

Enclosed are our members reasons and thoughts to stay with CAMFT which will be posted on our website. My opinions are at the end of the statements. Please continue to write your respectful comments pro or con.

Don L. Mathews MFT, President Elect EBCAMFT

1) Hi All,

As someone who was on the board for the past four years, I wanted to respond with my thoughts regarding leaving versus staying. My response that I am sharing here is similar to what was read at one of the first meetings EBCAMFT held this year. Since most of the E-Tree was not in attendance at this meeting, I wanted to post it here.

As we all know, the relationship with state CAMFT and East Bay CAMFT has been contentious over the last several years.

The feeling has been that CAMFT does not have their member's best interest at heart and is out of touch with the general membership.

They have been notoriously difficult to work with, have treated fellow colleagues deplorably, have engaged in many ways that are contradictory to the desires of its membership and acted in opposition to the core values of being a Marriage and Family Therapist.

Even with this, I am reluctant for the chapter to leave.

This is because I believe that 1) There is hope to repair the relationship with CAMFT and 2) I do not believe the majority of our members want the chapter to leave.

In my time on the board, my general understanding from my interactions with our membership is that they are chapter members because of its affiliation with CAMFT and that while they might be concerned with CAMFT's actions, they would still prefer to remain an affiliate.

Prior boards took steps towards opening lines of communication between our two groups. But various factors intervened and stalled the process from reaching its end goal.

One event that has occurred, which has had very little discussion (to my surprise), and which I think was a direct result of the petition that our board did last summer, is that state CAMFT will be hiring an MFT to replace Jill (the current Executive Director) and plans on focusing more on ways to benefit members.

This give me more hope around the direction of the organization.

My vote will be to remain a chapter.

Best,

Holly Forman-Patel. Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

1) cont.

Well said Holly. As a past Board member, I think it best to not separate.

Laura R. Friedeberg, LMFT

2)

While I'm intrigued about the possibilities of splitting with the state organization, I've got some central concerns....

1. Will people be hired, either full time or part time, to do some of the many potential (great) projects that have been proposed here, or will we continue to be a volunteer-driven organization? If we continue to depend on volunteers to carry out this new added burden, I'm concerned that there will be a perpetual cycle of a small number of well meaning individuals burning out, with a majority of our ranks not willing or able to participate in this proposed grand undertaking. Some of the proposed projects are going to take a tremendous amount of time and energy to achieve. What will happen when the current board, made up of some very well-intentioned

and highly motivated individuals, retire? Then where will our new organization be? I've served on some boards before and witnessed this cycle of people, serving in a volunteer capacity, wanting to achieve great things for the organization. They start some big projects and then need to move on with their own individual lives, and retire. The people who then step up to take their places on the board have a very different agenda. Lobbying the state and national insurance industry to get fair pay for our work is certainly a noble pursuit...but isn't this the sort of struggle that should be taken up by our state organization, which has far better funding and infrastructure for such an endeavor? I know that there has been deep frustration with CAMFT, but change *is* happening from within, even if it is at a snail's pace. By breaking ties with our state organization, I'm wondering what our relatively small group will be able to realistically achieve in terms of state and national change...in terms of Single Payer insurance and other significant causes.

2. Are we losing much of our valuable leverage in shifting policy with CAMFT by jumping ship? I am a lifetime member of CAMFT and committed to remaining a part of that organization, for better or for worse. East Bay CAMFT has always been great in rallying the troops to keep our state organization on the up-and-up. As MFT's, we are **still** beholden to the ethics that are determined by our state organization, like them or not...

3. It seems like East Bay CAMFT, should it break away from CAMFT, will become an entirely different kind of organization, as it appears that clinicians of all different backgrounds will be welcome...Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Psychologists, and Psychiatrists. And while I'm intrigued by how all that cross pollination which benefit how we serve our clients, there's a part of me that wonders what we will lose if we cease to be a group of MFT's, dedicated to the issues that pertain to our specific clinical class.

There are some of my concerns around leaving our state organization. I will be voting to stay with CAMFT, for better or worse. Here's wishing everyone well in navigating this momentous decision.

