

Somatic Psychotherapy Today: An Interview with Nancy Eichhorn, PhD  
With Serge Prengel

**How did the magazine come about, how long it has been published, what are its goals and content?**

As a doctoral student, I was immersed in academic literature for classwork as well as my research project. I was also volunteering as the student editor for the United States Association of Body Psychotherapy's member newsletter, and assisting with the peer reviewed journal, *The International Body Psychotherapy Journal*.

I realized there was a gap in the literature—there was a place to publish academic papers and a place for local chitchat, like association news and upcoming events, but there was nowhere for clinicians, like myself, to voice our truth as experienced day-to-day with our clients. There were magazines like *Psychology Today* and *Psychotherapy Networker*, but they were cognitive behaviorally based.

I thought we needed a magazine that encouraged first-person familiar voices talking about somatic psychology and body psychotherapy. We needed a place to share with our colleagues and offer articles that were credible in our field.

I founded SPT Magazine on the belief of the power of personal presence in a community of acceptance. What we do individually has a collective impact on our world – its health and wellbeing – and on all living entities that live here. Voicing our truth is paramount and finding the right venue to speak is just as critical.

Over the past 8 years, I've written with amazing people around the world who are making a difference in our field. They share their work from a bodily based perspective. They are open to editing and revision suggestions; their articles become a shared experience resulting in quality material for our readers and creating a sense of community. We are here for one another as we move somatic psychology and body psychotherapy into mainstream acceptance.

My goal is for SPT Magazine to offer writers and readers a place to connect, to share thoughts, ideas, and opinions about what matters in the work we do and to further our field of study and practice.

We can't capture everything related to the immense field of psychotherapy and body-oriented practices in each issue, but we can strive to provide a venue for our readers to experience different perspectives in a light and lively manner that I call educational entertainment. And just to add, I do fact check every article. I require accurate citations to back-up claims (using the American Psychological Association's format for in-text and reference list citations), and I expect contributors to be authentic in their presentations.

### **My background (writing and therapy).**

I'm pretty sure that I started writing in the womb. I discovered my voice creating stories on a blank piece of paper. I found my sanctuary in words. I wanted to be a journalist and was accepted to Lewis and Clark's journalism program my freshman year of college, but my life's choices took me elsewhere. My path rerouted from writing to teaching, elementary school to start. I loved teaching sixth graders how to find themselves within the texts they chose to read and how to express themselves on a blank page, so others could experience their beliefs, their questions and their challenges to the status quo.

As my teaching experiences shifted from elementary school to high school as a reading specialist (my first masters in Reading) and then on to junior college and teaching freshman composition at the University of New Hampshire (after earning my second masters in nonfiction writing), I kept confronting the use of personal narrative to teach writing. Here were 18-year-olds, many away from home for the first time, and they were writing about rape, suicide, drug abuse, shoplifting, eating disorders. I needed to learn more about writing and therapy, so I took classes in Narrative Therapy. My next stop was certification in the Amherst Writers and Artists program, an amazing process for writing and sharing feedback that supports writers.

I started facilitating writing groups in my home, at local churches and at the local housing authority. Writing created a supportive community. I wrote with these groups for 8 plus years, one group still meets on their own! My students kept challenging me to learn more, to be more present, to offer the support and guidance they craved. Thus, my master's in clinical psychology with a specialization in somatic psychology and then my doctorate. Writing has always been my vehicle of choice for all my personal and professional journeys.

## **A mix of articles and topics.**

When I started the magazine, I picked themes for the quarterly issues. Topics that I felt were trending in our society, in our communities, in our offices. One of our first issues covered military mental health. We've focused on prenatal and perinatal psychology and health, eating psychology, trauma and we continue to offer our annual book review issue for summer reading.

My goal was to provide unique material from an international perspective. Our contributors present globally diverse experiences, from divergent backgrounds in various theories and methodologies (many founding their own process).

I also wanted to offer experiences that readers can't find anywhere else. For starters, because we are not associated with any one theoretical or methodological approach, we can offer articles on any and all therapeutic processes and approaches. We offer Author Reflections to coincide with book reviews--it's fascinating to peer inside their mind, to be part of their process retrospectively and it helps to understand who they are and why they wrote their book. It also offers us insights to possibly write our own books.

And I have offered and will continue to offer our subscribers free editorial assistance. I work with all writers, mentoring them in the writing and publication process as needed for articles appearing in our magazine and on our website.

