



The ONTABA Analyst

In this issue

From the President's Desk
2

Announcements
3

Committee Updates
10

What Would You Do?
11

The Cusp
13

ONTABA Members
15

ONTABA's summer event

Get ready to stay up past your
bedtime!

pg. 8

Know someone who deserves a shout-out?

Awards season is right around
the corner...

pg. 9



Stay Connected



Follow us on Twitter @ONTABA1



Join us on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/248167828616496/>

From the President's Desk

On changing criterion...

During the last 6 months, we have made significant progress in our pursuit of a culture of excellence, integrity, and expertise for the advancement and promotion of the science of behaviour analysis. On June 8th 2017, the government of Ontario made a public commitment to regulating practitioners of applied behaviour analysis across the province. This marks a significant milestone for behaviour analysts and those receiving our services. It also marks a turning point in our work as an organization. For nearly two decades, ONTABA has been working to have policy makers see the value of our profession, and to understand the necessity of protecting the public through professional regulation. This key issue has dominated our mandate for the majority of our organization's history, and although we have just witnessed an important first step by policy makers, our work has only just begun. Now comes the crucial task of ensuring that the government follows through with this commitment, that regulation protects all of the individuals across the province who receive behaviour analytic services, that the maximum amount of those in need will receive high-quality care in a timely matter, and that regulation is designed to protect the integrity of our science-based practice. Behaviour analysis must be appreciated as an autonomous discipline with a unique philosophy, science, and practice. We must not allow the broad opportunity of our science of human behaviour to be relegated to technician status within the treatment of a single population or age group, to be overcome by the interests of other professions or directed by political intent or funding priorities. Our priority must be the interest of the public. What is best for the individuals we support and their families? How do we ensure their right to effective treatment is protected? How do we ensure the most individuals benefit? How do we ensure the best possible quality of service is delivered? How do we ensure that clinical decisions are made by qualified behaviour analysts and are based on objective data gleaned from direct observation of each individual within their unique context? These and many more questions lie ahead. It is our responsibility to answer them accurately and to communicate them effectively.

Behaviour analysis must be appreciated as an autonomous discipline with a unique philosophy, science, and practice.

With this small victory, we move to elevate and expand our targets. We have grown to nearly 1000 members with shocking velocity and have attained influence across multiple sectors and regions and within local and international organizations. We have built relationships within the Ministries of Education, Children and Youth, Health and Long-Term Care, and Community and Social Services. In addition to our important work to improve services for children and youth with developmental disabilities and within the education system, we can contribute to improved services for adults living with developmental disabilities and mental health diagnoses, and for seniors who all too often face aversive conditions, institutionalization, and exposure to restrictive procedures and overmedication. As you will read in the pages that follow, our committees and task forces are actively pursuing these ambitious goals.

As one example of our elevating goal line, I am proud to announce our latest endeavour. With the receipt of an International Development Grant from the Society for the Advancement of Behavior Analysis, we will soon launch the Ontario Scientific Expert Task Force for the Treatment of Challenging Behaviour (OSETT-CB). We will produce best practice guidelines for supporting adults with intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviour in Ontario and use this document to direct change in the adult social service and health care sectors.

Progress towards our goals does not mean we rest, nor do we stop to celebrate. We are behaviour analysts. We advance our targets and continue to shape towards optimum performance.

I look forward to working together on our ongoing pursuit of mastery.

Sincerely,



Louis Busch, President
Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis



Announcements

ONTABA Elections

EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES: 2017 Call for Nominees

The following positions are open for the 2017 Elections:



- 1 position – President-Elect** (2 year term then transition to President for another 2 year term; 4 year term in total)
- 2 positions – Director at Large** (2 year term)
- 1 position – Graduate Representative** (1 year term)
- 1 position – Undergraduate Representative** (1 year term)

The successful nominees will begin their respective terms immediately following the 2017 Annual Conference.

