

CHARLYNE GELT, PH.D.

Encouraging Self-Discovery and Empowerment



Dia de los Muertos **by Charlyne Gelt, Ph.D.**

*“How many deaths will it take till he knows
That too many people have died? The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind
The answer is blowin' in the wind.”*

— Bob Dylan



While Halloween is designed to scare away evil spirits and death, Dia de los Muertos reminds us to remember and honor the dead. Those departed souls live in our memory. We grow not in the light but in the fertile ground, in the dark night of the soul. *Grief, loss, death become part of the journey.*



Today, the world is a scary place. World tension is high — over issues from terrorism to heated divisions among nations, groups, and families. Political tension is high, an "emotional rollercoaster" of a political campaign — and it is felt at home, at work, and clients bring that tension and anxiety into session. Those who have grown up in chaotic-filled households experience these tensions at depth and bring their anxieties into the therapeutic setting.

External events can trigger hurtful memories of childhood wounds and dysfunctional

family emotional environments — victim/victimizer scenarios, profound fears, narcissistic parental attitudes of entitlement that impact adult behavior over multi-generations including objectifying and emotionally abusing women. Female clients, who learned to *endure an* abusive childhood — may be hurled to increased states of anxiety by the current political news events.

On the positive side, when the comfort zone gets stirred up by external social or political upheaval, it can be grist for the mill, and very useful in a therapeutic setting. A client's sudden escalation into emotional crisis because of "outside" situations can be carefully and compassionately addressed in the safety of a therapy session. A client may believe he or she is "just upset about politics," for example, or is reacting to some current personal event, but frequently it turns out to be a metaphor for "inside events," or an unresolved *family of origin* issue.

"It is the single small step that begins the journey of a thousand miles." — The Tao Te Ching (Chapter 64)

To schedule an appointment to work on your own struggles in individual, couples, or group therapy, please call: Charlyne Gelt, Ph.D. at 818.501.4123.

Thank you for your support!
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