Moving forward, we will continue to offer themes for our three yearly print issues with contributors sharing their experiences per these themes. And we are welcoming our regular columnists who write to specific topic areas including:

mind/body/spirit, global perspectives, relational mindfulness (with Serge), specializations in the field, client concerns, somatic praxis in practice, book reviews, author reflections, and Dr Jacqueline Carleton's Choice: Books Worth a Read.

Once we are more established, we will offer what I call the gifting back series, where colleagues share a 15 to 20-minute offering that viewers can take immediately and use either personally or professionally like a chair Qi

Gong exercise or breathing exercise or how to write using gender neutral language. We'll have a colleague-to-colleague connection to share recent research published in peer reviewed journals, a Folio Fellowship for authors where authors will share four copies of their recent book with four members willing to read and review the book. We'll then have an online book conversation about the strengths of the book, what worked and where readers might have had questions. I will facilitate the process and the feedback experience will be based on the Amherst Writers and Artists Workshop process. I will also start online writing workshops. The goal will be for 4 to 6 people to gather online, to share their writing for feedback using the Amherst process to support authors and help their drafts grow into the articles they are meant to be.

### **How can you be involved?**

We welcome new writers, book reviewers, authors wanting to share their new publications, colleagues interested in our gifting back series or perhaps offering webinars. We welcome cash donations and we would love for you to subscribe.

### **Why are we now moving to a paid subscriber platform?**

I've supported the magazine for 8 years volunteering my time and my finances. I've written, edited, copyedited, learned how to do layouts and find graphic arts to accompany articles. I've learned some basic marketing and some social media skills. I've done all of this without any training, no support, just me. The only consistent help I've received over the years is from my fantastic cover designer, Diana Houghton Whiting, a former Naropa student and now a therapist in Colorado. She has donated her talents to help me create covers that capture our readers' eye, that convey the theme of the issue and that are unique to our publication.

The magazine is growing, reaching out in different directions and I need your help. I've joined forces with Linda Heck. We've redesigned the website to make it more user-friendly, we're going to offer print issues three times a year, mailed to your home or office, something readers have asked for, for many years now. We're going to offer more hands-on experiences like the writing workshops, the Folio Fellowships, and more.

We want the magazine to be more than words on a page. We know this publication is important to our community and we want to create a solid

community base that supports our programming, our writers, our social media presence, and our website. And we need funding to make all this happen. Some people ask about becoming a formal non-profit, at this point it's too expensive for us to afford and the management appears to be a bit overwhelming right now. So, we are trying to do what we can as we can.

### **Can I still access articles and the magazine online?**

Our new format includes two basic divisions for two different audiences: online and in print, subscriber base and free access.

#### **Online and Open Source**

- All past issues (volumes 1-8) and articles
- Book reviews in *Carleton's Corner: Books Worth a Read*
- Current events and In Memory
- Monthly feature articles
- Bloggers and regular columnists
- Snippets of articles in our print issues

#### **Online for Our Subscribers**

- Access to our Gifting Back video series
- All open source materials as noted above
- Coffee House Chats
- Colleague to Colleague conversations, including facilitated case study presentations with feedback
- Folio Fellowship for Authors and Reviewers

- One-to-one editorial assistance for articles submitted to SPT Magazine
- Print issues mailed to your home or office three times a year
- Webinars
- Writers Workshops for those interested in submitting an article to SPT Magazine

So, if you find SPT Magazine and our community useful, if the articles, the reviews, the reflections, the interviews, the groups you can join of interest and you want to see it continue, please consider subscribing.

As of February 1, 2019, our website we be changing—the new subscribers' area will be up and running and many offerings that were always free, will now be limited to our subscribers. And, if you don't want to miss our March issue focused on prenatal and perinatal psychology and health, with articles by Genovino Ferri and Mary Jane Paiva, Kate White, Holly Holt, Serge Prengel, Aylee Welch, Michael Shea, and more, please consider subscribing. We'll also have hot of the press book reviews, author reflections, and interviews with audio available for the first time.

Our new format will let us bring so much more to you, to our community. We hope you will join us and support our mission to be the place where writers and readers connect to share thoughts, ideas, and opinions about what matters in the work we do and to further our field of study and practice.

You can subscribe on our website: [www.SomaticPsychotherapyToday.com](http://www.SomaticPsychotherapyToday.com)

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