

Connectives... *September/October 2002*

Published for Members and Friends of *Mind-Body-Spirit Connected*, Cleveland, Ohio

Mind-Body-Spirit Connected (MBSC) is a nonprofit association dedicated to the education and advancement of non-traditional healing practitioners and holistic methodologies. While there are many organizations that focus on various aspects of holistic practice, *MBSC* strives to bring together all disciplines and to bridge the gap between the holistic and traditional healing communities. *MBSC* encourages an understanding of both eastern and western philosophies.

Inside This Issue:

Databasing Your Clients,
MBSC Committees (pg. 2)

Starting a Practice on a Shoe-string, Lobbying effort for Ancient Healing Arts (insert)

Member Discounts, Chat Room (pg. 3)

Marketing Tip (back cover)



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"Connectives" will share information from a variety of places to expose you to helpful resources for your future reference. The newsletter is provided free of charge to *MBSC* members and on an annual basis to all others for \$12 to help defray printing and postage.

September Program: A Great Way to Spend Your Time

Nearly 60 members and guests took time out of their busy day to attend the September 18th luncheon program on Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. The average rating of evaluations turned in was 8.72 on a 10 scale, with many positive comments about both the quality of the four panelists and the program as a whole. The #1 suggestion made was that more time is needed by the speakers because they are so knowledgeable and have helpful information to share. This is being taken into consideration for the October 17th program on websites.

Special thanks to the following *MBSC* friends for contributing to the success of our September program:

Neal Szpatura donated three sets of his wonderful guided imagery CD's on Shamanic Journeying and Drumming
Body Sense magazine allowed us to reprint their article on massage therapy for Fibromyalgia

Upcoming MBSC Events

Be sure to reserve the following dates on your calendar. Even if the topic doesn't sound especially exciting, you'll get value from regular networking with other holistic practitioners.

October 7, 2002 6:30 p.m. *Networking Social & Annual Meeting*
(members only) – No charge

October 17, 2002 7:45 a.m. *Websites: A Powerful Tool*

Do you need a website? How much will it cost to develop or maintain? What can you do to save money? What resources are available? What are potential pitfalls?

October 21, 2002 8:00 a.m. *"Talking Circle" on Websites* – an informal gathering at Brielle's in Brecksville (on 21) to further discuss concepts and issues from the 10/17 program on Internet/Web development strategies.

November 19, 2002 Dinner *Ethics in Holistic Practice*

December 10, 2002 6:00 p.m. *Holiday Networking Social* at Lockkeepers

Looking for Administrative Angels

The middle of October will be busy for *MBSC* as we get ready for our program on 10/17 and also label, stamp, and sort 1,400 program flyers for the next event. If you can spare some time and would like to help with the direct mailing, please contact Donna Nowak by phone or email. Work parties will be scheduled in Cleveland Heights during the day or evening Tuesday 10/15 and Wednesday 10/16, (possibly Friday morning 10/18 also). This is a great way to get involved in our organization.

Committees Contribute to MBSC's Success

MBSC's ability to provide high-quality services and educational programs (to members and the public) expands significantly through committee activity. Members who generously volunteer their time and talents are critical to our success.

Following is a list of committees and members who have volunteered to participate so far:

Ethics/Legal

Jim Kozumplik, Chris Meyer and Rachel Rizzi

Grant Writing/Fundraising

Cheryl Dalton and Sandy Rosenbluth

Member Benefits

Cheryl Dalton, Karyn Pistone and Sandy Rosenbluth

Marketing/PR

Linda Droblich

Newsletter/Directory

Rachel Rizzi, Linda Droblich

Programming

Mary Schwendeman, Pam Warren and Sarah Weiss

Speakers Bureau

Julie Mitchell, Carol Spears, Neal Szpatura and Tom Walker

Talking Circles

Elyse Felber, Elaine Gallovic and Michael Stadul

If you are an MBSC member interested in committee participation, please contact Donna Nowak immediately at 216-321-9181. And if you already volunteered but have somehow slipped through our fingertips, pick up the phone now!

If none of the committees listed above hit your "hot" button, call anyway to find out what else is going on behind the scenes or may still be in start-up!

