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Malta Association for the
Counselling Profession

Abstract Guide

IAC CONFERENCE MALTA 2025



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KEYNOTES

KEYNOTE 1 Friday, 11th July, 2025 11:30-12:30 Grand Ballroom Floor 2

Launch of the WHO-UNICEF foundational helping skills training manual

Dr Mark van Ommeren,

Head, WHO Mental Health Unit, Dept of Mental Health and Substance Use



Foundational helping skills include communication skills, rapport building, empathy, exploring feelings, involving significant others, promoting hope, and other skills that are relevant to most helping roles. These skills are taught by counselling programmes around the world.

This keynote address at the International Association for Counselling (IAC) 2025 Global Counselling Conference is the launch moment for a major new product from WHO and UNICEF in counselling. WHO and UNICEF developed a training manual, as a key resource from the joint WHO/UNICEF initiative on Ensuring Quality in Psychosocial and Mental Health Care (EQUIP). The manual is for trainers and supervisors and explains how – using the EQUIP competency-based approach – one can teach foundational helping skills to helpers working with adults. To situate the manual, the speaker will present on broader aspects of mental health and WHO's work in mental health and how this foundational helping skills manual contributes to a vision of a world in which mental health is valued, promoted and protected and where people in need have access to appropriate care and support.



Dr Mark van Ommeren is Head of the Mental Health Unit at WHO headquarters. Much of his early work focused on initiating and developing inter-agency humanitarian policy, clinical guidelines and protocols (eg mhGAP modules for primary healthcare), counselling interventions (eg individual and group Problem Management Plus, EASE) and associated guides (eg Psychological Intervention Implementation Manual as well as the WHO/UNICEF EQUIP foundational skills' competency monitoring tool); and supporting countries to build back better mental health systems after emergencies. To improve intersectoral collaboration in emergency settings he introduced the now popular term "mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)".

He coordinated the writing of WHO's (2022) World Mental Health Report. He leads a WHO team that covers many aspects of mental health, including child and young people's mental health; suicide prevention; mental health at work; services reorganization; integrated care; workforce development; psychosocial, pharmaceutical and digital interventions; MHPSS emergency preparedness, response and recovery; and epidemiology.

Born and raised in the Netherlands, he worked for five years for a WHO Collaborating Centre, living in Nepal and Fiji, before joining WHO. He studied at the University of British Columbia (BSc in statistics; MA in counselling psychology) and received a doctorate - on impact of torture on refugees in Nepal - from the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam (2000).

KEYNOTE 2 Saturday, 12th July, 2025 09:15-10:15 *Grand Ballroom Floor 2*

The Digital Dilemma: Counselling Children in a Wired World

Dr Roberta Attard,

Head, Dept of Counselling, Deputy Dean, Faculty for Social Wellbeing (FSW), UM

In an era where screens and connectivity permeate every aspect of childhood, counselling practices must evolve to address the complex interplay between digital engagement and child wellbeing. This presentation explores the challenges and opportunities that arise when counselling children growing up in a wired world, where technology can act both as a catalyst and as a poison. Research shows that unmoderated digital use can affect attention, emotional regulation, sleep, and social functioning, areas central to a child's psychological wellbeing, potentially seriously impacting the counselling process itself. At the same time, digital media offers new avenues for learning, creativity, and connection, particularly when embedded in safe, child-centred environments.

Drawing on recent studies and practitioner insights, key developmental concerns, such as fragmented parent-child interactions, digital overstimulation, and the psychological effects of online environments are discussed, whilst advocating for integrating digital wellbeing assessments into counselling sessions, alongside tools such as gamified interventions to support emotional regulation, mindfulness, and trauma-focused work.

A central argument is that counsellors, educators, and mental health professionals must be equipped with a new skillset—grounded in digital psychology—to successfully relate with children, identify signs of digital distress and support their wellbeing in a fast-paced digital landscape. Ultimately, it can only be counterproductive to view technology as the enemy rather than as a powerful force that, when thoughtfully and expertly exploited, can help children thrive in the digital age.



Dr Roberta Attard, Head of the Department of Counselling, Faculty for Social Wellbeing (FSW), University of Malta, FSW Deputy Dean, is a seasoned Clinical Psychologist and Social Worker, currently serves as the Head of the Department of Counselling and Deputy Dean of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing at the University of Malta. With over 30 years of experience, she has dedicated her career to supporting children and young persons through therapy, education, and outreach. She is a consultant for various organisations, including NGOs and government agencies, and a founding member of the Safeguarding Committee within the Archdiocese of Malta. Her research interests are exploring innovative ways to investigate the human experience and promote wellbeing.

KEYNOTE 3 Sunday, 13th July, 2025, 09:00-10:00 Grand Ballroom Floor 2

Hope Springs Internal! Experiencing Hope and Wellbeing in a Troubled World

Dr John Prysor-Jones,
University of Bangor, Retired

This presentation explores the lived, embodied experience of hope within the practice of counselling, drawing from over two decades of research and professional engagement. In a world marked by uncertainty, conflict, and rapid technological and social shifts, the role of hope is increasingly significant for both counsellors and clients. Framed through the question posed by a client—“Is there any hope for me?”—the presentation invites reflection on how hope and well-being intersect in therapeutic relationships.

Hope is conceptualised not as a technique but as a deeply human and relational experience. It is embodied, culturally embedded, and often expressed through metaphor, such as “hope is a rope,” offering insight into clients’ inner worlds and emotional states. Drawing on narratives from counsellors and clients, the presentation demonstrates how hope is present even in profound hopelessness and how it fluctuates in the counselling process. Hope is shown to be relational, forward-looking, and sustaining in the present—an essential element of well-being and resilience.

The role of the counsellor in modelling and holding hope is explored, with emphasis on authenticity and the embodied presence of the therapist. Research findings highlight how counsellors’ belief in their clients’ capacity for change can significantly impact therapeutic outcomes. This presentation underscores the value of engaging with personal and professional stories of hope, encouraging counsellors to reflect on their own experiences and the shared human condition. Ultimately, the presentation affirms hope as a dynamic, life-affirming force that can sustain individuals through adversity and help shape a more compassionate world.



Dr John Prysor-Jones is a Counsellor and Psychotherapist, Registered, and Accredited with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. A former lecturer in Counselling Psychology, with over 40 years’ experience in mental health settings in the UK as a Specialist Counsellor, and Psychotherapist, and in the voluntary sector. He has counselled in India and presented at many International Conferences. He is a former Secretary of the Executive Council of the International Association for Counselling. A Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, he lives on the edge of Snowdonia, with a Celts love of walking in the mountains, and swimming in the sea.

MAIN STAGE PRESENTATION

Friday, 11th July, 2025 12:30-13:00 Main Stage Presentations. Grand Ballroom Floor 2

Counselling in a World of New Challenges: History, Progression, Advocacy, and the IACP

Ms Jade Lawless, Cathaoirleach (Chair) of the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP),
Ms Lisa Molloy, IACP Chief Executive Officer of,



Ms Jade Lawless, Cathaoirleach (Chair) of the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP), Jade Lawless is a chartered counselling psychologist and Cathaoirleach (Chair) of the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) with 17 years' experience in the field. Jade joined the IACP Board in 2018 where she served two years as Treasurer and Chair of the IACP Finance & Risk Management Committee and two years as Leas-Cathaoirleach (Vice Chair). As a result, Jade has an in-depth understanding of the role of the IACP, member needs and issues facing the profession. Jade is invested in advocating for the profession and the membership. Jade is the Academic Director in PCI College, a leading provider in counselling and psychotherapy

training in Ireland. This requires her to have strong credentials in counselling and psychotherapy regarding best practice and educational standards, along with demanding an awareness of counselling and psychotherapy approaches. Through this role and her work with IACP, Jade is well versed in the area of statutory regulation of the profession and the challenges and opportunities that this can bring. Jade is employed as a Counsellor/ Therapist within the Irish Health Service Executive, more recently working within the trauma service.



Ms Lisa Molloy is Chief Executive Officer of IACP, representing more than 6,400 members. For the past seven years, under Lisa's leadership, the IACP has been at the forefront of lobbying efforts on several important issues. These include advocating for VAT parity for counsellors and psychotherapists, advocating for the expansion of school counselling to all primary and secondary schools in Ireland, and seeking tax relief for counselling and psychotherapy services. Lisa has significant experience working at senior management level across a range of organisations. Her experience spans a number of areas including regulation, corporate governance, organisational development and change, board and staff development, communications, stakeholder engagement and financial management. Lisa is a graduate of the

Institute of Public Administration (IPA), with a MSc in Executive Leadership from Ulster University, and a certified mediator. Before joining the IACP, Lisa held senior roles at the Medical Council of Ireland for 10 years, including Head of Governance, Communications, and Secretary to Council. She has worked with the Local Government Management Services Board, the Eastern Regional Health Authority, and Eastern Health Shared Services. In addition, Lisa is a graduate of the Institute of Public Administration (IPA), holds an MSc in Executive Leadership from Ulster University and is a certified mediator. Lisa has a keen interest in working in the public interest and in contributing to the delivery of high quality and professional services and serves as a member of the Social Care Workers Registration Board and is a member of the Self-Regulated Professional Body Working Group.



Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

MAIN STAGE PRESENTATION

Friday, 11th July, 2025 14:00-14:30 Mainstage Presentation Grand Ballroom Floor 2

IAC & EBCC Partnering on the World Mapping and Development of the Counselling Profession

Ms Rita Caeiro, International Projects Coordinator, European Board for Certified Counselors (EBCC)

Mr Naoise Kelly, IAC Chief Executive Officer

Dr Wendi Schweiger-Moore, Director, Global Capacity Building, NBCC & Affiliates

Ms Rita Caeiro, M.A., GCDF, CSP, is a registered Mental Health Facilitator (MHF)

master trainer, Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF) trainer and master trainer, and a registered Certified Supervision Professional (CSP). Ms. Caeiro has a Master of Arts in Psychology, from the University of Évora in Portugal, with experience in the development and implementation of social and community projects, serving vulnerable populations. She is currently serving as the International Projects Coordinator for the European Board for Certified Counselors, collaborating closely with Leadership to advance the counselling profession in Europe. In her professional role, Ms. Caeiro has been serving as an advocate for counselling professionalization, helping to oversee the implementation of the EBCC credentialing and training programs - GCDF, CSP and MHF - which aim to establish common professional and ethical standards of practice, as the foundational steps in building a profession. Being passionate about expanding communities access to qualified services, and in supporting professionals to elevate their professional identity, Ms. Caeiro has also been proudly serving as a master trainer to those aiming to become certified or registered practitioners in the mental health and career facilitation areas.



Mr Naoise Kelly is the years' service as manager of the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, Ireland. He has extensive



**International Association
For Counselling**

organisational development, governance and strategic planning experience. Other interests include working with victims of crime (as a volunteer and board member with Ireland's Crime Victims Helpline) and the development of mental health services. Naoise believes that IAC's greatest strength lies in the large numbers of Counsellors practising throughout the world, and that IAC, as the world body for the profession, can consolidate that strength to become a leading organisation in the quest to improve global mental

health Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the International Association for Counselling (IAC). He previously served on the IAC Executive Council, and as National Director of the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) for seven years. Naoise is a board member of Northern Ireland's Independent Counselling Service (Contact NI). He holds an M.Sc. in Mental Health (Hons - 1st) from Trinity College Dublin (TCD), and a Psychology degree (Hons) also from TCD. His master thesis focused on counselling's contribution to suicide prevention. Naoise has over 20 years of leadership and senior management experience in the mental health and non-profit sectors, both in Ireland and internationally, including seven and well-being.



Wendi K. Schweiger-Moore, PhD, NCC, LCMHC, is Director of Global Capacity



Building, located in the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) Foundation and Professional Services Division. In this position, Dr Schweiger-Moore organizes and facilitates NBCC's collaboration efforts with counselors and counseling organizations outside the United States that are taking steps to professionalize and build toward a local counseling and mental health workforce. She has worked for NBCC in a variety of capacities since 2000, was first appointed to NBCC's new global efforts in 2003, and was named to her current position in September 2018. Dr Schweiger-Moore has been a National Certified Counselor since 1998. She is a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor in North Carolina and an inductee of the Chi Sigma Iota honor society. She travels, presents, and trains worldwide, having represented NBCC in over 40 countries, and she has co-authored publications inside and outside of the United States. Dr Schweiger-Moore completed her undergraduate studies at Salem College in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. She earned her Master of Science and Educational Specialist degrees in community counseling in 1997 and her doctorate in counselor education in 2008 at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). In 2017, UNCG's Department of Counseling and Educational Development awarded Dr Schweiger-Moore the Distinguished Alumni Award in honor of her global counseling work.



MAIN STAGE PRESENTATION

Friday, 11th July, 2025 14:30-15:00 *Mainstage Presentation Grand Ballroom Floor 2*

IAC-Africa: Update on the Development of the Profession across African Nations

Mr Dominic Nsona, President of the Malawi Association of Counselling



Dominic Nsona, Psychotherapist and Pastor, is the current president of Malawi Association of Counselling, a thriving counselling association that is advocating for and the development of counselling in Malawi, and a council member of International Association of Counselling (IAC-global) responsible for the African region. He is a general counselling practitioner that has over three counselling hours weekly, is a strong believer of client-centred approaches. He is a family man married to Gloria and have 3 children together. Dominic has worked with Kamuzu central hospital (Lighthouse) as a public health specialist in HIV testing and counselling services over 24yrs; He has also worked for Elizabeth Glaser paediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF) as HIV testing technical advisor. Dominic continues to spearhead the development of counselling in Africa through the IAC-Africa chapter. Such great management skills have helped the growth of the profession both in his home country and Africa at large.



Malawi Association of Counsellors

MAIN STAGE PRESENTATION

Friday, 11th July, 2025 16:45-18:00 *Mainstage Presentation Grand Ballroom Floor 2*

Launch - Malta Declaration on Climate-Responsive Counselling *Grand Ballroom Floor 2*

Dr Roberta Attard (Chair)

Prof. William Borgen, IAC President

Dr Vincent (Ċensu) Caruana, Director, Centre for Environmental Educ. & Research, UM

Prof. Lynne Gabriel, BACP President

Mr George Maringapasi, CCPA President

Eco-anxiety is defined as a chronic fear of environmental cataclysm stemming from observing the irrevocable impact of climate change and concern for future generations,. Research indicates that it is a growing psychological response to mounting environmental issues. While not a formal medical diagnosis, it can manifest in symptoms ranging from mild worry and stress to more severe presentations like insomnia, irritability, poor concentration, and even panic attacks. Studies highlight that young people, women, and vulnerable populations, particularly in the Global South, are disproportionately affected. However, research also suggests that eco-anxiety can be an adaptive response, driving increased cognitive engagement, pro-environmental attitudes, and collective action, serving as a powerful motivator for individuals to seek solutions and become involved in environmental stewardship. Addressing eco-anxiety, therefore, often involves not only acknowledging and processing these difficult emotions but also channeling them into tangible, collective efforts to foster agency and hope.

Arya, K. V., Shantha, V., & Kachhi, Z. (2024). Influence of Eco-Related Anxiety and Climate Distress on Mental Health.

In *IGI Global* (pp. 224-241). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-2177-5.ch015>

Jain, V. K., Muñóz San José, A., NJ, E., & John, D. (2024). *Exploring Eco-Anxiety and Eco-Coping in Young Adults in India*. <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-4371214/v1>

Köse, A. (2023). The role of school counsellors in response to eco-anxiety. *Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools*, 33, 245-251. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jgc.2023.11>

Rai, A. (2023). Understanding Eco-Anxiety and Eco-Grief: A Comprehensive Review. *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, 4(8), 681-686. <https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.4.823.50353>

Runfola, C. D., & Safer, D. L. (2024). The role of eco-anxiety in the presentation of bulimia nervosa: a case report. *The Journal of Eating Disorders*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40337-024-01118-5>

Sharma, A. (2024). The Psychological Impact of Eco-anxiety. *International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research*, 6(4). <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2024.v06i04.26371>

Turğut, F., & Öztürk, M. (2024). Interventions for the Treatment of Eco-anxiety. *Psikiyatride Guncel Yaklasimlar - Current Approaches in Psychiatry*, 17(2), 323-332. <https://doi.org/10.18863/pgy.1508265>



Dr Roberta Attard, Head of the Department of Counselling, Faculty for Social Wellbeing (FSW), University of Malta, FSW Deputy Dean, is a seasoned Clinical Psychologist and Social Worker, currently serves as the Head of the Department of Counselling and Deputy Dean of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing at the University of Malta. With over 30 years of experience, she has dedicated her career to supporting children and young persons through therapy, education, and outreach. She is a consultant for various organisations, including NGOs and government agencies, and a founding member of the Safeguarding Committee within the Archdiocese of Malta. Her research interests are exploring innovative ways to investigate the human experience and promote wellbeing.



President, IAC, Professor Emeritus, University of British Columbia, July 2025, **Prof. William (Bill) Borgen** has extensive experience conducting research and developing programs regarding life transitions and career development. His work has been translated and adapted for use in Bhutan, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, and Sweden. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Umea for leadership in the development of counsellor education in Sweden (2005), the Stu Conger Award for leadership in career development in Canada (2011), and the Outstanding Educator of Career Professionals award by the Asia Pacific Career Development Association (2020). Dr Borgen was President of the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association (now Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association) from 1993-1995, and has co-chaired the Canadian

Council for the Accreditation of Counsellor Education Programs since 2003; he was awarded honorary life membership in 2001. He has actively promoted the accreditation of Counselling Psychology doctoral programs, becoming a Fellow of the Canadian Psychological Association (2018).. He also served on the Board of Directors of the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (2011 - 2019). Dr Borgen is President of IAC, elected in 2019, He previously served in that role (1998 -2006), and was awarded an Honorary Life Membership in 2006. Dr Borgen has been involved with ethics all of his professional career. He and Dr Nathan Peron co-authored the Universal Declaration of Ethical Principles for Professional Counsellors in 2023. Agreeing to the Declaration is required for all IAC members. In 2023, he co-edited Ethics In a Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Context with Dr Michael Sorsdahl and Dr Roberta Borgen.



Vincent Caruana's mission in life is to inspire people to take action for a better self and a better world. In 2014, he obtained his PhD, focusing on education for sustainability and the social economy, through four case studies, in Egypt, Malta, Italy and Palestine. Vince is currently the Director of and a full-time lecturer and researcher at CEER-Malta & University Centre for Environmental Education and Research. He is active in the Social and Development scene locally and at a European level and is an established mentor, trainer and evaluator for various organisations. As our planet faces unprecedented environmental shifts, the profound psychological and emotional tolls of climate change are becoming increasingly evident, presenting a new frontier for the counselling profession. The Malta Declaration on Climate-

Responsive Counselling emerges as a pioneering commitment, recognizing the urgent need for mental health practitioners to integrate climate awareness and resilience-building into their therapeutic frameworks. This groundbreaking declaration outlines a holistic approach, empowering counselors to address eco-anxiety, climate grief, and the myriad psychological impacts of environmental instability, fostering adaptive coping strategies and promoting well-being in an era of ecological transformation.

Born from a collaborative spirit and deep concern for our collective future, the Malta Declaration invites mental health professionals, policymakers, and communities worldwide to embrace a proactive stance. It champions the development of innovative training, ethical guidelines, and practical interventions that equip counselors to support individuals and communities navigating the complexities of a changing climate. Join us in embracing this critical initiative, as we collectively work towards a future where mental health support is inherently responsive to our planetary well-being, building a resilient and hopeful pathway forward for all.



Lynne Gabriel, OBE

Professor of Counselling & Mental Health

President, British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy

Co-Chair, York Mental Health Partnership

Founder & Patron, York St John Communities Centre

Lynne is Professor of Counselling and Mental Health at York St John University, York, UK. She is a British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Accredited and Registered Counsellor and Psychotherapist, and a Fellow of the

Association. Originally trained in mental health nursing, Lynne undertook counsellor training and advanced research programmes, then moved into facilitating practitioner development courses and professional consultancy. Lynne's work has involved complex leadership roles within higher education, the helping professions, and mental health. Lynne is also a trained supervisor, with extensive experience of working with counselling, mental health and allied health professionals. Within the UK, Lynne is involved locally and nationally in the evolution of 24/7 neighbourhood mental health centres and associated provision of accessible community-based wellbeing and social care services. In 2016, Lynne founded the York St John Communities Centre to provide accessible therapies and wellbeing services and to innovate a range of projects focussed upon communities' needs. Today, Lynne continues to support the Centre as its Patron. In 2023, Lynne was appointed as President of the British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP) and continues to actively contribute to national and international evolution of the counselling and mental health professions.

Lynne's research interests include public mental health, relationship abuse, approaches to ethics for counselling and allied professions, group interventions for bereavement, loss and trauma, and the use of standardised mental health measures in counselling and psychotherapy. Lynne has published books on ethics in practice and research papers on multiple aspects of work within and through the counselling professions. Lynne works with co-editor Professor Andrew Reeves on the *Ethics in Action* series for Routledge and they recently published *Navigating Relational Ethics in Day-to-Day Practice* (Gabriel & Reeves, 2024; Routledge).



George Maringapasi, President of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA), is a former stand-out Olympic Solidarity and NCAA Division 1 Scholar Athlete for his native Zimbabwe and for St John's University in New York. After his track and field career, he spent over 15 years providing collaborative, culturally-responsive, community-based services to diverse populations including First Nations, African Canadians and Newcomers to Canada in a broad range of settings from remote northern First Nation communities, to rural, urban, and inner-city settings. Since coming to Canada in 2006, George's work has spanned the lifespan, including facilitating anti-bullying workshops, FASD work, family support, and community-based case management. Currently, he is a Clinical Therapist

with the NSHA and works in private practice in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. George believes in leadership through service and can be often found volunteering his time to learners, mentoring young athletes, participating in local festivals, and coaching. George completed education and leadership preparation programs at St. John's University and Acadia University

MAIN STAGE PRESENTATION

Saturday, 12th July, 2025 12:30-13:00 Mainstage Presentation. Grand Ballroom Floor 2

Counselling in Aotearoa/New Zealand: Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing Counselling in New Zealand

Sarah Maindonald, President of the NZ Association of Counsellors.

Wiremu Gray (MNZAC), Creator of Te Whare Mauri Ora



Namaste, Assalam ale kum, Kia ora! **Sarah Maindonald** is an Asian Pacific New Zealander who walks respectfully in te ao Māori. Sarah has 34 years experience counselling and educating young people, couples and families in a range of positions including Head of Guidance at Hillmorton and Mairehau secondary schools and community and corrections setting-- working as the Clinicial Supervisor of a Multi Systemic Therapy Reducing Youth Offending Programme and ACC (sexual trauma therapy) at START & Christchurch Women's prison. She has two adult children and has lived experience of growing up without. She now leads a Youth Mental Health team in a kaupapa Māori community mental health service (Purapura Whetu) and is completing the last year in her three year term as President of the NZ Association of Counsellors.

Sarah is passionate about utilizing the cultural strengths of whaiora/clients in a way that is mana enhancing and provides access to a post-colonial dynamic where indigenous and cultural knowledge is highly valued. She has presented in NZ and Australia around counselling and wellbeing, in particular the realities of counselling post the Christchurch Earthquakes, post Covid and post March 15th Terrorist attack to enhance mental health and wellbeing. She is also a published poet and a proud member of Fika creatives collective, giving voice to Pasifika voices.



New Zealand
Association of
Counsellors

Te Roopu Kaiwhiriwhiri o Aotearoa

MAIN STAGE PRESENTATION

Saturday, 12th July, 2025 12:30-13:00 Mainstage Presentation. Grand Ballroom Floor 2

Wiremu Gray MNZAC - Creator of *Te Whare Mauri Ora*

(Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Kahungunu)



Ko te ahu pātiki te mauka, ko Koukourarata te awa, ko
Tākitimu te Waka, ko Tahupōtiki te takata, ko Tūtehuarewa te
Marae, ko Kāti Irakehu te hapū, ko Kāi Tahu rāua kāti porou
ōku iwi. Ko Kuru rāua ko Mere Gray ōku matua, ko Wiremu
Gray tōku ingoa

Wiremu Gray is the visionary behind the *Te Whare Mauri Ora* model, a holistic framework that integrates traditional Māori wisdom with contemporary therapeutic approaches. Supported by esteemed scholars Professor Angus Macfarlane and Associate Professor Sonja Macfarlane, the model empowers individuals to achieve balanced well-being across physical, mental, social, and spiritual dimensions. With extensive experience in education, Wiremu has served as a

guidance counsellor and Head of Guidance Counselling at prominent Canterbury schools, including St Bede's College, Christ's College, Christchurch Boys' High School, Hillmorton High School, Lincoln High School, and several primary schools. Currently, he collaborates with rural and urban schools across New Zealand, implementing *Te Whare Mauri Ora* as a well-being prevention tool.

Beyond his work in schools, Wiremu provides counselling, lecturing, supervision, and cultural expertise, blending indigenous knowledge with modern practices. A trained Māori wood carver, he refined his skills under master carvers George Edwards (Ngāi Tahu) and John Rua (Tūhoe) at Lincoln University, infusing his work with cultural artistry. Wiremu also has a rich sporting background as a surfer, rugby player, and coach, reflecting his passion for physical activity and community engagement.

As the Director of Mana Facilitation, he continues to inspire individuals and communities, fostering resilience and holistic well-being through the interconnected pillars of *Te Whare Mauri Ora*: Taha Tinana (physical health), Taha Hinengaro (mental health), Taha Whānau (social health), Taha Wairua (spiritual health), Papatūānuku (gratitude & nature), Ranginui (hope and belief), and Mauri Ora (holistic well-being).

In addition, Wiremu is a board member of the Youth Hub, a residential and collaboration of youth agencies and networks, chaired by Dame Sue Bagshaw. He is also a valued member of the Leadership Lab team, where he facilitates Te Ao Māori leadership and well-being approaches for school leaders across the country.

MAIN STAGE PRESENTATION

Saturday, 12th July, 2025 14:00-14:30 Grand Ballroom Floor 2

Utilising cultural humility & broaching to enrich counselling relationships & build resilience

Dr M. Elsa Soto Leggett, President-American Counseling Association *Topic*

Elsa earned her PhD in Counselor Education at Texas A&M University Corpus Christi. She has taught in higher education for 20 years and is currently an Associate Professor at Truman State University. Her clinical experience, research, and publications focus on counseling children, solution focused counseling & play therapy, supervision, and application of cultural humility in counseling.

She has authored and co-authored numerous articles, book chapters, and presented at local, state, regional, national, and international conferences. She co-edited Directive play therapy. She is currently president elect of American Counseling Association 2024-20.



Cultural humility provides an avenue for counselors to engage with clients to explore their cultural identity and how it contributes valuable components to integrate into the clients' treatment. This allows for the development of a strong counseling relationships, work through cultural ruptures, and traverse value differences (Hook et al., 2017). Broaching provides the

opportunity for counselors to invite clients to explore issues of diversity. Counselors develop meaningful discussion concerning issues of difference related to diversity. Counselors recognize the client's cultural meaning into a meaningful practice to facilitate client empowerment, strengthens, alliance, and enhances counseling outcomes (Day-Vines et al., 2007) and build resilience.

