Marlene M. Maheu · Kenneth P. Drude Shawna D. Wright *Editors* 

# Career Paths in Telemental Health



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ISBN 978-3-319-23735-0 DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-23736-7

ISBN 978-3-319-23736-7 (eBook)

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016946372

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Printed on acid-free paper

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### Foreword by L'Abate

Can a profession devoted to helping people make positive behavior changes, in turn, modify its own clinical practices? If the stages of change model can be applied to a profession, and the mental health profession in particular, the change is now taking place as witnessed in this new volume. Contributors to this volume who have meditated, processed, and thought about incorporating Internet technology in their work demonstrate here how they eventually had no choice but to embrace the Internet as the next medium of psychological help and healing in this century. The diverse paths these varied professionals took toward their use of technology highlight the many individual ways technology may be used to benefit people needing services.

In the 1970s under the influence of the late attorney, Dan McDougald, I started to use programmed writing as a way to change and improve behavior, especially with inmates. When I gave then a workshop about distance writing at a GPA annual meeting, only three colleagues attended and two left after my introductory remarks. At the time, the idea that you could change behavior through distance writing was anathema to all those trained in the primacy of personal presence. In fact, many of my GPA colleagues began to avoid me. I had experimental results from my own students and my laboratory to support this position, but evidence is not always convincing in the face of strong traditional beliefs.

With the many varied contributions of this volume, I do feel a sense of vindication. However, I feel we are still only at the beginning of a great change. In 1976 I argued that only structured, replicable interventions based on writing would result in an empirically based profession of clinical psychology. In my opinion, the clinical psychology profession has continued to practice as art rather than as an empirical science. This, in spite of the more recent movement toward evidence-based interventions. Here the basic steps to pre-post- and follow-up evaluation were completely forgotten: process was valued above outcome. However, as long as these empirically based interventions were based on face-to-face talk, there was no way to replicate them.

The clinical mental health professions, lacking any organizational limits, have continued to practice as artists, no initial baseline, no post-intervention evaluation,

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and no follow-up. Gaudiano and Scott Lilienfeld (reference here please) in their writings have emphasized how the public tends to view clinicians as artists rather than professionals. The medical model has been cited as the underlying rationale for this kind of practice, to urge defensive rebuttals to possible criticisms. The idea that a referral should be linked with a concrete and specific targeted treatment was frowned upon. Talk and personal presence seemed to be the magic formula without a specific strategy. Some would say that clinical success was measured by how many professionals were financially successful.

The contributors to this volume appear at a crucial point in the evolution from auditory-verbal psychotherapies to visually digital remote writing interventions. They reflect a question that faces the twenty-first century clinician as to whether they are going to use replicable, targeted programmed remote interactive interventions that have been validated with pre-post- and follow-up client by single client. Will they continue practicing online in the same manner as face-to-face psychotherapists, without internal or external controls? Or will they practice (as psychologists were trained to do) in a replicable and scientific manner that provides a baseline, a targeted treatment, and follow-up? Anything short of these three steps departs from the scientific realm and enters the artistic realm. If it is not replicable in evaluation and in treatment, it remains in the artistic realm, do not need to demonstrate the validity of their productions. The last time I counted, there were 23 different types of psychotherapy where eclecticism prevented the need for a model responsible for change. But with the use of technology, as reflected in the experiences of this book, we are on the brink of a newer, more precise and scientific approach to helping those with psychological problems.

Georgia State University Atlanta, GA, USA

Luciano L'Abate

### Foreword by Zimbardo

I remember vividly the very first time I became aware of how technology could transform my teaching in dramatic ways. I have taught large lecture classes at different universities and realized that a teacher in a large auditorium must become a performer. That means going well beyond simply delivering information, but also to captivate, motivate, and inspire students to want to know more about psychology and life. But at a simple level, these grand themes get reduced to getting the students to attend to what you are saying and showing, to hold that attention for nearly an hour, and also from time to time, to divert it from one topic to another.

I also always wanted to make my class unique and memorable among all the others that students were taking. To do so I relied upon technologies of the time: I began my class with warm-up music, played through a CD player connected to big speakers; presented the outline of my lecture on an overhead transparency; showed 60–100 slides on the carousel slide projector; and showed 16 mm films on a separate film projector. In addition, I also would regularly do class demonstrations and many experiments.