Databasing 101: Analyze Your Client Profile?

At the July program, guest speaker Trina Becksted mentioned "databasing" in passing. At least one guest noted on their program evaluation that they didn't understand what she meant by this term, so this article will talk about just one aspect of your holistic practice which might benefit by a database. The databases that we are referring to here are simply a file or series of files containing the information that one believes is important about the customers, and arranged in a way that makes it easy to read and work with. This is most easily done on a computer utilizing a database management, spreadsheet or even contact management software; but even a manual compilation of data would be beneficial.

The Marketing/Sales departments of companies all around the world create databases to help them analyze their customers. Maybe they study demographics (age, geography, education, income, or other facts about customers) in order to get a clear picture of who buys their products. This way they know at whom they should target their advertising campaigns. They probably analyze customer sales, i.e., what \$ amount did each customer purchase in a specific timeframe, what products did they buy, are sales increasing year-to-year, do they seem to sell more in one part of the country than another or at one time of year versus another? The better they understand the buying patterns of customers, the better they can determine appropriate sales/marketing strategies.

As a holistic practitioner, what kind of "databasing" could help you? The key to what you put in your database, and how you format it, is in the questions that you want it to help you answer. Do you know how your clients heard about you (newspaper, Yellow Pages, Internet, paid advertising, lobby brochures, referrals, etc.)? If you offer more than one service, how many clients do you have for each? Is your business seasonal, i.e., is it stronger during some months than others? Is your business growing each year? Do you know why?

Here's a simple, hypothetical database belonging to a massage therapist who typically offered a 1-hour massage at \$55 and 1-1/2 hour at \$75 on Tuesdays and Thursdays only. On 2/24, a Val-Pak mailing advertised a 1-1/2 hour massage for \$70 and mentioned Saturday as an added day ("You can get an extra 1/2 hour for only \$15!")

January			\$	Service	Source (How'd they find you?)
Thu	1/10	Mary Smith	55	1-hr	Brochure
Thu	1/17	John Doe	55	1-hr	Referral
February					
Thu	2/7	Bill Williams	55	1-hr	Yellow Pages
Tue	2/12	Patty Barber	55	1-hr	Brochure
Thu	2/14	Jeremy Barts	55	1-hr	Referral
March					
Sat	3/2	Barb Rush	70	1-1/2 hr	Val-Pak
Sat	3/9	Bonnie Butler	70	1-1/2 hr	Val-Pak
Thu	3/14	Clyde Jones	70	1-1/2 hr.	Repeat
Sat	3/16	Neil Simmons	70	1-1/2 hr.	Brochure
Thu	3/19	Jerry Burk	55	1-hr.	Yellow Pages
Sat	3/23	Sally Smith	70	1-1/2 hr.	Val-Pak

Now, of course, this is not a whole lot of information yet to analyze, and for brevity's sake, we deliberately minimized the # of clients. Even so, from this limited database, several things might pique your curiosity.

1. No clients booked 1-1/2 hour sessions in January or February. Is this because people won't give up that much time on a weekday/night? Was it because they weren't willing to spend \$75 for a massage? Something else?
2. Why only one repeat customer in three months?
3. It looks like the Val-Pak coupon generated nice business, but what did the ad cost? Was it a worthwhile investment?

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Databasing: Analyze Your Client Profile (cont'd from previous page)

4. Did business stay strong in April and May, or will you have to continue regularly with coupon ads to generate the additional business?
5. How much are you paying for the Yellow Pages ad? If you average two clients every three months, is it a good investment?

Understanding the geographic distribution of your customers could enable you to tailor the Zip Code for which the next ad would be included in the ValPak, which might save considerable advertising cost. A database can provide important answers, but you need to develop the questions!

For more information, talk with someone who has successfully used databases as an analytical tool, or find a marketing consultant you trust to help you. Marsha Wertz attended MBSC's July 10th program, and she is familiar with client software that would allow you to track patient/client history by computer, so you may even wish to call her at 216-297-9767.

Starting a Practice on a Shoestring by Linda Otto, IMDHA

Many of us have been trained, certified, or licensed to be technically competent practitioners, but how many of us were coached by that training center in the fine art of moving into a new career or successfully launching a new business? Well, the article below may provide helpful insight in response to those questions.