MAIN STAGE PRESENTATION

Saturday, 12th July, 2025 14:30-15:00 Grand Ballroom Floor 2

Counselling in Canada

Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA)

Dr Kim Hollihan, CCPA CEO

Mr George Maringapasi, CCPA President



Dr Kim Hollihan is the CEO of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA), a national professional association established in 1965 with a membership of approximately 16,000 counsellors, counselling therapists, and psychotherapists across the country. She has worked with CCPA since 2013 in such areas as government, media, and stakeholder relations, advocacy, strategic partnerships (nationally and internationally), and pan-Canadian and global research. Prior to joining CCPA, Kim spent over 20 years in the career development field working as a federal and a provincial civil servant in Atlantic Canada on various policies, programs, and services. She is committed to promoting the counselling and

psychotherapy profession and its critical role in and contribution to improved access to mental health care.



George Maringapasi, President of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA), is a former stand-out Olympic Solidarity and NCAA Division 1 Scholar Athlete for his native Zimbabwe and for St John's University in New York. After his track and field career, he spent over 15 years providing collaborative, culturally-responsive, community-based services to diverse populations including First Nations, African Canadians and Newcomers to Canada in a broad range of settings from remote northern First Nation communities, to rural, urban, and inner-city settings. Since coming to Canada in 2006, George's work has spanned the lifespan, including facilitating anti-bullying workshops, FASD work, family support, and community- based

case management. Currently, he is a Clinical Therapist with the NSHA and works in private practice in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. George believes in leadership through service and can be often found volunteering his time to learners, mentoring young athletes, participating in local festivals, and coaching. George completed education and leadership preparation programs at St. John's University and Acadia University



CANADIAN COUNSELLING AND
PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DE
COUNSELING ET DE PSYCHOTHÉRAPIE

MAIN STAGE PRESENTATION Saturday, 12th July, 2025 17:00-18:00
Ethics Panel Discussion: Decision-Making with IAC UDEPPC ethical principles

Dr Roberta Borgen (Neault), President of Life Strategies Ltd.

Prof. William A. Borgen, President, IAC/Professor Emeritus, University of British Columbia

Dr Nathan Perron, Director, Affiliated Faculty & Instruction, Northwestern University, IAC EC Secretary PhD,

Dr Michael Sorsdahl, CCPA Chairperson Ethics Committee - Complaints Division



Dr Roberta Borgen (Neault), PhD, CCC, CCDF President of Life Strategies Ltd., is an award-winning author, speaker, researcher, career counsellor, and counsellor educator with over four decades of relevant experience, across 6 continents and more than 75 countries. Roberta's strengths lie in her professionalism, infectious enthusiasm for empowering individuals and organizations, and "hands-on" experience working with diverse groups of people. Currently serving on the Board of Directors for the Asia Pacific Career Development Association, as a regional correspondent for the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance, and on the National Certification Advisory Committee for Career Certification in Canada, Roberts

has received several international awards for her contributions and leadership. Roberta speaks, consults, and writes extensively on ethical practice and has developed/instructed several ethics courses. She co-edited CCPA's 2023 ethics textbook, *Ethics in a Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Context*.



President, IAC, Professor Emeritus, University of British Columbia, July 2025, Prof. Borgen has extensive experience conducting research and developing programs regarding life transitions and career development. His work has been translated and adapted for use in Bhutan, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, and Sweden. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Umea for leadership in the development of counsellor education in Sweden (2005), the Stu Conger Award for leadership in career development in Canada (2011), and the Outstanding Educator of Career Professionals award by the Asia Pacific Career Development Association (2020). Dr Borgen was President of the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association (now Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association) from 1993-1995, and has co-chaired the Canadian

Council for the Accreditation of Counsellor Education Programs since 2003; he was awarded honorary life membership in 2001. He has actively promoted the accreditation of Counselling Psychology doctoral programs, becoming a Fellow of the Canadian Psychological Association (2018).. He also served on the Board of Directors of the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (2011 - 2019). Dr Borgen is President of IAC, elected in 2019, He previously served in that role (1998 -2006), and was awarded an Honorary Life Membership in 2006. Dr Borgen has been involved with ethics all of his professional career. He and Dr Nathan Perron co-authored the Universal Declaration of Ethical Principles for Professional Counsellors in 2023. Agreeing to the Declaration is required for all IAC members. In 2023, he co-edited *Ethics In a Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Context* with Dr Michael Sorsdahl and Dr Roberta Borgen.



Dr Nate Perron serves as the Director of Affiliated Faculty & Instruction, and Clinical Associate Professor in the Masters of Arts in Counseling program of The Family Institute at Northwestern University. Dr Perron holds a PhD in counselor education and supervision and is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in Wisconsin, with equivalent licenses in Illinois and New Hampshire of the USA. Dr Perron has served in professional counseling since 2005, and has taught undergraduate and graduate students in counseling, psychology, and human services since 2008. Other areas of active research and practice include international counseling, first responder wellness, crisis and trauma recovery, child and adolescent counseling, and faith integration in counseling. Dr Perron has

served with multiple areas of leadership in the profession, including his role as the Secretary on the Executive Council of the International Association for Counselling (IAC), former chair of the International Committee of the American Counseling Association (ACA), and advanced international trainings through the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC). Dr Perron has also served on boards and committees focused on mental health and public service needs, including Nationwide Chaplain Services (NCS), community emergency response departments, and other various programs. Recent leadership opportunities have led to collaborations and direct involvement with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), along with opportunities as a regular keynote speaker for the International Turkcess Education and Social Sciences Congress in Türkiye over the past several years.



Dr Michael Sorsdahl, PhD (Educ), PsyD (cand), R.Psyc, CCC, RCC, GCDF President Juvenation Wellness Inc./ CCPA Chairperson Ethics Committee - Complaints Division, is a registered psychologist with a MA in counselling psychology, a PhD in Education with a focus on counselling, and is currently a PsyD candidate in Clinical Psychology. He has over 20 years of experience in individual, group, family, and couples therapy, specializing in PTSD, career coaching, LGBTQ2+ support, and life transitions. Dr Sorsdahl comes with a 25-year career of military service in the Royal Canadian Navy, where he commanded two Canadian warships and served as the Deputy Commandant of the West Coast Naval School. Dr Sorsdahl is a counsellor educator, has served as the president of the Counsellor Educator and Supervisor's chapter of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA), and has

taught at several universities including the University of Victoria, University of British Columbia, and University of Lethbridge. He has presented at both international and national conferences on mental health, PTSD, and trauma.

Dr Sorsdahl volunteers as the CCPA chairperson of the Ethics Committee - Complaints Division since 2018 reviewing ethical complaints placed against the association's membership. In 2023, he co-edited the textbook *Ethics In a Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Context* along with Dr Bill Borgen and Dr Roberta Borgen to bring practical application to the ethical codes provided by the association to improve ethical practice of counsellors/psychotherapists in Canada. He has also focused his most recent research on ethical issues in psychology and psychotherapy practice, with the intention of improving and updating ethical codes, standards of practice, and ethical training and education.

MAIN STAGE PRESENTATION

Sunday, 13th July, 2025 10:00-10:45 Grand Ballroom (Room 8, Floor 2)

Research Practitioners and Publishing in the IAC Journal

Dr Richard Scott Balkin

Chair for the Department of Leadership and Counselor Education and a Professor in Counselor Education and Educational Research, University of Mississippi.

Editor-in-Chief for the International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling



Rick Balkin, Ph.D., LPC, NCC is a Distinguished Professor and Chair of the Department of Leadership and Counselor Education at the University of Mississippi, where he also coordinates Educational Research and Design. He currently serves as Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling and previously served as Editor of the Journal of Counseling & Development, the flagship journal of the American Counseling Association (ACA). An ACA Fellow and past president of the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling, Dr Balkin began practicing as a professional counselor in 1993 and has worked in higher education since 2003.

He has authored over 100 publications, including textbooks, peer-reviewed articles, assessment tools, and technical manuals. His counseling work with at-risk youth shaped his research focus on adolescents in crisis, counseling outcomes, and access to services. This work led to the creation of a tele-mental health delivery system offering free counseling to underserved youth in Mississippi. He has also published on religious diversity and forgiveness, developing the Forgiveness Reconciliation Inventory and authoring *Practicing Forgiveness: A Path Toward Healing*, published by Oxford University Press.

Dr Balkin's work has been recognized with numerous national honors, including the ACA Extended Research Award, the ACES Legacy Award, the Patricia B. Elmore Outstanding Research Award, the Humanistic Educator and Supervisor Award, the Best Practices Research Award, and the Counseling Vision and Innovation Award. He was also listed among the top 10 most productive scholars in counseling research from 2010 to 2019 (Erford et al., 2023).



MAIN STAGE PRESENTATION

Sunday, 13th July, 2025 10:45-11:30 Grand Ballroom (Room 8, Floor 2)

Global Impact: Integrating Research to Inform Mental Health Practice

International Register Counselor Education Programs (IRCEP)

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)

IRCEP & CACREP Update



Dr Silvia Reyes, IRCEP Managing Director

Dr Sejal Parikh Foxx, Chair at University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Dr Olya Zaporozhets, Director of the Ukraine Institute for Education in Psychology

Dr Oksana Syvak, Director of Ukrainian Institute of Traumatherapy, LLC

Prof. Antonio Tena-Suck, Department of Psychology at the Universidad Iberoamericana

Mr Juan Facundo Cincunegui, Director International Graduate Program of Certified Addiction Counselors.

Ms Kadija McClure, Clinical Psychologist

In an increasingly interconnected world, the intricate tapestry of mental health challenges transcends geographical and cultural boundaries, underscoring the urgent need for universally effective solutions. This presentation delves into the vital imperative of integrating cutting-edge research findings directly into everyday mental health practice, forging a powerful bridge between scientific discovery and compassionate care. We will explore innovative methodologies for translating robust evidence into actionable strategies, demonstrating how collaborative global research efforts can profoundly enhance diagnostic precision, optimize intervention efficacy, and foster culturally responsive support systems worldwide. Join us to discover how our collective commitment to research integration can cultivate a truly impactful and transformative future for global mental health.



Dr Silvia Reyes, IRCEP Managing Director.

Dr Silvia Reyes, Ph.D. Mental Health and Family Counseling, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, National Certified Counselor (USA). Managing Director of CACREP's international affiliate- International Registry of Counsellor Education Programs (IRCEP), international recognition and quality assurance of counseling education/training programs. Experience: trainings on abuse and human trafficking, led wellness program for Ukrainian children displaced by war.



Dr Sejal Parikh Foxx, Chair at University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Dr Sejal Parikh Foxx UNC Counseling Professor & Department Chair (USA), Urban School Counseling Collaborative Director, co-author School Counseling in the 21st Century, 6th ed. Experience: school counseling, social justice, urban education, and equity.



Dr Olya Zaporozhets, Director of the Ukraine Institute for Education in Psychology

Dr Olya Zaporozhets, Ph.D. Counselor Education & Supervision. Professor-Regent University (USA). Experience: addiction treatment and crisis intervention, international trainings on trauma and cross-cultural supervision, Co-founder International Institute of Postgraduate Education (IIPE) in Kyiv.



Dr Oksana Syvak, , Director of Ukrainian Institute of Traumatherapy, LLC

Dr Oksana Syvak, MD in OB-GYN and psychiatry, co-founder of IIPE (Kyiv), director of Ukrainian Institute of Traumatherapy. Organized medical hospitals (Ukraine) and former Deputy Health Minister of Ukraine.



Prof. Antonio Tena-Suck, Department of Psychology at the Universidad Iberoamericana

Dr Antonio Tena-Suck, Ph.D. Psychology. Professor and clinic director at Universidad Iberoamericana (Mexico). Founding member-Mexican Association of Psychological Guidance and Psychotherapy, promoting ethical practice and certification of psychotherapists. Experience: Eating Behavior Disorders from an integrative approach.



Mr Juan Facundo Cincunegui, Director International Graduate Program of Certified Addiction Counselors.

Mr Juan Facundo Cincunegui Counsellor (Argentina), National Board Certified and Addiction Counselor (USA), co-founder of Choice Counseling, outpatient program rooted in humanistic addiction recovery approaches, and co-director of Mundo Counselling, counseling educational/training program (Spain).



Ms Kadija McClure, Clinical Psychologist

Ms Kadija McClure, licensed psychologist (Guyana), Licensed Mental Health Counselor and National Board-Certified Counselor (USA). Experience: suicide risk assessment, adolescent mental health, violence/abuse, prioritizes cultural humility, equity, and reducing stigma in mental health.

MAIN STAGE LAUNCH

Sunday July 13, 2025 12:00-12:30 Grand Ballroom (Room 8, Floor 2)

Official Launch of IAC-Europe (Regional Branch of IAC)

Launch of IAC-Europe: A New Chapter for Counselling in Europe

IAC President and IAC-Europe Interim Working Group

Leaders from both IAC and IAC-Europe will jointly launch the new regional body, marking a significant milestone in the development of counselling across Europe.

IAC Announces the Launch of IAC-Europe: A New Chapter for Counselling in Europe

The International Association for Counselling (IAC) is delighted to announce the official launch of IAC-Europe, our new regional branch dedicated to supporting and advancing the counselling profession across the European continent. This marks an important milestone in IAC's mission to build a truly global counselling community. IAC-Europe will serve as a dedicated platform for collaboration, advocacy, and professional development—shaped by Europe's unique cultural diversity and shared within a global context. With this launch, IAC aims to:

- Strengthen connections among European counselling professionals and organisations.
- Promote ethical and effective practices through regional dialogue and cooperation.
- Support mental health and wellbeing through initiatives tailored to European needs.

IAC-Europe represents a collective commitment to working together—across borders and disciplines—to elevate the counselling profession. We invite you to join us in launching this exciting step forward.

IAC-Europe Interim Working Group

Dr Anna Ballesteros-Urpí, Chair, IAC-Europe Interim Working Group, Asociación de Counselling Humanista de España (ACHE)

Mr Andrea Gogliani, President, Società Italiana di Counseling (S.I.Co.).

Mr Josef Mizzi, President, Malta Association for the Counselling Profession (MACP)

Ms Lisa Molloy, CEO, Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP)

Ms Sue Mohnani, IAC Executive Council (EC) Member, IAC EC Regional Representative



Anna Ballesteros-Urpí holds a PhD in Education (Cum Laude) from the University of Barcelona and a Master's in Counseling from Rhode Island College (USA). She works as a counsellor at the Hospital Clínic of Barcelona, supporting children and adolescents with mental health disorders. Since 2024, she has been a technical consultant for WHO/UNICEF on QualityRights training for youth. Her research focuses on personal recovery, user-led evaluation, and peer support in child and adolescent mental health. She lectures at several universities and directs a postgraduate program at University Ramon Llull (Spain). She is interim chair of IAC-Europe and a member of ACHE since 2018.



Andrea Gogliani notes: Currently, I am serving as the President of the Italian Society of Counseling (Società Italiana di Counseling - S.I.Co.). I began my professional life searching for the union between soul and body: the first step was medical studies, the second step was psychology, the third step was psychoanalysis, and the fourth step was counselling. I started my counselling activity at the University of West Piedmont (Università del Piemonte Orientale), where I have worked in the UPO Counseling Service for 14 years, supporting both students and teachers. In 2013, I joined S.I.Co., where I have since been involved in professional policy, particularly at the national and international levels. My activities include one-to-one sessions, supervision, and training.



Josef Mizzi is a qualified and experienced counsellor currently employed at the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST). He part-time counsels at Richmond Foundation and SOS Malta, and runs a private practice, offering support to clients of all ages & addressing a diverse range of psychological and emotional issues. He served on the 2020-2023 Council for the Counselling Profession in Malta, contributing to the development and regulation of professional counselling standards locally. He is currently serving his second term as President, Malta Association for the Counselling Profession. He is Vice-Chair of the IAC-Europe Interim Leadership (IAC- Europe). His work reflects a deep commitment to the advancement of the counselling profession locally and at European level.



Lisa Molloy is CEO of the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP). For the past seven years, under Lisa's leadership, the IACP has been at the forefront of lobbying efforts on several important issues. These include advocating for VAT parity for counsellors and psychotherapists, advocating for the expansion of school counselling to all primary and secondary schools in Ireland, and seeking tax relief for counselling and psychotherapy services. Lisa is a graduate of the Institute of Public Administration (IPA), holds an MSc in Executive Leadership from Ulster University and is a certified mediator. Lisa has a keen interest in working in the public interest and in contributing to the delivery of high quality and professional services.



Suzanne Mohnani IAC Council, Regional Representative (Europe). is a counselling supervisor and Deputy Head of Sixth Form, where she leads the Social and Emotional Wellbeing department and serves as Lead safeguarding officer. She has worked in education for the past 18 years, teaching students from primary level to university, with over 12 years' experience as a practising counsellor. Throughout her professional career, Suzanne has developed a strong interest in Adlerian Psychology and has served for eight years as Chairperson of the Malta Adlerian Psychology Association. She is actively involved in delivering presentations and workshops to parents and educators on a wide range of topics related to psychological wellbeing, including positive discipline, parenting, emotional health, and key psychological issues affecting individuals across the lifespan.

FOUR PARALLEL SESSIONS

Venues

PARALLEL SESSION 1 Friday, 11th July, 2025 08:45-10:45

Parallel Session 1.1	Counselling Education Practice and Skills	Carlson Suite (Floor 5)
Parallel Session 1.2	Self-Care & Wellness in Counselling	Business Lounge (Floor 3)
Parallel Session 1.3	Sexuality and Gender Issues	Clermont Suite (Floor 2)
Parallel Session 1.4	Children and Young Persons	Reading Room (Floor 3)
Parallel Session 1.5	Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health)	Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)
Parallel Session 1.6	Multicultural Counselling	Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

PARALLEL SESSION 2 Friday, 11th July, 2025 15:00-16:30

Parallel Session 2.1	Counselling Education Practice and Skills	Carlson Suite (Floor 5)
Parallel Session 2.2	Supervision and Training	Executive Boardroom (Floor 2)
Parallel Session 2.3	Multi-Cultural Counselling	Clermont Suite (Floor 2)
Parallel Session 2.4	Technology, Innovation, and AI in Counselling	Reading Room (Floor 3)
Parallel Session 2.5	Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health	Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)
Parallel Session 2.6	Multicultural, Social Justice, and Diversity	Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)
Parallel Session 2.7	Mental Health & Wellbeing	Business Lounge (Floor 3)

PARALLEL SESSION 3 Saturday, 12th July, 2025 10:15-11:45

Parallel Session 3.1	Counsellor Education & Professional Development	Carlson Suite (Floor 5)
Parallel Session 3.2	Children and Young Persons	Clermont Suite (Floor 2)
Parallel Session 3.3	Ethics, and Innovation in Counsellor Education	Reading Room (Floor 3)
Parallel Session 3.4	Wellbeing and Spirituality	Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)
Parallel Session 3.5	Multicultural Counselling	Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)
Parallel Session 3.6	Mental Health and Wellbeing	Business Lounge (Floor 3)

PARALLEL SESSION 4 Sunday 13th July, 2025 10:00 - 11:30

Parallel Session 4.1	Counsellor Education & Professional Development	Carlson Suite (Floor 5)
Parallel Session 4.2	Creative Counsellor Educ. & Prof. Development	Executive Boardroom (Floor 2)
Parallel Session 4.3	Sexuality & Gender Issues in Counselling	Clermont Suite (Floor 2)
Parallel Session 4.4	Technology, Innovation, and AI in Counselling	Reading Room (Floor 3)
Parallel Session 4.5	Ethics, and Innovation in Counsellor Education	Business Lounge (Floor 3)
Parallel Session 4.6	Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health	Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)
Parallel Session 4.7	Multicultural, Social Justice, and Diversity	Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

Session 1.1 Counselling Education Practice and Skills
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

Pros, Cons, and Understanding of the Varied Approaches to Mental Health Diagnosis and Assessment in Counseling

Laurie Persh

M. ED in Community Counseling, Counselor, trainer, and supervisor in private practice.
 Self-employed/consultant to Lartey Wellness Group.
 Silver Spring, Maryland, US

The past several years have seen exponential growth in both professional and public media attention to trends of increasing mental illness and the need for more counseling options. Social ills and crises are often blamed on the mentally ill. As counselors rise to meet many challenges, they also need to be able to identify how they approach their clients to be able to help them. Other mental health providers have adopted the medical model of forming a diagnosis and a corresponding treatment plan, but there are pros, cons, and limitations to this model.

Many counselors reject it while using it for some purposes, reject it altogether, or are not trained or recognized as being qualified to make diagnoses. This presentation will provide some tips and tools for counselors in making mental health diagnoses and assessments with differential diagnosis and varying approaches to assessment based on the needs and reasons. Resources will be provided and participants will have the opportunity to discuss some of the ethical considerations for counselors as they reflect on their professional identity, their own needs and those of their clients.

Gaebel W, Stricker J, Kerst A. Changes from ICD-10 to ICD-11 and future directions in psychiatric classification^[P]_[SEP]. *Dialogues Clin Neurosci*. 2020 Mar;22(1):7-15. doi: 10.31887/DCNS.2020.22.1/wgaebel. PMID: 32699501; PMCID: PMC7365296.

Holland, Kimberly. Mental Health Basics: Types of Mental Illness, Diagnosis, Treatment, and More, March 9, 2023. Retrieved from: <https://www.healthline.com/health/mental-health>. <https://mhmgroupp.com/the-pros-and-cons-of-mental-health-diagnosis/>

Nesse, R.M., Stein, D.J. Towards a genuinely medical model for psychiatric nosology. *BMC Med* 10, 5 (2012). <https://doi.org/10.1186/1741-7015-10-5>.

SAMHSA- <https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/dbhis/screening-assessment>

Stein DJ, Shoptaw S.J., Vigo DV, Lund C, Cuijpers P, Bantjes J, Sartorius N, & Maj M. Psychiatric diagnosis and treatment in the 21st century: paradigm shifts versus incremental integration. *World Psychiatry*. 2022 Oct;21(3):393-414. doi: 10.1002/wps.20998. PMID: 36073709; PMCID: PMC9453916.

Session 1.1 Counselling Education Practice and Skills
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

Bridging Theoretical Divides: Using Integrative Systemic Therapy in Counseling and Supervision

Emily Andrus B.S.

Doctoral Student, Counseling Psychology Brigham
 Young University
 Provo, UT, USA

Adam Fisher

PhD, Counseling Psychology Associate Clinical
 Professor
 Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, USA

Integrative Systemic Therapy (IST) is a metatheoretical framework designed to help therapists navigate the complexities of individual, couple, and family therapy by integrating evidence-based interventions within a systemic perspective. Unlike model-driven approaches, IST provides a structured yet flexible blueprint for therapy, allowing practitioners to address client concerns through a dynamic problem-solving process.

This presentation will explore the core principles of IST, including its decision-making framework, hypothesizing meta frameworks, and planning strategies. Special emphasis will be placed on its application in therapy and supervision, demonstrating how IST fosters resilience and wellbeing by tailoring interventions to client needs. Attendees will gain practical insights into using IST to enhance therapeutic outcomes and improve supervision practices, equipping them with a versatile approach to managing the complexities of modern counseling.

Breunlin, D. C., Pinsof, W. M., & Russell, W. P. (2018). *Integrative Systemic Therapy. In J. Lebow, A. Chambers, & D. Breunlin (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Couple and Family Therapy. New York, NY: Springer.

Hardy, N. R., Brosi, M. W., & Gallus, K. L. (2018). Integrative Systemic Therapy: Lessons on Collaboration and Training for the 21st Century. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 45*, 206-218. "

Pinsof, W. M., Breunlin, D. C., Russell, W. P., & Lebow, J. L. (2011). Integrative Problem Centered Metaframeworks (IPCM) Therapy II: Planning, Conversing, and Reading Feedback. **Family Process*, 50(3), 314-336.

Russell, W., Pinsof, W., Breunlin, D., & Lebow, J. (2016). Integrative Problem Centered Metaframeworks (IPCM) Therapy.* In T. Sexton & J. Lebow (Eds.), *Handbook of Family Therapy* (4th ed.), 530-544. New York: Routledge

Session 1.1 Counselling Education Practice and Skills
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

**First-Hand Accounts of October 7:
 Perceptions and Reflections of Arab, Jewish, Israeli, Muslim, and Palestinian Americans**

Limor Goldhaber

MA Clinical Mental Health Cou. Std
 Palo Alto University
 Palo Alto, California, US

Lauren Shure PhD

Professor,
 Barry University
 Miami, Florida, US

Yahyahan Aras PhD

Assistant Professor
 Barry University
 Miami, Florida, US

This presentation explores a qualitative study examining the emotional and identity shifts experienced by Arab, Jewish, Israeli, Muslim, and Palestinian Americans in the wake of the Israel-Hamas war. Using Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, the study investigates how these individuals navigate conversations within their social environments and process the deep impact of this conflict. Across all participant groups, themes of dehumanization, media bias, and the lack of control over their own narratives were prevalent. Participants expressed feeling silenced, isolated, and misunderstood, particularly when attempting to engage in dialogue outside of their cultural or religious communities. Key themes for Jewish and Israeli Americans include an intensified pride and identification with their Jewish identity and Israel, tempered by concerns for safety, particularly among mothers.

These participants also expressed feelings of grief, loss, and anger following the October 7 attacks, as well as frustration over being blamed for the actions of Israeli leaders. Another salient theme was the need to defend their identity and counter misinformation, as well as a cautious sense of hope for peace in the future. Moreover, a significant theme for Arab, Muslim, and Palestinian participants was the pressure to "take a side" and express unwavering support for Palestinian liberation, which created conflict within their communities and families. These themes highlight the importance of understanding the emotional and identity shifts resulting from this conflict and the role counselors play in fostering dialogue, advocacy, and support for affected individuals. This presentation provides insights into these complex issues, offering mental health professionals tools to engage with clients from diverse backgrounds while navigating the sensitive, highly charged conversations surrounding this conflict.

Updegraff, J. A., Silver, R. C., & Holman, E. A. (2008). Searching for and finding meaning in collective trauma: Results from a national longitudinal study of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95(3), 709-722. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.95.3.709>

Pew Research Center's Israeli Views of the Israel-Hamas War

<https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2024/05/30/israeli-views-of-the-israel-hamas-war/>

Israel's War in Gaza: Partisan, Racial, & Generational Views on the US Role in the Conflict <https://globalaffairs.org/research/public-opinion-survey/israels-war-gaza-partisan-racial-and-generational-views-us-role>

Recent research on the impact of rising antisemitism: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/pops.12449>
<https://www.ajqr.org/article/the-lived-experiences-of-anti-semitism-encountered-by-jewish-students-on-university-campuses-a-13482>

<https://governor.ky.gov/community/Documents/Kentucky-Antisemitism-Task-Force.pdf>

<https://www.fcas.org/fcas-study-reveals-jewish-hate-is-escalating-in-the-united-states/>

https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1200&context=pitzer_theses

<https://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/crown-conversations/cc-18.html>

Session 1.2 Self-Care and Wellness in Counselling
Business Lounge (Floor 3)

Filling Your Own Cup: Thriving Through Change with Self-Care

DeAnna Wilson

PhD Academic Coordinator
 Walden University
 United States

Tenisha Phillips

PhD
 Contributing Faculty Walden University
 United States

Counselors support and encourage clients when they experience challenges, yet they often neglect their own well-being in the process (Sünbül & Özcan, 2024). As the world continues to shift rapidly, mental health professionals face new stressors, including increased client needs, ethical dilemmas related to teletherapy, and heightened risks of burnout and compassion fatigue (Arcuri-Sanders & Kim, 2024). Without proper action, namely self-care, these challenges can lead to decreased effectiveness, emotional exhaustion, and even professional impairment (Olson et al., 2023). This workshop highlights the essential role of self-care in sustaining both personal well-being and professional standards and ethical responsibilities.

