

Tribute to Hindy Nobler by Elinor Dunn Grayor

Hindy Nobler died in her Los Angeles home, after a 4 year fight with cancer. She was, as ever, a tough fighter. Hindy fought with adversity, be it cancer, her husband's prolonged illness, or the vicissitudes of managed care. She believed, passionately, in the value of professional education and fought to promote it for group therapy and group therapists. As chair of the now defunct Institute arm of the LAGPS, Hindy developed a faculty of experienced group psychotherapy practitioners and teachers and marched into the larger community with training schemes. She took this faculty into multiple settings; State Hospitals, HMO organizations, family service agencies and more throughout the larger Los Angeles area. She even negotiated mileage reimbursement in addition to the honoraria for faculty.



Hindy was a very early member of the Los Angeles Group Psychotherapy Society, in the days when the organization maintained a training clinic and year long curriculum. In the late 80's and early 90's as the local organization began to wane and even falter, She kept the local organization going, teaching and a presence in the community. She established the practice of offering a basic course in group psychotherapy annually, developing a curriculum and faculty to teach it. At the low point of activity in the local organization Hindy used her ferocity to push through offering the course and insisted on maintaining training in the community.

Hindy was a mentor through and through. She helped new clinicians develop their group practices, often referring potential group members to them to help them develop and maintain their groups. She was always available for a consult and generous with her knowledge.

Hindy was an honorary member of CGPA and attended every conference she could, usually presenting a workshop. She was also active in AGPA, serving on the Board and as secretary of the organization. Rare was the conference that did not list Hindy as a faculty member.

On a personal level, Hindy grew up in Chicago, the elder of 2 children, to a union organizer mother and profoundly idealistic communist father. Her father, a dentist, believed that Russia needed his skills and emigrated when Hindy was a young child. After his departure, Hindy moved to Los Angeles with her mother and brother where her mother encouraged and sometimes insisted that Hindy join her in speech making. If Hindy demurred, her mother insisted that she never give up or let herself be afraid.

Her father's disillusionment came after several years in the USSR but he was denied an exit visa and lived out his life there. She maintained a correspondence with him, for some reason in Russian. Hindy, knowing no Russian, contacted a local therapist who is a Russian émigré and arranged translation of his letters for her. She did manage to get a visa to visit him and did, shortly before his death, fulfilling a long treasured hope of getting to know her father. Hindy was a sophisticated and cultured woman. She loved the theater, loved Persian food, loved art and travel. She and her husband Milton travelled extensively, particularly to London and to Asia. Her home was a private gallery of fine Asian art and sculpture.

Hindy was somewhat of an anomaly in casual dressed down Los Angeles. Her clothing was usually tailor made, sophisticated and classic with her accessories tastefully selected to complete the outfit. In all the years I knew Hindy I never saw her in jeans or a mismatched outfit.

Hindy loved dancing. She took Belly Dancing lessons weekly, had a belly dancing costume replete with jewelry and occasionally performed for select small groups of friends. Indeed, Hindy still attended her class 2 weeks before her death. Hindy fully enjoyed the Friday night parties at both the AGPA conferences and at Canadian Group Psychotherapy conferences. Usually she danced until the band went home. I once asked her how she tolerated the ear hurting volume. She gave me a wide eyed grin and said "I take out my hearing aides."

Hindy suffered the effects of cancer for many years, stolidly, bravely and fiercely. When a walker became necessary she brandished it with courage and humor. She refused to use it, however, when walking into a restaurant, preferring to use my arm. "I don't want to look old" was her comment.

So, farewell Hindy, a tough, courageous, pioneering woman. You are missed.