The article was written by Linda Otto and included in the July/August newsletter of the International Medical & Dental Hypnotherapy Association (IMDHA). Although Ms. Otto's article may have been geared toward hypnotherapists, you will see that her marketing tips could be beneficial to a wide variety of holistic practices. Our thanks to not only Linda for authoring the article, but to Dr. Anne Spencer-Beacham, Director of IMDHA, for graciously allowing us to include the article in our newsletter for your benefit. Wherever the word hypnosis was used in the original article, it has been changed to generically address holistic practice.

“Advertise, Advertise, Advertise...”

First and foremost the general public needs to be aware of the services that you are offering. While newspaper, yellow pages, and professional brochures are a surefire way to generate new clients, advertising in this capacity is not always cost effective to the beginner, and quite, frankly, it's not the only way for you to generate new clients.

A personal computer can be your best friend when first starting out in this field. There are many software programs available on the market today for a nominal fee that you can use to create professional-looking business cards, brochures, flyers and stationary. Capitalize on the creative ingenuity of the software makers. Unless you have personal experience in graphic designing or have worked in the marketing field previously, this is a surefire way to create professional looking pieces at a nominal fee. If you don't have a personal computer, I'm certain that you know someone who does and could possibly assist you in this venture.

Essential information to be included on your stationary is your name, the name of your business, the services you provide, your address, telephone number and office hours. All too often I have personally encountered business cards of professional looking quality, only to find that there is no address or telephone number where the advertiser can be reached. This not only decreases your chances of being contacted for your services, it inadvertently sends a signal to the recipient that you either do not have an office where they can contact you or that there is something to “hide”. Some people are skeptical where holistic practice is concerned. Make sure they get the positive message you desire. You don't want to give them the illusion that your holistic practice is something “shady” or “underhanded”. Be sure to include all pertinent information in your advertising.

Once you have created professional handouts depicting your services, the next step is to place them in areas where the general public will find them easily. By that I mean, place your brochures and business cards in areas such as other alternative therapy offices, massage centers, chiropractic offices, health food stores, pharmacies, medical buildings and such. This will zero in on people who would more likely be open to the services you provide. It also serves as a referral of sorts, as to where they got the card in the first place. Obtaining a brochure or business card from one of these facilities gives a more professional appearance than if the advertising material were found in a public telephone booth or local tavern! So avoid areas that are not conducive to the services you are providing. You will get a better percentage response per advertising dollar if your cards are placed in appropriate areas.

Free Advertising

There is no better way of getting FREE advertisements than to offer your services to give free lectures or demonstrations on the benefits of your holistic practice. Some of the advertising from which I benefited over the years while giving free lectures or demonstrations couldn't be bought at any price! Contact your local community health center or college and offer to give a free lecture or demonstration. Another resource is organizations that meet monthly, like men's lodges and women's clubs. How about the local chapter of the YWCA, YMCA, civic centers or adult learning facilities? They are always looking for new and interesting speakers and/or items of interest. If you're not too familiar with addressing a general audience, start with a small group and work

Continued on reverse

Starting a Practice on a Shoestring (cont'd from other side)

your way up to larger groups as your experience grows! You will be pleasantly surprised by how many referrals you get for the minimal amount of time it takes for you to offer your services to these groups. You will be spending little time and no money. Do this and watch your business grow!

Once you have arranged a free demo or lecture, don't forget to bring free "handouts" for the attendees. This is something tangible that they can carry home with them and use as a reference in the future, should they or any of their family or friends ever be in need of your services.

You are the best advertisement

They say the best form of advertising is the example one sets. You are a walking, talking advertisement for your services. Set a good example to others for the services you wish to provide. A hypnotist talking to a prospective client about obtaining services for a stop-smoking session with a cigarette in his/her hand is hardly worth the effort of the words expressed! Everywhere you go, everything you say or any action taken is being carefully scrutinized by onlookers. Even if no words or comments are spoken, be certain that you are leaving a lasting visual impression upon the watchful eyes of your contact.

