



# Ria Severance, LMFT<sup>24650</sup>

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## PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVES

As a highly skilled, bilingual/bicultural therapist with 30 years' experience, I currently work in a stable private practice and recently ended my work as a Mental Health Consultant for parents and teachers supporting young children with severe behavioral challenges. My current professional goals include: learning more about clinical work with adolescent and geriatric inpatient populations (and related end of life issues); gaining additional team experience alongside psychiatrists (bio/medical resource) with psychiatric populations; honing more subtle diagnostic as well as immediately applicable DBT skills; continuing to train and supervise interns; becoming trained in Emotionally Focused Therapy; and honing Motivational Interviewing skills, while continuing to train professionals on the applications of MI to Consensual Dispute Resolution for the county, state and international Collaborative Law communities.

## PERSONAL OBJECTIVE

To be a validating context for growth that empowers interns and clients to build on their strengths and creativity, and leaves them inspired by who they are as well as effective in their relationships, and in the world. Clients learn to generate and live into their vision of a life truly worth living, regardless of their circumstances.

## INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- Bilingual/Bicultural Latina
- Exceptional communication and listening skills
- Attuned and responsive; Authentically warm and genuinely non-judgmental
- Noteworthy empathic ability to perceive, articulate and reflect multiple levels of experience and to communicate in a way that enhances self-understanding, compassion, self-acceptance, effective relationships and inclusion
- Superior ability to bridge gulfs between people and promote acceptance, understanding and respect in the face of real differences
- Self-motivated and independent, while also a collaborative team-player
- Generous with time, attention, skill and heart in ways that empower
- Thirty years experience developing empowering clinical relationships with people of diverse cultures, classes, interests and needs

## PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- Excellent clinical, behavioral and writing skills; articulate and clear public speaker
- Empowering, attuned, and inspiring teacher, trainer and coach
- Superior analytical/critical-thinking skills; Quick learner
- Out-of-the-box creative thinker
- Consistently quick to envision win-win collaborations and solutions to challenges
- Dialectical thinker; Model and teach dialectical thinking when black-and-white thinking predominates
- Strong (empowering) leadership and team-building skills

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Licensed Marriage, Family and Child Therapist (LMFT24650),  
Private Practice.** September 1988 - Present

Areas of emphasis include: Depression, Anxiety, Traumatic syndromes, Compulsive overeating, Post-Alcohol/Substance abuse recovery, Parenting and in-home parent coaching with severe behavioral challenges, Co-Mediation with Attorneys, Divorce "Doula," Collaborative Divorce Coaching and Child Specialist

Advocacy, Re-unification work with children and alienated Parents, Co-Parent Skills training and mediation, Supervision and consultation for colleagues & interns, Small group facilitator, DBT-informed treatment (not currently on team); Gifted adults and adolescents, Young Children, Relationships, Individuation issues, Diversity issues, Gay/Lesbian/Bi-sexual individuals/families, Women's issues, Men's issues, Pre-marital counseling, Couples, Decision Counseling, Public Speaking on above issues

**Co-author of Amazon Best-Seller, “The Collaborative Advantage: Divorce Consciously to Protect Your Children and Avoid Financial and Emotional Bankruptcy.”** May 2017

**Bilingual/Bicultural Latina Therapist/Supervisor & Mental Health Consultant, Foundation for Early Childhood Education (Head Start).** September 2007-June 2015.

Provided:

- Culturally sensitive formal observations, assessments, recommendations & appropriate referrals for teachers and parents of identified pre-school children
- Teacher and parent training/coaching on varied challenging issues for preschoolers (e.g. Tracking/Narrating child's process, Empowering versus Enabling, Self-regulation and development of child's ability to follow directives/routine, Effective limit-setting, Engaging challenging parents, Assertiveness and conflict-resolution strategies appropriate for preschool children, Behavioral strategies for increasing learning-enhancing behaviors, Emotion regulation, etc.)
- Classroom Mental Health Assessments (e.g. Nature and quality of teachers' attachment and attunement to children/parents, Emotion regulation of teachers and impact on students, Overall “tone” of classroom, Ability to solicit, develop and speak to internal locus of control, Effectiveness of behavioral management strategies, Ability to cultivate higher order cognitive processing)
- Individual/family/dyadic parent consultations and short-term skills oriented therapy (include assessment and development of specific parenting skills needed to support child's specific challenges, in-home visits, and shadowing child in classroom while modeling and coaching parent to take the lead). Alcohol is the number one cause of death for Latino men in the US, so the impact of alcohol on the family is routinely assessed/addressed
- Bilingual lecturer for conferences designed for parents and teachers
- Implemented method for FECE consultants to shadow and model effective interventions with children while coaching parents to do the same in classroom setting
- Supervise interns