By underscoring the ethical obligation of self-care and helping mental health professionals develop strategies for wellness, this session empowers counselors to maintain their effectiveness while navigating the nuances of an ever-changing mental health landscape. Through self-awareness, boundary-setting, and self-care techniques, participants will leave with a blueprint to enhance their well-being and continue delivering effective services to their clients.

- Arcuri Sanders, N. M., & Kim, J. (2024). S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Self-care for Counselors. *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision*, 18(2), 1. <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/s-m-r-t-e-self-care-counselors/docview/3094014678/se-2>
- Browning, B. R., McDermott, R. C., & Scaffa, M. E. (2019). Transcendent Characteristics as Predictors of Counselor Professional Quality of Life. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 41(1), 51-64. <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/transcendent-characteristics-as-predictors/docview/2199222050/se-2>
- Hong, S., & Wang, Z. (2024). Understanding the impact of expertise on compassion fatigue in counseling via core self-evaluation and resilience. *Scientific Reports (Nature Publisher Group)*, 14(1), 22607. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-73666-4>
- Olson, M. G., Pyles, K. M., & Nadorff, D. K. (2023). Give until It Hurts: An Exploratory Analysis of Mental Health Workers' Wellness. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(20), 6925. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph20206925>
- Sünbül, Z. A., & Özcan, N. A. (2024). Authenticity, Self-compassion and Well-being in Psychological Counselors: The Mediating Role of Body Responsiveness and Emotion Dysregulation. [Psikolojik Danismanlarda Otantiklik, Özduyarlılık ve İyi Oluş: Beden Duyarlılığı ve Duygu Düzenleme Güçlüğü'nün Aracı Rolü] Çukurova University.Faculty of Education Journal, 53(3), 1267-1296. <https://doi.org/10.14812/cuefd.1463114>

Session 1.2 Self-Care and Wellness in Counselling.
Business Lounge (Floor 3)

Professional Quality of Life of Mental Health Professionals in Botswana: A Wellness Initiative

Lorraine J. Guth

PhD/Counseling Psychology

Distinguished University Professor Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Indiana, PA US

For counselors to be effective, they must attend to their emotional well-being. The ACA's Code of Ethics states that counselors must "engage in self-care activities to maintain and promote their emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual well-being to best meet their professional responsibilities (ACA, 2014). If helping professionals do not attend to their own self-care, this can lead to compassion fatigue including burnout and secondary traumatic stress (Stamm, 2009). It is essential to explore the professional quality of life of counselors to understand their levels of compassion satisfaction and compassion fatigue (see for example, Blount, et al., 2022; Mullen et al., 2017) and how they are related to counselor wellness. No studies were found that explored these wellbeing components in helping professionals in Botswana. The purpose of this mixed methods research study was to investigate the professional quality of life of counselors, teachers, social workers, nurses, and other helping professionals who are providing services in Botswana. Specifically, a questionnaire was administered to participants that included the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL; Stamm, 2009), open-ended questions related to significant mental health issues experienced by residents, and questions about counselor wellness/coping. Specifically, the presentation will overview: the importance of counselor wellness/self-care; an example of an international collaboration among helping professionals from the United States and Botswana; the study results including the ProQOL scores, sources of satisfaction/stress, and coping strategies; and ideas for cultivating the wellbeing of helping professionals in Botswana. Implications for counseling in a new world of challenges will be discussed. "American Counseling Association. (2014). 2014 ACA code of ethics. <https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>

- Blount, A. J., Bjornsen, A. L., Kissinger, D. B., Schneider, K., Vik, L., & Gonzalez-Voller, J. (2022) Wellness and professional quality of life in counselor-in-training interns: Assessment of wellness and non-wellness-infused supervision. *Journal of Wellness*, 3(3), Article 9.
- Blount, A. J., & Mullen, P. R., (2015). Development of an integrative wellness model: Supervising counselors-in-training. *The Professional Counselor*, 5(1), 100-113. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15241/ajb.5.1.100>
- Mullen, P. R., Blount, A. J., Lambie, G. W., & Chae, N. (2017). School counselors' perceived stress, burnout, and job satisfaction. *Professional School Counseling*, 21(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X18782468>
- Myers, J. (2005). *Counseling for wellness. Theory, research, and practice.* American Counseling Association.
- Parsons, R., Dickenson, K., & Asempapa, B. (2020). *Counselor wellness.* Cognella.
- Stamm, B. H. (2009). *Professional Quality of Life: Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Version 5 (ProQOL).* https://www.proqol.org/ProQol_Test.html

Session 1.2 Self-Care and Wellness in Counselling.
Business Lounge (Floor 3)

What about YOU? True Counselor Self-care Challenge

Elisabeth Bennett

PhD/Counseling Psychology
 Professor, Counselor Education;
 Licensed Psychologist
 Gonzaga University Spokane/Washington/USA

Adam Fisher

PhD, Counseling Psychology
 Associate Clinical Professor
 Brigham Young University
 Provo/Utah/USA

Robert McKinney

PhD/Counselor Education
 Associate Professor,
 LMHC Gonzaga University
 Spokane/Washington/USA

Taylor Ross

Master of Clinical Mental
 Health Student at Gonzaga,
 University in Spokane,
 Washington, USA.

Counselors must attend to their own wellbeing so as to be prepared to support the wellbeing of others. Still, counselors often struggle to find time and energy to evaluate their own wellbeing and attend to each sphere requiring self-care. This presentation will actively engage attendees in enthusiastic assessment of holistic well-being and contagious goal-setting to improve the counselor's well-being now and moving forward. In the demanding and deeply rewarding field of counseling, it is imperative for practitioners to nurture their own wellbeing, serving as the very foundation upon which they can effectively support the mental and emotional health of others. Yet, in the relentless pace of their vital work, counselors frequently encounter profound challenges in dedicating the necessary time and energy to a comprehensive evaluation of their own holistic well-being, often neglecting the multifaceted spheres essential for robust self-care. This dynamic and immersive presentation is meticulously crafted to shatter these barriers, actively engaging every attendee in an energetic and insightful assessment of their personal holistic well-being. Prepare for a session brimming with contagious enthusiasm and actionable strategies, empowering you not only to identify but also to set transformative, achievable goals that will profoundly elevate your well-being, both immediately and sustainably into the future. Join us to revitalize your most crucial tool: yourself.

Ismail, M., Jamaluddin, S., & Sumari, M. (2017). The counselors' psychological wellbeing. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 7(3), 733-738.

Jones, A., & Pijanowski, J. C. (2023). Understanding and addressing the well-being of school counselors. *Nassp Bulletin*, 107(1), 5-24.

Lewin, D. (2015). Holistic factors that influence counselor wellbeing in a high stress environment. *Counselor Education Capstone*.

Session 1.3 Sexuality & Gender Issues in Counselling
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)

**A Counselling Approach to Sexual and Relationship Challenges After
 Gynaecological and Breast Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment**

Anna Catania

Master in Counselling

Chairperson Council for the Counselling Profession in Malta

Counsellor and Psychosexual Therapist in Private Practice, Malta

Gynaecological and breast cancers pose substantial health difficulties for cisgender women globally. Beyond the physical challenges and treatment-related side effects, these diseases profoundly affect women's perceptions of their own sexuality, including their body image (Bonding et al., 2022; Lewis-Smith et al., 2018), sexual relationships (Gorman et al., 2022), and sexual functioning (La Spina et al., 2024; Rees et al. 2020). Therefore, the focus of the presentation will be on highlighting the psychosexual challenges these clients face and counselling interventions that can help them throughout their cancer journey and beyond. "Bonding, S. A., Russell, H., Knoetze, R., Wilson, V., & Stafford, L. (2022). 'Sometimes I can't look in the mirror': Recognising the importance of the sociocultural context in patient experiences of sexuality, relationships and body image after ovarian cancer. *European Journal of Cancer Care*, 31(6), e13645.

La Spina, S., Scollo, P., Pecorino, B., Lombardo, V., Motta, A., Calderone, R. G., ... & Scandurra, G. (2024). Life Experience of Survivors of Gynecologic Cancers: A Survey Conducted in Italy. *Oncology* (08909091), 38(1).

Lewis-Smith, H., Diedrichs, P. C., Rumsey, N., & Harcourt, D. (2018). Efficacy of psychosocial and physical activity-based interventions to improve body image among women treated for breast cancer: A systematic review. *Psycho-Oncology*, 27(12), 2687-2699.

Rees, M., Angioli, R., Coleman, R. L., Glasspool, R., Plotti, F., Simoncini, T., & Terranova, C. (2020). European Menopause and Andropause Society (EMAS) and International Gynecologic Cancer Society (IGCS) position statement on managing the menopause after gynecological cancer: focus on menopausal symptoms and osteoporosis. *Maturitas*, 134, 56-61

Whitaker, Katriina (2020) Earlier diagnosis: the importance of cancer symptoms. *The Lancet Oncology*, Volume 21, Issue 1, 6 - 8

Session 1.3 Sexuality & Gender Issues in Counselling
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)

Sex Trafficking Survivors & Social Determinants of Health: A Model

John Harrichand

PhD/Counselor Education and Supervision
 Assistant Professor
 The University of Texas at San Antonio
 San Antonio, Texas US

Devon E. Romero

PhD/Counselor Education and Supervision
 Associate Professor
 The University of Texas at San Antonio
 San Antonio Texas US

Claudia G. Interiano-Shiverdecker

PhD/Counselor Education and Supervision
 Associate Professor
 The University of Texas at San Antonio
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Priscilla Rose Prasath

PhD/Counselor Education and Supervision
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Sex trafficking (ST) continues to be a significant challenge globally, and although statistics exist on prevalence, they are usually unreliable due to fear of personal harm and/or legal consequences (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021). A systematic review of the SDOH conducted by Perry and McEwing (2013) in Southeast Asia, found that severe physical and mental health ramifications exist for individuals being trafficked, however, similar research in the United States remains lacking. Therefore, our research team sought to better understand and meet the mental health needs of sex trafficked survivors by examining the impact of SDOH using Charmaz's (2014) grounded theory methodology. This research session presents our model depicting the impact of SDOH on sex-trafficked survivors and provides recommendations for counselors who serve this marginalized community.

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Session 1.3 Sexuality & Gender Issues in Counselling
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)

Unexpected Origins: Mental Health Considerations in Late-Discovery Genetic Identity Cases

Katherine Boldt

MA Mental Health Counseling/LPC/Clinician

Cleveland Sex & Intimacy Counseling Cleveland Ohio US

The proliferation of direct-to-consumer DNA testing has led to an unprecedented surge in individuals unexpectedly discovering that their genetic origins differ from their assumed family history. This presentation examines the psychological impact of late-discovery non-paternity events, including both misattributed parentage and previously undisclosed donor conception. As research related to direct-to-consumer DNA testing and late discovery events emerges, documented patterns of trauma, identity disruption, and attachment challenges among individuals who discover their biological origins as adults are explored. The findings indicate higher rates of depression, anxiety, and familial distress following these discoveries, illustrating the complex relationship between genetic identity and psychological well-being. There is a critical need for mental health practitioners to develop specialized competencies in supporting clients through the acute and long-term emotional challenges of unexpected parentage revelation, including grief, trust issues, and family system disruption. This framework outlines trauma-informed therapeutic approaches for late-discovery cases, highlighting the need for specialized mental health interventions for this growing demographic.

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Session 1.3 Sexuality & Gender Issues In Counselling.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)

Between Longing and Loss: A Counselling Perspective into Pleasure and Destruction in Chemsex

Ryan Portelli

Master in Counselling . Counsellor, Educator, Counselling Leadership,
 Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation, Malta

Chemsex, the use of drugs such as (but not limited to) methamphetamine, GHB/GBL, and mephedrone to facilitate or enhance sex, often in group or extended settings, is a growing phenomenon, particularly among men that have sex with men (MSM). Chemsex can offer experiences of heightened intimacy, disinhibition, and belonging, it is also interwoven with complex themes of shame, trauma, marginalisation, and loss. This presentation explores the psychological and sociocultural dimensions of Chemsex, grounded in clinical experience and Counselling practices. Across Europe, including in Malta, we have seen a rise in Chemsex-related mental health concerns in recent years, often against a backdrop of limited resources, stigma, and political ambivalence towards LGBTQ+ sexual health. Drawing from practice-based work, this session outlines a therapeutic understanding, including integrative psychosexual therapy, trauma-informed care, harm-reduction models, and community-based interventions. It also addresses the vital role of cultural competence in working with MSM engaging in Chemsex, many of whom are navigating layered experiences of minority stress, internalised homophobia, and intersectional exclusion. Rather than pathologising desire or pleasure, this presentation advocates for sex-positive, non-judgmental counselling responses that hold space for the ambivalence and contradictions present in Chemsex engagement. Rooted in an affirmative and harm-reduction approach and referring to case examples, clinical reflections, and shared models of practice, attendees will be invited to reflect on their own clinical positioning critically and gain practical tools to support clients with compassion, containment, and Queer cultural awareness."

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**Session 1.4 Children and Young Persons.
Reading Room (Floor 3)**

**A Pilot Project for Implementing WHO's QualityRights Initiative for Children and Adolescents
with Mental Health Conditions**

Anna Ballesteros-Urpí	PhD, Adjunct Professor Hospital Clinic Barcelona Universitat de Barcelona, Spain
Albert Piquer	Master's degree President, Emilia Barcelona Association, Spain
Anna Mirón Fernández	Master's degree Social Worker Hospital Clinic Barcelona, Spain
Astrid Morer	Psychiatrist, Senior Consultant, Head of the Child and Adolescent Inpatient Unit, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychology Department, Hospital Clínic of Barcelona. Institute of Neurosciences, Hospital Clínic of Barcelona
Luisa Lazaro	PhD, MD, Head of the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychology Hospital Clínic of Barcelona

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations 2006) advocates for the full and equal human rights of all individuals with physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments (Funk 2020, UN, 2006). In line with this, WHO launched the QualityRights initiative (WHO 2019) to enhance care quality in social and mental health services and uphold the human rights of those with mental health, psychosocial, intellectual, or cognitive disabilities (Funk 2020). A key component of QualityRights is training stakeholders - from policymakers to service users - in person-centered care and personal recovery (Funk 2020). Personal recovery is defined as "a deeply personal and unique process for the patient to change their attitudes, values, feelings, goals, skills and roles in order to achieve a fulfilling, hopeful and productive way of living, even with the possible limitations of their illness" (Leamy 2011). Transforming mental health services towards this recovery model involves training professionals in person-centered treatment, ensuring active patient participation, and practically integrating recovery approaches (Subandi 2023). Peer Support programs typically foster personal recovery, shared decision-making, and accompaniment (Ibrahim 2019, Pitt 2013). While most Peer Support initiatives and studies have focused on adults, evidence for pediatric populations is limited. This project sought to identify strategies for integrating the QualityRights initiative to develop personal recovery plans within a Children and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychology Department in a Barcelona hospital, with applicability to other European hospitals.

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Session 1.4 Children and Young Persons.
Reading Room (Floor 3)

Parental Style and Adolescent's Safety in Social Media World in 21st Century: Implications for Counselling

Dr Olayinka M. Ayannuga

Ph.D Chief Lecturer/Director of Academic Planning

Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, Lagos, Nigeria,

The purpose of this paper was to investigate the effect of parental style on adolescent's safety in social media in Somolu Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. Survey research design was adopted, participants were one hundred and fifty Senior Secondary School students. The instrument was a self-developed questionnaire titled "Parental Style and Adolescents Safety in Social Media" (PSSM). The reliability of the instrument was 0.77 using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient method while the content and construct validity were determined using the multivariable factor analyses. Analysis of data was done using simple percentages, frequency, mean, and standard deviation presented in tables based on the research questions. The result of the study showed different social media applications available to adolescents and how frequently they are used. It also reveals different reasons why adolescents use social media and that most parents adopt authoritative parental styles to ensure the online safety of adolescents on social media. It was concluded that in children's upbringing, their safety anywhere should be paramount to the parents. The authoritative style that most parents adopted based on the result of this study may neither be the best nor the worst, other styles can also be the best for some families, and variation in parenting styles is only related to differences in parent-adolescent relationship features from family to family. It is also recommended among others that counsellors should provide adolescents' parents with programs to enlighten them on different parenting styles and the consequences of adolescent's social media.

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Session 1.4 Children and Young Persons
Reading Room (Floor 3)

Using Art to Promote Wellness in Children and Adolescents Across Cultures

Patricia Kimball

PhD Counselor Education and Supervision
 Associate Professor Liberty University
 Lynchburg, Virginia, US

Christina Villarreal-Davis

PhD/Counselor Education and Supervision
 Associate Professor Liberty University
 Lynchburg, Virginia, US

Children and adolescents (C/A) are the future of all cultures, so developing youth who mature into holistically well adults to take their future role in their communities is vital for the culture's growth and success. In the past several years, the mental health needs of children and adolescents has increased worldwide, and mental health concerns like depression and anxiety have expanded globally (Benton et al., 2021; Ghafari et al., 2022). Increased needs for C/A indicates a need to understand counseling effectively with them, since C/A do not respond the same as adults to traditional talk therapy, due to multiple developmental factors (Berk, 2022). Additionally, using art in counseling can improve mental and emotional well-being for not just C/A but for all ages of clients (Tripathi & Dilawari, 2012). This highly practical presentation will focus on why utilizing art when working with C/A is more effective than standard talk therapy and how art promotes positive mental health and wellness (Zarobe & Bungay, 2017). Art-based interventions across cultures and with a variety of ages will be reviewed (Gladding, 2021). The Feeling Tree will be used as an example of using art and instructions will be provided. Modifications of intervention and practical considerations will be discussed.

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- Berk, L. E. (2022). *Infants, children, and adolescents*. SAGE Publications.
- Braitto, I., Rudd, T., Buyuktasgin, D., Ahmed, M., Glancy, C., & Mulligan, A. (2022). systematic review of effectiveness of art psychotherapy in children with mental health disorders. *Irish Journal of Medical Science (1971-)*, 191(3), 1369-1383.
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Session 1.4 Children and Young Persons
Reading Room (Floor 3)

**Creative Bibliotherapy in the Promotion of Wellness and Resilience
 in Children and Adolescents Across Cultures**

Patricia Kimball PhD

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 Associate Professor Liberty University
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Christina Villarreal-Davis PhD

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 Assistant Professor Liberty University
 Lynchburg, Virginia, US

The development of mental health and wellness in children and adolescents (C/A) is important to communities across the globe. With the rise of mental health difficulties in C/A populations world-wide, being able to address these issues in a developmentally appropriate manner is essential to holistic health and wellness. Creative techniques are accepted methods to address the mental health concerns of C/A in a developmentally appropriate manner (Kress et al., 2018). One of these techniques is Creative Bibliotherapy, the guiding reading of fiction, fairy tales or poetry, in a way to address mental health needs and proactive problem solving (Montgomery & Maunders, 2015). Through story, many find their inner self and discover solutions that were once unimaginable (Başarı et al., 2023). Creative Bibliotherapy has been found to have positive cognitive, emotional and social outcomes in multiple populations with many different mental health needs (De Vries et al., 2017). It is also useful in developing plans for how to manage future problems and has been shown to increase resilience (Başarı et al., 2023; Ramamurthy et al., 2024). In this presentation, the foundations of Creative Bibliotherapy will be reviewed and what makes it an ideal intervention when working with C/A explored. How to use of Creative Bibliotherapy will be explored and an example will be used to show how to engage C/A. We will conclude with a discussion on how to choose stories and books appropriate for age, culture, and mental health needs.

- Başarı, Ş., Güneyli, A., Yılmaz, G. L., & Kahveci, G. (2023). The Impact of Fairy Tale and Short Film Based Bibliotherapy Training: Social, Emotional and Reading Skills of Psychological Counselor Candidates. *Kıbrıs Türk Psikiyatri ve Psikoloji Dergisi*, 5(1), 13-24.
- Conover, K. M. (2020). Tell me a story: Promoting resiliency in military children with a bibliotherapy intervention. In *Nursing Forum*, 55 (3), 439-446.
- Fletcher, T. B., & DeDiego, A. C. (Eds.). (2023). *Creativity in Counseling Children and Adolescents: A Guide to Experiential Activities*. Taylor & Francis.
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Session 1.5 Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

**An Autoethnographic Enquiry into Innocence,
 Childhood Sexual Abuse, and The Survivor's Sense of Self.**

Daniel Liam Cutajar

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 Counsellor, Malta EU

This autoethnographic study explores the enduring impact of childhood sexual abuse (CSA) on the author's innocence and sense of self. CSA is a pervasive issue with profound psychological consequences. This is why it necessitates a deeper understanding of survivors' lived experiences. The study employs autoethnography, a methodology combining personal narrative and scholarly analysis, to shed light on the trauma experienced through sexual grooming and exploitation. Grounded in a social constructionist paradigm, the research embraces subjective and culturally situated realities. Data sources include the author's firsthand account, reflections, and scholarly literature on trauma, dissociation, and sexual abuse.

Through vivid storytelling, the complexities of betrayal, lost innocence, and dissociation as a survival mechanism in the face of overwhelming abuse are explored. By courageously confronting long-suppressed painful memories, the author discovers resilience and reclaims their narrative as a male survivor. Key findings highlight how dissociation served as a coping mechanism, the intricacies of integrating traumatic memories, and the process of reclaiming one's voice after abuse. This autoethnography emerges from a desire to find wholeness, confront one's lost innocence, and empower the author's voice by grappling with painful secrets. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of the long-lasting effect of CSA and the journey towards healing and self-acceptance."

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Brison, S. J. (1997). One outliving oneself: Trauma, memory, and personal identity. In D. T. Meyers (Ed.), *Feminists rethink the self* (pp. 12-39). Routledge.

Davies, B., Browne, J., Gannon, S., Hey, V., McNamee, S., & Newman, P. (2004). The ambivalent practices of reflexivity. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10(3), 360-389.

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Session 1.5 Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

**Empowering Communities: Collaborative Approaches to Mental Health
 in Times of Widespread Crisis and Unrest**

Anabel Mifsud

PhD Assistant Professor

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The fateful events of recent years, including a global pandemic, extreme weather catastrophes, war, and economic instability, have underscored the need for community-based, collective interventions to address the surging mental health toll on individuals, families, and communities. The magnitude and complexity of contemporary challenges to mental health demand that counselors adopt innovative approaches, as the need for help far surpasses what can be met through traditional individual or family counseling (Somasundaram, 2014). Additionally, conventional one-on-one therapy may not be compatible with the worldview, values, and beliefs of community members from diverse cultures. Collective approaches offer a sustainable, accessible, and collaborative means to meet the rising demand for mental health services, cater to the unique needs of historically underserved groups, and foster community engagement and resilience (Castillo et al., 2019).

This presentation aims to raise awareness and knowledge of collective interventions to improve community mental health and empower communities to heal and flourish. The presenter will highlight the significance and benefits of community-based collective mental health interventions, address best practices for implementing culturally responsive collective interventions in community settings, and explore the role that professional counselors can assume in these efforts. The session will draw upon extant literature on collective interventions and the presenter's dissertation findings. Case vignettes will be used to illustrate the relevance of collective behavioral health interventions.

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Session 1.5 Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

Evaluating the Impact of the Gen.Ukrainian Camps on Trauma Symptoms in Children

Shana Pribesh

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 Professor, Old Dominion University,
 Norfolk, Virginia, US

Children exposed to the trauma of war often exhibit significant psychological distress, necessitating targeted interventions. This study evaluates the impact of two Gen.Ukrainian camps on trauma symptoms in children affected by the war in Ukraine by measuring changes in scores on the CATS 2 and CRIES 8 instruments. The first camp addressed trauma rooted in the death of a parent or close family member. The second camp worked with children who had been forcibly deported/abducted and then either rescued or escaped. A one-group pre-test/post-test design was employed for each camp (45 in the loss camp, 38 in the abduction camp). Results indicated a statistically significant reduction in trauma-related symptoms in participants in the loss camp, with mean CATS 2 scores decreasing from 16.18 to 9.13 and CRIES 8 scores from 10.02 to 4.25 for intrusion and 7.09 to 2.43 for avoidance. Similarly, there was a statistically significant reduction in trauma-related symptoms in participants in the abduction camp, with mean CATS 2 scores decreasing from 16.21 to 9.32 and CRIES 8 scores from 8.05 to 4.18 for intrusion and 9.21 to 5.11 for avoidance. These findings suggest that the Gen.Ukrainian camp interventions may be an effective short-term strategy for reducing trauma symptoms in children. Implications for practice and future research directions are discussed.

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Session 1.5 Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

**Correlates and Predictors of Posttraumatic Growth Following Interpersonal Trauma:
 Original Research and Practical Implications**

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 Student, Licensed Professional Counselor
 Virginia Commonwealth University
 Richmond, Virginia US

Emily Kitching

M.Ed./Counselor Education and Supervision
 Doctoral Student and Graduate Assistant
 Virginia Commonwealth University Richmond,
 Richmond, Virginia US

Consistent with a strengths-based approach, counselors can therapeutically foster positive reactions of trauma survivors through a trauma-informed lens. While the deleterious effects of trauma are well-researched (Kilpatrick et al., 2013; Schleider et al., 2021; Thomas et al., 2021), there has been a shift from a singularly deficit-oriented view of trauma reactions to one that is more inclusive and includes a focus on wellbeing and posttraumatic growth (PTG; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) outlined a theoretical framework for the growth process, including intra- and inter-personal supportive factors, such as cognitive skills and social support. Our research expands on this framework to explore a variety of intra- and inter-personal factors that correlate and predict PTG among interpersonal trauma experiencers. In this session, we will discuss findings from our original research, a large-scale (N = 593) cross-sectional survey study that explored the relationships of hope, mindfulness, forgiveness, optimism, locus of control, social connectedness and childhood experiences to PTG to further elucidate correlates and predictors of PTG. We will present results of bivariate correlations and multiple regression analyses, as well as interpret these results in the context of fostering personal growth and wellbeing in counseling. Participants will learn about the facilitators of PTG and be able to apply PTG concepts to clinical practice. By focusing on practical ways to apply strengths-based and trauma-informed interventions, stigma around trauma can decrease and trauma experiencers can access yet unseen parts of themselves that can help them thrive.

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Session 1.6 Multicultural Counselling.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

**Counselling Around the World: Preparing Students to Provide Culturally-Adapted Care
 Through an International Field School Experience**

Erin Thrift

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 Kwantlen Polytechnic University Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Kwantlen Polytechnic University's (KPU) undergraduate counselling psychology (CNPS) program is interested in developing a joint field school with a focus on culturally-adapted care. Most CNPS programs now include a course that focuses on developing competencies for counselling individuals from diverse groups. However, cultural competencies alone have not been linked to increased positive client outcomes, whereas, culturally-adapted approaches - that is, therapeutic care that is based on norms of a group, in the language of the group, and provided by a member of the group - have been shown to improve counselling results (e.g., Friendship Bench Model, Chibanda, 2017; McKenzie et al., 2016). The predominance of psychological knowledge and practices derived from WEIRD samples (Heinrich et al., 2010) means that often it is hard for students to imagine how counselling processes and structures could be altered to better serve members of diverse cultural groups. By participating in an international field school, students could learn from each other how to increase the wellbeing of those from varied groups, especially those currently underserved by the counselling field. As envisioned, students from partner institutions would enrol in a course on Cultural Considerations at their home universities and then come together for a 1- 2 week global experience during which they would present projects on culturally-adapted care, ideally connected to their identity(ies). This presentation will lay out the rationale and vision for this field school, with an appeal to educators interested in collaborating on this project.

