



## From The Director...

July 2017

*"Restoring humanity to life"*



Chuck Ruby, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

I have been thinking a lot lately about the famed Goldwater Rule and how it has crept up again into public discourse. In response to a 1964 magazine article that published psychiatrists' opinions about then presidential candidate Barry Goldwater, the American Psychiatric Association responded with ethical guidance stating that psychiatrists' public comments about mental health and illness should remain general and hypothetical. They were prohibited from offering professional opinions about specific public figures without first conducting a proper evaluation and obtaining informed consent. The

**Dear ISEPP members and friends,**

### **ISEPP's 20th Annual Conference - Mental Health: Considering Context in Human Suffering**

[Register now](#) for our [conference](#) in Denver this coming October 6 through 8. The conference theme of considering context in human suffering promises to showcase the best ideas about how emotional distress is best seen as a normal reaction to abnormal situations. Up to 18 CEUs are available. Make your travel plans and [lodging accommodations](#) today!

### **ISEPP Membership**

All current ISEPP members receive a registration discount for the conference. To get the discount, obtain the coupon code from [Robert Slicen](#) (201-664-2566) prior to registering. Those of you who are not currently members should [join now](#). In addition to the conference registration discount, you will immediately begin receiving the ISEPP *Bulletin*, electronic access to our peer-reviewed

American Psychological Association and other member organizations followed with similar ethical guidelines.

But given ISEPP's position about so-called mental illness, it seems to me that the Goldwater rule is irrelevant to us. What I mean is that since we renounce the biopsychiatric and medical model theories of human suffering, which include the reality of DSM diagnoses and any kind of intrinsic defect or dysfunction at the root of "mental illness", we wouldn't be offering such opinions about public figures in the first place. To say a presidential candidate suffers from antisocial personality disorder or "psychopathy" is meaningless to us in terms of indicating some illness that one could evaluate and diagnose. It is true we could point out behaviors publicly displayed such as, disregarding others' rights, manipulating people, and lying repeatedly. But, just about anyone could note those behaviors. It doesn't take an expert to notice those things and it doesn't take an expert to recognize how damaging they can be to relationships, trust, and organizational effectiveness.

The problem isn't in the professional opinion given. The problem lies in the construct of "mental illness" itself. It was created, largely as metaphor, as a way to understand human suffering and problems in living. But its

journal, [Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry \(EHPP\)](#), and your membership will be good through 2018. You will start receiving the hard copy EHPP in the mail with the 2018 issues.

## **We Need Volunteers for Professional Membership Outreach**

We are asking for volunteers to help recruit ISEPP members from the mental health professions. The idea is to canvas internet media reports and academic journals to identify people from the various mental health professions who write articles consistent with [ISEPP's principles and mission](#). Our volunteers would compile those individuals' contact information so we can tell them about ISEPP and encourage them to join us. There are many, many professionals out there who have never heard of us and who would be more than happy to join in our fight. Contact [Robert Sliclen](#) (201-664-2566) to volunteer!

## **The Out of Control Mental Health System**

A newly published book, [Mental Health, Inc.: How Corruption, Lax Oversight, and Failed Reforms Endanger Our Most Vulnerable Citizens](#), written by prize-winning investigative journalist Art Levine, details the failures of the out of control and profit driven mental health system, especially that of the pharmaceutical industry. The book devotes an entire chapter entitled "Drug-Free PTSD Recovery" detailing ISEPP's Mary Vieten and [her work with military and veterans](#) suffering from the traumas of war and the dangers of conventional treatment. Robert Whitaker has given a

metaphorical roots were quickly obscured so much that it is now widely regarded as being literally an illness a person can have. So if one assumes people can have real intrinsic neurobiological defects called mental illness, it would make sense to require a proper evaluation in order to provide a correct diagnosis and to obtain informed consent from the person prior to making a public statement about it. But if there is no illness to evaluate, there is no diagnosis to give, and the Goldwater Rule doesn't apply.

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resounding endorsement of this book.

### **Call for Papers - *Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry***

We have issued a [Call for Papers](#) for our peer-reviewed journal [Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry \(EHPP\)](#), published by Springer Publishing Company. EHPP offers a publication opportunity unlike other journals and is looking for high quality submissions focused on ethical, just, and humane contributions to society. Please spread the word, especially among your academic friends. Submissions can be made online.

### **The ISEPP Inquiry**

We again want to announce the possibility of producing on-site recordings for *The ISEPP Inquiry* while at the conference in Denver. But before we set the plans in motion, we want to see if anyone is interested in being interviewed. We produced only a few recordings so far via Skype (Chuck Ruby, Al Galves, and Ron Unger) and we'd like to further take advantage of this forum to allow ISEPP members the opportunity to advertise their efforts at spreading ISEPP's message in various ways. So if you are interested and will be joining us in Denver, please contact our *Inquiry* moderator, [Michele Paiva](#) and let her know.

As always, please share this newsletter and other ISEPP information through your social networking sites. Also, make sure to visit our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages. Feel free to contact our Executive Director, Chuck Ruby at

[docruby@me.com](mailto:docruby@me.com) or 301-646-6022 if you have any questions or suggestions.

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[www.psychintegrity.org](http://www.psychintegrity.org)

[psychintegrity@gmail.com](mailto:psychintegrity@gmail.com)

PO Box 15120 - Washington, DC - 20003

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