**Co-Parenting Lecturer and Group Leader, Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice.** August 2013-October 2013

- Trained, researched, prepared and co-lead groups.
- Project cut suddenly as funding depended on referrals made exclusively by judges, which were not forthcoming

**Co-Mediator, Collaborative Divorce Coach & Child Specialist, Co-Parenting & Reunification Specialist, Pasadena Collaborative Divorce (PCD).** August 2013-Present

- PCD Marketing Chair since 2013 - Redesigned website-responsible for

90% of the content and related brochures; Initiated, planned, marketed and executed PCD's family law attorneys, CPA's and therapists monthly offerings of free public service trainings (1.5-3 hours each, for 8 months out of the year), "Divorce Options," for professionals working with couples and families, as well as couples approaching the possibility of separation and divorce. Received statewide recognition for success of program.

- Lead presenter at annual state CPCAL conference (April 2016 and 2017) regarding the game-changing impact of Motivational Interviewing (MI) on Consensual Dispute Resolution (CDR) when teams of professionals are trained.
- Lead presenter at CPCal 2017 to train other CA practice groups in successful marketing efforts for Divorce Options program
- Lead presenter at annual IACP (International Association of Collaborative Professionals) Conference (October 2016) regarding the application of MI to CDR
- Co-lead Streamlined Protocols Study Group (for Collaborative Divorce Process), for Attorneys and Mental Health Professionals. June 2013-Nov 2015
- Initiated and Co-lead Motivational Interviewing & Consensual Dispute Resolution Study Group for Attorneys & Mental Health professionals (i.e. Select online MI courses, determine syllabi and texts used, manage assignments and meetings). October 2015-Present
- Trainer for Los Angeles County Law Association Basic Collaborative Training. August 2016

**Director, Pay-It-Forward Service-Learning and Leadership Program; Member, Board of Advisors, World Education University (WEU).** August 2012 –June 2014

- Part of a team to design structure and academic foundation for global, free-online university (start-up company) to extend meaningful learning beyond computer screen
- Lead effort to ensure service-learning and leadership training are built into completion requirements for all courses, regardless of the subject matter. Waiting for approval to proceed with final edits of book outlining this structure and process
- Drafted Honoring Diversity Statement, proposing related changes to bylaws, defining "social consciousness" in terms of decision-making protocols that consider the well-being of local cultures, economies and ecosystems for three generations hence
- Drafted WEU adaptation of the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Defined "social justice" in terms of this document

**DBT Consult Team Therapist in affiliation with DBT Center - San Gabriel Valley.** August 2011 - July 2012

- Approximately 10+ hours/week participating in DBT Skills Training Groups, DBT Clinical Consult Team, workshops, and extensive reading
- Clients treated in my private practice

**Co-founder and Director, Visionary Team Builders.** January 2007-January 2009

- Partnered with business consultant to co-create and facilitate workshops/ retreats tailored to the specific needs of corporate and nonprofit companies
- Built/Strengthened teams among executives, managers and supervisors, while extending leadership training to include all team members.

- Promote paradigm shift necessary for creating Sustainable Businesses for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

**Executive Development Consulting, Founder and President.** January 2005-Present

- Currently primarily private consultations for Professionals/Executives referred individually by HR, including those with dual diagnoses, including substance abuse
- Provide training in work-related interpersonal, leadership and management skills for individuals, small and organizational groups
- Seminars, workshops and speaking on related topics (please see website at [www.execdev.org](http://www.execdev.org))

**Supervisor of Clinical Interns/Trainees, Pasadena Mental Health.** October 1995-October 1997

- Trained budding clinicians to hold themselves accountable for their impact on clients, in their own lives and on the therapeutic process, while facilitating the development of clinical skills necessary for competence

**Supervisor of LMFT's and Interns in Private Practice.** October 1996-Present

- Supervise Licensed MFT's pursuing AAMFT or CAMFT Supervisor Certification (Supervise their Supervision)
- Supervised interns through LMFT California licensure process, with supervision emphasis on personal and professional accountability, and skills building at the forefront of their clinical work
- Mentored interns to identify primary interests and talents, to build on/pursue professional development in these arenas

