**Introduction to Integrative Health/ Complementary and Alternative Medicine:**

Patients are showing an ever increasing interest and use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine for the treatment of illnesses and wellness promotion. The first large scale survey that included spending on CAM produced startling results. It found that in 1991, one-third of respondents used CAM and spent about $14 billion- $10.5 billion out of pocket- for these therapies. When the survey was repeated in 1997, the findings were more dramatic: 42 percent of respondents had spent $21 billion- $12 billion out of pocket. These expenditures exceeded the amount spent on all US hospitalizations for that year. Americans were visiting CAM practitioners more frequently than primary care physicians.

With the ever increasing use of CAM therapies, developing a model of integrated health care is essential. Mental health care providers can make unique and critical contributions to this paradigm, according to a task force report issued by the American Psychological Association.

**Definitions of CAM and IH.**

CAM is used to describe a variable set of diagnostic and therapeutic modalities considered unconventional.

IH is used to describe the combination of allopathy and CAM.

Integrative medicine/health strives to find a balance between the “rigor” of empirical research and the “relevance” of personal information through the use of both quantitative and qualitative information during treatment planning.