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*KAPA is an affiliate of the  
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[www.knoxvilleareapsychology.org](http://www.knoxvilleareapsychology.org)*

## Defining the mother-daughter relationship

*By: R. Steve McCallum, Ph.D.,  
Professor and Head Educational Psychology and Counseling  
University of Tennessee*

As some of you may know I am a faculty member at the University of Tennessee, in the Department of Educational Psychology and Counseling. One of the most rewarding aspects of my job is my work with students on research projects. In the following paragraphs I share with you a little information about one of those projects that may be of interest to some of you, particularly those psychologists who work with adolescent females (or who are the parents of adolescent females).

A few years ago one of our School Psychology students, (now Dr.) Pam Gross approached me about a need that she had discovered while working with adolescent females. She wanted an efficient assessment strategy to help her determine the quality of the relationship between adolescent daughters and their mothers. Based on her experience she believed that some adolescent females, especially those at risk for depression, eating disorders, and psychological stress in general, perceive their relationship with their mothers unfavorably; similarly, mothers of at-risk adolescents sometimes perceive the relationship with their daughters as troubled and unhealthy. In some cases the perceptions match and in other situations they do not. Although we could find no scale in the literature to quickly and efficiently determine the quality of mother-daughter relationships, her perceptions were confirmed to some extent by the literature. That is, Pam discovered that mother-daughter relationships may be characterized as synchronous or asynchronous, and that synchrony is probably related, at least in part, to perceptions of how well the mother-daughter duo get along on a day-to-day basis (i.e., harmony), how much support there is in the relationship, and how well and how much the two communicate. In the literature these elements were hypothesized to be associated with relationship quality, and perhaps to real world outcomes, such as self-confidence, academic performance, happiness, resilience, etc. Armed with this knowledge Pam and I decided to build our own scale to assess these (presumably) important elements of synchrony. Over the course of a little more than a year we worked together to create the Mother-Daughter Synchrony Scale (MDSS) to assess perceived levels of these three elements within mother-daughter relationships, both from the perspective of the mother and the daughter.

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One of the first steps required that we develop items. Based on the literature and experience Pam and I created items to assess the three elements (scales): Harmony, Support, Communication. For example, a support item was, "My mother/daughter loves me the way I am." A communication item was, "My mother/daughter tells me about work and school." A harmony item was, "I enjoy giving and getting hugs from my mother/daughter." Both mothers and daughters answered the same question, i.e., the items were yoked. After considerable work at the pilot stage we completed development of the three scales and examined 212 daughters and their mothers. We also measured daughters' self-esteem and academic competence (i.e., grade point average (GPA)). Good psychometric properties were obtained for the MDSS; Cronbach's alphas ranged from .80 to .91 for the scales; with the exception of one item, item-subscale correlation coefficients ranged from .40 to .79. Using factor analysis, a strong three-factor structure emerged supporting the three elements-- Harmony, Communication, and Support.

Some of our findings were predictable, and some not so much. Synchrony between mother and daughter, as perceived by the daughter, was significantly positively related to the daughter's self-esteem and academic competence. Furthermore, a hierarchical regression analysis revealed that synchrony was a moderate predictor ( $<.05$ ) of GPA after partialing out variance because of self-esteem. So, the better the daughters perceived the relationship the better their self-esteem and grades. Perhaps better relationships help daughters develop more positive perceptions of themselves, and may help them to study more effectively, i.e., there may be less conflict and more regular study habits within homes where the relationships are stronger. Other interesting findings emerged. In general, mothers reported a slightly higher level of synchrony than daughters reported; specifically, mothers perceived the level of harmony to be much higher and the level of communication to be a little higher than daughters perceived. On the other hand, daughters felt a greater degree of support (from their mothers) than did mothers (from their daughters).



So, the results from this study add to the literature suggesting that the perceived quality of the mother-daughter relationship is important for the daughter's well being. Therapists who want to help at-risk adolescents may find it useful to read the article that resulted from this work in the *School Psychology Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No 3, 2000, pp 295-329. In the article there are more examples of the questions used to operationalize the three elements of synchrony on the MDSS. In addition, Dr. Gross works as a licensed psychologist in the Knoxville area and will share the scale with interested practitioners. As many of you know her practice is set in rural Anderson County at HorseFeathers Farm. She uses Equine Assisted Psychotherapy activities to aid children, adolescents and their parents achieve family harmony, restore/improve communication and focus successfully on personal growth and learning. In her experience, many families seem comfortable in this beautiful and calm rural setting, and are better able to relax and work together there. Dr. Gross is willing to discuss the study and how she has used the information gained from this work and the scale itself in her practice. She may be reached at [drpamgross@comcast.net](mailto:drpamgross@comcast.net) and 865.435.4414.