**Professor of Psychology, East Los Angeles City College.** August 1997-January 1998

- Psych 101 concepts taught via lectures, in-class exercises, personally meaningful projects/experiences that simultaneously build community in the classroom
- Used in-class exercises/extensive writing assignments to improve writing skills
- Left position because only paid for in-class time as part-time professor (no prep, grading or advisory time) - *loved* the work

**Group & Individual Psychotherapist, Glendale Memorial Hospital & Health Center Addictive Behavior Program (Obesity).** January 1989-January 1991

- Developed therapeutic program to run concurrently and collaboratively with nutritional training to build emotion regulation skills, and process intense affects, idealizations, devaluations, etc. previously directed at dietitians when concurrent therapy program was unavailable
- Taught disease model of addiction and facilitated tracking of skills development - e.g. interpersonal skills (such as assertiveness), mindfulness, distress tolerance and emotion regulation skills
- Encouraged on-going participation in 12-step programs such as CEA-HOW & OA
- Increased tolerance for dependency needs and autonomy in intimate relationships
- Facilitated understanding of complexity of intra- and interpersonal dynamics associated with compulsive overeating/concurrent addictive

behavior, and how these extended to patients' lives

- Left job when had first child. Taught/ran workshops privately on related topics through Adult Education school in South Pasadena, September 1993-August 1994

**Assistant Director of Clinical Training and Psychotherapist, Randon Institute of Clinical Psychotherapies.** March 1983-December 1990

- Provided ongoing lecture series on clinical theory and practice,, and developed related skills-training modules for intern training
- Taught skills necessary to develop and sustain a full-time private practice by the time licensure was obtained
- Trainee, then Intern from May 1978-September 1988

**Bilingual Therapist/Intern Trainer/Social Worker & Public Relations**

**Coordinator, Hispanic Outreach Project, Foothill Family Services** January 1987-January 1989

- In-home treatment for Spanish-speaking, abused children, mothers and perpetrators (with different configurations) unable to access community mental health facilities
- Community Outreach Education in public schools (parents, teachers & children)
- Coordinated development of Alanon (for mothers) and Alateen groups in Spanish to run simultaneously with local AA meetings, where local perpetrators' were often mandated DUI attendees so that abused family members could meet to heal/ share safely and regularly outside the family (rather than being obligated to wait outside for Dad to finish AA meeting)
- Trained interns

**Lecturer and Assistant Instructor in Developmental Psychology under Dr. Judith Stevens-Long, CSULA.** January 1986– April 1986

**Bilingual Lecturer & Small Group Leader, Behavioral Health Services Alcohol Rehabilitation Program.** January 1984-January 1985

- Taught 10-week curriculum including disease model, effects of different drugs, the nature of addiction and impact on individual/family for men and women ages 25-70 arrested for DUI's – concurrent attendance to AA was mandated

**Teaching Assistant in Cognitive Psychology under Dr. Robert Bjork, UCLA.** April 1982-June 1982

**Behavioral Therapist and Parent Trainer under Dr. Ivar Lovaas, UCLA Young Autism Project.** September 1981-June 1982

**Research Assistant under Dr. Richard Gilbert and Dr. Andrew Christensen, UCLA NIMH Grant.** January-June 1981 & September-June 1982

**Crisis Counselor Trainer and Crisis Counselor, Institute for Studies of Destructive Behavior & Los Angeles Suicide Prevention Center.** November 1978-January 1980

**EDUCATION**

**Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, BBSE, California, September 1988**

**MS in Psychology**

Cal State LA, 4.0 GPA. December 1986

Psi Chi, National Honor Society in Psychology, CSULA, Elected member for academic excellence. 1986

### **BA in Psychology**

UCLA, Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa. June 1983

### **REFERENCES**

Available upon request.

Please see Addendum below for additional information.

### **ADDENDUM TO CV**

#### **CERTIFICATIONS**

**CAMFT-Approved Supervisor Post-Graduate Certification**, California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT). September 2000

**AAMFT-Approved Supervisor Post-graduate Certification & Training**, American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (AAMFT), Year-long course & weekly Private Supervision of Supervision. September 1997

**Object Relations and Self Psychology-Advanced Post-Graduate Certification & Training, Dr. Richard Gilbert**, CAMFT-Sponsored. January 1991-January 1995

**Certification in Use of Hypnosis**, Rob Stone, Encino. November 1990

**California Community Colleges Instructor Credential in Psychology**. October 1989

**Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist**, Board of Behavioral Science Examiners, California. September 1988