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Session 1.6 Multicultural Counselling.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

**Counseling in Pediatric Palliative Care:
 Readings from a Reflective Journal**

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 Programme Associate (Education) UNESCO
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This performance-based presentation explores the emotional and ethical complexities of pediatric oncology and palliative care through narrative storytelling and visual media. Using a reflective journal kept during my training as a psychology trainee in a children's cancer hospital, I will perform a reading of selected journal entries while a video installation plays in the background, creating a multisensory, immersive experience. The presentation highlights the mental health challenges faced by counselors working with seriously ill children, as well as the emotional resilience and ethical considerations involved in providing compassionate care. The journal entries offer insights into interactions with young patients, their families, and the hospital culture, illustrating the complexities of supporting children in end-of-life care. Key themes include:

The emotional impact of pediatric palliative care on counselors and the importance of self-reflection in mental health professions. Person-centered, humanistic approaches to counseling that emphasize empathy, respect, and individualized support. Ethical storytelling and confidentiality in counseling narratives, ensuring dignity and privacy for patients and families. Healthcare system challenges in pediatric oncology and palliative care, and their implications for mental health professionals. By combining spoken word and visual storytelling, this session will engage counselors in a deeper discussion on mental health, resilience, and ethical dilemmas in palliative care. The session invites attendees to reflect on their own experiences in counseling and explore ways to cultivate well-being while navigating the emotional demands of their work.

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Session 1.6 Multicultural Counselling.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

**Utilizing Cultural Humility and Broaching to Enrich
 Counseling Relationship and Build Resilience**

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 PhD, LPC-S (TX), LPC (MO), RPT-S™, CSC
 PhD Counselor Education
 President Elect, American Counseling Association,
 Houston, Texas, US

Cultural humility provides an avenue for counselors to engage with clients to explore their cultural identity and how it contributes valuable components to integrate into the clients' treatment. This allows for the development of a strong counseling relationships, work through cultural ruptures, and traverse value differences (Hook et al., 2017). Broaching provides the opportunity for counselors to invite clients to explore issues of diversity. Counselors develop meaningful discussion concerning issues of difference related to diversity. Counselors recognize the client's cultural meaning into a meaningful practice to facilitate client empowerment, strengthens, alliance, and enhances counseling outcomes (Day-Vines et al., 2007) and build resilience.

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Day-Vines, N., Zhang, J., Cluxton-Keller, F., Hicks, D., Jones, C., Spann, R., Daga, D., & Agorsor, C. (2024). The development and validation of an instrument to examine clients' perspectives about their counselors' ability to broach racial, ethnic, and cultural concerns in *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12300> .

Hook, J. N., Davis, D. E., Owen, J., Worthington, E. L., Jr., & Utsey, S. O. (2013). Cultural humility: Measuring openness to culturally diverse clients. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 60(3), 353-366. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032595>

Gottlieb, M. (2020). The case for a cultural humility framework in social work practice in *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, April, 463-481. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2020.1753615> .

Hook, J., Watkins, C.E., Davis, D., Owen, J., Van Tongeren, D., & Ramos, M. (2016). Cultural humility in psychotherapy supervision. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 70(2), 149-231. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.psychotherapy.2016.70.2.149>

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Pérez-Rojas, A. E., Bartholomew, T. T., Lockard, A. J., & Gonzalez, J. M. (2019). Development and initial validation of the therapist cultural comfort scale. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 66(5), 534-549. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000344>

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Session 2.1 Counsellor Education Practice and Skills.
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

**The Social Determinants-Based Counseling Model: Best Practices for Addressing
the Social Determinants of Mental Health within Professional Counseling**

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Laura Jones PhD

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Asheville, North Carolina, US

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Las Vegas, Nevada, US

Danica Hays PhD,

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Las Vegas, Nevada, US

Counselors have long understood that social factors influence the mental health of clients. However, less time is spent systematically identifying and addressing the broader forces that influence client optimal development and wellness. The social determinants of health framework has been used for decades to better understand the ecological and environmental factors influencing overall health and health disparities. Focusing on prevention and health promotion, it examines the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age, and extends to contexts such as access to housing and food, transportation, safety, and discrimination. Although established within physical health disciplines, models that outline the social determinants of mental health (SDMH) are just now becoming commonplace. As such, it is imperative that counselors begin not only understanding but actively addressing the SDMH within their practice. The Social Determinants-Based Counseling Model (SDCM) is a newly developed empirically-based model of best practices to address the SDMH that can be applied across service settings. The SDCM model further operationalizes the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (Ratts et al., 2016) by providing practical strategies, contextual factors, and mediating influences that reflect the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and actions of multiculturally competent counselors. This session will 1) introduce original research from a grounded theory study exploring best practices in addressing the SDMH within professional counseling; 2) propose a new research-based model to guide professional counselors in addressing the SDMH; and 3) facilitate a discussion on applications of this model for clinical practice.

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Lund, C., Brooke-Sumner, C., Baingana, F., Baron, E. C., Breuer, E., Chandra, P., ... & Saxena, S. (2018). Social determinants of mental disorders and the Sustainable Development Goals: A systematic review of reviews. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 5(4), 357-369. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366\(18\)30060-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(18)30060-9)

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Session 2.1 Counsellor Education Practice and Skills.
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

Standardization, Medicalization and Counselling: ".. What if we will help Icarus?"

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Master's degree in psychology

Psychologist, counsellor, professor, author, Self-employed

Rome, Italy, EU

The expressive potential of each Icarus is the product of the continuous interaction of biological and social aspects, an interweaving of unique manifestations and heritage of all human beings. Do we renounce the pedagogical management of the relationship with the ""sprouting"" individual or, cultivating mental health and wellbeing, do we provide him with support and tools so that he gives himself to himself and to the world? Normality or pathology are terms that are increasingly used today in the translation of the behaviors of individuals in developmental age. For various reasons, standard references of training and behavioral models are used and increasingly the medicalization of learning up to the use of psychoactive products, despite the fact that the scientific community does not agree on the administration of these products on organisms with a central nervous system that is still developing. It is essential to consider that complications deriving from the social and environmental context can generate behavioral responses, signals of request for help, to be listened to and translated by those who have the appropriate skills. It is necessary to focus attention on the need of a remodulating Figure within the system, intoxicated by functional fragmentation and social incommunicability, increasingly distant from the existential expressive growth of individuals. The Counsellor is able to professionally guarantee the individual to enjoy a beneficial space where he can express himself and modulate his notes, in full freedom and respect for the consistent needs of the Being and to facilitate a constructive interaction between the parties.

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Kim, M., King, M. D., & Jennings, J. (2019). ADHD remission, inclusive special education, and socioeconomic disparities. *SSM-Population Health*, 100420

Wilkinson, R., & Pickett, K. (2019). *The inner level: How more equal societies reduce stress, restore sanity and improve everyone's well-being*. Penguin Press.

Russell, A. E., Ford, T., Williams, R., & Russell, G. (2016). The association between socioeconomic disadvantage and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD): a systematic review. *Child Psychiatry & Human Development*, 47(3), 440-458.

Riccio, M. 2013. La medicalizzazione della pedagogia. Il ruolo della scuola tra standardizzazione dell'apprendimento e l'aumento di diagnosi di "disabilità dell'apprendimento". *Bambini*, 10: 22-25.

Psicofarmaci in età evolutiva: la posizione della Rete Sostenibilità e Salute - Sportello Ti Ascolto

Session 2.1 Counsellor Education Practice and Skills.
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

Training Counselors for Hospital Settings: Healthcare Professionals Perspectives on Counselors' Role

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PhD Counseling Education and Supervision

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To respond to the increased need for psychological and emotional health along with physical health, mental health counselors (MHCs) have been more and more integrated to support the multidisciplinary teams within hospital settings. In this study, we explored health professionals' perspectives on the tasks of MHCs in a hospital setting. Using an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design, we obtained a variety of tasks health professionals deemed important for counselors to perform. Considering the current lack of MHCs in most hospital settings and the lack of scholarly and professionally defined roles, the results of this study inform counselor educators and supervisors on the unique aspects of training MHCs need for efficient integration within multidisciplinary teams in hospital settings. "

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- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *A concise introduction to mixed methods research*. Sage Publication.
- Grimes, T. O. (2020). Exploring the phenomenon of rural school counselors' professional identity construction. *Professional School Counseling*, 24(1), 1-13.10.1177/2156759x20965180
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- Reinert, M., Nguyen, T., & Fritze, D. (2021). The state of mental health in America. *Mental Health America*.https://mhanational.org/sites/default/files/2021%20State%20of%20Mental%20Health%20in%20America_0.pdf<https://ccforum.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/cc10003.pdf>

Session 2.1 Counsellor Education Practice and Skills.
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

Counsellor Education & Professional Development:
Evolution of Counseling Theories for Current World Challenges

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Kristi Perryman PhD
 Associate Professor
 University of Arkansas
 Fayetteville, Arkansas US

This presentation will illustrate existing gaps in counseling theories in meeting current global mental health challenges. Recent and ongoing events have culminated in creating a unique set of problems that have not been previously encountered. The pandemic, ongoing climate change anxiety, political and civil unrest, etc. have heightened and increased mental health challenges around the world. Founding counseling theorists such as Freud, Jung, and Rogers developed ideas and concepts based on their knowledge during their lifetime. Though these theories have been researched and refined over time, further evolution is needed to address present needs. Advances in knowledge and research in the areas of neuroscience, attachment theory, and cultural humility/competence offer vital information that can improve the efficacy of counseling theories. Neuroscience for example, has demonstrated research regarding the functions of various areas of the brain, types of physiological trauma responses as well as memory reconsolidation, providing a blueprint for how theories work (Alberini, et al., 2013; Beeson & Feld (2017); Cammisuli & Castelnuevo, 2023; van der Kolk, 2014). Attachment theory also offers research regarding the role of relationships in well-being and healing (Bowlby, 1988; Cammisuli & Castelnuevo, 2023; Conroy et al., 2022). Research regarding the role of cultural humility also offers vital insights into working with clients from diverse backgrounds (Bailey, et al., 2021, Byer-Tyre, et al, 2022; Day-Vines, et al., 2021; Sue, et al., 2007). This presentation will review seminal theories and demonstrate the application of knowledge in these areas to enhance clinical practice.

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Session 2.2 Supervision and Training.
Executive Boardroom (Floor 2)

**Creative Connections in Counseling Supervision: Utilizing Creativity to Foster Connection,
 Counselor Growth and Development, and Professional identity**

Christina Villarreal-Davis PhD

Counselor Education & Supervision
 Associate Professor, Liberty University
 San Antonio, Texas, USA

Patricia Kimball PhD

Counselor Education and Supervision
 Associate Professor, Liberty University
 Lynchburg Virginia USA

Building effective relationship with counselors in training remains a key role in counselor education and supervision (Butts & Gutierrez, 2018). One way to build the supervisor-supervisee relationship is through creative interventions (Villarreal-Davis et al., 2021; Villarreal-Davis & LeCraw, 2021). Research has shown that creative interventions lead to a more enjoyable experience (as cited in Shephard & Brew, 2014), allow supervisees to connect with their supervisor at a deeper level (Graham et al., 2014), reduces supervisee stress (Binson & Lev-Wiesel, 2018), improve the supervisor relationship (Binson & Lev-Wiesel, 2018), enhances verbal sharing (Binson & Lev-Wiesel, 2018), and increases professional identity (Binson & Lev-Wiesel, 2018). Furthermore, creativity within supervision allows for a whole -brain experience by incorporating both the right and left hemispheres of the brain, which often leads to greater awareness when words are difficult to find. In this workshop, the benefits of infusing creativity in counselor supervision will be explored. The presenters will introduce and describe the art-based technique called “Phoenix Rising Out of the Ashes” (Bratton & Stewart, 2018) and present a case-study. Lastly, attendees will get to experience this creative intervention firsthand as they assess their own level of counselor and/or supervisor growth and development.

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Graham, M. A., & Pehrsson, D. E. (2009). Bibliosupervision: A creative supervision technique. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 4(4), 366-374. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401380903372661>

Shepard, D. S., & Brew, L. (2013). Using creativity to make practicum a transformative experience. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 8(4), 444-455. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2013.849579>

Villarreal-Davis, C., & LeCraw, S. (2021, Spring). Infusing creativity in online counseling supervision. *SACES Newsletter*, 16(2), 9-10. *SACES Spring 2021 Newsletter Final*

Villarreal-Davis, C., Sartor, T. A., & McLean, L. (2021). Utilizing creativity to foster connection in online counseling supervision. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 16(2), 244-257.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2020.1754989>

Session 2.2 Supervision and Training.
Executive Boardroom (Floor 2)

Building a Culture of Health: Training Inclusive Counselors

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 Counselor Education and Supervision
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 Professor & Director, Center for Aging Research
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Research indicates the need for counseling professionals to receive training in justice, accessibility, inclusion, equity, diversity, and belonging (JAIDEB). Cultural competence is critical in clinical practice, as it helps professionals provide high-quality, inclusive client care, particularly to diverse populations (Nair & Adetayo, 2019). Despite advances in healthcare, health disparities persist, highlighting the need for practitioners to expand their understanding of JAIDEB and intersectionality to address the complex factors impacting client care (Pitts et al., 2024). Although the importance of JAIDEB training is clear, there remains a lack of diversity training within health professions. Research confirms that diversity training improves healthcare professionals' cultural competence, communication skills, addresses health disparities, and enhances client care (Ochs, 2023). Given these findings, it is essential that health professionals and students receive JAIDEB training. This training should expand the definition and understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion to honor all components of intersectionality, including ability, age, education, gender identity, geographic location, immigration status, parental status, racial and ethnic identity, relationship orientation, religion, social class, and more. In our presentation, counselors will learn about disability etiquette, expanding beyond the gender binary, weight inclusivity, and dismantling mental health stereotypes, all areas of JAIDEB that have been historically neglected in educational curriculum and post-graduate trainings.

- Boggs, C., Rule, M., Terrell, K. R., Brantley, M., Hamadi, H. Y., & Ross, J. (2023). Normative does not mean inclusive: A diverse approach to size in clinical mental health counseling training. *Journal of Counseling Preparation and Supervision*, 17(4) 2.
- Fricke, J., Siddique, S. M., Aysola, J., Cohen, M.E., & Mull, N. K. (2022) Making healthcare safer IV: A continuous updating of patient safety harms and practices. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.
<https://www.ahrq.gov/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/professionals/quality-patient-safety/patient-safety-resources/making-healthcare-safer-iv.pdf>
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- Nelson, L. A., & Shurpin, K. (2024). Barriers to healthcare for transgender individuals. *Journal of Doctoral Nursing Practice*, 17(2), 110-116. <https://doi.org/10.1891/JDNP-2023-0018>
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- Pitts, A., Terrell, K. R., Salpietro, L., & Hamadi, H. Y. (Accepted). Overcoming barriers and infusing inclusive teaching practices in counseling programs. *Journal of Counseling Preparation and Supervision*.
- Salpietro, L., Perez, J., & Terrell, K. R. (2024). Sex, gender, patriarchy, and transmisia. In J. M. Cook & M. Clark (Eds.), *Multicultural and social justice counseling: A systemic, person-centered, and ethical approach* (pp. 351-382). Cognella.

Session 2.2 Supervision and Training.
Executive Boardroom (Floor 2)

Transnationalism and its Impact on International Counseling Students

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The systemic oppression IS encounters significantly affects their educational journey and interactions with peers, faculty, and clients. Behl et al. (2017) emphasized the need to explore the lived experiences of international counseling students (ICS) using qualitative methods to better understand their acculturative stressors and expectations while living in the U.S. Similarly, Portes et al. (1999) highlighted the importance of studying transnationalism, particularly occupations involving ongoing cross-border interactions, and the qualitative impacts of these engagements. This intricate interplay between the expectations of their home and host countries profoundly shapes ICS's identity and sense of belonging, potentially leaving them marginalized and unsupported in their pursuit of education (Vertovec, 1999). Research, mainly qualitative studies, exploring the nuanced impacts of transnationalism on international students (IS) across various disciplines is also lacking (Yao et al., 2019). Additionally, Relational Cultural Theory (RCT; Jordan, 2017) highlights the importance of relational growth through dialogue among marginalized populations like ICS, addressing power dynamics and privilege in shaping interactions. Within CE literature, there remains a notable absence of discussions addressing the experiences of oppression and marginalization, self-advocacy, power dynamics, identity formation, social relationships, and political implications specific to ICS and transnationalism. Therefore, our study aims to explore the lived experiences of ICS within CE, focusing on their engagement with transnationalism and its multifaceted implications. To delve deeply into these experiences, the study employed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) for 14 participating ICS, which allowed for an in-depth exploration of how ICS make sense of their transnational experiences (Smith et al., 2022).

- Anandavalli, S., Harrichand, J. J. S., & Litam, S. D. A. (2020). Counseling international students in times of uncertainty: A critical feminist and bioecological approach. *The Professional Counselor*, 10(3), 365-375.
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- Behl, M., Laux, J. M., Roseman, C. P., Tiarniyu, M., & Spann, S. (2017). Needs and acculturative stress of international students in CACREP programs. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 56(4), 305-318.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12087>
- Jordan, J. V. (2017). Relational-cultural theory: The power of connection to transform our lives. *The Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, 56(3), 228-243. <https://doi.org/10.1002/johc.12055>
- Portes, A., Guarnizo, L. E., & Landolt, P. (1999). The study of transnationalism: pitfalls and promise of an emergent research field. *Ethnic and racial studies*, 22(2), 217-237. <https://doi.org/10.1080/014198799329468>
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- Vertovec, S. (1999). Conceiving and researching transnationalism. *Ethnic and racial studies*, 22(2), 447-462.
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<https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392113498692>
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Session 2.2 Supervision and Training.
Executive Boardroom (Floor 2)

**Broaching the Unspoken: Enhancing Supervisor-Supervisee Relationships
 through Cultural Dialogue and Professional Identity Development**

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This presentation explores the concept of broaching within counselor supervision as a critical skill that enhances cultural responsiveness, ethical practice, and professional identity development. Broaching, defined as the consistent and intentional invitation to discuss cultural identities, race, gender, spirituality, and power dynamics, is a foundational component of multicultural supervision. The session is grounded in Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies, integrating research on how broaching impacts supervision outcomes, counselor development, and client well-being. Participants will examine current literature and case examples highlighting the barriers and facilitators of effective broaching. Emphasis will be placed on how supervisory relationships can either support or interfere with supervisees' capacity to explore their biases, cultural identities, and reactions to client diversity. The presentation will offer strategies for supervisors and counselor trainees to engage in reflective dialogue that promotes safety, accountability, and growth."

- Day-Vines, N. L., Bryan, J., Brodar, J. R., & Griffin, D. (2022). Grappling with race: A national study of the broaching attitudes and behavior of school counselors, clinical mental health counselors, and counselor trainees. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 50(1), 25-34. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12241>
- Day-Vines, N. L., Cluxton-Keller, F., Agorsor, C., & Gubara, S. (2021). Strategies for broaching the subjects of race, ethnicity, and culture. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 99(3), 348-357. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12379>
- Dollarhide, C. T., Hale, S. C., & Stone-Sabali, S. (2019). A new model for social justice supervision. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 58(1), 2-15. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12120>
- Fickling, M. J., Tangen, J. L., Graden, M. W., & Grays, D. (2019). Multicultural and social justice competence in clinical supervision. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 58(4), 309-316. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12151>
- Jones, C. T., & Branco, S. F. (2023). Cultural humility and broaching enhancements: A commentary on "Getting off the racist sidelines: An antiracist approach to mental health supervision and training" (Legha, 2023). *The Clinical Supervisor*, 42(3), 247-258.
- Jones, C. T., & Welfare, L. E. (2018). Broaching behaviors of licensed professional counselors: A qualitative inquiry. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 57(1), 60-73.
- King, K. M., & Jones, K. (2018). An autoethnography of broaching in supervision: Joining supervisee and supervisor perspectives on addressing identity, power, and difference. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 38(1), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07325223.2018.1525597>
- King, K. M., Borders, L. D., & Jones, C. T. (2020). Multicultural orientation in clinical supervision: Examining impact through dyadic data. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 59(2), 97-113. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12169>

**Session 2.3 Multicultural Counselling.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)**

**Assessing and Promoting Multicultural Competency:
Introducing the Intercultural Development Inventory within Counselor Education**

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Gonzaga University Spokane Washington US
Nyah Allgood B.A.
Psychology Graduate Student
Gonzaga University Spokane Washington US

Amy Robinson B.A. Psychology Graduate Student
Gonzaga University Spokane Washington US
Lisa Bennett PhD Counseling Psychology
Professor, Counselor Education
Licensed Psychologist
Gonzaga University Spokane, Washington US

While it has been seen as essential for professional counselors to understand cultural considerations (CACREP, 2024; Karanikola et al., 2022), there remains a lack of consistent measurement related to the effectiveness of multicultural education within counseling training programs. As many topics mentioned in counseling work, such as wellbeing and resilience, have cultural connections, validation of the training and education students are receiving is imperative. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is a “cross-culturally generalizable, valid, and reliable assessment of an individual’s and group’s core orientations toward cultural difference,” (Hammer, 2009, p. 211) meaning this measure is not limited to a specific group and can be used in various settings (Hammer, 1999; Hammer et al., 2003). Yet, there is limited research on this tool within counselor education. This presentation provides attendees with an overview of the IDI and illustrates how it is currently being used within three counseling programs that have an integrated multicultural sequence that students must complete. The IDI not only operates as an assessment tool that generates awareness and discussion in class, but also highlights the multicultural growth a student has made during the program through pre- and post-test data. Such considerations, the process of using this assessment tool, and preliminary data will be provided to attendees. Presenters will engage attendees in a discussion about the next steps they can take to implement a similar process within their own counseling training program or with supervisees.

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. (2024). 202 CACREP standards.

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Hammer, M. R. (1999). A measure of intercultural sensitivity: The Intercultural Development Inventory. In S. M. Fowler & M. G. Fowler (Eds.), *The intercultural sourcebook* (Vol. 2, pp. 61-72). Intercultural Press.

Hammer, M. R., Bennett, M. J., Wiseman, R. (2003). Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The Intercultural Development Inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27(4), 421-443.

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Hammer, M. R. (2009). The intercultural development inventory: An approach for assessing and building intercultural competence. In M. A. Moodian (Ed.), *Contemporary leadership and intercultural competence: Exploring the cross-cultural dynamics within organizations* (pp. 203-217). Sage.

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Sabbah, M. F., Dinsmore, J. A., & Hof, D. D. (2009). A comparative study of the competence of counselors in the United States in counseling Arab Americans and other racial/ethnic groups. *International Journal of Psychology: A Biopsychosocial Approach / Tarptautinis Psichologijos Žurnalas: Biopsichosocialinis Požiūris*, 3(2), 29-45.

Session 2.3 Multicultural Counselling.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)

Healing in the Age of Division: Helping Clients Navigate Political Polarization

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 San Antonio Texas US

In an era of heightened political polarization, societal divides increasingly influence individuals' relationships, wellness, and mental health. This presentation will explore the intersection of political polarization, wellness, and counseling, focusing on how counselors can help clients navigate political differences. Attendees will leave with actionable strategies and insights to support clients' emotional resilience and foster a therapeutic environment that transcends political divides. By addressing this growing issue, we aim to contribute to cultivating mental health and wellbeing in a world facing new and complex challenges.

- Bayne, H. B., Dietlin, O., Michel, R., Impellizzeri, J., & Tolentino, L. (2021). Developing and initial validation of the political identity and relational impact scale. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07481756.2021.1958233>
- Brown, A. M., Zeiders, K. H., Sarsar, E. D., Hoyt, L. T., & Nair, R. L. (2023). ""When the political becomes personal": Evaluation of an elected president, election distress, and college students' psychological well-being. *Journal of American College Health*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2022.2145896>
- Early, A. S., Smith, E. L., & Neupert, S. D. (2022). Age, education, and political involvement differences in daily election-related stress. *Current Psychology*, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-02979-2>
- Gu, Y., & Wang, Z. (2022). Income inequality and global political polarization: The economic origin of political polarization in the world. *Chinese Journal of Political Science*, 27(2), 375-398. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11366-021-09772-1>
- Jordan, J. V. (2018). *Relational-cultural therapy* (2nd ed.). American Psychological Association.
- Solomonov, N., & Barber, J. P. (2018). Patients' perspectives on political self-disclosure, the therapeutic alliance, and the infiltration of politics into the therapy room in the Trump era. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 74(5), 779-787. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.22609>
- Spangler, P. T., Thompson, B. J., Vivino, B. L., & Wolf, J. A. (2017). Navigating the midfield of politics in the therapy session. *Psychotherapy Bulletin*, 52(4). <https://societyforpsychotherapy.org/navigating-the-minefield-of-politics-in-the-therapy-session/>

Session 2.3 Multicultural Counselling.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)

**Impacts of Internationalization-at-Home Programs on Intercultural Competency among
Domestic Graduate Level Trainees in Helping Professions**

Shengli Dong PhD	Professor Florida State University Tallahassee Florida US
Kamari Gouin	Master's student Florida State University Tallahassee Florida US
Anna Bui	Master's student Florida State University Tallahassee Florida US
Valarie Angulo	Bachelor-level student, Florida State University, Tallahassee Florida US
Danielle Meyer	Bachelor-level student Florida State University, Tallahassee Florida US

Increased globalization in higher education has expanded internationalization-at-home (IaH) efforts to develop intercultural competence (ICC) among helping professional trainees. Using Deardorff's (2006) theoretical framework of ICC development, this study explores how intercultural interactions in IaH programs impact domestic graduate students' ICC. Deardorff's framework illustrates how cross-cultural interactions provide opportunities for the continuous improvement of ICC (Sabet & Chapman, 2023). The current study included 68 graduate students from southeastern U.S. universities who had participated in various helping-related programs. Students participated in a semester-long cultural partner program with cross-cultural activities and reflections. Surveys and open-ended questions identified barriers and facilitators of ICC development. Domestic students reported cultural benefits and positive interactions as key facilitators. Participants faced language barriers, cultural differences, scheduling conflicts, and academic pressures. Additionally, domestic students' discomfort and perceived lack of engagement from international partners hindered their ICC development. This research highlights the importance of mutual engagement in IaH programs and the benefits and challenges for domestic students. These findings are crucial for higher education policy, suggesting that enhancing IaH initiatives can foster more inclusive and supportive environments for intercultural interactions. Counseling programs can utilize these results to implement courses specifically focusing on developing ICC as part of their curriculum. Resultingly, early intercultural exchanges are instrumental in promoting global competence among graduate students in the helping profession and ultimately provide students with the necessary skills to navigate globalized and diverse clinical settings. Subsequently, the study's implications emphasize the positive impacts of IaH programs on ICC in the counseling profession.