The nomination form which includes the submission guidelines, submission deadline and other pertinent information is available to members in ONTABA membership portal. Questions and submissions should be directed to:

contact@ontaba.org

You Say Goodbye, I Say Hello

The board says an amicable farewell to Carl Fournier-Sweeney and welcomes Nicole Aliya Rahim as Treasurer-Elect! Nicole has been appointed as Treasurer-Elect as per bylaw article 4 (section 4.1). Nicole Aliya Rahim is Board Certified Behavior Analyst with an interest in complex behaviour and behavioural pharmacology. Nicole Aliya is completing her PhD in Applied Behaviour Analysis and co-leads a behavioural-medical clinic at Surrey Place Centre. Nicole Aliya also works in Psychiatry at the Hospital for Sick Children, where she assesses and treats individuals who have complex physical and mental health conditions with and without development disabilities. Her research interests are in behavioural pharmacology, intrusive measures, functional analogues, BCBA training programs, sector-wide gaps, and behavioural medicine.



Breaking News from the Adult Services Task Force

Introducing: The Ontario Scientific Expert Task force for the Treatment of Challenging Behaviour (OSETT-CB)

ONTABA is thrilled to announce the launch of our next big project; best practice guidelines for the treatment of challenging behaviour for adults with developmental disabilities! In February of this year, Dr. Alison Cox submitted an application on behalf of ONTABA's Adult Services Task Force and was the successful recipient of the SABA international Development Grant. The task force will be co-chaired by **Dr. Alison Cox** and **Dr. Val Saini**.



The proposed guidelines will incorporate best practice suggestions from all relevant areas of behaviour analytic work, including literature from the field of organizational behavior management in order to make recommendations at the systems level. The completed report will be used to drive change within programs funded by the Ministries of Community and Social Services and Health and Long-term Care. Our hope is that this important work will provide policy makers, practitioners, advocates, and caregivers with the tools necessary to improve the quality and safety of services being provided to vulnerable adults and to enhance the clinical infrastructure of community agencies across the province.

Within the coming weeks, *OSETT-CB* will hold its first meeting, begin to recruit committee members and reviewers and develop a work plan for the project's completion. Stay tuned for updates!



Advancing ABA's Next Great Frontier: Behavioural Gerontology

Over the last 10 months, ONTABA's Adult Services Task Force has been working to advocate for investments in behaviour analytic services for seniors. We've consulted with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Behaviour Supports Ontario's Operations Committee, administrators within tertiary-level psychogeriatric programs, and the leadership of one of Ontario's largest senior support organizations to provide education on the evidence for behaviour analytic interventions to promote safety and independence for individuals experiencing dementia and challenges associated with aging.

On June 9th 2017, ONTABA partnered with [Behavioural Supports Ontario](#) to provide a free webinar entitled, 'Introduction to Behaviour Analysis and Cognitive Loss' featuring Dr. Claudia Drossell, a leading expert in the field of behavioural gerontology and the current chair of ABAI's Behavior Gerontology Special Interest Group. On July 11th 2017, task force members presented to the professional practice leadership of one of Canada's largest operators of senior living facilities. We anticipate movement on a pilot project that would see behaviour

analysts added to the clinical team supporting seniors with complex and challenging presentations.



Behaviour analysis is uniquely suited to promote a novel and

implementable vision for improving the health, independence, and quality of life for the many individuals with neurocognitive loss and their care partners. It is time behaviour analysts made the safety and dignity of our elders a priority in Ontario. ONTABA is ready to lead the way!



Photo credit: Katrina Abou Risk

Autism Speaks Canada Walk: Toronto 2017

The Events Committee would like to thank all those who participated in the Autism Speaks Canada Walk held on June 4th at Nathan Philips Square. This event was a big success, with the ONTABA Team raising \$2,050! Thanks to all who donated to this important event, your continued support and generosity is greatly appreciated. The Events Committee is looking forward to seeing you and your friends for the next fun-filled fundraising event.

The Satellite Conference Committee was Pleased to Support yet Another Successful Event



Photo credits: Nancy Marchese



Changing Perspectives: A Fresh Take on Building Your Skills & Developing Your Career as a Behavior Analyst
April 2017



**TORONTO
ABA WORKSHOP**

**REDUCE CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR
IN HALF THE TIME THROUGH
DATA SCIENCE**

ONTABA

2 Day Hands On Intensive Workshop · July 27 & 28 2017 · 9am - 4pm

Learn to use data science to accelerate learning and solve problems

This workshop is geared towards education and therapeutic professionals who care about accelerating outcomes for their students and clients through applied data science. If you champion the natural science of behavior and are dedicated to applying the best tools and methods to help others succeed, this workshop is for you!