One day, in the middle of teaching a lecture on mental illness and its treatment, a student in the front row began to giggle loudly. I tried to simply stare her down to stop, which stifled the sound, but not the negative headshaking. I could not understand what was funny about some of the tragic cases I was presenting of severe mental illness. I asked her to remain after class, which she did, and to explain what was so funny.

"You are funny, running around the stage like a madman turning one device after another, on and off, into the audience to start the film, back to overhead transparency, reveal revealing line by line moving a piece of cardboard marker!"

I asked her: "How else is it possible to operate all those AV-devices, without doing what I was doing, and have been doing for years?"

"DIGITIZE."

"What does that mean," I asked puzzled.

She, Cindy Wang, asked me to let her demonstrate how to do so, rather than try to explain. She then asked me to give her all my AV materials. I reluctantly shared

them, but was open to any new gimmick that might make my teaching better and easier.

The next day Cindy came to my office and exchanged the two slide trays, music CD, overhead transparency, and 16 mm film reel for one little disk, something called a DVD. She had somehow transferred all that analog information and input into a digital format that could be burned to a disk, which could be all played through a computer—at one station with no frantic antics. It was sheer magic. Of course, I hired her as my tech TA for the next few years, and together we reprogrammed my class lectures and also my research-colloquium lectures. My life got easier, and my lectures became "dazzling" as I learned how to use PowerPoint, Keynote, and now Prezi performance programs for combining audio, video, and information.

In my next class lecture following the one on mental illness, I was discussing different forms of therapy and raised the issue of various barriers and obstacles that prevented someone who needed help to actually go to a therapist's office for the therapy he or she had available for clients. I had started the first therapy center in the world at Stanford University focused entirely on treating extremely shy people. However, many shy people were unable to call our office phone to make an initial appointment, so we had to provide a mailing address in order for some of them to do that. That experience sensitized me to the many reasons potential clients do not become actual clients. Among them are living in a rural or remote area, lack of transportation, lack of sufficient funds to pay for the service, language barriers, and appointment timing issues, such as can't take off from work during daytime office hours, among others.

So how can these barriers be converted to challenges that can be adequately handled by technology? If potential clients simply had access to a computer, iPad, or smartphone, they cannot only make appointments, but the therapeutic session itself would be available on those services. Thinking in this way is the equivalent to my earlier lesson to simply "digitize." This is such a simple idea but one with enormous positive consequences. Fortunately, many professionals in mental health domains now have available such services provided by the wedding of information technology with the future-oriented thinking of the editors of this unique volume, along with its many talented contributors.

The bottomline of my introduction is to alert you, the reader, along with all professionals with mental health degrees about the revolution that is happening in the world of telehealth. Why should you care?

First, there will be ample and rewarding employment in the information technology (IT) industry. Four introductory chapters discuss the importance of technology and what's going on that impacts behavioral and mental health. They focus on healthcare reform, legal and regulatory changes, education, and mental health. These introductory chapters are followed by 30–35 short chapters each written by educators, counselors, or psychologists who started out in behavioral health and now works in somewhere in this new tech sector.

From my perspective, it is not only my colleagues in psychology that I want to alert about this exciting new adventure so they can be in the forefront of this movement, but all behavioral scientists should know about and appreciate fully this revolution that combines the wisdom of ages of effective therapies with new technologies that hold the promise of delivering these strategies to so many more people whose lives can be enhanced by such easy and always available treatment options.

Stanford University

Philip Zimbardo, Ph.D.

### **Preface**

As dreamers who know they are dreaming, most of us realize that we are in the midst of unprecedented change, even as we engage in the minutia of everyday life. Relatively mundane tasks such as buying our groceries or pumping our gas are now often dependent on technology. Sleek, hip, and oh-so-convenient, our mobile phones bring a world of computing to our hip pockets.