- Anderson, K. N., Bautista, C. L., & Hope, D. A. (2019). Therapeutic alliance, cultural competence and minority status in premature termination of psychotherapy. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 89(1), 104-114.
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- Brown, L. (2009). A failure of communication on the cross-cultural campus. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 13(4): 439-454. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10283153093319>
- Deardorff, D. K. (2006). Identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 10(3), 241-266.
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<https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.22679>

**Session 2.3 Multicultural Counselling.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)**

**Fostering Culturally Competent Clinical Supervision to Enhance Professional
Identity Development in Counseling**

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Associate Professor & Chair
University of San Diego, San Diego California, USA

Nedeljko Golubovic PhD
Associate Professor
University of San Diego
San Diego, California, USA

This presentation will explore the critical relationship between clinical supervision and the professional identity development of emerging counselors, emphasizing the integration of culturally competent practices. We will outline predominant models of clinical supervision, such as psychotherapy-based, developmental, and process models (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), illustrating their relevance in developing therapeutic competence (Loganbill et al., 1982). Given the evolving landscape of the counseling profession, our discussion will highlight the necessity of adaptable supervisory approaches that account for the diverse contexts and developmental stages of supervisors and supervisees.

A primary focus will be on how cultural values, beliefs, and lived experiences shape the supervisory relationship, impacting the overall learning and professional growth of supervisees (Borders & Brown, 2005). The session will provide practical strategies for embedding cultural awareness into supervision frameworks, fostering an inclusive environment. Participants can expect to gain insights into enhancing their supervision practices, promoting cultural competence, and ultimately improving client outcomes. The objective is to engage attendees in meaningful dialogue, ensuring they leave equipped with vital tools for cultivating culturally competent supervision in their own practices.

Bernard, J. M., & Goodyear, R. K. (2014). *Fundamentals of clinical supervision* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Borders, L. D., & Brown, L. L. (2005). *The new handbook of counseling supervision*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

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Stoltenberg, C. D., & McNeill, B. W. (2010). *IDM Supervision: An integrative developmental model for supervising counselors & therapists* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Young, T. L., Lambie, G. W., Hutchinson, T., & Thurston-Dyer, J. (2011). The integration of reflectivity in developmental supervision: Implications for clinical supervisors. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 30(1), 1-18.

Session 2.4 Technology, Innovation, and AI in Counselling.
Reading Room (Floor 3)

Using Virtual Reality in Suicide Prevention Training for Counselors

Amanda DeDiego PhD

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Suicide risk assessment and management are critical skills for counselors-in-training. The field lacks dynamic training tools to teach interviewing skills for this process. This presentation shares a free-use virtual reality teaching tool developed by counselor educators to teach suicide risk assessment using the C-SSRS, and safety planning. It provides overview of integration in counseling skills training, and demonstration of the virtual reality software. In 2023, the PI worked as part of a collaborative research team with researchers from the University of Utah. They created an immersive virtual reality (VR) training software focused on suicide risk assessment and management based on the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale and a Stanley-Brown Safety Planning template. The software includes three interactive training scenarios, (1) an adolescent foster child who is a member of the LGBT+ community, (2) a postpartum mother in her 20s, and (3) an older adult male veteran with connections to the agricultural community. This free software is now available as a training tool for counselors. The presentation offers an overview of application and demonstrate of this innovative tool. The C-SSRS is the most used instrument to assess suicide risk assessment (Posner et al., 2008). The C-SSRS is widely used in school and clinical settings using standard definitions of suicidal ideation and behavior previously adopted by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to define self-injury and suicide across settings. As suicide risk assessment and management are critical skills in providing mental health services, this is a critical aspect of training in graduate programs for professional counselors, social workers, and psychiatric nurse practitioners. Suicide risk assessment and management are also as a common gap in skills for mental health professionals (Cramer et al., 2013; Schmitz et al., 2012). Prior research has demonstrated that experiential practice, such as role plays, are an effective means of training mental health professionals in suicide risk assessment and management (Gryglewicz et al., 2020). VR has been used in medical training as a tool for experiential learning to offer a realistic practice opportunity without potentially harming community members in the training process (Bracq et al., 2019; Fertleman et al., 2018; Mäkinen et al., 2022).

- Posner, K., Brown, G. K., Stanley, B., Brent, D. A., Yershova, K. V., Oquendo, M. A., Currier, G. W., Melvin, G. A., Greenhill, L., Shen, S., & Mann, J. J. (2011). The Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale: Initial validity and internal consistency findings from three multisite studies with adolescents and adults. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 168(12), 1266-1277. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ajp.2011.10111704>
- Schmitz, W. M., Allen, M. H., Feldman, B. N., Gutin, N. J., Jahn, D. R., Kleespies, P. M., ... Simpson, S. (2012). Preventing suicide through improved training in suicide risk assessment and care: An American Association of Suicidology task force report addressing serious gaps in U.S. mental health training. *Suicide & Life Threatening Behavior*, 42(3), 292-304. doi:10.1111/j.1943- 278X.2012.00090.x
- Stanley, B., & Brown, G. K. (2012). Safety planning intervention: a brief intervention to mitigate suicide risk. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*, 19(2), 256-264.
- Pottle, J. (2019). Virtual reality and the transformation of medical education. *Future Healthcare Journal*, 6(3), 181-185.

Session 2.4 Technology, Innovation, and AI in Counselling.
Reading Room (Floor 3)

AI in Counselling: Enhancing Practice While Preserving the Human Connection

Matthew Bartolo

Masters in Psychotherapy
 Lead Clinician at Willingness Team
 Willingness Team
 Malta EU

This presentation critically assesses the integration and implications of artificial intelligence (AI) in counselling by comprehensively reviewing the current literature. It will provide attendees with an analysis of modern technological innovations, such as predictive analytics, therapeutic chatbots, and virtual counsellors, focusing on their potential to enhance the efficacy, accessibility, and personalised care of therapy. The session will delve deeper into the ethical concerns of using AI in counselling. The dangers associated with algorithmic bias, transparency of AI-driven interventions, client confidentiality, and informed consent will be thoroughly examined. The critical equilibrium between the humanistic essence of counselling and the incorporation of technological advancements will be emphasised, and participants will be encouraged to reflect on the impact of these ethical dimensions on their professional practice.

This presentation is intended to improve attendees' understanding regarding the responsible integration of AI technologies into counselling environments. It is intended for counsellors, educators, trainees, and counselling practitioners. The goal is to provide professionals with the necessary tools to effectively employ AI while maintaining the quality and integrity of client care. This will be achieved by discussing clear ethical guidelines and practical considerations.

Alowais, A., Bélisle-Pipon, J. C., Davahli, M. R., Gaonkar, B., & Graham, S. (2023). Regulating AI in mental health: Ethics of care perspective. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 11450345. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.11450345>

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**Session 2.4 Technology, Innovation, and AI in Counselling.
Reading Room (Floor 3)**

**The Global Gig Economy Meets Counselling: Cultivating Ethics,
Reclaiming Practitioner Wellness and Being CAREful in Virtual Settings**

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This presentation examines the growing challenges of direct-to-consumer (D2C) telehealth platforms and their impact on the counseling profession. Subscription-based platforms, while expanding access to mental health and wellbeing services, present unique ethical challenges for practitioners, educators, and students (Hiland, 2021). *Therapy tech: The digital transformation of mental healthcare* (1st ed.). University of Minnesota Press. . Attendees will explore key issues such as conflicts between corporate practices and professional ethical standards, regulatory considerations in gig-based employment, and the implications of these platforms on counselor-client relationships and practitioner well-being. Grounded in the IAC Universal Ethical Principles and the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics, this session offers strategies to navigate these challenges while upholding standards of care. Through an analysis of marketplace dilemmas, participants will gain insights into labor dynamics, compensation concerns, and systemic factors shaping the practitioner experience (Hackman, 2023). *Emotional labor: The invisible work shaping our lives and how to claim our power*. The presentation will provide practical recommendations to help counselors, educators, and students address ethical dilemmas, maintain professional integrity, and advocate for equitable working conditions within this evolving employment landscape. By offering a global perspective, this session aims to empower practitioners to adapt ethical decision-making frameworks to diverse cultural and regulatory contexts, ensuring both client welfare and professional sustainability in the digital gig economy.

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Session 2.5 Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

**Trauma-Informed Healing Centered Advocacy:
 The Counselor Between the Marginalized and the Current World Order**

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Mongonia (2022) indicated that there is a lack of counselor advocacy when dealing with issues of climate change, which is causing major weather disasters around the world, from earthquakes in Greece to fires in California to longer and stronger hurricane seasons. Counselors should be at the forefront of helping individuals experiencing a crisis, whether that crisis is manmade, governmental, or natural. Yet, many counselors and supervisors have not been trained in trauma-informed or healing-centered care, making it challenging to be strong advocates for marginalized populations experiencing trauma. Ginwright (2018) indicates that trauma-informed practices help counselors understand the impact of the trauma experience on their clients and the behaviors of those clients. Ginwright (2018) challenges us to move beyond trauma-informed practices and integrate a healing-centered approach to our work. In using a healing-centered approach to advocacy, we would advocate for the holistic care of the individual and the communities around the individual who have been impacted by trauma. Healing-centered care not only recognizes the specific trauma and its impact on the client and community but also explores the intersectionality of historically marginalized populations, what black feminists in the United States have indicated as the intersection of a need for anti-oppressive community-engaged social advocacy to help heal the spirit of those marginalized communities (Doetsch-Kidder & Harris, 2023). This presentation aims to discuss this challenge and provide practical strategies that counselors can implement to advocate for those disproportionately impacted by the current world political, economic, and environmental climates.

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Session 2.5 Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

Migration Trauma: Implications for the Aid Profession

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I will present a research I have conducted. A study has been conducted to investigate trauma, specifically secondary traumatic stress or vicarious traumatization, experienced by help workers interacting with traumatized migrants. For this purpose, 41 subjects, including volunteers and professionals who work with migrants, were involved in the research. A battery of tests was administered, including the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale (STSS), the Brief - Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (I-Brief COPE), the Resilience Scale for Adults (RSA), and the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory (PTG). The psychological conditions of the workers engaged in helping actions directed at migrants were evaluated in terms of vicarious traumatization and personal resources, such as coping strategies, resilience, and post-traumatic personal growth. An analysis of correlations was conducted regarding the variables considered in the study, and it was assessed which of the investigated variables predicted secondary traumatic stress. The results confirmed the presence of secondary traumatic stress among help workers and indicated that younger individuals, as are helping professionals, are more exposed to vicarious traumatization and arousal than older individuals. Furthermore, it emerged that the more resilient a subject is, the lower the incidence of secondary traumatization, while the greater the demand for external support, the higher the incidence of secondary traumatic stress.

Indico le fonti più rilevanti:

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- Bessel V.D.K. (2004). *Stress traumatico. Gli effetti sulla mente, sul corpo e sulla società delle esperienze intollerabili*. Roma: Edizione Magi.
- Bromberg P. (2007). *Clinica del trauma e della dissociazione*. Milano: Cortina.
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Session 2.5 Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

School Counselors Fostering Posttraumatic Growth: A Practical Approach

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School counselors play a critical role in supporting mental health in schools, especially given students' rising mental health needs and increases in rates of childhood trauma, with researchers estimating that approximately 60% of children experience at least one traumatic event (Finkelhor et al., 2015; McLaughlin et al., 2013; SAMHSA, 2024). Because trauma exposure can lead to negative psychological, emotional, academic, and social impacts for children and adolescents (Bethell et al., 2014; Copeland et al., 2018; De Bellis & Zisk, 2014; LeMoult et al., 2020; Powers et al., 2015), school counselors are called to provide additional layers of support to these students. While researchers have explored the concept of trauma-informed school counseling, the concept of posttraumatic growth (PTG; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996) provides a unique expanded lens through which to view students' potential for recovery after trauma. PTG positions trauma as a potential catalyst for growth and indicates that students can not only "bounce back" with resilience after trauma, but can also achieve higher levels of functioning as a result of what they experience. Thus, we advocate that school counselors' professional calling does not stop at addressing the immediate psychological needs of trauma but extends to actively promoting students' long-term growth. We will present a multitiered approach to intentionally designed school counseling programs that are not only trauma-sensitive but that also extend to encourage the increased personal strength, improved relationships, and transformed perspectives that characterize posttraumatic growth.

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Session 2.5 Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.

Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

Trauma-Informed and Culture-Centered Practices in Children with Trauma Exposure

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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, US

Kevin Melanson MA

Elementary School Teacher

Downingtown School District

Downingtown, Pennsylvania, US

Our presentation will examine common ways that trauma can present itself in children and adolescents in the learning environment using both empirical and anecdotal experiences as a primary schoolteacher and professional counselor. Over 70% of 68,894 adult participants in the general population surveys completed in 24 countries reported that they had been exposed to a traumatic event with an 30.5% exposure to 4 or more (Benjet et al., 2016). Despite the near ubiquity of trauma exposure in the global population, research has shown insufficient and inconsistent trauma training in graduate counseling programs (York et al., 2024). The presenters will provide clinical implications for helping professionals, such as mental health counselors, about strategies on how interact with children and adolescents who may have been exposed to trauma. Due to the complexities and individual differences, the effects of trauma experiences can present differently in children and adolescents. Therefore, this warrants a different set of strategies to work with them whether in the counseling setting or education setting.

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Session 2.6 Multicultural, Social Justice, and Diversity.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

Wellness Factors for LGBTQ+ Individuals with a Serious Mental Illness

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Counselor Education & Supervision

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This presentation will highlight the findings of a research study that examines which dimensions of wellness LGBTQ+ living with severe mental illness (SMI) use most to support their recovery. Dimensions of wellness are factors associated with a sense of purpose and satisfaction in one's life; the presence and/or absence of these factors in life can greatly impact the process of recovery in individuals living with severe mental illness. LGBTQ+ individuals living with SMI face unique challenges due to the intersection of their marginalized identities. We hope to identify which dimensions of wellness LGBTQ+ individuals living with SMI employ most to support their recovery and which they may not often utilize in their lives. This research will help fill a gap in the literature by providing quantitative evidence to indicate which dimensions of wellness are present and lacking within this community. Understanding how affectional and gender diverse individuals living with severe mental illness utilize wellness factors can better inform practitioners how to best serve their clients

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- Medley, G., Lipari, R. N., Bose, J., Cribb, D. S., Kroutil, L. A., & McHenry, G. (2016). Sexual orientation and estimates of adult substance use and mental health: Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. *NSDUH Data Review*. Retrieved from [https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-SexualOrientation-2015/NSDUH-SexualOrientation-2015.htm](https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-SexualOrientation-2015/NSDUH-SexualOrientation-2015/NSDUH-SexualOrientation-2015.htm)
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Session 2.6 Multicultural, Social Justice, and Diversity.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

Mentalisation, Self-compassion and the Psychosocial Impact of ADHD in Adult Women

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The purpose of this study was to explore relationships between mentalisation, self-compassion and psychosocial impact of ADHD in adult women. In phase 1, factor analysis, reliability analyses and discriminant validity analyses were utilised to evaluate a new measure, the ADHD Impact of Psychosocial Functioning (AIPF), in a sample of women with a diagnosis of ADHD (N = 388). In phase 2, the Mentalisation Scale, Self-Compassion Scale - SF, and AIPF were administered to an additional sample of women with ADHD (N = 89). Regression and mediation analyses indicated that, as hypothesised, low self-mentalisation was associated with high psychosocial impact of ADHD, and this was fully mediated by self-compassion. These findings highlight the unique role of self-mentalisation as a predictor of negative psychosocial outcomes in women with ADHD, and provide additional evidence of the protective role of self-compassion. This study identified a number of interesting findings pertaining to the socio-cognitive profile of a sample of women with ADHD. These findings have implications for enhancing understanding of the mechanisms of difficulty associated with attentional control and emotion regulation in women with ADHD, as well as informing the development of targeted therapeutic approaches for this population. The notable challenges associated with self-mentalisation identified in this study highlight the potential utility of targeting this construct in therapy, as a way of enhancing therapeutic outcomes. The study's findings suggest that refining treatment approaches to prioritise the enhancement of self-related mentalisation processes, as well as an emphasis on self-compassion, may enhance therapeutic outcomes for women with ADHD.

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**Session 2.6 Multicultural, Social Justice, and Diversity.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)**

Multicultural, Social Justice, and Diversity: Indigenous Wisdom to Transform and Decolonize Counselling

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Team Leader Manu Ka Rere Youth

Mental Health Team & President NZAC

New Zealand Association of Counsellors, Christchurch, New Zealand

Wiremu Gray

Tohu i ngā matauranga Māori, mahi hinengaro

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Many of us have trained in therapeutic models which focus on individual cognitions, expression of emotion and concepts of identity. Colonization in Aotearoa/New Zealand and possibly the world over has preferenced this lense. In this presentation we invite you to see the 'client' as an expression of their collective identity including family, community and culture employing a holistic therapeutic approach which invites their cultural strengths to the fore. Language and Identity are critical constructs in this approach to ensure safe pathways to access these strengths. We challenge this individualistic paradigm and focus on utilizing cultural strengths in the counselling process in a way that is honouring the client's cultural context and intergenerational inherited knowledge.

Te Whare Mauri Ora is a groundbreaking indigenous well-being model that integrates cultural strengths and ancestral wisdom to enhance relationships and holistic health. Rooted in Māori traditions, it embraces wairua (spiritual well-being), whānau (relationships), hinengaro (mindset), and tinana (physical well-being), alongside Papatūānuku (gratitude for life) and Ranginui (belief, hope, and achievement). By fostering Mauri Ora—the essence of vitality and balance—it empowers individuals and communities to heal, thrive, and strengthen relationships. This model provides an indigenous lens for counsellors, educators, and leaders to transform relational dynamics through cultural identity, narrative therapy, and values-based engagement.

We introduce *Te Whare Mauriora*, created by Wiremu Gray with support from Professor Mason Durie, the late Professor Angus MacFarlane and Dr Sonya MacFarlane which embraces indigenous (Māori) knowledge and incorporating elements of PERMA V (Dr Martin Seligman). We then share how this is utilized in two case studies of clients, one from Syria and one from Colombia.

PERMAV Dr Martin Seligman ; Culture Counts Professor Angus McFarlane, A Māori perspective of health, Te Pae Māhuronga: A model for Māori health et al.

Session 2.6 Multicultural, Social Justice, and Diversity.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

Cultural Humility and Repairing Cultural Ruptures within a Global Context

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As more counselors engage in global counseling, understanding how to navigate complex global realities within the therapeutic space and address cultural ruptures in counseling relationships become indispensable for fostering clients' mental health and wellness. In the face of global challenges such as migration, political conflict, systemic oppression, and mental health crises, counselors are tasked with supporting clients who experience these profound stressors. Counselors who fail to broach and bridge cultural and cross-cultural issues, where misattunements or misunderstandings can exacerbate ruptures in the therapy process (Day-Vines et al., 2007; Day-Vines et al., 2020; Gaztambide, 2012). Failing to effectively address these cultural ruptures can undermine the therapeutic relationship, impeding counseling progress, and possibly causing harm. By focusing on cultural rupture and repair in a global context, this presentation addresses how counselors can cultivate clients' mental health and wellness amidst new global challenges. Specifically, presenters will explore how cultural humility (Hook et al., 2016), contextual knowledge, and broaching skills (Day-Vines et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2022) are essential in navigating therapeutic ruptures in a global context. Using clinical examples, presenters will highlight strategies for broaching challenging topics to honor the diverse identities and experiences of their clients, understanding cultural nuances in rupture dynamics, and facilitating repair processes that attend to individual and cultural differences.

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Session 2.7 Mental Health & Wellbeing.
Business Lounge (Floor 3)

Proactive Strategies for Preventing Vicarious Traumatization and Compassion Fatigue

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 Immaculata University,
 Immaculata, Pennsylvania, US

Vicarious traumatization, secondary stress, and compassion fatigue (Figley, 2002) are significant issues facing clinical mental health counsellors and students in training to work with clients in crisis. A proactive strategy for handling secondary stress, compassion fatigue (Teater & Ludgate, 2014) and vicarious traumatization is necessary to prevent counsellor burnout. This presentation will explore how compassion satisfaction, self-care, and awareness of the cycle of care (Skovholt, 2005) can counteract burnout, secondary stress, and vicarious traumatization's detrimental effects on a clinical mental health counsellor.

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**Session 2.7 Mental Health & Wellbeing.
Business Lounge (Floor 3)**

Aging in Context: The Interplay of Mental Health, Cultural Narratives, and Personal Experiences in Later Life

Emily Hardman

Master in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
Crisis Clinician
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio, US

Bilal Urkmez

PhD in Rehabilitation Counselor Education
Associate Professor
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio, US

This informative session highlights recent research on the influence of societal narratives about aging and their effects on older adults' mental health, identity, and well-being. Participants will gain insight into how older adults internalize, resist, and reinterpret these narratives and explore implications for counseling practices. The session promotes counselor awareness and advocacy to support older adults effectively in professional settings.

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/J.PSYCHSPORT.2013.11.002>

Fawsitt, F., & Setti, A. (2017). Extending the stereotype embodiment model: A targeted review. *Translational Issues in Psychological Science*, 3(4), 357-369. <https://psycnet.apa.org/buy/2017-55852-005>

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Pedroso-Chaparro, M. del S., Antón-López, J. C., Cabrera, I., Márquez-González, M., Martínez-Huertas, J. Á., & Losada-Baltar, A. (2023). 'I feel old and have aging stereotypes'. Internalized aging stereotypes and older adults' mental health: The mediational role of loneliness. *Aging & Mental Health*, 27(8), 1619-1626.

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Session 2.7 Mental Health & Wellbeing.
Business Lounge (Floor 3)

Navigating Borders and Barriers: Mental Health Consequences of Immigration Policies in a Changing World

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Master's Degree in Mental Health Counseling
 Psychotherapist in Private Practice Counseling PLLC
 PhD Candidate at Sam Houston State University
 Houston, Texas, US

Christina Ramos

MA, LLC Counseling and Consultation Services
 Owner, private practice,
 Doctoral student
 The Woodlands, Texas, US

This presentation explores the lived experiences of immigrant clients and the counselors who serve them, shedding light on the relationship between systemic barriers and mental health. Immigrant clients often face unique challenges, including prioritizing basic needs such as work, food, and shelter over therapy, leaving mental health concerns unaddressed. Counselors working with these populations are to navigate multicultural competencies, to strive to provide culturally competent care within a system that may perpetuate inequities. Grounded in the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC), this presentation examines how these principles can guide counselors in addressing systemic oppression while fostering resilience and wellbeing. The session will discuss strategies for integrating MSJCC into practice, including advocacy, collaboration, and self-awareness, to better support immigrant clients. Participants will gain insights into the lived experiences of both clients and counselors, the barriers impacting mental health access, and actionable approaches to bridge these gaps. By emphasizing the need for systemic change alongside individual support, this presentation aligns with the conference theme, equipping counselors with tools to navigate these challenges and promote mental health in a rapidly changing world.

- Atsuko Seto, & Forth, N. L. A. (2020). What Is Known About Bilingual Counseling? A Systematic Review of the Literature. *Professional Counselor*, 10(3), 393-405. <https://doi.org/10.15241/as.10.3.393>
- Dogan, S. (2023). Effectively working with immigrants: A model for school counselors. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 51(3), 148-157. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12244>
- Estrada, O., Brown, J. L. C., & Molloy, L. (2018). Bilingual Therapists' Confidence Using Clinical Spanish Language Terminology. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 38(3), 324-341. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08841233.2018.1468384>
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- Kondili, E., Interiano-Shiverdecker, C., & Hahn, C. (2022). Counseling and social justice advocacy interventions with refugees: Two case studies. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 50(4), 219-229. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12270>
- Mollen, D., & Ridley, C. R. (2021). Rethinking Multicultural Counseling Competence: An Introduction to the Major Contribution. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 49(4), 490-503. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000020986543>
- Ratts, M. J., Singh, A. A., Nassar-McMillan, S., Butler, S. K., & McCullough, J. R. (2016). Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies: Guidelines for the Counseling Profession. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development*, 44(1), 28-48. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12035>
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- Verdinelli, S., & Biever, J. L. (2013). Therapists' Experiences of Cross-Ethnic Therapy With Spanish-Speaking Latina/o Clients. *Journal of Latina/o Psychology*, 1(4), 227-242. <https://doi.org/10.1037/lat0000004>

**Session 2.7 Mental Health & Wellbeing.
Business Lounge (Floor 3)**

**Building Resilience to the Effects of Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue, and
Burnout through Wellness Planning (Self-care): An Ethical Imperative**

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Counselling/Psychology. Psychologist
Educator Juvenation Wellness
Duncan, British Columbia, Canada

Michael Partridge
Certificate - Career Development
Career Counsellor, Juvenation Wellness
Duncan, British Columbia, Canada

There are inherent challenges faced by counselling professionals by the nature of their work (including Stress, Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue, and Burnout), as outlined by Van Hoy and Rzeszutek (2022). An emphasis on self-love, and the importance of building resilience to the impact of psychotherapy work will be made (Henschke & Sedlmeier, 2023). Wellness planning that includes self-care approaches and a personal wellness orientation is an ethical imperative to remain competent as practitioners, and one that must be a priority in our professional practice (Dorociak et al., 2017). This presentation will outline how to identify negative symptoms of stress, vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, and burnout as well as the myths and truths around the impact of these on our practice (Bryant, 2020). An explanation of the added negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and changing technological workspace will be provided along with some strategies to help navigate these issues in practice (Van Daele et al., 2020). This presentation will also provide a template and worksheet on how to build resilience to the impacts of counselling work that helps to create more healthy boundaries that must be considered for ethical practice that combine important considerations and looks to achieve personal balance to build resilience and remain healthy while working in these changing counselling contexts (Guler & Ceyhan, 2021).

Bryant, L. (2020). The self-care necessity [PowerPoint slides].

Dorociak, K. E., Rupert, P. A., Bryant, F. B., & Zahniser, E. (2017). Development of the Self-Care Assessment for Psychologists. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 64(3), 325-334. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000206>

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Session 3.1 Counsellor Education & Professional Development.
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

**Exploring Nature-Based Therapies in Malta:
 Ecotherapy and Adventure Therapy as Emerging Modalities for Counsellors.**

Russell Attard, Master in Counselling
 PSCD & Guidance Teacher/Private Practice Counsellor
 St Paul's Missionary College, Malta EU

This preliminary study explores the current landscape of nature-based therapies in Malta, focusing on ecotherapy and adventure therapy as emerging modalities for counsellors. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research investigates Maltese counsellors' awareness, perceptions, and potential use of these innovative approaches. The quantitative phase involved an online questionnaire disseminated via the Malta Association for the Counselling Profession, with 39 counsellors from Malta and Gozo participating. Results indicate that while many counsellors are unfamiliar with ecotherapy and adventure therapy, there is notable openness to integrating nature-based interventions—particularly for clients who may benefit from non-traditional therapeutic environments. Participants widely acknowledged the role of nature in supporting psychological wellbeing. The study also identified perceived barriers to implementation, including limited access to suitable natural spaces, ethical concerns around confidentiality and safety, and the need for clearer professional boundaries in outdoor settings. Complementing the survey, qualitative interviews with practitioners actively using ecotherapy and adventure therapy highlighted key benefits of these approaches, such as enhancing client engagement, strengthening the therapeutic relationship, and leveraging the healing potential of natural environments. Findings suggest growing interest and latent potential for incorporating nature-based therapies in Maltese counselling practice. Recommendations include culturally sensitive training, ethical guidance, and continued research to support the safe and effective integration of these modalities across diverse European contexts.