The two day workshop will provide participants with the skill to pinpoint individual targets, produce intensive, precision quantitative data, and then assess and evaluate visual evidence to make informed decisions.

Workshop participants, who have learned to apply the precision measurement framework in practice, have produced 10x changes in their practice. Attendees have also indicated a dramatic drop in interpretive errors and an accompanying rise in effective decision making and accelerated positive outcomes achieved.



Presented by Dr. Rick Kubina, BCBA-D, Professor of Special Education at Penn State University, co-founder of Chartlytics.

Rick is an international expert on behavioral measurement science. He is well-published in journals and books and writes on measurement of student progress, single case design, and evidence-based education. Rick has also consulted widely on Precision Teaching to school districts and individual learning centres. Rick's research focuses on accelerated learning and achievement through powerful learning methods and measurement.

Continuing Education and Professional Development

- 12 BACB Type II CEUs
- 12 Hrs of OT & SLP Continuing Education Hrs

Register Today!

<http://accelerating-aba-outcomes-toronto.eventbrite.com/>

Pricing is \$100 to \$250 and group discounts are available. Email: info@chartlytics.com

Seats are limited. Register today!



YOU COULD WIN A TRIP TO YOUR DREAM DESTINATION IN CANADA†

We're sending 1 **GRAND PRIZE WINNER** on an unforgettable Canadian adventure for 2*—where that adventure leads is up to you.

Plus **10 WINNERS** will receive Canadian-themed prize packages*, delivered right to you.

Call for a home or auto insurance quote and you'll be automatically entered to win!

Plus find out how Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis members can get exclusive savings through Johnson!

1-877-742-7490 | Johnson.ca/birthday

MENTION GROUP CODE: 9C

Ask about MEDOC® Travel Insurance and Johnson Personal Health Plan savings.

JOHNSON
INSURANCE

If it happens to you, it happens to us.



For over 130 years, Johnson Insurance has been serving Canadians with compassion and care. We look beyond the things people insure to the people themselves. No matter what happens, we can relate. Because if it happens to you, it happens to us.

Johnson Insurance is a trademark of Johnson Inc. ("Johnson") and operates as Johnson Insurance Services in British Columbia. Johnson is a licensed Insurance Intermediary. Home and auto policies underwritten, and claims handled, by Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Company of Canada ("RSA") in Quebec and primarily underwritten, and claims handled, by Unifund Assurance Company ("Unifund") in the rest of Canada. Johnson, RSA and Unifund share common ownership. Auto insurance not available in BC, SK or MB. Home and auto insurance not available in NU. Eligibility requirements, limitations, exclusions or additional costs may apply, and/or may vary by province or territory. †NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Open March 15 – December 31, 2017 to legal residents of Canada (excluding QC and Nunavut) who have reached the age of majority in their jurisdiction of residence and are a recognized group of the Sponsor (excluding ON college groups). One (1) grand prize available: \$15,000 travel voucher. Ten (10) secondary prizes available, each consisting of one (1) Canada-themed gift packs (Approx. value \$200 each). Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. Math skill test required. Rules: Johnson.ca/150rules. MEDOC® is a Registered Trademark of Johnson. This insurance product is underwritten by RSA and administered by Johnson. The eligibility requirements, terms, conditions, limitations and policy. Policy wordings prevail.

0257.0617

The ONTABA

SUMMER EVENT

August 18th, 2017
at 918 Bathurst
Toronto

DAYTIME
9AM to 4PM

Workshop

Presented by
Dr. Gregory Hanley
Ph.D., BCBA-D

Part 1
Functional Assessment of Severe Problem Behaviour of Persons with Autism: A Focus on a Safer, Faster and Still Effective Process

- Lunch and Drinks -

Part 2
Treating Severe Problem Behaviour: A Focus on Strengthening Socially Impaired Behaviour of Persons with Autism

EVENING
6PM to 11PM

Presentations

Presented by
Dr. Gregory Hanley
Dr. Wanda Smith
Sarah Kupferschmidt
M.A., BCBA

- Music and Refreshments -

Pricing

Workshop	Cost	CEU
Member	\$150	Free
Student	\$125	Free
Non-Member	\$180	\$30
Non-Member Student	\$155	\$30