Our youth have adapted to this change in ways that leave many of us in awe. Young people, even very young people, now have the capacity to dazzle and amaze us with their technical prowess. They reverse the teacher-student roles quietly, as they help us untangle our email or bring our PowerPoints to life with video and audio effects that flip and whiz. Professors cannot teach without being aware that any student can take a picture of the professor's every gesture, facial expression or body stance at any time, to post YouTube with a particularly humorous or scathing comment. For those in the behavioral health field, it is apparent that technology increasingly offers new opportunities for delivering professional services. However, these opportunities, no matter how promising, remain elusive to many. This is uncharted territory, and how and where to begin or where to go can be a daunting experience.

Welcome to the future. This book on technology in behavioral health aims to provide real insights into how one can envision a career that is fully integrated with the technological environment. It is intended to inspire both graduate students and experienced behavioral and mental health professionals by offering perspectives on emerging, nontraditional career paths that derive from the current technology revolution. Based on personal histories, it illustrates how some professionals have successfully embraced technology to the benefit of their careers and their clients' health. It is readily apparent that, for many of our chapter authors, inspiration and the excitement of exploration have led to new ways of contributing to our respective fields. Themes of rigorous discipline, adversity, ingenuity, wisdom, and plain good luck are evident through various age groups, disciplines, employment settings, and continents represented by our authors. From young and old; from hospital adminis-

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trators, physicians, lawyers, and psychiatrists to social workers, psychologists, nurses, counselors, and in between; from hospitals to universities; from private and group practices to corporate settings; and from various countries, our authors were all eager to share their stories of carving a personal career path by embracing new technology.

They are a new breed of behavioral and mental health professionals who can serve as models who point the way for others to follow. While fascinating and often engrossing, the specifics of the stories you will read in this book are *not the way*. Rather, the editors of this text encourage you to look beyond the individual stories of the chapter authors whose stories are offered. You are encouraged to consider the experiences described herein to help you to plot your own path toward your technology-related career and professional goals. Although it can be challenging to adapt to the emerging 21st Century landscape, behavioral health professionals are optimally equipped for engaging in change rather than just theorizing, lecturing, researching or guiding others to weather such difficult processes. Luckily for you, the many different authors of this book's chapters have made unprecedented leaps of faith to get to where they are now. As a reader then, you are in the fortunate position to benefit from an inside glimpse of their successes, failures and words of wisdom regarding how to get from a bahavioal health degree to a satisfying career in a technology-related field.

Five introductory chapters were invited to provide a real-world, practical context for the individual stories of the pioneering adventurers whose experiences are depicted in the main body of this book. The five chapters defining the perimeter of the area include general advances in the age of health care reform; technology-related healthcare law; behavioral technology professional education and training; integrated healthcare; and technology overuse and gaming disorders.

The subsequent chapter authors then offer their personal accounts of how they are using different technologies in their work, taking sometimes unique and often serendipitous routes to reach their sometimes undefined goals. They include thoughtful evaluations of their decisions related to immersing themselves in technology in lieu of "settling" for traditional behavioral health care careers. Readers will note that the authors' training and experiences vary considerably, as do their choices related to which technology to adopt, or develop, or research.

At indentifiable points, their divergence from traditional formal training backgrounds becomes palpable. The reader will sense the grit, the resolve and the occasional tears of many authors as they re-count episodes of self-questionning about their futures. The reader will also recoil upon reading of the frequent discouragement and occasionally, mistreatment by traditional colleagues to tried to dissuade the authors from making their "risky" career choices. Yet, these brave explorers persisted courageouly, steadfastly, and as if driven to tolerate the disapproval until they met with the success that they knew awaited. Clearly their stories demonstrate that there are many creative and exciting routes to developing personally satisfying and financially successful careers in behavioral health and technology, but that such an explorer must be willing to weather the inevitable storms that are part of the voyage. Hopefully, this anthology of pioneering spirits will excite the reader into plotting his or her own course into this exciting new world.

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This book then, is a testimony to professionals in the behavioral fields as they adapt to worldwide economic forces that are creating new challenges and new opportunities. A willingness to take risks, seek or develop the needed training, try and fail only to try again, and to create their own community are common characteristics of this assembly of creative and persistent explorers. Perseverance is illustrated in repeated creative manifestations of a "can do" and "will do" attitude that will not (and possibly cannot) tolerate attempts at suppression.