Chalquist, C. (2009). A look at the ecotherapy research evidence. *Ecopsychology*, 1 (2), 64-74.
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Cooley, S. J., Jones, C. R., Kurtz, A., & Robertson, N. (2020). 'Into the Wild': A meta-synthesis of talking therapy in natural outdoor spaces. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 77, 101841. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2020.101841>

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Walker, K. L., Ray, D. C., & Lollar, S. (2022). Integrating humanistic counseling and ecotherapy. *Journal of Professional Counseling: Practice, Theory & Research*, 49(1), 5-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15566382.2021.1949209>

Session 3.1 Counsellor Education & Professional Development.
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

The Truth about Rehabilitation Counseling

Abigail Akande PhD

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 Penn State University, Abington College,
 Abington, Pennsylvania, US

In the US, vocational rehabilitation counseling is the only branch of counseling that was established by the federal government, as a response to disabled veterans after World War 1 (McHargue, 2017; Whitebread et al., 2022). Today, rehabilitation counselors employ various assessments, case management services, and counseling and guidance to support adults and transition-aged youth in identifying vocational goals (Chiu et al., 2024; Tarvydas et al., 2019). Certified rehabilitation counselors are disability experts and coordinate services to identify accommodations to support success at work. Rehabilitation counseling is an allied health field, that is tertiary to public health and medicine (Akande, 2023). Rehabilitation interventions help to sustain an optimal quality of life, by addressing biopsychosocial aspects of disability throughout the lifespan. According to the World Health Organization's International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF), health conditions have reciprocal relationships with body structures and functions, human activities, and participation in society, among other factors (Akande, 2023; CDC, 2024). Some of these factors are directly addressed through rehabilitation, such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, mental health counseling, and rehabilitation counseling. In 2023, the World Health Assembly "endorsed the historic resolution on strengthening rehabilitation in health systems" (WHO, 2023). A large portion of the world, including nations that have ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), have not integrated rehabilitation into health systems, academic institutions, or legislation in any practical way (United Nations, 2022). With a growing disability burden internationally, fostering the growth of rehabilitation can help to address long-term needs (Salomon, 2022)

- Akande, A. O. (2023). Knowledge of legislation as an ethical principle for undergraduate rehabilitation students. *Journal of Human Services*, 42(2), 49-57.
- Akande, A. (2023). The academic study of rehabilitation: Prioritizing university curriculum for the preparation of practitioners in the international field. *Proceedings of the World Disability & Rehabilitation Conference* 4(1), 1-15. <https://tiikmpublishing.com/proceedings/index.php/wdrc/article/download/1398/1> 119
- CDC. (2024, June 10). ICF. Classification of Diseases, Functioning, & Disability. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/icd/icf/index.html>
- Chiu, C., Rumrill, S., Ahonle, Z. J., Wertheimer, J., Henderson, K., & Dillahunt-Aspillaga, C. (2024). The Unique Function and Value of a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor for People with Disabilities and Chronic Illnesses. *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*, 105(9), 1813-1816.
- McHargue, J. M. (2017). Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, State of Florida. In *Reasonable Accommodation* (pp. 285-302). Routledge.
- Salomon, J. (2010). New disability weights for the global burden of disease. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 88(12), 879-879. <https://doi.org/10.2471/blt.10.084301>
- Tarvydas, V. M., Maki, D. R., & Hartley, M. T. (2018). Rehabilitation counseling: A specialty practice of the counseling profession. *The professional practice of rehabilitation counseling*, 1-13.
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Session 3.1 Counsellor Education & Professional Development.
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

The Path to University Leadership: Leveraging Your Counselor Educator Expertise

Angie Cartwright PhD,
 Assistant Vice Provost ,
 University of North Texas,
 Denton, Texas US

Janee Avent Harris PhD,
 Associate Dean,
 East Carolina University,
 Greenville, North Carolina US

Kathy Ybañez-Llorente
 PhD, Associate Dean,
 Texas State University
 San Marcos, Texas, US

The leaders of this presentation aim to provide insight, inspiration, and support for counselor educators seeking entry into university leadership and administration. Discussants will share their motivations for being university leaders, pathways into administration, and how they leverage their skills as counselor educators in their administrative roles. The experienced counselor educators will also share their strategies for navigating their respective transitions from faculty to administration. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage with the panelists through interactive discussions and question/answer segments. The principles of Relational Cultural Theory (Jordan, 2017) are transferable in administrative roles as the theory emphasizes connection and relational-building, promoting mutuality and empowerment, addressing power differentials, and cultivating growth-fostering relationships. Thus, the presenters will provide an overview of administrative positions in the academy and discuss the unique challenges and opportunities that counselor educators face when transitioning into administrative roles. Discuss the importance of mentorship, professional development, and ongoing learning in nurturing future leaders in counselor education.

- Cartwright, A. D., Avent-Harris, J. R., Munsey, R. B., & Lloyd-Hazlett, J. (2018). Interview experiences and diversity concerns of counselor education faculty from underrepresented groups. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 57(2), 132-146. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12098>
- Hays, D. "Administration (Program Coordinator, Department Chair, Associate Dean, or Dean) in Counselor Education." *Counselor Education in the 21st Century: Issues and Experiences*, edited by Jane Atieno Okech and Deborah Rubel, 1st ed., vol. 1, American Counseling Association, Alexandria, VA, 2018, pp. 149-168.
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**Session 3.2 Children and Young Persons.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)**

An Evidence-Based Approach to Empowering Youth: Identity Behavior Counseling

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Associate Professor,
Mercy University Dobbs Ferry
New York US
Charles University Prague,
Czech Republic EU

Yoko Tanaka
PhD Nursing
Lecturer
Kio University
Nara, Japan

Cynthia Walley PhD Counseling,
Chair, Dept of Counseling Program;
Director, School Counseling
Program; Associate Professor,
Counseling Department
Mercy University,
Dobbs Ferry, New York US

Counselors work with youth in settings with a variety of resources and worldviews. Sense of self, therefore, is integral to navigating a tense, competitive world. As such, this presentation presents strategies for using social psychological theory and evidence-based practices with youth and those who are charged to support them, and those in their wider communities. Beginning by introducing and explaining the Identity Behavior Counseling (IBC) theory, including foundation and epistemology, speakers will then address specific counseling issues, such as academic achievement, crisis, trauma, and resiliency, from a social psychological lens. Practical and accessible, the anecdotes will be filled with case examples, evidence-based interventions, and helpful tools to show how counselors incorporate IBC into their practice with children and adolescents. Extending beyond youth problems, this presentation also explores issues that affect adults who interact with youth, such as teachers, parents, and coaches. Behavioral health integration with primary care is essential in addressing these challenges, ensuring that diverse perspectives and expertise are combined to support these youth and their communities effectively. Lastly, resources in the form of websites and readings will be provided. The IBC approach is essential for counselors who value empowering youth using a strengths-based perspective to act from their core identities and to find and create solutions tied to personhood in environments that help them live their best lives. It will also be of interest to counselors who work in schools and those seeking new ways to work with students, families, and their communities.

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<https://doi.org/10.2307/3033745>

Lock, S., Rees, C. S., & Heritage, B. (2020). Development and validation of a brief measure of psychological resilience: the state-trait assessment of resilience scale. Aust. Psychol. 55, 10-25. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ap.12434>

Simons, J. D., Kudrnáč, A., Kepic, M., McCajor-Hall, T., & Smetáčková, I. (2024). Beyond tolerance toward inclusion: Response to homo- and trans-negative language. Sexual and Gender Diversity in Social Services.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/29933021.2024.2413550> NIHMSID: 2039943

Simons, J. D. (2022). Identity Behavior Theory Resilience Scale [Database record]. PsycTESTS.
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<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0248022>. eCollection 2021. PubMed PMID: 33730023; PubMed Central PMCID: PMC7968657

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**Session 3.2 Children and Young Persons.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)**

Child-Centered Play Therapy: Utilizing Children's Natural Language for Healing and Resilience

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This presentation will introduce Child-Centered Play Therapy (CCPT) as an evidence-based approach for working with children, based on the work of Carl Rogers and the Person-Centered theory he developed (1961). According to Person-Centered theory, the counselor-client relationship offers the impetus for change, and that all human beings have an innate tendency to grow. CCPT was the adaptation of this theory for working with children by Axline (1947). It emphasizes the relationship with the child and being present with them and focuses on the child rather than the behavior, creating an accepting and safe environment for growth and change, through their natural language of play. There is a plethora of research on CCPT. Ray & Landreth (2019) asserted that CCPT supports externalized and internalized behavior change, self-concept, teacher relationships and academic achievement. CCPT studies show positive outcomes that include increases in self-esteem, expressive language in students with speech delay, academic achievement, and adaptive, as well as overall, behaviors (Blanco & Ray, 2011; Blanco et al., 2017; Danger & Landreth, 2005; Kot et al., 1998; Perryman & Bowers, 2018; Massengale & Perryman, 2021; Post et al., 2004). This presentation will include an overview of the theory and concepts as well as materials needed for implementation. Neurological implications of play and its role in the wellbeing and development of children as well as addressing trauma will be addressed.

Axline, V. (1947). *Play therapy: The inner dynamics of childhood*. Read Books Ltd.

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Post, P., McAllister, M., Sheely, A., Hess, B., & Flowers, C. (2004). Child-centered kinder training for teachers of pre-school children deemed at-risk. *International Journal of Play Therapy*, 13(2), 53-74. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0088890>

Ray, D., & Landreth, G., (September 2019). Child-centered play therapy. 14(3), 18-19. www.a4pt.org

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Rogers, C. R. 1. (1961). *On becoming a person: a therapist's view of psychotherapy*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin.

Schoonover, T. J., & Perryman, K. (2022). Child-centered play therapy and adverse childhood experiences: A single-case research design. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Counseling*, 9(1), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23727810.2022.2138045>

Session 3.2 Children and Young Persons.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)

Examining the Factor Structure and Psychometric Properties of the Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire: Implications for Counseling Practice in Global Contexts

Tony Michael

PhD/ Counselor Education and Supervision
 Professor Tennessee Tech University,
 Cookeville, Tennessee, US

This presentation examines the factor structure and psychometric properties of the Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (ACE-Q) within a college student population. Using a sample of 354 students from a mid-sized university in the southeastern United States, the study tested three distinct factor models (one-, two-, and three-factor) to assess the theoretical validity of the ACE-Q. Confirmatory factor analyses conducted in SPSS AMOS 26 demonstrated strong model fit across all three structures, with internal consistency findings supporting the applicability of one- and two-factor models. The presentation will explore the implications of these findings for counseling practice, focusing on how ACEs impact college students' mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being. The discussion will emphasize theoretical frameworks for understanding ACEs, the interpretability of factor structures, and considerations for applying the ACE-Q in diverse settings. Attendees will gain insights into how these findings can inform culturally responsive counseling interventions and support services within higher education and international contexts. By addressing the psychometric validity of the ACE-Q in a college population, this research contributes to global counseling practices, offering a foundation for future studies on trauma assessment and intervention. The session will conclude with recommendations for counselors, educators, and researchers seeking to apply ACE findings to improve client and student outcomes.

- Michael, T., Phillips, B., & Loftis, M. A. (2024). Examining the Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire factor structure and psychometric properties among college students in the southeastern United States. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*. DOI: 10.1007/s10447-024-09583-y
- Felitti, V. J., Anda, R. F., Nordenberg, D., Williamson, D. F., Spitz, A. M., Edwards, V., Koss, M. P., & Marks, J. S. (1998). Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 14(4), 245-258. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0749-3797\(98\)00017-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0749-3797(98)00017-8)
- Finkelhor, D. (2018). Screening for adverse childhood experiences (ACES): Cautions and suggestions. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 85, 174-179. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.07.016>
- Finkelhor, D., Shattuck, A., Turner, H., & Hamby, S. (2013). Improving the adverse childhood experiences study scale. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 167(1), 70-75. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2013.420>
- Ford, D. C., Merrick, M. T., Parks, S. E., Breiding, M. J., Gilbert, L. K., Edwards, V. J., Dhingra, S. S., Barile, J. P., & Thompson, W. W. (2014). Examination of the factorial structure of adverse childhood experiences and recommendations for three subscale scores. *Psychology of Violence*, 4(4), 432-444. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0037723>
- Mersky, J. P., Janczewski, C. E., & Topitzes, J. (2017). Rethinking the measurement of adversity: Moving toward second-generation research on adverse childhood experiences. *Child Maltreatment*, 22(1), 58-68. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077559516679513>

Session 3.2 Children and Young Persons.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)

**Cultivating Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Through
 Their Natural Medium of Communication, Play and Play Therapy**

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Patricia Kimball

PhD in Counselor Education & Supervision
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 Lynchburg, Virginia US

Birds fly, fish swim, and children play" (Landreth, 2024, p. 1). By reaching children through their nature medium of communication, play, mental health clinicians can face any new challenges by learning how to provide a safe and therapeutic atmosphere through the means of play and play therapy. When mental health clinicians are trained in the foundational principals of play therapy, they are equipped to provide a healing space for children to express, explore, and heal. In this workshop, foundational principles of child-centered play therapy will be explored (Landreth, 2024), along with recent research on relational healing from traumatic experiences through child-centered play therapy (Frawley & Taylor, 2024). This presentation will also briefly explore how to create a culturally inclusive playroom (Chung et al., 2023).

Chung, R. K., Ray, D. C., Aguilar, E. V., Turner, K. K. (2023). The multicultural play therapy room: Intentional decision-making in selecting play therapy toys and materials. *International Journal of Play Therapy*, 32(4), 197-207.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/pla0000203>

Frawley, C., & Taylor, D. D. (2024). The relational change mechanisms of child-centered play therapy with children exposed to adverse childhood experiences. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 102(2), 153-162.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12500>

Frawley, C., Lambie, G. W., Haugen, J. S., & Taylor, D. D. (2023). The assessment of play therapy and child counseling competencies (APTCCC). *International Journal of Play Therapy*, 33(3), 129-139.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/pla0000208>

Landreth, G. L. (2024). *Play therapy: The art of the relationship* (4th ed.). Routledge.

Ray, D. (2004). Supervision of basic and advanced skills in play therapy. *Journal of Professional Counseling: Practice, Theory, & Research*, 32(2), 28-41. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1080/15566382.2004.12033805>

Ray, D. C. (2011). *Advanced play therapy: Essential conditions, knowledge, and skills for child practice*. Routledge.

Turner, R., Schoeneberg, C., Ray, D., & Lin, Y. (2020). Establishing play therapy competencies: A Delphi study. *International Journal of Play Therapy*, 29(4), 177-189. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/pla0000138>

Session 3.3 Ethics and Innovation in Counsellor Education
Reading Room (Floor 3)

Systemic Wellness: Disrupting the Paths to Burnout

Kelly Farrish

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Understanding the factors that positively contribute to counselor wellness in the workplace requires defining and operationalizing workplace wellness. Over the past three decades, research and interest in burnout has steadily increased, with consensus that burnout, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma are costs to caring. In the burnout research, exhaustion is often cited as the central component. However, environmental factors, particularly role overload, have been found to be positively correlated with exhaustion, suggesting a connection between the external environment and burnout. Additionally, devaluing clients, a final stage of burnout, is predicted by a negative work environment, mediated through deterioration in personal life, exhaustion, and loss of perception of efficacy. This underscores the importance of focusing on negative work environment and other organizational variables that impact counselors. It is critical to investigate strategies to disrupt these pathways to burnout, increase environmental supports, and promote preventative measures for counselor wellness.

- Cropanzano, R., Rupp, D. E., & Byrne, Z. S. (2003). The relationship of emotional exhaustion to job performance ratings and organizational citizenship behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(1), 160-169. DOI: 10.1037/0021-9010.88.1.160
- Fye, H. J., Cook, R. M., Baltrinic, E. R., & Baylin, A. (2020). Examining individual and organizational factors of school counselor burnout. *The Professional Counselor*, 10(2), 235-250. <https://doi.org/10.15241/hjf.10.2.235>
- Lawson, G., & Myers, J. E. (2011). Wellness, professional quality of life, and career-sustaining behaviors: What keeps us well? *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 2011(89), 163-171.
- Lee, D., Nam, S., Jeong, J., Na, G., & Lee, J. (2023). Developing and validating a process model of counselor burnout: A serial mediation model. *The Professional Counselor*, 13(3), 162-176 doi:10.15241/dl.13.3.162
- Lee, M. K., Kim, E., Paik, I. S., Chung, J., & Lee, S. M. (2019). Relationship between environmental factors and burnout of psychotherapists: Meta-analytic approach. *Counseling Psychotherapy Research*, 2020(20), 164-172. DOI: 10.1002/capr.12245
- Lee, S. M., Baker, C. R., Cho, S. H., Heckathorn, D. E., Holland, M. W., Newgent, R. A., Ogle, N. T., Powell, M. L., Quinn, J. J., Wallace, & S. L., Yu, K. (2007). Development and initial psychometrics of the counselor burnout inventory. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 40(3), 142-154.

Session 3.3 Ethics and Innovation in Counsellor Education
Reading Room (Floor 3)

**A New Challenge: Using art to enhance counseling students’
 training and wellbeing in community mental health settings**

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Shannon Karl PhD, Counseling, Professor, Nova Southeastern Univ. Ft Lauderdale, Florida, US

Elda Kanzki-Veloso PhD, Counseling, Professor, Nova Southeastern Univ. Ft Lauderdale, Florida, US

Carly Paro-Tompkins Ed.D., Assoc. Prof. of Counseling, Nova Southeastern Univ. Ft Lauderdale, Florida, US

Art is beneficial in multiple ways when used alongside traditional therapeutic methods. Recent research emphasizes the value of art therapy in trauma processing and emotional regulation. Studies indicate that art therapy not only provides new perspectives but also improves communication, helping individuals express their emotions and experiences effectively (Kievisiene et al., 2020; Bosman et al., 2021). This approach can be particularly valuable for counselors and counseling trainees as they develop clinical skillsets. Led by an art therapist, this study aimed at activating the right brain hemisphere functions of counseling students, working in community mental health settings, as they develop into professional counselors. This study also aimed to enhance professional growth using art interventions in supervision by fostering creativity, emotional regulation, continuous learning, and self-improvement (Liberati, & Agbisit, 2017; Davis, et al., 2018). Specifically, six variables intended at enhancing professional growth were measured: self-awareness, emotional regulation, countertransference, communication and engagement, empathy, and self-care. The mixed method research question that guided this study was, “Does participating in an art intervention protocol in supervision impact levels of professional growth in six targeted areas in counselors and counselors in training? The main objective of this presentation is to share the results of this study in assessing the impact of integrating art into clinical supervision meetings. Counselors would gain knowledge of how engaging in art interventions can positively influence professional growth among counselors in training and other counselors beyond traditional methods of verbal supervision. Specific art protocols will be shared with participants for their use.

American Counseling Association (2014). Code of Ethics. Alexandria, VA:

Bosman, J. T., Bood, Z. M., Scherer-Rath, M., Dörr, H., Christophe, N., Sprangers, M. A., & van Laarhoven, H. W. (2021). The effects of art therapy on anxiety, depression, and quality of life in adults with cancer: a systematic literature review. *Supportive Care in Cancer*, 29, 2289-2298.

Davis, K. M., Snyder, M. A., & Hartig, N. (2018). Intermodal expressive arts in group supervision. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 13(1), 68-75. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2017.1328294>

Kievisiene, J., Jautakyte, R., Rauckiene-Michaelsson, A., Fatkulina, N., & Agostinis-Sobrinho, C. (2020). The effect of art therapy and music therapy on breast cancer patients: what we know and what we need to find out—a systematic review. *Evidence-based complementary and alternative medicine*, 2020, 1-14.

Liberati, R., & Agbisit, M. (2017). Using art-based strategies in group-based counselor supervision. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 12(1), 15-30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2016.1189369>

Session 3.3 Ethics and Innovation in Counsellor Education
Reading Room (Floor 3)

Counseling in a World of New Challenges:
Using Motivational Interviewing to Encourage and Promote Change in our Clients

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Shannon Karl PhD, Counseling, Professor, Nova Southeastern Univ. Ft Lauderdale, Florida, US

Elda Kanzki-Veloso PhD, Counseling, Professor, Nova Southeastern Univ. Ft Lauderdale, Florida, US

Carly Paro-Tompkins Ed.D., Assoc. Prof. of Counseling, Nova Southeastern Univ. Ft Lauderdale, Florida, US

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is an approach developed in the 1980s to treat clients with addictions by minimizing resistance and increasing the likelihood for change (Rollnick & Miller, 2002; Miller & Rose, 2009). Although originated in the treatment of substance abuse with high rates for dropping out, relapse, and poor outcomes, MI's applications are extended and proven effective in health care settings and counseling practices (e.g., obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety, veterans' posttraumatic stress disorder, eating disorders, depression and suicidality, pathological gambling, and other psychological problems; Arkowitz et al., 2008). This non-judgmental, non-confrontational, supportive, conversational, and empathic approach is client-centered, allows clients to take responsibility for their own change process, and foment self-efficacy and the belief that clients can accomplish their own goals. Over 120 research studies have shown MI to effectively reduce health care costs, increase treatment compliance and outcomes, and increase patient satisfaction (Apodace & Longabaugh 2009; Burke et al., 2003; Sobell, 2011). This is because MI increases client's commitment to change by using specific techniques that assist clients reduce their ambivalence to change. The purpose of this presentation is to illustrate how MI techniques can be applied in the practice of counseling in a variety of settings. MI techniques like "asking for permission," "eliciting/evoking change talk," "reflective listening," "normalizing," "decisional balancing," "the Columbo approach," and the "readiness-to-change ruler" will be demonstrated. These evidenced-based practices are extremely effective and easy to incorporate in short-term counseling. Participants will learn practical, hands-on activities that can be introduced in their clinical practices immediately.

Arkowitz, H., Miller, W.R., Westra, H., & Steve Rollnick (2008) (eds.). *Motivational interviewing in the treatment of psychological problems*. New York: Guilford Press.

Apodace, T. R., & Longabaugh, R. (2009). Mechanisms of change in Motivational Interviewing: A review and preliminary evaluation of the evidence. *Addiction*, 104(5): 705-715. Retrieved from NIH Public Access <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2756738/> on June 7, 2011

Burke, B.L., Arkowitz, H., & Menchola, M. (2003). The efficacy of motivational interviewing: A meta-analysis of controlled clinical trials. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*; 71:843-861. Retrieved from NIH Public Access <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2756738/> on June 7, 2011.

Miller, W.R., & Rollnick, S. (2002). *Motivational interviewing: Preparing people for change* (2nd ed.). New York: Guilford Press.

Miller, R., & Rose, G. (2009). Toward a Theory of Motivational Interviewing. *American Psychologist*; 64(6): 527-537. Retrieved from APA PsycNet <http://psycnet.apa.org/journals/amp/64/6/527/> on June 1, 2011.

Sobell, L. (2011). Using motivational interviewing strategies and techniques to help patients change risky/problem behaviors. Workshop at Nova Southeastern University.

Session 3.3 Ethics and Innovation in Counsellor Education
Reading Room (Floor 3)

Rethinking Competence: Cultural Humility in Practice

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This presentation examines recent research on the effectiveness of cultural humility in counseling and its influence on therapeutic relationships. Drawing from studies by Owen et al. (2016), Wilcox et al. (2023), and Greene-Moton & Minkler (2020), it emphasizes that cultural humility surpasses traditional cultural competence by promoting openness, self-reflection, and a stronger connection with clients. Unlike the fixed goal of achieving cultural competence, cultural humility focuses on a continuous process of learning, addressing power dynamics, and responding to the distinct identities and experiences of clients. The session will review research findings, such as how clients perceive cultural humility in their therapists and its association with better therapeutic outcomes (Owen et al., 2016). It will also discuss its role in enhancing cultural comfort and addressing cultural opportunities in psychotherapy supervision (Watkins et al., 2019). Practical applications for integrating cultural humility into counseling and supervision will be shared, including strategies to cultivate cultural comfort and address systemic barriers. Transitioning from competence to humility is crucial for a lasting and impactful counseling career. Participants will gain actionable insights and tools to promote equity and inclusivity in their practice, ensuring that their work remains responsive and meaningful in a diverse and evolving world. This presentation directly aligns with the conference theme by addressing new challenges in counseling and providing pathways to nurture mental health and well-being.

- Sensoy, Ö., & DiAngelo, R. (2017). *Is everyone really equal? An introduction to key concepts in social justice education* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Owen, J., Tao, K. W., Drinane, J. M., Hook, J., Davis, D. E., Kune, N. F., & Brown, R. T. (2016). Client perceptions of therapists' multicultural orientation: Cultural (missed) opportunities and cultural humility. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 47(1), 30-37. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pro0000046>
- Watkins, C. E., Hook, J. N., Owen, J., DeBlaere, C., Davis, D. E., & Van Tongeren, D. R. (2019). Multicultural orientation in psychotherapy supervision: Cultural humility, cultural comfort, and cultural opportunities. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 72(2), 38-46. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.psychotherapy.20180040>
- Greene-Moton, E., & Minkler, M. (2020). Cultural competence or cultural humility? Moving beyond the debate. *Health Promotion Practice*, 21(1), 142-145. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839919884912>

Session 3.4 Wellbeing and Spirituality
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

Declining Mental Health, Wellbeing, and the Influence of Religion: Is There a Link?

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****Neuroscience in Relation to Quantum Physics Applied to Health Behavioral and Cognitive Applied Psychology ,**

Nietzsche is credited with the idea that “individuals who have a why (life meaning or purpose) to live can suffer any how (life journey or means).” Religion and spirituality (R/S) provide a sense of life meaning, purpose, system of belief, and community (ASERVIC, n.d). A strong positive faith or belief system can positively impact mental health and wellbeing (Cashwell & Young, 2020; Ivey, et al., 2023). However, the importance of the role and influence of religion is in decline in America, Canada, Europe, and the U.K. (Pew, 2022). Many have deconstructed, dispensed of, and dismissed religion. Simultaneously, new world challenges have arisen accelerated by social media, cultural value shifts, and worldview confusion adversely impacting mental health and wellbeing. It is supposed by some that there may be a link between increases in adverse symptoms of mental illness and a lack of meaning, connection, and transcendence associated with religion. With a deterioration or absence of the why, the how has potentially become incomprehensible, intolerable, and insufferable. The worldwide increases in adverse mental health symptoms and declining aspects of wellbeing may be connected to the decrease in the influence of religion. This global panel discussion will explore cultivating mental health and wellbeing through the integration of religion and spirituality in counseling. Examples of effective integration of religion and spirituality in different parts of the world will be provided. Discussion around the topic of the perceived impact of decreases in the influence of religion on mental health and wellbeing will be facilitated.

Abrams, Z. (2023, November 1). Can religion and spirituality have a place in therapy? Experts say yes. Monitor on Psychology 54(8), 67.<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2023/11/incorporating-religion-spirituality-in-therapy>
 Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling. (n.d.). ASERVIC white paper.
<https://aservic.org/aservic-white-paper/>

Cashwell, C. S., & Young, J. S. (2020). Integrating spirituality and religion into counseling: A guide to competent practice. (3rd ed.). American Counseling Association.

Ivey, A. E., Ivey, M. B., & Zalaquett, C. P. (2023). Intentional interviewing and counseling: Facilitating client development in a multicultural society (10th ed.). Cengage.