Evening Event	Cost	CEU
Member	\$25	Free
Non-Member	\$50	\$30

Register now at ontaba.org



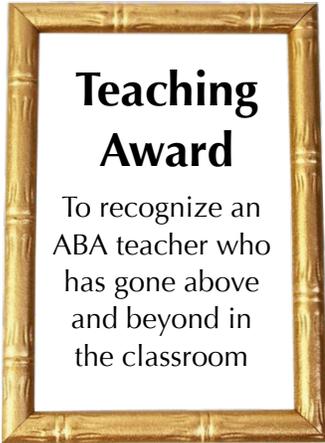
ONTABA Awards 2017 Call for Nominations

Calling all ONTABA members, ABA enthusiasts, educators, parents, and students. We want YOU to nominate someone exceptional to win one of the 2017 ONTABA Awards!



Student Award

To recognize an exceptional ABA student



Teaching Award

To recognize an ABA teacher who has gone above and beyond in the classroom



Research Award

To recognize someone who is contributing meaningfully to the field of ABA through research



Clinical Excellence Award

To recognize someone who is positively impacting the lives of their clients through excellent behaviour analytic work



Behaviour Analysis Ally Award

To recognize an individual who is actively supporting and advocating for the use of behavioural services in Ontario

Please visit www.ontaba.org for full award descriptions and the nomination form. Please help us recognize the exceptional work of our colleagues, students, teachers, and ABA friends!

Suggestions or feedback?

Could we really call ourselves behaviour analysts if we didn't want feedback?

contact@ontaba.org or newsletter@ontaba.org

Got something for an upcoming issue?

The ONTABA Analyst is produced quarterly, the remaining issue for 2017 will be released in the last week of **October**. Interested? Send it to us!

newsletter@ontaba.org



Committee Updates

PRC

The Professional Regulation Committee (PRC) is pleased to provide another update to the membership. The goal of these updates is to provide members with a clear understanding of the ongoing actions taken by the Professional Regulation Committee towards our long-term goal of public regulation.

On June 8th 2017, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) announced a commitment to regulation of behaviour analysts. We are excited that the government is moving forward with public regulation and look forward to contributing to this process. Given that public regulation is a long process and the membership has previously voiced commitment to public protection, the PRC will actively continue its efforts to achieve title protection in the interim.

In attempt to achieve title protection, the PRC is finalizing the draft of the Private Act, and we will seek membership feedback in the next few weeks (pending ONTABA board approval).

In the meantime, the PRC has completed the following actions since the last update:

- Met with policy makers to provide guidance on the regulatory processes
- Sent representatives to the MCYS Ontario Autism Program announcement on June 8
- Completed a full-day committee meeting
- Consulted with other regulated professions regarding Private Act/voluntary college process
- Consulted with other provinces regarding regulation process
- PRC representatives participated in the first meeting of the ONTABA ad hoc Accreditation Committee
- Held an information webinar for parents on regulation efforts with Drs. Gina Green and Jim Carr and other local representatives on July 18

Next steps:

- Continue to provide guidance to relevant

Ministries on the regulatory process through education, consultation, and formal policy position

- Finalize draft of the Private Act
- Distribute draft Private Act to membership for feedback
- Select MPP to take forward Private Act in the fall of 2017
- Continue participation in the ONTABA ad hoc Accreditation Committee



If you have specific questions or comments, please contact us at: professionalregulation@ontaba.org

Sincerely,

Your Professional Regulation Committee

Conference

ONTABA's Annual 2017 Conference is shaping up to be a big one! The conference committee is pleased to announce the addition of **Dr. Merrill Winston** as a fourth invited speaker. That means the invited speakers for 2017 are:

Dr. Patrick Friman
Dr. Peter Sturme
Dr. Larry Williams
Dr. Merrill Winston

And yes, we are running out of mics to drop.



All available information including the draft conference schedule, hotel information, and the call for papers submission forms (closes September 8th, 2017) are available at www.ontaba.org under the 'conference' tab. Abstracts and scheduling will be updated as more information becomes available.

Registration for the November conference is set to open early August. An announcement will be sent to the membership once registration is up and running. Every year the conference gets bigger—you won't want to miss out on this one!

Inquiries can be sent to the conference committee at conference@ontaba.org. We hope to see you November 9th and 10th at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre!