Greg Kaplan

Greg, you have more or less summed up the reasons why I have moved from the "pro" to the "con" side on this. I have serious concerns about the ability of a small, volunteer-led organization to do the things that some think a new group free from CAMFT restraint would do. In addition I don't think it makes sense to give up on CAMFT just when it is beginning to (maybe!) shift course on some issues.

In addition, I keep wondering what went on with the mostly hushed up (perhaps for good reasons) conflict that resulted in some EBCAMFT board members resigning a few months back. Did that have any connection to the leaving CAMFT issue?

Jim Moyers, MFT

2) cont.

I seem to have drifted over the the "Con" side. Here are my reasons:

I am skeptical about the viability of a new organization. How will it be able to do things, such as lobbying, fighting the insurance industry, etc. that many of us feel CAMFT has not done effectively? Where will the money come from to do these things, to hire regular staff, presumably rent an office, and the many things that this level of activity will require? I can't see how the current setup in which EBCAMFT is run by unpaid board members is going to be workable in the proposed new organization. I need more details of how this new organization would function.

While I have been very unhappy with CAMFT for a number of years, it seems that it is finally showing some indication that it might be moving in the right direction. I know all too well that organizational change tends to happen very slowly. I want to wait to see what happens there before I give up on it.

Some of my uneasiness comes from hearing rumors about some kind of recent schism in the EBCAMFT board that resulted in some people abruptly leaving. I don't know what that may have been about as that information seems to be confidential. But it does make me uneasy.

Jim Moyers, MFT

3)

I have to start by saying that I actually quit CAMFT and therefore, EBCAMFT about a year or two ago. But since I WAS a member for about 30 years, I am writing this anyway.

I definitely see the good reasons for leaving CAMFT and I am not opposed to it. However, the thing that I have been thinking about is how we have had a positive influence, through writing articles and letters in the Therapist magazine and various other methods of influence, in affecting change on controversial issues, such as conversion therapy and gay marriage, Single Payer and such. I worry what the absence of the thoughtful, more liberal voice of the EB Chapter will mean for the organization's policies as a whole. Will CAMFT have more room to push a less progressive agenda?

Thank you so much for all you do for EBCAMFT and our profession in general.

Best wishes,

Esther Lerman, MFT

4)

-The reason for splitting appears to be no longer there since Jill plans to quit and suggested we have an MFT as the new Ex Dir..That was the main reason for the suggested split.

-I want to stay in current chapter because:

-If we divide we will lose strength

-If we split there will be big hassles over the money, more divisions

-Many of the problems that are asserted by some are the responsibility of the Board that our Chapter elected. The election process may not suit us but it is democratic, i.e. we elected the Board.

Gil Shepard

Currently CAMFT and EBCAMFT is about to be the best thing in town for AAMFT California members and BAAMF because the leadership of AAMFT definitely intends to close down all of its State Chapters. They barely lost the last vote to do so. I wrote

the director to object to their move when I was a member of AAMFT and then did not renew when he told me his attitude - it is the same problem as we had with CAMFT deciding things roughly on its own without membership input. The reasons are also the same - more money with less diversion of resources. For us it was more the focus of our organization but that was based on desiring more members to apparently swell our coffers. Again, power,not service.

I don't think what any other group hopes to do if we split should even be a factor in whether we split from CAMFT as a chapter. The future is very unkinown even for us, much less if they talk about joining or not - I

have not heard that they have had a vote on the possibility of joining us that depends upon the possibility of us splitting from CAMFT. Get my drift - its all potential, no reality yet.

However, the desire to split and potentially further divide EBCAMFT members, was based on a desire to get an MFT as Director of CAMFT and to replace an attorney as an executive director. That is now moot, as Jill told us she is stepping down and recommending exactly what we wanted. Now we are beating a dead horse.

Gil Shepard

5)

I don't find the plan (dis-affiliation with CAMFT) clear enough or specific enough to have confidence of what it will actually do.