Each chapter begins with an inspirational quote that the authors felt relevant to their work. Such quotes are followed by a vignette depicting a "moment in time" during their tech-related day, or an example of someone using their technology. Authors next describe their formal training and work experiences as a backdrop to illustrate from whence they came. So as to more clearly describe how they managed to traverse the chasm between their traditional and nontraditional worlds. Next, they outline some of the perceived pros and cons relevant to their chosen behavioral technology-related work. Lastly, the authors provide references to clearly demonstrate that their work has an evidence base, and is thus replicable. Each chapter is freestanding and can be independently read.

The editors wish to acknowledge and express gratitude to the eminent psychologists, Drs. Luciano L'Abate and Philip Zimbardo, who graciously agreed wrote the book forewords. Both of these mentors have taken the time to express perspectives that are pivotal for the future of behavioral telepractice. Dr. L'Abate's emphasis on developing and using empirical methods with the use of technology is crucial for establishing a strong evidence base for telepractice. The late Dr. L'Abate has not only been an advocate for the use of technologies for more than two decades, but he has been steadfast in his focused assertion that professionals have a responsibility to develop and follow specific, effective and replicable routes to creating change. The foreword provided by Dr. Zimbardo points to the need to remain humble and open to new ways of delivering the services that many professionals have spent decades perfecting. As he humorously described, much can be learn from the younger generations. Beyond doubt, technological innovation is needed to help the many people who are still unserved or underserved by the professional behavioral health community.

The editors appreciate the time and effort that the chapter authors took in writing about their experiences with technology in a personal rather than academic style. The editors also also thank their families, the Coalition for Technology in Behavioral Science (www.CTiBS.org), and Sharon Panulla at Springer Science for their steadfast support and encouragement. Lastly, they thank the many professionals who could not write a chapter for the current book, but who wholeheartedly supported their efforts to offer this compendium of insights to share with the interprofessional community at large.

San Diego, CA, USA Dayton, OH, USA Chanute, KS, USA Marlene M. Maheu, PhD Kenneth P. Drude, PhD Shawna D. Wright, PhD

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Shawna Wright

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### **About the Editors**

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For more than 20 years, Dr. Maheu's focus has been on the legal and ethical risk management issues related to the use of technologies to better serve behavioral health clients and patients. She has served on a dozen professional association committees and task forces related to establishing standards and guidelines for telehealth. She has written dozens of peer-reviewed articles and is lead author of multiple telehealth textbooks.

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**Kenneth P. Drude, Ph.D.** has a doctorate in counseling psychology from the University of Illinois. His telemental health interests include the ethics, standards, guidelines, policy and regulation of telemental health practice, and interprofessional relations. He chaired an Ohio Psychological Association committee that developed the first psychological association telepsychology guidelines in the United States in 2008. Dr. Drude served on the Ohio Psychological Association governing board for 28 years in various capacities and as editor of *The Ohio Psychologist*. He currently is the president of the Ohio Board of Psychology. He was a member of the Association for State and Provincial Psychology Board's Telepsychology Task Force that developed an interstate psychology compact. He currently provides outpatient psychological services in a general private practice in Dayton, Ohio.

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Shawna Wright, Ph.D. is a licensed psychologist in Kansas and Nebraska who works in private practice as a telepsychologist. She obtained her graduate training in clinical psychology from Texas Tech University specializing in child and family treatment. She has worked for over a decade in community mental health in southeastern Kansas as outpatient therapist. In 2011, she completed a comprehensive telemental health certificate training program through the TeleMental Health Institute and initiated a private practice providing telepsychology services to residents of rural nursing facilities. Dr. Wright has a keen interest in working to develop standards, training, and resources to assist psychologists who are interested in telepsychology careers. She is the membership chair for the Coalition for Technology in Behavioral Sciences (CTiBS) and maintains aspirations of sharing her professional experience to help advance professional resources for telepsychology through educational endeavors and consultation.

### **About the Authors**

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Cambridge, MA. Her interests in telemental health focus on the use of advanced technologies to improve client engagement and outcomes. She has authored over 50 journal and conference papers and numerous book chapters.