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## CALL FOR KAPA PRESIDENT-ELECT NOMINATION

**KAPA needs you!** The KAPA Board is now accepting nominations to fill the office of President-Elect for the upcoming year. This position serves as President-Elect for one year, President for the next year, and Past-President for the third year. If you would like to nominate a KAPA member or are willing to be nominated, please contact Victor W. Barr at [vbarr@utk.edu](mailto:vbarr@utk.edu) or by phone at 974-2196. If it has been a while since you served on the Board, please consider serving again. As an added bonus, ***all incoming Board members have their annual dues waved for the duration of their term.***

<b>KAPA</b>	Victor W. Barr, President	974-2196	<a href="mailto:vbarr@utk.edu">vbarr@utk.edu</a>
<b>BOARD</b>	Joshua Williams, President-elect	909-0929	<a href="mailto:jw10ec@aol.com">jw10ec@aol.com</a>
	Shana Hamilton-Lockwood, Sec	423-623-5301	<a href="mailto:shana.hamilton@cherokeehealth.com">shana.hamilton@cherokeehealth.com</a>
<b>CONTACT</b>	Steve McCallum, CE Coordinator	974-5405	<a href="mailto:mccallum@utk.edu">mccallum@utk.edu</a>
<b>INFO</b>	James T. "Dale" Berry, Treasurer	670-0988	<a href="mailto:Jtdberry@yahoo.com">Jtdberry@yahoo.com</a>

### Help Us Recognize New KAPA Members

Welcome to the following psychologists who have joined KAPA recently. You may find them listed in the Membership Directory on the KAPA web site at [www.knoxvilleareapsychology.org](http://www.knoxvilleareapsychology.org).

**Dr. Philip Axtell**

**Dr. Arina Diyankova**

**Dr. Daniel Willams**

**Dr. Lanny Bolling**

**Dr. Susan Flynt**

To show KAPA's support for:

**Raising awareness of mental health/illness issues within the homeless population ...**

Donate Right Now! Send check payable to Volunteer Ministry Center (VMC)

To: Elsbeth Freeman, 5401 Kingston Pike, Suite 410, Knoxville, TN 37919

Volunteer Ministry Center is presenting "**Carry the Torch**" on May 11, 2010. This is a community wide event featuring Steve Lopez, author of the book, *The Soloist*. The purpose of this event is to raise awareness of mental health/illness issues within the homeless population. For more information about **VMC** and this event go to [www.vmcinc.org](http://www.vmcinc.org).

**Please remember** to keep us informed of any changes to your email address, business contact information, or website listing. Contact the administrative assistant at [ltoney5017@comcast.net](mailto:ltoney5017@comcast.net) to make changes.



## Save the Date ...

### Continuing Education Opportunities Outside of KAPA

<b>April 29</b>	The DSM-IV-TR for Clinicians: Accurate Diagnosis & Effective Treatment Planning Seminar	Crowne Plaza
<b>May 8</b>	Human-Animal Interaction and Being: Complements to Psychotherapy.	Fort Sanders
<b>May 19</b>	What Color is Dead? How to Talk with Kids about Death	Holiday Inn Select Downtown
<b>May 21</b>	TN Very Best Treatment for ADHD and the Processing Disorders: Immediate Evidence-Based Strategies That Work! Seminar	Crowne Plaza
<b>June 3</b>	Comprehensive Child Therapy: Practical Approaches, Treatments and Interventions	Holiday Inn Select Downtown
<b>June 17</b>	HIPAA Compliance after the Stimulus Package	Holiday Inn Select Downtown
<b>June 25</b>	Suicide & Self Mutilation Seminar	Marriott Hotel

## KAPA PROGRAM

**Monday April 26<sup>th</sup> 2010**

### **Dealing with Forensic Issues as Psychologists**

**Different Venue: East Tennessee Children's Hospital**

***Presented by***

Jim Murray, Ph.D.

Licensed Psychologist

#### **Introduction to Dr. Murray's Program:**

With the increasing involvement of litigation and government regulation in our personal and professional lives, more and more the practicing psychologist is faced with sorting through when the clinical domain and the forensic world diverge and when they intersect. Often clinicians take on forensic work voluntarily (e.g., writing letters to attorneys, testifying on their patient's behalf) or find themselves thrust into this realm; as when a subpoena arrives. It is increasingly important for clinicians to take note of the important differences between this two "psychologies" in areas such as the role of the practitioner, the relation with or identification of the "client", the "ethics" of practice, the applicability (or lack thereof) of HIPPA regulations, and professional liability issues.

Although the technical tools of clinical and forensic work are often the same or similar in nature (interviews, tests, review of records), the nature and responsibilities of the psychologist change when the "client" (or the consumer of the psychologist's expertise) is not necessarily the individual being examined. While it is probably difficult to imagine the clinician being confused about who is actually their patient, the forensic psychologist (and often the clinician entering the forensic area) can easily find the issue murky or changing over time. These issues will be addressed through both didactic and case presentation material involving recent court appearances. [Important note: Nothing appearing in these materials or the referenced presentation should be construed as legal advice as this type of material is the purview of practicing attorneys.]