Munsil, T. (2024, January 28). Loss of biblical worldview fuels mental health crisis among young adults, says CRC's Barna. Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University. <https://www.arizonachristian.edu/2024/01/28/mental-health-crisis-among-young-adults-a-worldview-problem-says-crcs-barna/>

Pew Research Center. (2019, January 31). Religion's relationship to happiness, civic engagement and health around the world. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2019/01/31/religions-relationship-to-happiness-civic-engagement-and-health-around-the-world/>

Pew Research Center. (2022, December 21). Key findings from the global religious futures project. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2022/12/21/key-findings-from-the-global-religious-futures-project/>

Session 3.4 Wellbeing and Spirituality
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

Self-Forgiveness Counseling: Theory, Research, and Practice

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Causing offense or harm to others will unfortunately happen in most relationships, ranging from minor or unintentional harm such as speaking tersely to one's child while low on sleep to more significant or intentional transgressions such as sexual infidelity. Causing significant harm to others can later cause sorrow, self-condemnation, or shame; when longstanding, these reactions can be damaging for both the transgressor and the victim (Friedman et al., 2007), preventing personal and relational resolution. In this presentation, I will introduce the audience to the concept of self-forgiveness, the "process in which a person (a) accepts RESPONSIBILITY for having harmed another; (b) expresses REMORSE while reducing shame; (c) engages in RESTORATION through reparative behaviors and a recommitment to values; and (d) thus achieves a RENEWAL of self-respect, self-compassion, and self-acceptance" (Cornish & Wade, 2015a, p. 97). I will briefly review the research that connects self-forgiveness to positive mental and relational functioning (e.g., Cornish et al., 2024; Davis et al., 2015). I will then provide an overview of my therapeutic model of self-forgiveness (Cornish & Wade, 2015a), which helps clients work through the Four Rs included in the above definition. This will include intervention examples from the individual counseling intervention (Cornish 2012; 2016) based on this Four Rs model, using a clinical example. I will briefly highlight the research support for this intervention (e.g., Carroll et al., 2024; Cornish & Wade, 2015b; Cornish et al., 2020) and address specific presenting concerns (e.g., affairs, substance use) for which this model may be particularly helpful.

- Carroll, T., Cornish, M., Marie, L., Fadoir, N., Kim, E., Taylor, S., Borgogna, N., & Currier, J. M. (2024). Understanding self-forgiveness in emotion-focused therapy: An interpersonal recall study with men in recovery from addiction. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/int0000336>
- Cornish, M. A. (2016). *Healing the past through self-forgiveness: An individual counseling intervention to promote self-forgiveness for past regrets* (2nd ed.). Unpublished treatment manual.
- Cornish, M. A., Grey, C., Rossi, C., Dyas, K. C., Horton, A. J., & Saha, A. (2024). Adult attachment and personal and romantic relationship wellbeing: Forgiveness of self and partner as mediators. *Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cfp0000260>
- Cornish, M. A., Hanks, M. A., & Gubash Black, S. M. (2020). Self-forgiving processes in therapy for romantic relationship infidelity: An evidence-based case study. *Psychotherapy*, 5, 352-365. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pst0000292>
- Cornish, M. A., & Wade, N. G. (2015a). A therapeutic model of self-forgiveness with intervention strategies for counselors. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 93, 96-104. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2015.00185.x>
- Cornish, M. A., & Wade, N. G. (2015b). Working through past wrongdoing: Examination of a self-forgiveness counseling intervention. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 62, 521-528. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000080>
- Davis, D. E., Ho, M. Y., Griffin, B. J., Bell, C., Hook, J. N., Van Tongeren, D. R., . . . Westbrook, C. J. (2015). Forgiving the self and physical and mental health correlates: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 62, 329-335. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/cou0000063>
- Friedman, L. C., Romero, C., Elledge, R., Chang, J., Kalidas, M., Dulay, M. F., . . . Osborne, C. K. (2007). Attribution of blame, self-forgiving attitude and psychological adjustment in women with breast cancer. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 30, 351-357. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10865-007-9108-5>

Session 3.4 Wellbeing and Spirituality.
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

**Mediating Effects of Gambling Advertising on Personality, Spirituality,
 and Gambling Behavior of Young Adults and its Implication to Counselling**

Osagie O. Johnson	PhD/ Counselling Psychology, Head, Centre for Career Services; Member 8th Governing Council of FCE, Abeokuta, Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria
Choja A Oduaran	PhD/ Clinical Psychology Head of Department, Clinical Psychology (Mafikeng)North West University, Mmabatho, Mafikeng, South Africa
Abimbola A. Akanni	Ph.D Psychology, Assistant Dean, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile -Ife/ Osun State, Nigeria

Increased gambling behavior among young adults in Nigeria is worrisome and may negatively impact their mental health. Thus, the study examined the mediating effect of gambling advertising on the relationship between personality, spirituality, and gambling behavior. Cross-sectional descriptive research design was used for the study using a total of 1,036 ($F = 38.82\%$; mean age = 25.77; $SD = 4.72$) young adults in Nigeria between ages 18 to 35 years responded to the Big Five Inventory, Spirituality Scale, Impacts of Gambling Advertising Questionnaire and Canadian Problem Gambling Index. Data was analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The results showed a direct link between personality (conscientiousness, agreeableness), spirituality (relationship, self-discovery), advertising, and gambling behavior. Also, gambling advertising mediated the relationship between personality, spirituality, and gambling behavior of young adults in Nigeria. The study concluded that gambling advertising had an indirect effect on the relationship between personality, spirituality, and gambling behavior of young adults. Based on the mediating effects of gambling advertising, the study shed light on the likely mental health effect of gamblers whose gambling behavior is influenced by gambling advertising and its implication for counselling. Also, recommendations on how counselling can be used to safeguard the mental health of gamblers who are influenced by gambling advertising were offered.

- Adigun, A. (2020). Gambling Problem among Nigerian Youth. A Short Update. GRIN Verlag. ISBN-10: 3346190676
- Emond, A. M., & Griffiths, M. D. (2020). Gambling in children and adolescents. *British Medical Bulletin*, 136(1), 21-29. doi: 10.1093/bmb/ldaa027. 10.1093/bmb/ldaa027
- Hodgins, D. C., & Stevens, R. M. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on gambling and gambling disorder: emerging data. *Current Opinion in Psychiatry*, 34(4), 332-343. 10.1097/YCO.0000000000000709
- Kristiansen, S., & Severin-Nielsen, M. K. (2022). Adolescent gambling advertising awareness: A national survey. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 31(2), 263-273. 10.1111/ijsw.1250
- Månsson, V., Samuelsson, E., Berman, A. H., & Nilsson, A. (2022). Treatment for problem gambling and counselors' perception of their clinical competence: a national web survey in Sweden. *Addiction science & clinical practice*, 17(1), 70. 10.1186/s13722-022-00347-w

The aforementioned were cited in the manuscript. The cited articles were used because they are relevant to the topic, reveal the consequences of problem gambling, discuss extensively on gambling, and shed light on the treatment that may be offered to those experiencing problem gambling.

Session 3.4 Wellbeing and Spirituality.
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

**Why is Forgiveness Difficult? An Exploration of Emotional States Associated
 with Acts of Forgiveness, Karma, and Revenge**

Richard S. Balkin

PhD, Professor and Chair
 The University of Mississippi
 Oxford, Mississippi, USA

Emotional distress and the capacity to forgive may be influenced by beliefs about forgiveness, Karma, and revenge. Understanding emotional states associated with forgiveness, Karma, and revenge can help counselors assist clients in working through conflict and forgiveness. The purpose of this study was to explore the variation of emotional states associated with forgiveness, Karma and revenge, which may provide insight into decisions about forgiveness. Eighty-one participants received three randomized prompts related to forgiveness, Karma, and revenge. Participants responded after each prompt and completed the Discrete Emotion Questionnaire. Raters recorded a rating of intensity for each response. Differences were found in participants' emotional states and intensity after disclosing life events related to each of the prompts. Implications for counseling include the navigation of emotional states tied to forgiveness, Karma, and revenge.

- Akhtar, S., Dolan, A., & Barlow, J. (2017;2016;). Understanding the relationship between state forgiveness and psychological wellbeing: A qualitative study. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 56(2), 450-463. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-016-0188-9>
- Carlsmith, K. M., Wilson, T. D., & Gilbert, D. T. (2008). The paradoxical consequences of revenge. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95(6), 1316-1324. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012165>
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Session 3.5 Multicultural Counselling.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

**Creative Pathways - Therapy Cards as Non-Directive Tools for
 Cultivating Reflection, Connection, and Growth in the Therapeutic Journey**

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Education Officer (Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation) in charge of Personal, Social and Career Development Subject (PSCD)

Happy Life Foundation, Lija, Malta EU

Julian Sant Fournier, MBA Brunel University

Mediator Family Court,

Co Founder Happy Life Foundation, St Julian's Malta EU

This presentation explores the therapeutic application of Therapy Cards (developed by 8 Maltese Counsellors together with the Relationships Forever Foundation), a non-directive, image-based tool that fosters reflection, emotional connection, and insight throughout the counselling process. Featuring evocative images on one side and open-ended questions on the other, the cards are designed to help clients engage with their emotions, thoughts, and internal strengths in a gentle, client-led manner. Especially effective with resistant clients, children, or those who find verbal expression difficult, the cards offer an alternative to traditional talk therapy by creating a bridge between internal experience and outward expression. Grounded in person-centered, experiential, and expressive therapies, these therapy cards support mindfulness and present-moment awareness while encouraging critical self-reflection. They can be introduced at any phase of the therapeutic journey and are especially useful in unblocking therapeutic progress during impasses. Through imagery and metaphor, clients can safely project, explore, and give meaning to their experiences, fostering empowerment and resilience. The presentation will include a theoretical background, practical implementation strategies, and case examples from both individual and group therapy settings. Emphasis will be placed on how therapists can integrate the cards into various modalities and adapt their use across different age groups and cultural contexts. Attendees will leave with actionable tools to enrich therapeutic encounters and enhance client engagement, especially when conventional dialogue-based approaches are limited or ineffective.

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Session 3.5 Multicultural Counselling.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling as the Counselor Identity Development in Korea

Jung (June) H. Hyun PhD

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 Agnes Scott College
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Recently Choi and La (2019) developed a Korean Multicultural Counseling Competency Indicator (KMCCI) after surveying Korean literature on multicultural counseling in Korea. Part of the results (Choi & La, 2019) revealed that only 7.5 percent of the participants in their study took multicultural counseling courses in their graduate program. Their review of the literature on multicultural counseling in Korea showed the existing multicultural counseling courses focus on working with immigrant laborers and issues with interracial marriage. This lack of training in multicultural counseling and social justice competencies led the authors to investigate the current status of multicultural counseling and social justice training by interviewing counselor educators in the counselor education programs in Korea and surveying Korean practitioners. After reviewing the results of this qualitative study, the presenter will provide a roadmap to support Korean counselors in their identity development and further Korean society's wellness.

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Session 3.5 Multicultural Counselling.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

Eco-Wellness Counseling: Addressing the Human-Nature Connection for Global Mental Health and Wellbeing

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 Oregon State University
 Cascades, Bend, Oregon, US

EcoWellness counseling emphasizes the human-nature connection as a key component of holistic wellness. This presentation introduces the EcoWellness framework (Presenters, 2012; 2015; 2022), which integrates multidisciplinary research to provide practical strategies for assessing and incorporating nature into professional counseling and therapy. Grounded in the presenter's research and clinical applications, the session will highlight the model's global relevance in addressing diverse client needs. Participants will explore the tiered EcoWellness assessment process, ensuring ethical and culturally sustainable applications for individuals and groups.

The session will also address the intersection of climate change, environmental justice, and mental health, offering tools for advocacy and systemic interventions. Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of how to integrate nature into traditional counseling settings, foster global wellbeing, and navigate ethical considerations. Practical examples will illustrate the transformative potential of EcoWellness in promoting client empowerment and resilience across diverse communities." "Note: The below citations are at the foundation of this session proposal. Given the double-blind nature of the review process, the presenter name(s) has been removed.

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Session 3.5 Multicultural Counselling.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

Language and Culture: A Phenomenological Study of Training Novice Counselors

Supporting Bilingual East and Southeast Asian Clients

Szu-Yu (Darlene) Chen PhD

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Palo Alto University
California, US

Zachary Pietrantonio PhD

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Florida International University
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Yun Shi PhD

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Portland State University Palo Alto,
Portland, Oregon, US

Counselors must possess attitudes, knowledge, and skills that affirm the client's cultural, familial, and linguistic needs. Our study used a phenomenological approach to analyze participant interview data to identify their training experiences, challenges, and needs of novice counselors working with bilingual clients. The findings highlighted hurdles that novice counselors experience, particularly when attempting to conceptualize the unique mental health needs of bilingual clients. Moreover, our findings indicated the need for advanced training and supervision to aid in the development of cultural responsiveness, conceptualization, and intervention. This presentation will articulate the challenges novice counselors encounter when conceptualizing the mental health needs of bilingual clients. The presentation will also summarize culturally responsive and affirming practices that counselors can implement to effectively support bilingual clients. Lastly, the presentation will share a training and supervision framework for supporting novice counselors to meet the mental health needs of bilingual clients.

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Session 3.5 Multicultural Counselling.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

Session 3.6 Mental Health & Wellbeing *Business Lounge (Floor 3)*

**Promoting Mental Health in the Classroom:
 Effects of Embedding Art-Based Meditation into Post-Secondary Courses.**

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 Leadership, Policy & Governance
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Nadia Delanoy PhD
 Assistant Professor
 University of Calgary
 Calgary (Alberta)/Canada

Marsha Harris Ed.D
 MMFT, Ed.D (c) Counselling Therapist,
 Brandon University (Manitoba), Canada
 Doctoral student University of Calgary
 Calgary (Alberta) Canada

This presentation is situated at the intersection of art, brain, and mind (Gardner, 2008), drawing on research from arts education (Edwards, 1998) neuroscience (Lazar et al, 2000; Dietrich & Kanso, 2010; Sperry 1969), and psychology (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). It shares the effects of a classroom intervention for mental health promotion and education designed around art-based processes that trigger shifts in mental states, away from negative states (Curry & Kasser, 2005; Drake et al., 2014) towards positive states (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Dietrich & Kanso, 2010) and foster skills in self-regulation (Martin & Colp, 2022). Preliminary findings will be shared from a study that employed a quasi-experimental, one-way within-and-between subjects design (pre and post surveys), including the effects on student mental health capacity and well-being. As a transdisciplinary study, the presentation is framed through the lens of providing evidence on art-based activities that promote mental health (Haeyen & Hinz, 2020; Kimport & Robbins, 2012; Martin & Colp, 2022) and will be of interest to mental health service providers. Through stories, video, and slides we provide a theoretical explanation of the research that informed the intervention, findings from different learning contexts (in-person and on-line delivery), and recommendations for practice.

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Session 3.6 Mental Health & Wellbeing
Business Lounge (Floor 3)

The Self-perceived Level of Wellness Among Ghanaian Mental Health Counselors

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Psychology & Human Development
 Graduate Counseling Student
 Liverpool John Moore University
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This presentation explores the self-perceived wellness of Ghanaian mental health counselors in the context of increasing mental health service demands and systemic challenges. Despite the growing need for counseling services in Ghana, counselors often experience unwellness due to factors such as high caseloads, low funding, and minimal work staff. However, research examining the direct impact of these factors on counselor wellness remains limited. Grounded in the Holistic Wellness Theory, this quantitative study utilized predictive regression analysis to examine the correlation between counselor wellness and external work-related stressors. The Five Factor Wellness Instrument (5F-WEL) was employed to assess participants' overall well-being, while a survey measured the effects of funding constraints, staffing shortages, and workload demands. The study included 96 actively practicing Ghanaian mental health counselors, offering a representative perspective on wellness challenges within the profession. Key findings revealed a significant correlation between counselor well-being and external stressors, emphasizing the urgent need for structured wellness interventions. The presentation will highlight the importance of integrating wellness practices into counselor training programs and discuss strategies for enhancing professional resilience. The most critical takeaway from this study is the call for systemic improvements, including better funding, manageable caseloads, and wellness initiatives for mental health professionals in Ghana. The findings advocate for policy changes and professional support systems to enhance counselor wellbeing, ultimately improving mental health service delivery. This research contributes to the broader conversation on sustaining counselor wellness and promoting effective, ethical, and culturally responsive mental health care in Ghana.

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Session 3.6 Mental Health & Wellbeing
Business Lounge (Floor 3)

The Mental Health Effects of Civic Participation

Latifat Cabirou PhD
 Assistant Professor,
 Auburn University,
 Auburn, Alabama, US

This presentation will focus on research findings on the relationship between civic engagement and mental health among adult Nigerians. There is limited empirical evidence for the relationship between political civic engagement and mental health, especially in Nigeria, but anecdotal information provides some insight. In societies where the costs of civic engagement can be life threatening, people may hesitate to engage. For example, the October 2020 End SARS protest in Nigeria resulted in the violent murders of many young people by government officials. Although groundbreaking in the way it drew global attention to Nigerians' commitment to fighting for their rights, it resulted in the silencing and immobilization of many Nigerians. These anecdotal reports are consistent with research that reveal the negative mental health consequences of activism-based civic engagement. For example, a systematic review of activists' mental health following a riot or protest reveal high rates of depression and posttraumatic stress disorder. On the other hand, civic engagement has been indicated as a social determinant of health.

Given the mixed findings of the relationship between civic engagement and mental health, we use Ballard & Ozer's (2016) framework of civic engagement to identify the pathways that link civic engagement to mental health and well-being. The framework suggests that the relationship between civic engagement and mental health exists through includes stress, coping, empowerment, purpose and identity, social capital, and systemic change. Specifically, we will report on how this model applies to adult Nigerians and discuss implications for mental health and civic engagement.

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Session 3.6 Mental Health & Wellbeing
Business Lounge (Floor 3)

Exploring Generation Z's College Student's Experiences with Social Media and Mental Health Literacy

Tami Navalon

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Generation Z college students face a heightened risk of developing mental health challenges, yet they are often reluctant to seek formal mental health services. As digital natives, they regularly turn to social media not only for entertainment, but also for information about mental health. Research suggests they feel safer and more supported in online communities than in traditional settings, highlighting the potential of social media platforms to serve as effective spaces for mental health support and education. However, concerns remain about the widespread dissemination of misinformation, which can negatively impact users' wellbeing. This constructivist grounded theory study explored how Gen Z college students experience and interpret mental health content on social media, particularly in relation to mental health literacy. Fourteen diverse college students were recruited from social media platforms and student-centered spaces. Through in-depth interviews, a central theme of intentionality emerged, revealing that students who engage with social media mindfully, by critically evaluating content and setting boundaries, can improve their mental health literacy and reduce negative psychological outcomes. The findings underscore the need for counselor educators, clinicians, and policymakers to integrate social media literacy into training and support strategies. Implications for counselor education include the development of curricula that promote digital discernment and mental health literacy, teaching students and clients to navigate online environments more safely and effectively. The study also advocates for stronger oversight and safeguards on social media platforms to protect young users and promote accurate, supportive mental health content.

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Session 4.1 Counsellor Education & Professional Development.
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

Counsellors' Perspectives on Discussing Wellbeing with Clients

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 Social Worker/Counsellor
 Malta EU

Prompted by growing interest in holistic approaches in mental health, this study utilises qualitative research methods, including open-ended interviews and reflexive thematic analysis (RTA), to delve into the nuanced approaches, challenges, and strategies employed by counsellors in integrating well-being within the therapeutic context. The research involves a sample of six participants, all of whom are female counsellors actively practicing in various therapeutic settings. The literature review examines the distinctions between wellness and well-being, focusing on their theoretical foundations and practical implications in counselling. It discusses hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, psychological frameworks, the evolution of wellness models, and the integration of wellness into counselling practices, highlighting The Wheel of Wellness and Indivisible Self-model. Key findings include the importance of practising what counsellors advocate, the multifaceted nature of well-being, the role of early intervention, and the necessity of creating a non-judgmental space for clients. Such insights offer a deeper understanding of therapeutic interventions aimed at promoting comprehensive well-being. Implications of this study suggest that counsellors should incorporate holistic strategies and culturally sensitive practices to enhance well-being discussions. It recommends the development of training programs, encouraging further research on the impact of holistic well-being interventions in diverse counselling settings, and implementing feedback mechanisms for counsellors to continuously improve their well-being discussion strategies.

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Session 4.1 Counsellor Education & Professional Development.
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

Growth in Counselling: Counsellor Perspectives and Implications for Practise from the Island-Nation of Malta

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Growth in the counselling process is leveraged metaphorically through images and words. Its prominence and prevalence vary over time and across professional and cultural contexts. The individual and cultural understandings that counsellors develop of the concept of growth shape their identity as individuals and professionals. This qualitative study aimed to explore how counsellors in Malta understand the concept of growth, what factors shaped this understanding and the role that this understanding plays in their work to support clients in achieving increased wellbeing. Five warranted counsellors in Malta with at least three years of experience were interviewed. Data collection included the use of visual and linguistic stimuli to support and enhance the typical interlocution process behind semi-structured interviews. Findings were analysed using Thematic Network Analysis and Reflexive Thematic Analysis. Participants effected a process of personal growth navigating intrapsychic and external factors engaging in a cycle of discovery, with active self-direction through adverse circumstances shaping their mobilisation of personal agency. Participants identified the important relationship between their experiences of growth through their counselling and their clients' potential and possible outcomes. Participants' individual experience of growth could support their work with clients by providing a reference point to make sense of their clients' experiences. This could also pose potential dangers to their work by obscuring clients' experiences and journeys with their own. Recommendations include more stress on growth in training courses, international collaboration between organisations and institutes to reach common understandings of growth and more research across different cultures and countries.

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Session 4.1 Counsellor Education & Professional Development.
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

**School Counsellors' Roles and Effectiveness:
 The Relationships Between Professional Identity, School Climate, and the Cultural Setting.**

Mark Harrison EdD

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Mr Alex Tam

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We investigated the professional identity of school counsellors in Hong Kong and its impact on their effectiveness in responding to students' social-emotional needs. We interviewed 70 participants (principals, students, school counsellors, and parents) and conducted thematic analysis on the data to explore the relationships between counsellors' professional identities, their roles, school climate, and cultural factors.

Our findings suggest that school counsellors' professional identity significantly influences their effectiveness in supporting young people. However, perceptions of effectiveness varied widely among stakeholders, instantiating a lack of consensus on what constitutes effective counselling. Moreover, we found that professional identity was not a static construct; it was fluid and often ambiguous, shaped by both individual experiences and collective understandings within the school context. Additionally, school climate and cultural factors played critical roles in shaping the professional identities of counsellors, highlighting the importance of contextual influences in their practice.

These insights underscore a need for clearer definitions of professional identity and effectiveness in school counselling. The findings have implications for school counsellors in Asian cultures and beyond.

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Session 4.1 Counsellor Education & Professional Development.
Carlson Suite (Floor 5)

2050: What Will The Counseling Profession Look Like?

Christine Suniti Bhat

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Professor of Counselor Education

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2050 may seem like it is in distant future but it will be around before we know it. In this presentation we will discuss trends in the profession of counseling and attempt to predict what leaders will have to focus on in order to position counseling for success. Among the very many potential areas to consider, the presentation will focus on five areas:

1. Cementing our professional counselor identity by generating and testing counseling theories that are grounded in wellness while paying attention to intersectionalities (Bhat, et al., 2025).
2. Growing evidence-based practice (EBP) that utilizes quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies (Stevens & Bhat, 2024)
3. Harnessing the power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to transcend the boundaries of time and space while maintaining the human connection that is so integral to meaningful helping relationships (ACA, 2024)
4. Incorporating more culturally informed indigenous ways of healing as the profession continues to grow globally
5. Utilizing brain imaging to better diagnose and treat mental health conditions (Tompas, R., 2024)

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**Session 4.2 Creative Counsellor Education & Professional Development.
Executive Boardroom (Floor 2)**

Keeping Hope Alive via Spiritual Wellness and Advocacy During Complex Times

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Spiritual wellness has four main components that can all be cultivated in counselors and clients: meaning and purpose in life, positive interconnectedness, inner resources and transcendence. With global challenges on the rise, needs for advocacy for self and others intersect with all areas of spiritual wellness. Counselors can ensure their own spiritual wellness at the center of their lives, while supporting clients. Additional aspects of spiritual wellness as a way to support mental health and advocacy include: instilling hope as a resilience factor; finding meaning in the midst of challenges, empowering self and others via community action and support. This presentation will cover the concepts mentioned above and participants will receive hands-on ideas for themselves and clients, including a template for a personal spiritual wellness and advocacy plan. Practical applications will be covered, such as mindfulness, rituals, social support/advocacy, and hope-centered practices.

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Session 4.2 Creative Counsellor Education & Professional Development.
Executive Boardroom (Floor 2)

Women as Change Agents in Public Policy Across the Globe

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Counselors are well poised to implement social justice advocacy by utilizing their skills in managing crises and employing empathy and compassion (Sinclair et al., 2024). Women have a unique perspective that can inform policies impacting schools and communities, including issues on gender equality, families, and children. This presentation focuses on how professional counselors can translate advocacy skills to public policy work through legislative advocacy, public service, and global health initiatives. Practical implementation for addressing public policies for clients and communities, in addition to professional advocacy models [i.e., The Three-Tiered Legislative Professional Advocacy Model (Farrell & Barrio Minton, 2019)]; and strategies will be discussed to assist women in balancing their services with other responsibilities and life roles. Counselor educators can play an integral role in teaching pathways to be change agents (Foss-Kelly et al., 2024; Mullen et al., 2023; Um & Wood, 2024). To understand how women counselors can change public policy across the globe, it is essential to consider their roles in various sectors and the strategies they employ: advocacy and representation; global health leadership (Downs et al., 2014; Smith & Sinkford, 2022); leadership in international organizations (Barraza Vargas, 2019); and integration of feminist theoretical approaches in counseling (Musindarwezo et al., 2023). Counselors need to address the diverse needs of women worldwide from a sociopolitical context, as described by Nassar-McMillan et al. (2015). Women counselors can engage in gender transformative leadership to promote gender equality in policy-making (Downs et al. 2014).

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- Musindarwezo, D., Anumo, F., & Awori, S. (2023). Transnational feminist organizing & advocacy for gender justice and women's rights. *Handbook of Gender, Communication, and Women's Human Rights*, 377-394.
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Session 4.2 Creative Counsellor Education & Professional Development.
Executive Boardroom (Floor 2)

Gatekeeping: It's No Fun, but it's Gotta be Done!

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Gatekeeping is an important responsibility of all counselors (Freeman, et al., 2018). Still, many shy away from gatekeeping as it is often a murky, daunting, unrewarding task. Those who do actively pursue these tasks are haunted by the negative emotional drain they often are (DeCino, et al., 2020). This presentation will provide the attendee an opportunity to refresh their knowledge regarding and increase their capacity to respond to gatekeeping issues by moving through common vignettes and practicing their responses to these gatekeeping issues.

