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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AGPA CONNECT ANNUAL GROUP-BASED MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS TRAINING  
TO BE HELD VIRTUALLY FEBRUARY 13 – FEBRUARY 27, 2021

NEW YORK, January 7, 2021 – The American Group Psychotherapy Association (AGPA) is hosting its 2021 Annual Training, *Virtual AGPA Connect*, online in February. The 78<sup>th</sup> annual conference offers an extraordinary array of state of the art educational offerings. Entitled “The Power of Groups in a Challenging World,” this experience promises to include the development of new clinical approaches, refinement of therapeutic methods, exchange of clinical and empirical knowledge with colleagues, exposure to current research and theory, and the opportunity to participate with a multidisciplinary peer support network.

Group therapists of all disciplines will gather to learn the most effective techniques in working with a variety of populations in groups, a valuable modality due to its effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. The theme reflects the meeting’s emphasis on the power of groups to effect change in meaningful ways on personal and societal levels.

“*AGPA Connect* is the source for experiential training in leading therapeutic groups,” said Molyn Leszcz, MD, FRCPC, CGP, DFAGPA, AGPA President. “This annual training is a one-of-a-kind educational opportunity to learn group skills in an innovative format that blends learning with self-care and rejuvenation. We believe the virtual format of this year’s conference will enable increased access for all.”

AGPA Connect is designed for clinicians, mental health workers, psychiatric residents and graduate students in mental health degree programs. It is composed of three major sections:

- **Two-Day Institute (Saturday - Sunday, February 13 -14)** devoted to small group teaching primarily in the experiential mode. There will be a special Institute Plenary Address on Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup> at 7pm delivered by **Alexis Abernethy, PhD, CGP, FAGPA, Chief of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena California**
- **Special Institutes (Friday, February 19th)** two session options, each taught by prominent clinicians
  - **Aaron Black, PhD, CGP, Faculty, Center for Group Studies, Rochester, New York**
  - **Zindel Segal, PhD, Founder of Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) and professor of psychology at University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada**
- **Three-Day Conference (Thursday - Saturday, February 25-27)** offering a variety of formats, including courses, limited registration workshops, and open session panels on special topics and original scientific papers. Special events through the conference include:
  - Conference Opening Plenary Address (2/25): “A Relational Approach to Working with Maltreated Children,” **Bruce Perry, MD, PhD, Senior Fellow at the Child Trauma Academy**

- Mitchell Hochberg Memorial Public Education Event (2/26): “Incarcerated Truths: Finding Unexpected Hope and Connection,” **Elizabeth Ford, MD**, bestselling author seen on the Daily Show with Trevor Noah
- Anne and Ramon Alonso Plenary Address (2/27): “Group Healing to Address the Wounds of Racial Trauma,” **Thema Bryant-Davis, PhD**, Associate Professor of Psychology at Pepperdine University
- Louis R. Ormont Lecture (2/27): **J. Scott Rutan, PhD, CGP-R, DFAGPA**, former president of AGPA and recipient of the Harold S. Bernard Group Psychotherapy Training Award 2020

This one-of-a-kind event, bringing together many of the nation’s leading group therapists, will explore the variety of ways in which group therapy can help people and communities in today’s world. Scholarships are also available to attend this Meeting. For more information, contact AGPA at 877-668-AGPA (2472) or visit [www.agpa.org](http://www.agpa.org).

EDITOR’S NOTE: Media are invited to attend select sessions of **AGPA Connect 2021**. To register, please send an e-mail request to [dfairman@agpa.org](mailto:dfairman@agpa.org) or call 877-668-AGPA (2472).

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## About AGPA

The American Group Psychotherapy Association (AGPA) is the foremost professional association dedicated to the field of group psychotherapy, operating through a tri-partite structure: AGPA, a professional and educational organization; the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health, its philanthropic arm; and the International Board for Certification of Group Psychotherapists, a standard setting and certifying body. AGPA represents over 2,000 mental health professional members including psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers, as well as mental health, family, and pastoral counselors, many of whom have been recognized as specialists through the Certified Group Psychotherapist credential. Its members are experienced mental health professionals who lead psychotherapy groups and various non-clinical groups. Many are organizational specialists who work with businesses, not-for-profit organizations, communities and other "natural" groups to help them improve their functioning. The association also has 21 local and regional societies located across the country.

AGPA is committed to supporting the dignity and psychological safety of every individual without discrimination regarding race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sex, age, or disability. Central to our mission is a belief in the power of groups to treat mental illness, heal the scars from traumatic events, and enhance the well-being of adults and children in their families, schools, corporate settings, and communities.

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