There is a time and place for selling your services. When making new contacts for prospective clients, do so in a professional environment. Trying to ascertain prospective clients in the local bar is hardly my idea of professionalism. Especially when you've had a few drinks yourself. Try to avoid these circumstances at all cost. You will lose the respect and admiration of others and possibly forfeit any new business due to the atmosphere in which the conversation took place. Now, I'm not saying that you can't make contacts at a local bar or community event, what I am proposing is that you wait to talk about professional matters in a professional environment. Give them your card and ask them to contact you at a later date.

Use your resources

As your initial training comes to an end, be sure to take advantage of all resources available to you. Certainly as you leave the comforting nest of your qualified instructor, he/she has given you an ample amount of contacts, reading material and resources. By all means use them. There are many organizations that offer excellent benefits to their members. Be sure to join. Professional memberships can be a valuable tool for contacts. Some organizations offer a professional referral directory. The nominal cost of initially joining is one of the best investments you can make. They may also offer mentoring programs, annual conventions, mini workshops and lectures throughout the year, a quarterly publication, professional practitioner insurance, networking with other like-minded individuals, and other wonderful services too numerous to mention. Additionally, the advertising that is offered is one of national or international proportions. This is by far one of the best investments for your dollars.

In addition to the quality diverse education that is offered by attending the conferences, you will come away feeling refreshed and invigorated. You will have the opportunity to network with other professionals in the business. Some may become your friends for a lifetime. Networking with other professionals can also provide another valuable resource for new clients. Professional referrals from other therapists are a common occurrence in this field. And the best way to start is to attend the annual conventions and *make those connections*.

Office sharing is an affordable alternative for the beginning therapist. This is not only a viable choice in terms of financial expenditures, but if the office is shared with another health care professional, the traffic generated from others will give you additional exposure at no additional expense. I'm certain that there are many alternative health facilities in your area that have an ample amount of unoccupied space and would welcome the idea of office sharing and lowering their monthly expenditures. Search for an office-sharing partner in your local health and fitness centers, a chiropractic center, massage center or another alternative therapy office. Most established businesses already have essential office furnishings in place. Paying a nominal fee to rent a room from an established facility will save you a lot of money in initial office set-up costs. The prime location for initiating a new office may be around a professional building or professional medical office. It will give your business the look of professionalism in the health care field simply by *association*.

While there are many additional ideas and helpful suggestions that are aimed at getting you started, we hope that some of the suggestions mentioned in this article will serve as a foundation or beginning for you. By all means, take advantage of every opportunity available to you. Network. Let people know about the training you've just received. Be open and receptive to new ideas and options. And by doing so, we are certain that you will be well on your way to establishing a flourishing, profitable and steady holistic practice.

Linda Otto sits on the IMDHA Honorary Advisory Board as secretary. She will be presenting a seminar on this topic at the Annual IMDHA Conference October 24-29 in Troy, MI.

Ancient Healing Arts Association is in the early stages of start-up for holistic practitioners and may be of interest to you. This new organization was formed as a "for-profit" business so they could dedicate a percentage of their "dues" to pay for lobbyists and lawyers to keep the Ancient Healing Arts alive. If you are concerned about legislation and regulation promoted by other groups, this association may be your answer. Check out AncientHealingArts.org

Benefits for MBSC Members

Office Products Discount

A one-year strategic alliance agreement between *MBSC* and Viking Office Products entitles members to receive a 10% discount on all products sold by Viking, even if they're already on sale. This is a fantastic offer since Viking's regular prices are already lower than Office Max, Quill and others on many products, so the discount is an added bargain. Viking offers fast delivery; free delivery on orders of \$25 or more; and friendly, efficient customer service. The product selection is huge, and they'll generously provide catalogs for your shopping convenience.

Be on the lookout for information directly from Viking soon. And get ready to save money on both your routine and special office supplies.

Office Services Discount

Web Design:

Rodswebdesign.com created and hosts the websites for Donna Nowak and *MBSC* locally, as well as a wide variety of other sites nationally. This company was also the first to become an *MBSC* bronze sponsor for the October 17th program on Website Development Strategies. Rodney Dawson routinely extends a 10% discount off his standard pricing to *MBSC* members.