Aside from the continued probability (virtual certainty to me) that the non-affiliated organization will keep all EB-CAMFT resources (rather than share them), I believe that there is not nor will not be anything near the resources necessary to accomplish the still vague implied goals of a non-affiliated organization. Members may find it of interest to see what insurance companies spend annually on lobbying for their interests- <http://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/indusclient.php?id=F09&year=2015>

After your assertion that you haven't heard a single reason to stay affiliated with CAMFT, you reference a lot of back and forth about whether CAMFT is a good organization- effectively, dismissing positives (including a couple you name) about CAMFT. My not getting into promoting CAMFT or listing positives of CAMFT and affiliation is strategic and practical. I have repeatedly acknowledged that there are members who are adamant in their criticism of CAMFT and believe in disassociating from it. And there are those who wish to stay affiliated with CAMFT. I respectfully disagree with those who want to leave CAMFT but accept that and find repeated arguments over passionately held views unproductive- if not downright annoying and painful.

So, I've addressed what I believe are the impractical aspirations to strive for ambiguous goals of a non-affiliated organization. As you are satisfied in both the general direction and the articulated vision as more than enough, I question if that is sufficient for others.

Regarding CAMFT financially "seeding" or funding a new local chapter, Jill Epstein Executive Director told me that is not likely (or is not permitted per CAMFT policy, perhaps), but CAMFT would otherwise try to support a new chapter trying to build itself.



Ronald Mah, M.A., Ph.D.

5) .cont.

Hi Ben,

I believe you're arguing semantics and technicalities. "Take" or "keep"... the organization I and others had joined, contributed funds to, and otherwise supported that was affiliated with CAMFT will be gone, terminated, changed, reconstituted... whatever term you want you. And the resources and assets of the organization I and others had been members of (for many, specifically because it was a chapter affiliate of CAMFT) will be also

gone, taken, kept, unavailable, outside control... whatever term one wants to use. Water fowl, migratory bird, Donald or Daffy's cousin, no matter what you call it, it's still a duck.

And as such the discussion is not so much technical or even legal, but to me ethically and morally, the \$100000 and other resources and assets are taken, kept, gone, vanished, accommodated, shifted... I don't think that's right. "Re-accommodating" (an obvious reference to United Airlines!) the discussion to what technically is or is not a new or "just" renamed organization avoids that perspective, which I some believe others may share. Respectfully differing,

Ronald Mah, M.A., Ph.D.

6)

When I joined the Board 5 months ago I did not want our Chapter to come to this point. I now believe there needs to be a separation between the two sides of the East Bay CAMFT. We need to separate because the bitterness and mistrust runs too deep to heal. Other CAMFT chapters do not have the years of hostility towards CAMFT like we have therefore they do not feel the impulse to leave like we do. When I went to the CAMFT leadership conference a couple of months ago I heard nothing negative about Camft. I passed out flyers with East Bay CAMFT list of demands made by the 2016 Board. I felt strange...the therapists could not relate to our Demands. Did they not see what we have seen? I realized that the demonization of CAMFT was ours...Partly true partly not. This bitterness toward CAMFT most Mft's in California do not have as far as I can tell. I don't want it either. I want to be done with the bitterness. For this reason I will not stay on the board if we leave CAMFT. It would need people who believe in the new vision. Where are these visionaries and energetic people to come from ...I'm not sure because it's the older members who have been having a lot of this discussion. They certainly didn't show up for the membership meetings to discuss these issues. To have a positive energetic future we need to be more in touch with younger therapists. Any rate, it will not be me to lead the "Exodus".

On the other hand if the measure does not pass and we stay with CAMFT, I will make a motion as your next President, that we give those people who lost the election the opportunity to leave with **funding to start anew.** I do not respect or agree with the idea that one side should take all the money and assets. **If you vote to leave, you also vote to leave some of your longtime colleagues with no funding for a new local organization.**

Bad marriages are very predictable. Good marriages are not so predictable.

John Gottman

The same with divorces. Let us have a good ending!

Don L. Mathews, President Elect EBCAMFT