Sincerely,

Your ONTABA Conference Committee

Website

Our website is under construction! The website committee is currently working with a designer and programmer to redesign our website. Keep your eyes open for a new ontaba.org! Any questions? Contact us at website@ontaba.org.

Sincerely,

Your Website Committee



WHAT

Would You Do?

Professional and Ethical Issues

By: Dr. Rosemary Condillac, C.Psych., BCBA-D

*Associate Professor, Centre for Applied Disability Studies
Brock University*

Welcome to the “What Would You Do?” column on ethical and professional dilemmas in ABA. Please submit your questions, issues, dilemmas or tricky situations to newsletter@ontaba.org. My responses are my own, and are not intended to represent the Behavior Analysis Certification Board (BACB), ONTABA, or any other organization with whom I am affiliated. Responses should not be taken as specific legal or professional advice as it is not possible to have or provide enough information in a column of this nature. References to the BACB Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts (2016) appear in parentheses.

This ethical issue was submitted by an ONTABA member:

When and how is it ethical to try fading out a successful antecedent strategy that is restrictive? For example, if a client is wearing a padded mitten to prevent him from pulling out his J-tube. It is successful and he wears it when sleeping, left alone or in exclusionary time away though staff monitor him in the ETA. If I wanted to fade out the mitten either by increasing the duration of time he is without it or changing to a five finger glove then a lighter glove etc. what are the ethics involved if any successful pull at his J-tube will require emergency surgery and physical pain with complicated post op?

Thank you to the member who submitted this great question, as the decision to fade or not fade restraints is a complex one. The risk of injury to the client must be weighed against the freedom of movement during the times when the restraint is worn (4.05). The use of the least restrictive procedure that will be effective is also a consideration (4.09). The J-tube is a medical device, and it is not clear if the restraints were put in place by the medical professional responsible for the J-tube insertion and care or by the behaviour analyst. In either case, that professional should be consulted as part of the clinical team for the client and included in the decision-making about potentially fading the restraints (2.03).

Ethical practice in ABA requires consideration of our own competence (1.02) defined as our education, training and supervised experience, and reliance on the scientific evidence (1.01). As behaviour analysts, our clinical interventions need to be within our areas of training and supervision, and consistent with the literature surrounding effective practices. Our clinical decisions need to be data-based (3.01, 4.11), and we must consider the perspective of the individual and/or their agents when we make decisions (4.02). In preparation for fading, if that becomes a goal, it is important to consider what has been done or what can

be done to teach the client to leave the J-tube in place, or to occupy his hands more functionally when the mittens are off (4.08)? In order to determine the impact of increasing the duration of time the client is without the mittens, and/or determining the degree to which gloves serve the same preventative purpose as the mittens a thorough assessment with built in risk management would need to be undertaken (3.01).

In summary, an ethical approach would be to examine the literature on fading of restraints (2.09) and examine the data on your client's progress to decide how to proceed (4.11), in consultation with the MD who is responsible for the J-tube (3.02) and the client and their agents (4.02). If the behaviour analyst does not have supervised experience with clinical decision-making surrounding the effective use and fading of restraints, or if this particular case poses unique challenges, they should seek consultation or supervision from a BCBA or BCBA-D with experience in this area (1.02). Ideally, for future clients, the steps for fading the restraints and the design of the assessment procedures to be used to make incremental decisions would be included in the intervention plan from the outset (4.11).



Reference

Behavior Analyst Certification Board (2016). Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts. Littleton, CO: Author. bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/161101-experience-standards-english.pdf

Have a question or a topic for

WHAT Would You Do?

Send it to us!
newsletter@ontaba.org





Behavioural cusp · *n.* **1** | be.hav'ioʊr.al cusp | /bɪ'hɛv.jər(ə)l kʌsp/

“any behaviour change that brings the organism’s behaviour into contact with new contingencies that have even more far-reaching consequences...a cusp is a special instance of behaviour change, a change crucial to what can come next.” (Rosales-Ruiz & Baer, 1997, p. 533)

The Cusp

Behaviour Analysis in Ontario: The people behind the work

Editor’s note: The landscape of behaviour analysis in Ontario is changing. It’s an incredibly exciting time for our field and I figured it would be fitting to feature someone who has stepped forward and stepped up to be a part of shaping the future of behaviour analytic services in Ontario. Awesome and inspiring! *Lesley*

Nick Feltz, BST

Nick is currently a behaviour therapist (BT) in Ottawa on the Geriatric Psychiatry Outreach Team at the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre ([The Royal](#)).



