause movement”—marked by front-page references and articles in popular periodicals (e.g., the *New York Times*), TV commercials like a Super Bowl 2023 pharmaceutical ad for “VMS,” and Telehealth hormone replacement practices—is a call to psychologists to take action. We can help patients navigate facts, fiction, myths, and taboos; provide access to professional and peer support; and normalize conversations about menopause. (R. Miller, personal communication, August 28, 2023).

By example, earlier this year Miller designed and piloted an eight-week, structured, psychoeducational and psychotherapeutic group for patients dealing with peri-menopause (when early hormonal changes present preliminary symptoms, despite continued menstruation) and menopause (changes associated with cessation of menstruation). The impetus for the group was her desire to address the concerns of a growing number of individual patients in her practice, who were raising concerns about the pervasive impact on their lives—sleep quality, cognitive changes, sexual relationship health, anxiety, mood problems, etc. Noticing that the social landscape of awareness and resources was changing, and that menopausal patients were a largely untapped treatment group, Miller engaged in considerable self-study and developed a network of other professionals interested in addressing this need.



## **PERMISSION TO DISCUSS (FINALLY!) ADDRESSING MENOPAUSE IN CLINICAL WORK**

Miller's 8-Week Menopause Support Group (two groups scheduled to run again this fall—one beginning this month and another starting in October; both in-person in her Bethesda office and virtual with PsyPact certification) involves weekly, two-hour sessions. During most sessions, the first hour features a presentation by a professional expert on some aspect of menopause; the second hour engages patients in discussion, facilitated by Miller, to sort through their reactions to and personal relevance of the expert information. Guest professionals include a gynecologist, reproductive psychiatrist, exercise physiologist, a dietician, and a sex therapist. Miller stated that the group's mission is to empower women with information to improve symptoms, to advocate for themselves with medical professionals, and to reconsider attitudes about this life transition. It is also about intervening in the public "marketing push...of so many celebrities lending their names and resources to 'menopause' products; to educate patients about what's real and what's 'snake oil' and to help them find reputable sources" of information and intervention (R. Miller, personal communication, August 28, 2023). Educated in bio-psycho-social understandings of health and well-being, psychologists need to talk about menopause. Unlike many professionals who have unidisciplinary expertise, we can address the "whole picture." For instance, we can talk with a patient about the ways in which hormone-based night sweats affect sleep disturbance, which affect cognition and mood, which impact work and social relationships. We can address the feelings of overwhelm, shame, and stigma associated with such interconnected symptoms and experiences.

Other resources have shown that specific psychological interventions can be effective in alleviating some menopausal (especially vasomotor) symptoms (e.g., a 2022 meta-analysis of more than 20,000 science-related articles published in the International Journal of BioMedicine by Samami et al.). Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, cognitive-behavioral therapy, relaxation training, and hypnotherapy were identified as promising, non pharmaceutical interventions.

For more information, please consult—among other great and emerging resources:

DeAngelis, T. (2023). Easing the menopausal transition. *Monitor on Psychology*, 54(6), 36-44.

Miller, R: [Groups - Robyn B. Miller, Ph.D.](#)

Samami, E., Shahhosseini, Z., & Elyasi, F. (2022). The effects of psychological interventions on menopausal hot flashes: A systematic review. *International Journal of Reproductive Biomedicine*, 20(4), 255-272. <https://doi.org/10.18502/ijrm.v20i4.10898>

The Psychology of Menopause, Volumes 1 and 2, in *Frontiers: Global Women's Health*, 2021- (multiple articles and authors).

<https://www.menopause.org/home> (FYI: The Menopause Society advises that education about menopause and normalization of the experience in a group format has a strong effect on women's adjustment and mental health.)

## UPCOMING CONTINUING EDUCATION

BY MIKE SCHAUB, PHD

Please plan to attend our next continuing education training this fall on **October 27, 2023**, at Maggiano's Little Italy in Tyson's II Galleria. We will gather at 11:00 a.m. for networking, lunch, and an informative seminar (wrapping up at 4:00 p.m.). Register at: <https://www.vapsych.org/nvcp-1027>

### **"Overcoming the Internal Barriers to Integrating Sociocultural Sensitivity and Engagement in Clinical Work"**

**(Virginia psychologists will receive 3 CEs for full attendance.)**

**Presenters: Patrice A. Alvarado, Ph.D. & Scott Krysztofiak, Psy.D.**

Demonstrating sociocultural awareness and sensitivity in our clinical work is widely recognized. Psychologists almost universally hold strong values of equity and inclusion and strive to manifest them in both their personal and professional lives. However, it is in fact the deep significance of these principles that can create barriers to fully immersing oneself in the process of learning, evolving, and applying insights.

