

## COMMENT REGARDING ABCT APOLOGY STATEMENT

David H Barlow PhD ABPP

On June 6 ABCT released its apology for behavior therapy's early contributions to SOGIECEs or so-called "conversion therapies" and this was signed by a number of past presidents of the organization, myself included. The context and history of these efforts is well documented in that report and I will not repeat them here. But I also want to add a personal statement concerning that document making it clear that I am one of a small group of still living "past leaders" of the organization mentioned in the Apology who published papers in that era circa 50 years ago.

As fully documented in the Apology, the social and scientific context in which this issue has played out has radically changed over the last 50 years. These changes occurred due in large measure to the progress achieved by the SGM community as the immoral nature of those efforts became clearer and considerable data accumulated documenting the pain-and-suffering caused by administration of these procedures to sexual minority populations. During several presentations at meetings as well as in a professional autobiography published in 2016, I expressed deep and abiding regret for that early work and the harm it caused. However, several of my colleagues and students with whom I work noted that I had not taken the next step and formally apologized myself for those early papers. Therefore, I will say very clearly at this point that I am extremely regretful and sorry for the pain-and-suffering this work has caused over the decades, and in my few remaining years, I will continue to experience that sorrow and regret on a frequent basis. That regret is compounded by the fact I did not keep up with how these papers were continuing to be used in a harmful manner. I will support whatever reparative actions regarding these articles that are decided upon by Editors, Associations, and publishing companies

It is a supreme irony that I began my career in clinical psychology almost 60 years ago with the specific mission of relieving human suffering and enhancing human functioning. Now I find in the course of an otherwise rich and rewarding career that in these early publications I have caused, and continue to cause, the very human suffering I had pledged to alleviate. I am also aware that my words will not achieve resolution for some of you.