Nick has studied and practiced behaviour analysis for the past five years, and has previous experience working in the areas of developmental disabilities and complex mental illness. Before joining The Royal, Nick worked as a behaviour therapist assistant, as well as an associate behaviour consultant in Toronto. Nick previously graduated from the Behavioural Science Technology (BST) Advanced Diploma program at George Brown College, and continues his undergraduate studies in Applied Behaviour Analysis online through Capilano University located in North Vancouver, British Columbia. Nick also remains active in the behaviour analytic community through coordinating the North Eastern Chapter of the Ontario Behaviour Analytic Community of Practice (NE-OBACoP) and attending provincial and international conferences in behaviour analysis.

I hear that you were the first ABA-trained person to be hired in the geriatric program at the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre. First, congratulations! Second, how did you do that? Thank you! I was the first behaviour therapist (BT) hired in the Geriatric Psychiatry Outreach program at [The Royal](#), and we are currently a team of three. The new BT positions are funded through the [Behavioural Supports Ontario](#) (BSO) initiative. It’s really exciting to be involved in the development of the BT role. Within the Geriatric Psychiatry program we use a collaborative model of service delivery to our long-term care home (LTCH) partners in the Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). Previously, I was living in Toronto and working with Safe Management Group in Oakville as well as doing some private work in the Greater Toronto Area. When I saw the posting at The Royal I just decided to go for it. I grew up in a small town, so the idea of downsizing to a smaller city like Ottawa was pretty appealing. I’m really thankful that this opportunity came up and I’m glad it’s working out really well so far.

Tell us a bit about your job and what you’re doing on a day-to-day basis. I was hired for the BT role in February 2017. Our team is led by our manager/BSO lead for the

Champlain LHIN and the program evaluation coordinator. Development of the BT role in the Geriatric Psychiatry Outreach program has been our team’s focus, including the design of a logic model, development of the referral process, and documentation tools and templates for use in the Electronic Medical Record (EMR). We are now moving forward with introductions and the educational components for our LTCH partners. An introductory video created by Adele Loncar, our program evaluation coordinator, will be one of the communication tools we use. Clinically, we’re also providing consultation to LTCHs, involving triage of referrals, functional behavioural assessments, and the creation of individualized behaviour support plans to best support residents for success in their current LTCH environment.

That’s awesome! Now as if that isn’t enough, word on the street is that you are trying to start up a behaviour analytic community of practice for North Eastern Ontario. What was the impetus and what do you hope to achieve by establishing this group? When I was in Toronto, I felt like the local behaviour analytic community was really strong and there were lots of local opportunities for new grads such as myself to network. I continue to attend the

Association for Behaviour Analysis International (ABAI) conventions and the Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis (ONTABA) conferences, but now that I'm in Ottawa I miss the community — to sit in a room with local like-minded people on a regular basis.

We currently don't have a BCBA at The Royal, but some BTs are seeking additional supervision as it is important moving forward for professional development purposes. I figured if we could start a chapter community of practice modeled after the Ontario Behaviour Analytic Community of Practice (OBACoP) then we could create that missing piece locally and get people together who are interested in learning and sharing resources to essentially collaborate in building an even larger Ontario community.

I sent out the initial email regarding the first meeting and there was an overwhelming response, which was great! I would freely label our first meeting on July 7th a success. During the meeting, each member provided an in-depth introduction, I presented on communities of practice and how they can be applied to ABA practitioners, and we finished by tuning into OBACoP's webinar presentation by Dr. Alan Poling. Although we didn't get a great deal of time to network due to the density of the meeting, there were some noteworthy discussions amongst the members. Additionally, there seemed to be some excitement surrounding the chapter and we can only look ahead as we continue growing as a successful community.

What's your most recent favourite talk or article? Lately I've read a lot of Dr. Claudia Drossel's work on behavioural gerontology and tuned

into her webinar put together by ONTABA and BSO. I've really just been reading everything that comes through the Behavioral Gerontology Special Interest Group as ABA is fairly new to this population. I come across some pretty complex cases, so this body of literature is quite helpful and relevant to approaching neurocognitive decline and dementia.