In this workshop, we will explore the internal barriers to addressing sociocultural issues in clinical work, using research on aversive emotions and self-compassion. Information will be provided on current findings regarding what, how, and why adopting a sociocultural framework is essential to clinical practice, as well as recent information on what clients' needs are in these areas. Experiential exercises and learning will help us recognize and overcome barriers. Finally, strategies to effectively integrate sociocultural awareness and understanding in our work will be addressed.

## SERVING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

BY SCOTT KRYSZTOFIK, PSYD

The fall season includes several months of celebration and awareness. Please check out these links from the National Alliance on Mental Illness and the American Psychological Association to learn more about mental health concerns and specific groups of individuals.

### **September, Hispanic Heritage Month**

[NAMI - Hispanic/Latinx](#)

[APA - Ethnicity and Health in America series](#)

### **October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month**

[NAMI - People with Disabilities](#)

[APA - Disability Issues in Psychology](#)

### **November, Native American Heritage Month**

[NAMI - Indigenous](#)

[APA - Ethnicity and Health in America series](#)

**To all readers:** Your perspectives on working with specific client needs are invited and welcomed for inclusion in future newsletter issues! If you are interested in sharing your recommendations for addressing diversity, please contact Scott Krysztofiak, Diversity Chair, at [nvcpsdiversity@gmail.com](mailto:nvcpsdiversity@gmail.com).

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## VACP Fall Conference

### October 12 - 14, 2023



**Hilton  
Richmond  
Downtown**

Register online at  
[www.VaPsych.org/fall](http://www.VaPsych.org/fall)

**Save  
the Date!**  
VACP Spring  
Conference  
**April 18 - 20, 2024**  
at  
Hotel 24 South  
Staunton, VA



Amber Mason, Ph.D., NCSP  
Licensed Clinical Psychologist  
Founder and Director

**Call:**  
(703) 855-1584

**Email:**  
[info@aptivatesuccess.com](mailto:info@aptivatesuccess.com)

**Visit our website:**  
[www.aptivatesuccess.com](http://www.aptivatesuccess.com)

**We are located at:**  
225 N. Washington St., Second Fl.  
Alexandria, VA 22314



*Helping Youth Elevate Their Aptitude.*

**Aptivate**  
Educational & Psychological Solutions

### **Aptivate Educational and Psychological Solutions**

is a one-stop shop for clinical and educational services for children ages 3 to 18 years in Old Town Alexandria, VA.

*We are currently accepting new clients for **psychological evaluations, psychotherapy, social skills groups, and speech therapy and evaluations!***



**Psychological Services**



**Educational Services**



**Speech Services**



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Wishing to be able to meet with clients in person on flexible terms  
and without long-term commitments?**

Two furnished office spaces, well-suited for full-time, part-time, or hourly use. Both support a telehealth option and can accommodate small group practices.

Please call or text Charles Burt, Ph.D., at 703-899-3290 or email [cburtphd@gmail.com](mailto:cburtphd@gmail.com) for more information on either of these spaces:



21351 Gentry Drive, Cascades/Sterling, across the street from Costco. Pictured is one of the Gentry Drive offices



1800 Michael Faraday Drive, a short walk from the Silverline Metro Station that is located on Wiehle Avenue and Reston Station Boulevard. There is a large EYA Townhouse development that is expanding adjacent to the building, adding to the draw of this location.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Accepting New Patients in Old Town Alexandria and Online

I am primarily psychodynamically oriented and have significant trauma training and specialization in working with **emerging adults, transitions to adulthood, maternal mental health, and reproductive grief and loss**. I also work with patients around a multitude of issues related to **depression, anxiety, work/academic stress and transitions, and relationships**. Serving adults and couples only, I am licensed in Virginia, DC, Maryland, New York and am PsyPact credentialed.



Desiree Pearson, Ph.D., Licensed Clinical Psychologist  
(202)909-3660, [dr.desiree.pearson@protonmail.com](mailto:dr.desiree.pearson@protonmail.com), <https://desireepearsonphd.com/>  
218 N. Lee St., 3rd Floor, Alexandria, VA 22314

\*Office conveniently located near -King St. Metro (Blue or Yellow line) and several DASH bus routes.

\*Out-of-network, provide documentation for patients to submit to insurers for potential partial reimbursement.