

Bio for Cristina Blasoni DSW, LCSW, Ch.T.

Cristina started in the mental health field for 33 years ago at Bergen Regional Counseling Center in Hackensack, NJ, by obtaining rent subsidies, placing and monitoring mentally ill clients into their new apartments in the community, as well as, providing Suicide Crisis Interventions at the client's home. While doing her Master's program at Hunter University, Cristina worked at the International Ladies' Garment Worker Union, Member's Assistance Program, providing psychotherapeutic services to the Union members and families, substance abuse and recovery treatment, individual and group therapy, crisis interventions at the workplace, executed various types of educational programs for the Union members and taught ESL to Latin American members. In addition, served as an American Red Cross, First Aid Instructor Aid and an American Red Cross, Latino HIV/Aids Instructor for the members and community. After the ILGWU, she went to work with a psychiatrist in Union City, NJ where she provided individual psychotherapy to a myriad of patients of different backgrounds and presenting problems, starting with a holistic approach in psychotherapy. In addition, had Substance Abuse Recovery Psychotherapy groups and Spanish speaking Sex Offenders -Behavior Modification and CBT groups for sex offenders getting back into the community. In 1999, started working at Bergen Regional Medical Center, currently Bergen New Bridge Medical Center in Paramus NJ, in various capacities: first as a Medical Social Worker in the Medical OPD, creating a holistic therapeutic approach to treat various medical conditions, by doing Reiki, meditation, Mind/Body Integration, CBT, RET, forgiveness work and hypnotherapy to participating patients. In the same year started a private practice for the subsequent 13 years, utilizing a holistic approach in psychotherapy. In 2002 Cristina transferred to the Behavioral Health Department to conduct various types of groups focusing on holistic modalities, stress reduction techniques, coping skills, and psychotherapy in inpatient psychiatry and Dual Diagnosed Units. Presently working at the Dual Diagnosed/PH program, providing psychotherapeutic and educational groups,

as well as, coordinating services in the community for patients. During her Social Work Doctorate studies at Rutgers University, Cristina became interested in integrated multidisciplinary theories of the human mind and the influence of the clinician's state of presence in the healing process, especially with the voice hearer. Upon completion of her studies she then became indoctrinated by the Hearing Voices Network USA on conducting groups for voice hearers. Thus, starting the Hearing Voices groups for both tracts with much success in shifting the notion of stigmatization of hearing voices and seeing visions while incorporating healthy coping skills to deal with mental health issues, substance abuse, hearing voices, and seeing visions. Cristina also created the Empowerment Workbook (3rd edition), containing various techniques to deal with mental health issues to empower self for individual patient use.

Outside of the professional work environment, Cristina is on the Board for NAMI Greater Bergen in the function of secretary and Meet the Professional Series to continue imparting the importance of advocating on behalf of individuals with mental health issues. In addition, with the eager pursuit of understanding and educating on the importance of the clinician's state of presence especially in the Hearing Voices groups, Cristina contributed, "Radical Empathy, The Thin Place: Hearing Voices in Psycho-Spiritual Group Therapy" in "Spirituality in Mental Health Practice" first edition, Miriam Jaffe editor, creating a stepping stone for more ideas to flourish in understanding on what makes a person.