At the ABAI convention this year in Denver I also went to a talk on rethinking mental health. Dr. Bernard Guerin was the invited presenter who spoke to some of his international work, as well as his emphasis on the importance of rethinking diagnoses from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) and their use of labels for identifying individuals who suffer from mental illness and the correlated symptoms. Dr. Guerin spoke to contextualizing behaviours commonly described as "symptoms" of mental health, and outlined the mentalistic implications associated with labelling individuals as a result of the collection of these "symptoms" or behaviours. The promotion of rethinking these labels by identifying the functional and contextual variables can go a long way in our day to day work, and could better the quality of life across the various populations we serve. This talk appealed to me for obvious reasons as an ABA practitioner in the mental health field, and I think there is value in unpacking the underlying deterministic philosophy that drives treatment goals such as "symptom" reduction.

So what do you envision in your 5-year plan? I've never really been one to plan too far in advance (laughs). I just want to take each opportunity that arises and see where it goes. I'm

actually working on my undergrad now, so other than work, finishing my degree is the main objective. Some future plans may include pursuing graduate school, board certification, and maybe publishing some literature. I have to admit that I am much further ahead in my career and clinically than I could have hoped for, so for now I'm really just continuing to focus on cases that involve complex mental health and behaviour. In terms of other clinical interests, behaviour analysis in forensics has always been on my radar so I'd love an opportunity somewhere down the road to work in that field again.

What's the best advice you've received? This is a loaded question, but I've always been taught to just put my head down and go, you know, do your work and do it to the best of your abilities. I've always just done this and been hopeful that it would one day pan out.

The best advice that I've received outside of this has been to take chances, and always network. This advice certainly holds true today as I wouldn't be where I am without the network that shaped me as a practitioner and continues to support me along the way. I recently came across a quote from B. F. Skinner's book *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* that stood out to me. It stated "A failure is not always a mistake, it may simply be the best one can do under the circumstances. The real mistake is to stop trying." As a field that preaches reinforcement, our practitioners often access it on a very thin schedule, and generally following a number of restrictive circumstances within the environments we work. As I continue to shape my career in the right direction by taking chances on

opportunities that arise and by staying true to the domain of ABA, I am always able to lean on my network when circumstances become overwhelming. Working to create and maintain a solid network has certainly increased the availability of support and social reinforcement.

It would be a lie to say that pursuing new opportunities isn't intimidating, and that it doesn't involve some level of risk, but I guess it's been working out for me thus far thanks to the advice!



Have someone in mind for the Cusp?

Let us know, we love suggestions!
newsletter@ontaba.org

ONTABA Members

Emeritus

Maurice Feldman
 Joel Hundert
 Larry Williams

Sustaining

Eilaf Abdel Rahim	Lisa Israel	Tara Raimondo
Chaza Attar	Julie Koudys	Heather Roy
Joy Brewster	Tracie Lindblad	Wanda Smith
Louis Busch	Jessica Malone	Toby Stahlschmidt-Kah
Rosemary Condillac	Rachel Metcalfe	Benj Wu
Nancy Freeman	Kim Moore	Carobeth Zorzos
Kieva Hbranchuk	Kay Narula	

ONTABA Board of Directors

President:
 Louis Busch

President-Elect:
 Jennifer Cunningham

Secretary:
 Milena Kako

Treasurer:
 Sarah O'Donoghue

Treasurer-Elect
 Nicole Aliya Rahim

Directors at Large:
 Joan Broto
 Stefanie Cali
 Kyla Douthwaite
 Nicole Neil
 Kendra Thomson

Graduate Student Rep:
 Raluca Nuta

Undergraduate Student Rep:
 Willie Thorman

ONTABA Professional Committees

Conference Chairs:
 Jennifer Cunningham
 Milena Kako

Membership, Awards, and Recruitment Chair:
 Raluca Nuta

Newsletter Chair:
 Willie Thorman
 (Editor-in-Chief: Lesley Barreira)

Professional Practice Chair:
 Nicole Neil

Professional Development Chair:
 Stefanie Cali

Professional Regulation Chairs:
 Joan Broto
 Kendra Thomson

Public and Community Relations Chair:
 Sarah O'Donoghue

Webpage Chair:
 Kyla Douthwaite