#### **ADDITIONAL TRAINING & EDUCATION**

**Motivational Interviewing: The Language of Change, Stephen Rollnick, PhD, (6-month online training, 4-8 hours/month)**, Pasadena, CA. January-June 2017

**DBT: Advanced Intensive Training, Charlie Swenson, MD and Kelly Koerner, PhD (4-day training)**, Pasadena, CA. March 2016

**Motivational Interviewing, Patty Gieselman (3-day training)**, Arcadia CA. October 2015

**Sensory Integration Training for Preschool-aged Children with USC professor Dr. Kate Crowley, sponsored by Los Angeles County Office of Education**, December 2014

**DBT with Parents, Couples & Families Part 1, Dr. Alan Fruzzetti (2-days)**, Las Vegas NV. April 2014

**Neuroscience of Well-being, Mindfulness and Love, Dan Siegel and Jack Kornfield (2-days)**, UCLA, LA. October 2013

**Dialectical Behavior Therapy Training: Getting Behavior Change and Preventing Therapist Burnout, Dr. Charles Swenson (2 days)**, Clearview Treatment Programs, LA. October 2013

**Streamlined Collaborative Divorce Full-Team Protocols Training, (CDI)** Collaborative Divorce Institute (3 days), Phoenix, AZ. January 2013

**Advanced Dialectical Behavior Therapy Training, Dr. Charles Swenson, Live-**

online 4-month course, with 1.5 hours/week of lecture; 5 hours/week of readings and exercises in DBT Consult Team. February 2012-May 2012

**Modern Shamanism Training: Enhancing Effectiveness of Clinical Practice by Understanding Indigenous Healing Approaches** more readily accepted by some US Latino populations (6 days), Peru. December 2011

**Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Training, Dr. Alan Fruzzetti,** 1-yr course, in conjunction with intensive weekly DBT training and practicum & 15 hours of Adherence ratings of online videos; Member weekly 4-hour DBT Consult Team. August 2011- May 2012

**Psychoanalysis and Literature Seminar Series, Dr. Alan Karbelnig** Review psychoanalytic literature on topics e.g. Love in the Psychoanalytic Relationship and Existentialism alongside literary, psychodynamic discussion of related themes/character analyses in great literary works. November 2010-March 2011

**Seventeen 3-day Trainings on Self-expression, Community building, Leadership, Project Initiation and Management,** Landmark Education, Additional 5-hour weekly seminars and small group meetings; Lead weekly small group meetings. October 2005-June 2015

**Training as Collaborative Divorce Coach and Collaborative Child Specialist,** Collaborative Divorce Team Training, LLC, Phoenix AZ, 3-day training to work in teams with lawyers & financial specialists to facilitate a divorce that is cost-effective and allows families, rather than the courts, to determine divorce outcomes. January 2007

**Divorce Mediation – Advanced Training,** Coast to Coast Mediation Training And Consulting Group, 5-day Training. September 2005

**Dispute & Divorce Mediation Training, John Biancardi, UCLA,** Series of All-day Saturday Trainings. October 2004

**Individual Supervision/Training, Focused on Multidisciplinary, Psycho-neurobiological Theory and Practice in Treatment of Families of Children 0-3, with Self-regulatory Problems (Physiological, Affective and Cognitive disorders), Dr. Constance Lillas,** Weekly 1-hour meetings. September 2000-July 2006

**Formal & Experiential Training, Pacific Oaks College & Children’s School, and Sequoyah School.** December 1990-September 2008

Training included:

- Developmental Psychology
- Training and implementation of Anti-bias Curriculum
- Co-parenting skills
- Community-building and development
- Progressive education (bottom-up, meaningful and relevant pedagogy and team- and project-based learning, with emphasis on collaboration and interpersonal skills training)
- Raising self-motivated lifelong learners with a stake in their own education.

**Continuing Education Seminars on various psychotherapeutic topics** related to organizational psychology, inclusivity and equity, clinical supervision, collaborative divorce & custody issues, ethics and other clinical issues. May 1977-Present

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS & VOLUNTEER WORK**

**Board Member, Los Angeles Collaborative Family Law Association,**

Membership Committee and Co-chair Public Outreach Committees. January 2016-Present

**Board and Founding Member, Civil Collaborative Professionals**, Marketing (website content and design, vision/mission statements, tag lines, etc.) and Training Committees. August 2016-Present.