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Dr. Jethwani is also responsible for shaping the research roadmap for the Center, leads the evaluation of all on-going programs, and contributes to efforts at program development and scaling. His research has evolved over time to include exploration of newer health delivery models, like employer-based health programs and electronic social network-based programs. Dr. Jethwani is also exploring newer tools to deliver feedback to patients, like simple text message-based platforms, applications for smart phones, etc.

Dr. Jethwani is currently an Assistant in Dermatology at Massachusetts General Hospital and Instructor at Harvard Medical School.

**Deborah Jones, Ph.D.** earned her doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of Georgia, completed her clinical internship at the Brown University Clinical Psychology Training Consortium, and did a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh. She is currently a Professor in the child and family track of the clinical psychology training program in the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dr. Jones' basic and applied research have long focused on understanding variability in risk and resilience in underserved families. This work really sparked Dr. Jones' interest in the capacity for increasingly available innovations in technology to bridge the research-to-practice gap, particularly for families who may need, yet be least likely to have access to and/or benefit from, evidence-based mental healthcare. Dr. Jones' research in this area has been consistently funded by the National Institute of Mental Health and also allows her the added benefit of actively participating in clinical supervision and training, which she enjoys greatly.

**Thomas J. Kim, M.D., M.P.H.** has worked as a telehealth practitioner, developer, educator, investigator, strategist, and advocate. His efforts have focused on collaborative care models, vulnerable populations, disaster preparedness, public policy, and service sustainability and scalability. From academia and government to private industry and nonprofits, Dr. Kim has engaged a wide variety of organizations toward understanding how best to apply technology to healthcare.

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Before being admitted to the Bar in 1985, Joe had been a university-trained internist and a practicing emergency physician. For many years he represented an array of healthcare clients at a large international law firm before striking out on his own in 2013 to found MDJD, PLC, and McMenamin Law Offices, PLLC.

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After graduation from Middlebury College in 1982, Susan Landgren's first professional activities were as a science educator. In 2000, following a year as a technician in a molecular genetics laboratory, Susan entered the master of science program in genetic counseling at Brandeis University. Since obtaining her M.S. degree in 2002, Susan has provided genetic counseling services from Billings, Montana. She was certified by the American Board of Genetic Counselors in 2005. Many of her patients live in Wyoming and North and South Dakota. In 2009, Susan initiated a program providing genetic counseling services to patients over the Eastern Montana Telemedicine Network, which coordinates its services with neighboring systems. That effort was supported by a generous grant from the Mountain States Genetics Regional Collaborative.

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Mr. Vernmark is conducting his research at Linköping University where he investigates the effectiveness of different treatment modalities, and the role of alliance, when delivering online treatment for depression. He is the business area manager of digital psychology in the private company Psykologpartners that delivers several services in the psychology market. At Psykologpartners he is involved in large-scale implementation projects, assisting Swedish county councils in the process of making Internet-based CBT/ACT an integrated part of their regular care.

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# Part I Introduction

# Chapter 1 Tackling Changes in Mental Health Practice: The Impact of Information-Age Healthcare

Joseph L. Ternullo and Steven E. Locke

"I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy."

—Rabindranath Tagore, the first Asian to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature (1913).

Wherever you are in your journey, a career focused on mental health draws upon the noblest of human instincts—serving others, relieving suffering, rendering compassionate care, and pursuing knowledge. The field is dynamic and, especially now, for reasons summarized in this chapter, change is occurring rapidly. Employment opportunities are expanding and projected to outpace those of other fields. With the advent of a plethora of affordable and reliable enabling technologies coupled with a rapidly evolving regulatory landscape, traditional boundaries to practice are falling and brand-new electronic avenues of care are opening. For those seeking enriching and high-impact careers, there is no better time to pursue a career in the mental health professions. Cutting across all aspects of humanity, the profession draws upon the tension and complexities of our contemporary world and increasingly incorporates elements of technical savvy, team collaboration, and continuous learning.

This chapter summarizes the mental health marketplace dimensions and regulatory landscape, explores the evolution of enabling technologies and the changing nature of care, and identifies barriers to telemental health and career trends and

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© Springer International Publishing Switzerland 2017 M.M. Maheu et al. (eds.), *Career Paths in Telemental Health*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-23736-7\_1