To preview Rod's work, see:

MBSCOnline.org DonnaNowak.com rodswebdesign.com

Accounting/Tax/Advisory:

Ciuni & Panichi (C&P) offers to *MBSC* members a program similar to what they have been doing for COSE members. They will provide 30-60 minutes of advice on small business accounting, tax, and general advisory matters free of charge to *MBSC* members.

If you are an *MBSC* member interested in any products or services under this discount program, please call the office at 216-321-9181 for more details.

MBSC Speakers Bureau

If you have successful experience presenting workshops or lectures on your holistic topic or you are well-versed in talking about the wide range of complementary modalities, you may want to volunteer for *MBSC*'s Speakers' Bureau, likely to launch in early 2003.

The Speakers Bureau will provide a public educational service at no charge to non-profit and/or other interested groups. This is consistent with our proposal to be recognized as a 501(C)(3) tax-exempt organization by the federal government, educating the community concerning holistic practice and complementary healing methodologies. Members' workshops will be marketed to a wide range of organizations, resulting in increased market exposure and perhaps new business opportunities.

Carol Spears of Heart in Hands is chairing the committee that includes *MBSC* members Julie Mitchell, Neal Szpatura and Tom Walker. The committee is currently working behind the scenes to develop guidelines to ensure high-quality programs and all the standard operating procedures (SOP's) that support those guidelines.

MBSC "Chat Room" is Launched

A guest from the audience at our July program asked if *MBSC* might eventually have a chat room on its website. We contacted our website designer, Rodney Dawson, shortly thereafter and he began building our chat room. Although it is still somewhat in development, visit our website and click on "Online Discussion" to see how we have progressed. You can post an inquiry, and any other visitor can respond; the conversation can continue as long as it is helpful. So, visit *MBSCOnline.org* and see who will talk back to you!

Other Discounts Being Investigated for MBSC Members

The Member Benefits Committee has developed a long list of products and services that would be of interest to *MBSC* members. At their meeting on September 11, they identified five priorities and they are currently researching high-quality service providers who will offer a discount. Karyn Pistone is chair of the committee, which includes Sandy Rosenbluth and Cheryl Dalton. If you have a marketing or sales background and would like to join this committee, or if you know of high-quality organizations offering products/services of interest to our membership who might be interested in extending a discount to *MBSC*, please contact Karyn at 216-321-7523 or email her at k_pistone@hotmail.com

Please Note

If you have articles, ideas or corrections for *Connectives*, please email them to us at MBSCHelp@cs.com, or mail to: 23210 Chagrin Blvd. Suite 211, Beachwood 44122. (Please be sure to include the suite number.) Due to the divergence of views among its readers, the editors and publishers of *Connectives* disclaim responsibility for the opinions expressed by its contributors.

For added details on upcoming *MBSC* events or more news on the association, please refer to our website at *MBSCOnline.org*

Marketing Tip

The last issue of *Connectives* informed you of a free Internet directory listing for “healers”, as well as a referral service for Cayce-focused health professionals. Today, we want to tell you about OneBody, a website that provides you a free web-page and no-charge membership. Simply go to this address: www.onebody.com, click on "For Health Professionals," then click "Join OneBody Now" and supply the requested information.

If you have any questions regarding this website and its appropriateness for you, you may also contact OneBody at the following email address: practitionersupport@onebody.com or call them at 888-922-9452.

If you know of other free directory listings for practitioners or health professionals, please share the information with us so we can spread the word.



Exchange Corner

Books, Gifts and Other – Journeys Books & Gifts, located at 19110 Old Detroit Road in Rocky River, is offering a 10% discount on the purchase of all non-sale items to *MBSC* members. Be sure to tell the cashier you are an *MBSC* member before your order is rung up. Special thanks to Journeys’ owner, Sherry Ascher, for this benefit to *MBSC*.

Sharing Your Brochures - If you’d like to display your brochures or business cards at *MBSC* programs, simply bring them with you. We’ll have a table set up for your convenience. Just be sure to take any leftovers with you when you leave. Anything left at the conclusion of the program may be discarded.



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C o n n e c t i v e s . . . a bi-monthly newsletter for holistic practitioners

If you are not an *MBSC* member and you wish to continue receiving this newsletter, please see page one.