**Founder AAMFT-Certified Supervisor Study Group.** December 2014-January 2016

**Board Member, Fifty-Fifty Leadership**, a nonprofit dedicated to 50% of the world's leaders occurring naturally as women, Pasadena, CA. January 2014 - Present

**Member & Marketing Committee Chair, Pasadena Collaborative Divorce.** August 2013-Present

**Co-lead Streamlined Protocols Study Group (for Collaborative Divorce Process), for Attorneys and Mental Health Professionals.** June 2013-Nov 2015

**Initiated and Co-lead Motivational Interviewing & Consensual Dispute Resolution Study Group for Attorneys & Mental Health professionals** (i.e. Select online MI courses, determine syllabi, manage assignments and meetings). October 2015-Present

**Volunteer Collaborative Coach, Collaborative (Divorce) Conferencing Project, Loyola Law School.** Collaborative Coach with attorneys to serve underserved divorcing couple populations, and help train new attorneys. August 2013-Present

**Advisory Board Member, World Education University (WEU).** August 2012 – August 2014

**Member, Senator Carol Liu's 21st District Women's Council**, provide leadership in areas of Human Services and Education. March 2009-Present

**Member & Volunteer Translator for Physicians, Liga International ("Flying Doctors of Mercy")** in remote villages in Mexico. October 2000 – 2014

**Volunteer Translator for Physicians & Parenting Class Instructor, Clinica Esperanza.** Roatan, Honduras. March 20-April 4, 2015.

**Advisor to Board of 50-50 Leadership.** January 2006-January 2014

**Member, Elected Member of the Month, Los Angeles Collaborative Family Law Association (LACFLA).** June 2005-Present

**Member & Various Leadership Positions (e.g. Committee Chair, Tour Leader), Boy Scouts of America (BSA).** May 2009-March 2015

- Advocated actively for inclusion of Gay boys/leaders within the BSA at troop and council levels
- Highest leadership training in BSA: Woodbadge over 1-year course period
- Prepared and taught Autism and ADD courses at Commissioner College

**Active Parent Member/Leader Various Committees (e.g. Diversity Advocacy, Leadership, Community-building, etc.), Pacific Oaks Children's School, Sequoyah School, Westridge School for Girls and Polytechnic School.** September 1991-2009

- Co-chair Diversity Committee (6 years)
- Engaged entire Sequoyah community in collaborative 2-year effort to draft Honoring Diversity Statement included in school's handbook
- Deepened Sequoyah community's formerly sporadic relationship with



service-learning in conjunction with Union Station Foundation by engaging administration, teachers and students in each classroom to donate and prepare sack-lunch food monthly for homeless parents seeking employment. Program still in place.

**Scholarship Committee Member, San Gabriel Valley/Pomona Valley CAMFT.**  
October 1994

**Member, South Pasadena Mental Health Network.** March 1993-October 1995

**Board Member: Special Events Coordinator, San Gabriel Valley/Pomona Valley CAMFT.** October 1991-December 1992

**Lifetime Clinical Member (State) & Clinical Member (Local) of San Gabriel Valley/Pomona Valley Chapter, California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT).** September 1988-Present

**Clinical Member, American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (AAMFT).** September 1988-Present

### **AWARDS**

**LACFLA's Distinguished Member of the Month, selected and featured.** 2012

**Scouter's Training Award, Distinguished Leadership Contributions Recognized by San Gabriel Valley BSA Council.** 2012

**Psi Chi, National Honor Society in Psychology, CSULA, Elected member for academic excellence.** 1986

**Phi Beta Kappa and Psi Chi, UCLA, Elected member for academic excellence.** 1983

**Alpha Mu Gamma (National Foreign Language Society), Elected Member for mastery in English, Spanish, French and German.** 1976

### **FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

Fluent in Spanish (Bilingual/Bicultural Latina), completed 2 years college-level French & 3 years of high-school level German.

### **INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL**

Canada, Caribbean Countries, Costa Rica, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Peru, Mexico, Kenya, Vietnam, China & 20 European Countries (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Scotland, Switzerland, Vatican City, Yugoslavia). Also lived in Costa Rica, Switzerland, Germany, England and Argentina for prolonged periods.

### **HOBBIES & INTERESTS**

Being of Service, Time with my children, Yoga, Experiencing different cultures and ways of living first-hand, Creative writing, Growth of any kind, Literature, Beauty in Nature and Art, Dance, Mindfulness and Meditation practices, Social Justice and Advocacy, Foreign films, Interior design – *not* necessarily in that order!