James F. Murray, Ph.D.,P.C. is a Knoxville licensed clinical psychologist with consultation in the areas of forensic and clinical psychology. He is a Clinical Diplomate of the American Board of Professional Psychology and a Fellow of the Academy of Clinical Psychology.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Participants will gain an understanding of basic features and differences of clinical and forensic psychological practice.
  2. Participants will develop an appreciation of important conceptual issues that clinicians should consider when dealing with forensic issues.
  3. Participants will develop increased awareness of the differences in the roles, relationship with a 'client', standards of practice and ethics, Tennessee Licensure Law, adherence to HIPPA standards, and professional liability issues.
  4. Participants will be made aware of the importance of informed decisions and receiving necessary legal consultation when dealing with subpoenas and requests for records or psychological testing data.
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### Continuing Education and Fees:

This program is appropriate for psychologists and other mental health professionals and 1.0 hours of Continuing Education will be available for attendees. The social hour and business meeting is from 7-7:30 pm and the presentation starts promptly at 7:30 pm and will go until 8:30 pm. Current KAPA members can attend for no charge. Non-KAPA members will be charged \$15.00 to obtain CE credit. However, if you are not a member of KAPA and you do not want CE credit, this program is free of charge. KAPA is approved by the American Psychological Association to provide continuing education to psychologists and maintains responsibility for this program.

### Pre-registration for KAPA programs:

To pre-register for this program please email Victor W. Barr, Ph.D. at [vbarr@utk.edu](mailto:vbarr@utk.edu) with a **subject line of "KAPA Program registration"**, or phone 865-974-2196. Make sure you include the following information when you pre-register: Please mention if you want a vegetarian meal.

1. Your Name & Degree
2. Professional Discipline
3. Your phone number

### Important for KAPA Members:

A meal will be provided specifically for those KAPA members who have **pre-registered** for this program. If you plan to attend this meeting, please pre-register in order to secure your meal. Please mention if you want a vegetarian meal. Thanks!!

**Pre-registration will end Thursday 04/22/2010 at 12:00 noon**, so that the final registrant list can be compiled and food may be ordered.

**Please Note!!** Late registrants are very welcome to attend the program and can sign in at the door on Monday night.

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### Directions to East Tennessee Children's Hospital

**East Tennessee Children's Hospital 2018 W. Clinch Avenue Knoxville, TN 37916. Koppel Plaza Building, 2nd Floor, Meschendorf Conference Room**

#### From the East:

- Take I-40E to Exit 387 (Western Ave/17th Street).
- Exit Right onto 17<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Take Right on Cumberland Ave.
- Take Right at 22<sup>nd</sup> Street
- Right onto White Street

#### From the West:

- Take I-40E to Exit 387 (Western Ave/17th Street).
  - Exit Left onto 17<sup>th</sup> Street.
  - Take Right on Cumberland Ave.
  - Take Right at 22<sup>nd</sup> Street
  - Right onto White Street
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## KAPA Classifieds

### Office Space:

*Office space available in a thriving private practice of psychologists and clinical social workers (all independent practitioners) in Oak Ridge. Offices within our group are attractive and spacious, and we offer abundant referrals through a strong referral base, especially to those on or willing to join insurance panels. Full or part-time arrangements are possible. Contact Dr. Lorrie Beevers at 212-5296 ([lorribeevers@wildblue.net](mailto:lorribeevers@wildblue.net)) or Dr. Laurel Goodrich at 212-5299.*

*Lovely spacious office in Homberg-Bearden area. Shared waiting room. Secretarial and billing support possible. Very convenient to UT, downtown, Gourmet Market! Available Jan. 1. Call 909-0929.*

### Seeking Psychologist:

*Ebenezer Counseling Services in Knoxville, TN is seeking an experienced, licensed psychologist looking for a vibrant, active, and friendly group practice to join on a full or part-time basis. Practicing from a Christian worldview foundation is essential. In addition to providing therapy to a broad range of client needs, we are looking for a person to help supervise/mentor younger therapists. Ebenezer Counseling Services is a supportive family of therapists and staff serving the Knoxville area for the past 12 years. We value having a positive and collegial attitude. We provide office space and full-service support including live receptionists greeting clients and answering phones both in the day and evenings. We also provide scheduling, billing, insurance filing, and liability insurance. See our website at [ebenezercounseling.com](http://ebenezercounseling.com) and email Dale Berry at [jtdberry@yahoo.com](mailto:jtdberry@yahoo.com) to inquire further. You may also call Dale at 865 670-0988 if you prefer.*

### Did You Know?

One of the many benefits of KAPA membership is free advertising in the KAPA Classifieds! Please contact Shana Hamilton-Lockwood, KAPA Secretary, at [shana.hamilton@cherokeehealth.com](mailto:shana.hamilton@cherokeehealth.com) for more details on how you can advertise in our next newsletter.