- Chang, V., & Rubel, D. (2019). Counselor educators' internal experiences of gatekeeping. *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision*, 12(4), 11.
- DeCino, D. A., Waalkes, P. L., & Dalbey, A. (2020). "" They Stay with You"": Counselor Educators' Emotionally Intense Gatekeeping Experiences. *Professional Counselor*, 10(4), 548-561.
- Erickson, F. (1975). Gatekeeping and the melting pot: Interaction in counseling encounters. *Harvard educational review*, 45(1), 44-70.
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- Kimball, P. L., Phillips, L. C., Kirka, K. E., & Harrichand, J. J. (2019). Gatekeeping: A counselor educator's responsibility to the counseling profession and community. *International Journal on Responsibility*, 3(2), 6.
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Session 4.3 Sexuality, Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)

**A Maltese Perspective on Sex: Insights into Sexual Behaviours,
 Satisfaction, and Communication in a Shifting Cultural Landscape**

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 Lead clinician at Sex Clinic Malta
 Willingness Team, Malta EU

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Doctorate Student in Health Psychology
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 Willingness Team Malta EU

Sexual health is a fundamental component of adult well-being; however, it is frequently disregarded in counselling, particularly in more conservative cultures. This presentation is based on nationwide research conducted in Malta. The study involved collecting responses from a representative sample of 400 adults through telephone interviews. The investigation investigated the manner in which individuals define sex, their level of confidence in discussing it, and the relationship between factors such as communication frequency and satisfaction. The results of a society in transition are reflected. Although some participants characterised sex as an act of affection or intimacy, a significant number of them continued to maintain conventional perspectives. The majority of individuals reported feeling at ease discussing sex with their partner, but not with acquaintances. These individuals were also more likely to report sexual satisfaction when they communicated openly with their partner. Satisfaction was positively correlated with frequency of intercourse; however, duration was not. These discoveries provide counsellors with invaluable insights. They emphasise the necessity of addressing communication regarding intimacy in therapy and taking cultural beliefs into account when collaborating with clients. This session will provide professionals with practical tools to facilitate more effective communication with clients regarding sexual issues, such as strategies to foster openness and reduce feelings of humiliation. This presentation provides novel approaches to collaborating with clients on a subject that frequently persists in the background, despite its profound impact on mental and relational health, by integrating research with counselling practice.

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Cheng, Z., & Smyth, R. (2015). ""Sex and Happiness."" *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 112, 26-32.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2014.12.030>

Blanchflower, D.G., & Oswald, A.J. (2004). ""Money, Sex, and Happiness: An Empirical Study."" *Scandinavian Journal of Economics*, 106(3), 393-415. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0347-0520.2004.00369.x>

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Session 4.3 Sexuality, Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)

**Understanding Sex Therapy Comfort and Competency to Help
 Clients Find Therapists Best Equipped to Meet Their Needs**

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Elon Slutsky

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 LPC Clinician
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Despite the growing accessibility of sex therapy services, a critical gap exists in effectively matching clients with therapists who possess both the competency and comfort level to address specific sexual concerns. Research to date has emphasized therapist comfort in addressing a range of presenting sexual issues, while conceptualizing competency as the province of therapists with specialized sex therapy training. However, comfort alone does not guarantee clinical competence, and non-specialist therapists have a range of sex therapy competency. While general therapeutic alliance measures exist, sex therapy competencies include unique dimensions: ability with LGBTQIA+ affirmative care, kink/BDSM, and other specific clinical presentations like desire discrepancies or sexual pain, all mediated by intersecting identities and ecological factors. Therapist competence to address these issues is not adequately captured by current general matching tools, nor by a therapist's comfort in approaching these issues. Thus, the complexity of sexual concerns demands a particularly nuanced approach that looks simultaneously to assess both therapist competency and comfort in client-therapist matching. This presentation takes a closer look at the challenges of current client-therapist matching methods in sex therapy. It highlights the pressing need for specialized assessment tools that can better evaluate clinical expertise, comfort levels, and therapeutic styles when working with diverse sexual concerns. Drawing from clinical examples and current research, we explore how improved matching mechanisms that assess both skill and comfort could enhance therapeutic outcomes and reduce early termination rates in sex therapy, and present draft sex-therapy specific tools for client-therapist matching and therapist self-evaluation.

Hanzlik, M., & Gaubatz, M. (2012). Clinical PsyD trainees' comfort discussing sexual issues with clients. *American Journal of Sexuality Education*, 7(3), 219-236. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15546128.2012.707080>.

Harris, S. M., & Hays, K. W. (2008). Family therapist comfort with and willingness to discuss client sexuality. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 34(2), 239-250.

Shafir, N., & Bahalhur, D. (2022). Development of an instrument to measure therapists' attitudes toward client sexuality. *Psychology*, 13(8), 1231-1242. <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2022.138080>.

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Session 4.3 Sexuality, Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)

Sexually Minoritized and Disordered Eating: Culturally Responsive Approach

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Throughout literature it has been established that sexual minority populations display an elevated risk for disordered eating, eating disorders, body image and shape related concerns (Rosenbaum et al.,2023; Hazzard et al.,2020; Wiseman et al.,2010) . Evidence from eating disorders' research suggests that there is a significantly higher risk for pathology related to eating, in sexual minorities who are also ethnic minorities (Calzo et al.,2017). Writing about the intervention strategies, Enhanced Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT-E) has been popular amongst clinicians in recent years for the treatment of eating disorders and has proven to be effective (Calugi et al.,2021; Frostad et al.,2018). On the contrary, a study also points towards the fact that eating disorders have one of the highest relapse rates amongst psychological disorders (Berends et al.,2018). Evaluating the present literature two research questions can be extracted, 1. Is CBT-E also effective with populations from a sexuality minority background, with ethnic and racial variables involved? 2. Are there any other intervention strategies which are still unexplored that can be effective with these populations? The workshop will primarily explore these two questions. "Berends, T., Boonstra, N., & Van Elburg, A. (2018). Relapse in anorexia nervosa: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Current opinion in psychiatry*, 31(6), 445-455.

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Session 4.3 Sexuality, Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Clermont Suite (Floor 2)

Empowering Change: Sexual Violence Prevention

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Sexual violence refers to “any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work” (WHO, 2021). Violence against women and children permeates all societies and crosses boundaries of race, religion, and cultures. The effects of sexual violence are extensive and long lasting. It impacts the whole community. An individual’s psychological/socio-emotional and their academic performance do not exist in isolation from each other and cannot be treated as such. This presentation addresses the need for effective prevention strategies and interventions to combat sexual violence in educational settings. Schneider and Hirsch (2018) highlight the importance of talking to children earlier about sexual violence due to a) prevalence of child abuse cases and b) to break gender stereotypes. According to Goldfarb and Lieberman (2021) « School based sex education plays a vital role in sexual health and wellbeing of young people. Participants will gain insight into the prevalence of sexual violence in schools and its impact on a student’s physical, psychological and emotional well-being. Participants will learn prevention strategies that can be implemented in schools to create a culture of consent and respect (including: sexual harassment, bystander intervention and healthy relationships. In addition this presentation will provide counsellors with practical guidance on how to respond to the disclosure of sexual violence.

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Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence (2023) Retrieved from <https://www.acesdv.org/about-sexual-domestic-violence/sexual-violence-myths-misconceptions/>

Arnsten, A., Raskin, M.A., Taylor, F.B., Connor. D.F (2014). The effects of stress exposure on prefrontal cortex: translating basic research into successful treatments for post traumatic stress disorder. *Neurobiology of Stress* , 1

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Bremner, JD. (2004). Neuroanatomical changes associated with pharmacotherapy in posttraumatic stress. *Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience*, 8(4)

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Session 4.4 Technology, Innovation, and AI in Counselling.
Reading Room (Floor 3)

Converging Paths: Applying Current Technologies in Counseling to Common Professional Issues Identified in International Counseling Research

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 The Family Institute, Wisconsin, US

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The introduction of Chat GPT in November 2022 seems to have ushered in a new era of artificial intelligence that has accelerated advancements in technology like never before (Javaid, et al., 2023). International institutions that serve mental health needs, such as the World Health Organization (WHO, 2024), recognize the value of integrating technology with a variety of needs that exist, and have implemented them with efforts to support improved wellness. A thorough review of technology development throughout the past 250 years demonstrates the progression of impact that technology has had on mental health support. Original research was conducted through a qualitative study of international counseling professionals that revealed common professional issues experienced throughout the world. Key areas identified among the professional issues included understanding stigma, distinguishing professions, addressing barriers, and utilizing proper training. Additionally, new and trending technologies were considered in relation to the benefits and barriers they represent for mental health professionals around the world. Such technologies include artificial intelligence, virtual or augmented reality, video conferencing, neurobiofeedback, among a variety of other developing approaches. Final considerations of the technology and mental health research converge on practical applications the presenters discuss for combatting newly identified challenges with newly developed tools of technology. Careful attention is given to recognizing the ethical implications of implementing these new strategies in ways that provide the most benefit to clients possible. Considerations of future areas of research are discussed with hope of understanding even more opportunities that will enhance mental health and wellness support globally.

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Phan, P., Mitragotri, S., & Zhao, Z. (2023). Digital therapeutics in the clinic. *Bioengineering and Translational Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/btm2.10536>

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Session 4.4 Technology, Innovation, and AI in Counselling.
Reading Room (Floor 3)

Is AI Aiding or Hindering the Learning Process for Counselling Students?
A Qualitative Analysis of AI Generated Mental Health Papers

Kaycee Bills

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Artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT, have had a sudden emergence over the past few years that have sparked several discussions in higher education (Rawas, 2024). However, opinions appear to be conflicted on the impacts AI will have on learning (Chan & Tsi, 2024). Given that mental health professionals such as counsellors, social workers, and therapists have ethical commitments to the profession, it is essential for educators to understand the limitations of AI when it is misused (Slimi & Carballido, 2024). Using a sample of nine AI generated papers that were submitted by undergraduate students in mental health courses (N = 9), a qualitative content analysis was conducted to uncover the limitations when AI is misused to complete assignments. The results revealed four themes: repeated content, misinterpreted text, "AI hallucination," and plagiarized information. Implications for counseling education and future practice in relation to these findings and AI misuse are discussed. Additionally, strategies for counseling educators to mitigate these limitations are also provided (Cotton, Cotton, & Shipway, 2024; Walter, 2024)

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Session 4.4 Technology, Innovation, and AI in Counselling.
Reading Room (Floor 3)

**Adapting Counseling Theories for Space:
 Mental Health Practice Beyond Earth for New Frontiers and New Stressors.**

Jennifer Young PhD
 Counselor Education and Supervision
 Associate Professor,
 University of the Cumberland, South Daytona, Florida, US

Long-duration space travel presents extreme psychological conditions, including isolation, disrupted circadian rhythms, microgravity-induced stress, and existential disorientation. While traditional counseling theories have been foundational in supporting mental health on Earth, they require strategic adaptation for application in space environments. This presentation will review empirical findings from space psychology research and propose practical adaptations of three major counseling frameworks: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), existential therapy, and trauma-informed counseling. CBT is examined for its potential as a digitally-delivered, self-guided tool during missions with communication delays. Existential therapy is explored in the context of the “Overview Effect,” a phenomenon linked to awe, altered identity, and spiritual transformation reported by astronauts. Trauma-informed counseling is addressed in relation to launch trauma, space anomalies, and psychological reintegration post-mission—areas currently underrepresented in space mental health literature. Through case-informed discussion and literature synthesis, participants will engage with practical models for adapting therapeutic interventions to suit the unique needs of spacefarers, including astronauts, commercial passengers, and future planetary settlers. Emphasis will be placed on technological integration, cultural considerations, and ethical complexities. This session encourages attendees to reimagine mental health care delivery in settings with no precedent, challenging us to expand our theoretical frameworks to meet the psychological needs of humans navigating the unknown."

Chang et al. (2020) Promoting Tech Transfer Between Space and Global Mental Health. DOI: 10.3357/AMHP.5589.2020

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DOI: 10.14195/1647-8606_62-1_3

Smith, L. (2024) Automated Psychotherapy in a Spaceflight Environment: Advantages, Drawbacks, and Unknowns

DOI: 10.2196/58803

Kim, D. (2022) Mars Space Exploration and Astronautical Religion in Human Research History: Psychological Countermeasures of Long-Term Astronauts DOI: 10.3390/aerospace9120814

Morphew, E. (2020) Psychological and Human Factors in Long Duration Spaceflight. Published in various NASA literature and cited in multiple overviews, such as: [Link via Semantic Scholar](#)

Arone, A., et al. (2021) The Burden of Space Exploration on the Mental Health of Astronauts: A Narrative Review

DOI: 10.36131/cnfioritieditore20210502

Session 4.4 Technology, Innovation, and AI in Counselling.
Reading Room (Floor 3)

**Navigating the Digital Age:
 Addressing the Pitfalls of Technology in Counseling to Promote Mental Health and Well-Being**

Caroline Perjessy

PhD Clinical Faculty, Counselor,
 Southern New Hampshire University, Tampa, Florida, US

As technology continues to evolve, its impact on mental health and well-being becomes increasingly complex, presenting both opportunities and challenges for the field of counseling. While digital tools and online platforms provide new avenues for communication, therapy, and support, they also bring potential pitfalls that can adversely affect mental health. Issues such as excessive screen time, social media addiction, cyberbullying, digital burnout, and privacy concerns are becoming more prevalent, particularly among adolescents and young adults. These challenges are compounded by the rapid pace of technological advancements, which often outstrip our understanding of their long-term psychological effects. This presentation will examine the pitfalls of technology through the lens of counseling, highlighting the growing need for mental health professionals to address these digital-age issues in their practice. Drawing on recent research and case studies, we will explore how excessive or inappropriate use of technology can contribute to anxiety, depression, social isolation, and other mental health concerns. We will also discuss strategies for helping clients develop healthier relationships with technology, such as setting boundaries, promoting digital literacy, and fostering in-person social connections. By understanding the psychological implications of technology use, counselors can better equip themselves to support clients in navigating this new landscape. The presentation will provide practical tools and evidence-based approaches for integrating technology responsibly into counseling practices, ensuring that it serves as a resource for cultivating mental health and well-being rather than a detriment.

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Session 4.5 Ethics & Innovation in Counselling.
Business Lounge (Floor 3)

The Transition of Maltese Military Retirees to New Careers after Twenty-five Years of Service

Roseann Farrugia,

Master in Lifelong Career Guidance Development,

Master in Counsellor trainee

Career Advisor Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation, Malta EU

This presentation will explore the findings of a qualitative study investigating the transition experiences of Maltese military veterans as they reintegrate into civilian employment. Grounded in a narrative approach, the research involved semi-structured interviews with twelve veterans who were either approaching retirement had recently retired, or continued service after 25 years. The presentation will highlight the psychological, emotional, and practical challenges veterans face, such as translating military qualifications to civilian roles, adapting to less structured work environments, and managing trauma, including PTSD. The study is grounded in several theoretical frameworks, including the Theory of Human Motivation, Work Adaptation, Continuity, Social Learning, and the Rite of Passage. These frameworks offer valuable insights into how veterans reconstruct their identity, seek meaning, and adapt their military values and experiences to civilian life. Special attention will be given to the emotional toll of career transition, the loss of routine and camaraderie, and the struggle for recognition of military competencies within civilian sectors. The presentation emphasises the crucial role of counsellors and career advisors in providing trauma-informed, culturally sensitive, and transition-focused support. Participants' suggestions will be presented as practical recommendations, such as introducing tailored guidance by the 18th year of service and creating mentorship and awareness programs. This session aims to enhance understanding of this underserved client group and to promote the development of more inclusive and responsive counselling practices that support mental health and long-term well-being during significant life transitions.

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McCormick, W. H., Currier, J. M., Isaak, S. L., Sims, B. M., Slagel, B. A., Carroll, T. D., Hamner, K., & Albright, D. L. (2019). Military Culture and Post-Military Transitioning Among Veterans: A Qualitative Analysis. *Journal of Veterans Studies*, 4(2), 288-298. <https://doi.org/10.21061/jvs.v4i2.121>

**Session 4.5 Ethics & Innovation in Counselling.
Business Lounge (Floor 3)**

**Beyond Crisis: Lessons in Building a Resilient and Inclusive Academic Community:
Insights from the Psychological Support Centre at the University of Gdańsk**

Agata Rudnik PhD

Head of the Academic Psychological Support Centre
Assistant Professor, University of Gdańsk
Gdańsk Poland EU

This presentation will share key lessons learned from operating the Academic Psychological Support Centre, highlighting both challenges and transformative practices in supporting students and staff in a rapidly changing academic landscape. Drawing from real cases, research, and institutional experience, it will explore how psychological support in higher education can move beyond reactive crisis response toward proactive, inclusive, and sustainable well-being strategies. Key Topics:

- From Help-Seeking to Help-Building: How to normalize mental health support and reduce stigma on campus.
- What Students Really Need: Insights into the emotional and psychological challenges students face - including loneliness, perfectionism, burnout, and fear of failure.
- Neurodiversity and Inclusion: Lessons from supporting neurodivergent students - what works, what needs to change.
- Crisis as Catalyst: How the pandemic, political instability, and global crises reshaped the nature of academic psychological support.
- Interdisciplinary Synergy: Collaborating with faculties, administration, and student organizations to create a culture of care.
- From the Local to the Global: What we've learned from international experiences and how global perspectives can enrich local practices.

What's Next?: Recommendations for universities aiming to build or improve psychological support structures, including ideas for co-created services, student engagement, and digital tools.

Rudnik, A., Anikiej-Wiczenbach, P., Szulman-Wardal, A., Conway, P., & Bidzan, M. (2021). Offering psychological support to university students in Poland during the COVID-19 pandemic: Lessons learned from an initial evaluation. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 635378. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.635378>

Wielewska, M. K., Godzwon, J. M., Gargul, K., Nawrocka, E., Konopka, K., Sobczak, K., Rudnik, A. & Zdun-Ryzewska, A. (2022). Comparing students of medical and social sciences in terms of self-assessment of perceived stress, quality of life, and personal characteristics. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 815369. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.815369>

Session 4.5 Ethics & Innovation in Counselling.
Business Lounge (Floor 3)

Liberating the single narrative: Disrupting Couple-Centric Norms for Anti-Oppressive Counselling Practices.

Marine Decaillet Graduate Student
 Master's Degree in Cultural Anthropology
 Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada

Ahlam Rahal PhD, MA, Reg. Counselling Therapist
 Assistant Professor
 Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada

This presentation critically examines couple-centric norms, singlism, and biases tied to them across various social contexts, including counselling. We invite counsellors to reflect on social and personal biases toward single individuals, the impacts of couple-centric norms on clients' experiences, and how these biases shape therapeutic approaches and clients' well-being. Grounded in post-structural frameworks, particularly liberation psychology, feminist theory, intersectionality, and existentialism, this presentation offers tools to disrupt social norms internalized by both clients and counsellors and explores the norms' role in perpetuating singlism. By doing so, we aim to foster more inclusive, empowering, and culturally-responsive counselling practices. While singlehood is increasingly prevalent worldwide (Mortelmans et al. 2023), societal norms across cultures continue to privilege couplehood and marriage, fostering stigma and mental health challenges for single individuals—a phenomenon known as singlism (DePaulo & Morris, 2006; Dupuis & Girmé, 2024; Ibrahim-Dwairy & Kulik, 2022). Despite evidence that counsellors bring their values and assumptions into therapy (Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Sue et al., 2022, Yager et al., 2021), research on their perspectives of singlehood remains scarce, limiting the available knowledge on the impacts of counsellors' perspectives on single clients' experiences. This presentation addresses this gap by offering a thorough review of theoretical and empirical information relevant to counselling practices with single clients and suggesting anti-oppressive counselling techniques to challenge historically constructed values and power structures that form singlism and sustain its psychosocial impacts. Participants will engage reflectively by examining cultural biases towards singlehood and learn counter-narrative techniques for reauthoring clients' stories.

- DePaulo, B. M., & Morris, W. L. (2006). The unrecognized stereotyping and discrimination against singles. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 15 (5), 251-254. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8721.2006.00446.x>
- Dupuis, H. E., & Girmé, Y. U. (2024). "'Cat ladies'" and "'mama's boys'": A mixed-methods analysis of the gendered discrimination and stereotypes of single women and single men. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 50 (2), 314-328. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672231186592>
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- Ibrahim-Dwairy, C., & Kulik, L. (2022). Perceived stress among single Palestinian women in Israel: A mixed-method research. *Current Psychology*, 42, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-04070-2>
- Remley, T. P., & Herlihy, B. (2019). *Ethical, legal, and professional issues in counseling* (6th ed.). Pearson.
- Shachar, R., Leshem, T., Nasim, R., Rosenberg, J., Schmidt, A., & Schmuely, V. (2013). Exploring discourses that affect therapists regarding single women. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*, 25(4), 257-280. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08952833.2013.841142>
- Sharp, E. A., & Ganong, L. (2011). "'I'm a loser, I'm not married, let's just all look at me'": Ever-single women's perceptions of their social environment. *Journal of Family Issues*, 32(7), 956-980. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X10395129>
- Sue, D. W., Sue, D., Neville, H. A., & Smith, L. (2022). *Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice* (9th ed.). Wiley.
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Session 4.5 Ethics & Innovation in Counselling.
Business Lounge (Floor 3)

Ethics and Social Justice in Counseling: Addressing New Challenges in Mental Health and Wellbeing

Merve Başat

Master's Degree Guidance & Psychological Counseling
 Research Assistant, Boğaziçi University,
 Boğaziçi University, Guidance and Psychological Counseling Program, İstanbul/Türkiye

Zeynep Hande Sart

PhD in Applied Developmental Psychology
 Associate Professor,

This presentation examines the intersection of ethics, social justice, and mental health by integrating the Social Determinants of Mental Health (SDMH) with Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC). In a world of multiple challenges, systemic inequalities disproportionately affect marginalized communities and exacerbate socioeconomic inequalities (Sami & Jeter, 2021). The SDMH paradigm provides a comprehensive understanding of the effect of social and environmental factors—such as access to health care, education, and financial stability—on mental health and wellbeing (Lenz & Litam, 2023). Moreover, ethical standards signify the multicultural competency and advocacy responsibilities of counselors (ASCA, 2022; CACREP, 2023), which further lead to the operationalization of MSJCC (Ratts et al., 2016). However, translating ethical guidelines and theoretical frameworks into practice is challenging for counselors (Coombs, 2021; Cooper et al., 2024; Edwards et al., 2017). This presentation discusses how counselors can operationalize ethical standards and advocacy responsibilities to promote mental health equity. Based on the results of a qualitative study of 27 prospective school counselors at Boğaziçi University in Türkiye, one important way to deal with these challenges is to develop a stronger foundation of ethics. Moreover, integration of SDMH principles with the MSJCC framework will be suggested to address these challenges. Practical tools, the Subjective Social Status scale (SSS) (Cundiff et al., 2011) and ACA Advocacy Competencies (Toporek & Daniels, 2018), will be shared, providing attendees with actionable strategies to enhance advocacy efforts and promote client wellbeing in diverse counseling contexts.

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Counselors. [https://www.schoolcounselor.org/About-School-Counseling/Ethical-Responsibilities/ASCA-Ethical-Standards-for-School-Counselors-\(1\)](https://www.schoolcounselor.org/About-School-Counseling/Ethical-Responsibilities/ASCA-Ethical-Standards-for-School-Counselors-(1))

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Cooper, J. M., Radliff, K., & Weinberg, J. R. (2024). A National Evaluation of Social Justice and Antiracism within School Psychology Graduate Preparation Programs. *School Psychology Review*, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2372966x.2023.2301233>

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Cundiff, J. M., Smith, T. W., Uchino, B. N., & Berg, C. A. (2011). Subjective Social Status: Construct Validity and Associations with Psychosocial Vulnerability and Self-Rated Health. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 20(1), 148-158. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12529-011-9206-1>

Edwards, L. M., Tate, K. A., Cook, J. M., Toigo, M. P., & Yeomans, A. C. (2017). Counselors as Advocates: Effects of a Pilot Project Designed to Develop Advocacy Knowledge and Confidence in Trainees. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling & Psychology*, 9(2), 79-94. <https://doi.org/10.33043/JSACP.9.2.79-94>

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Session 4.6 Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

Evolving Trauma Care: Integrating Culturally Affirming and Anti-Oppressive Practices in Counselor Education

Alisha Guthery PhD

Counseling Education and Supervision
 Visiting Faculty, Palo Alto University
 Seattle, Washington, US

The global landscape of trauma is changing rapidly, requiring counselor educators to continuously update and refine their teaching methods. This presentation will address the growing need for culturally competent trauma and crisis counseling education at the Master's level, emphasizing how educators can incorporate embodied, anti-oppressive practices into their curricula. Mental health professionals serve increasingly diverse populations, so it is essential that they understand trauma from a culturally informed, systemic perspective. This presentation will explore key teaching strategies that prepare students for trauma counseling by integrating somatic interventions, polyvagal-informed techniques, and crisis stabilization approaches that reflect cultural and linguistic diversity. By focusing on trauma's intersection with race, language, power dynamics, and neurobiological responses, educators can ensure students are equipped to be both trauma-informed and capable of addressing trauma in culturally diverse and neurologically nuanced contexts.

- American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force. (n.d.). Culturally informed trauma and grief recovery toolkit. <https://www.apa.org/about/governance/president/grief-toolkit/collective-trauma.pdf>
- Bloomfield, M. A., Yusuf, F. N., Srinivasan, R., Kelleher, I., Bell, V., & Pitman, A. (2020). Trauma-informed care for adult survivors of developmental trauma with psychotic and dissociative symptoms: A systematic review of intervention studies. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 7(5), 449-462. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366\(20\)30041-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(20)30041-9)
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- Roller, K., Chen, S., & Jacoby, R. (2023). Anti-racist skills development with non-violent communication and privilege and subjugated tasks models. *Association of Counselor Education and Supervision Teaching Practice Briefs*, 1(1), 1-10. https://acesonline.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/TPB-v1_iss1-Anti-Racist-Skills-Development-with-Non-Violent-Communication-and-Privileged-and-Subjugated-Tasks-Models.pdf

Session 4.6 Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

You Might Want Some Self-Compassion for That: A Balm for Burnout

PaQuita R. Pullen PhD

Counseling and Counselor Education
 CEO, Ubuntu Counseling & Wellness
 Nashville, Tennessee, US

Counseling professionals are at heightened risk of burnout due to the emotionally demanding nature of their work. This presentation explores the role of self-compassion as a protective factor against burnout in the counseling profession. Drawing on current research and evidence-based practices, the presentation will highlight how cultivating self-compassion can support emotional resilience, improve therapeutic presence, and enhance overall well-being. Participants will gain insights into the science behind self-compassion, assess their own levels of burnout, and engage in practical strategies to foster a more compassionate relationship with themselves. The ultimate goal is to empower clinicians to sustain their passion for helping others while maintaining their own mental health and professional effectiveness. "American Counseling Association. (2014). ACA Code of Ethics. Author.

- Buser, T. J., Buser, J. K., Peterson, C. H., & Seraydarian, D. G. (2012). Influence of mindfulness practice on counseling skills development. *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision*, 4(1), 20-36.
- Coaston, S. C. (2017). Self-care through self-compassion: A balm for burnout. *The Professional Counselor*, 7(3), 285-297. <https://doi.15241/scc.7.3.285>
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- Eriksson, T., Germundsjo, L., Astrom, E., & Ronnlund, M. (2018). Mindful self-compassion training reduces stress and burnout symptoms among practicing psychologists: A randomized trial of a brief web-based intervention. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02340>
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- Richardson, C. M. E., Trusty, W. T., & George, K. A. (2018). Trainee wellness: Self-critical perfectionism, self-compassion, depression, and burnout among doctoral trainees in psychology. *Counseling Psychology Quarterly*, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2018.1509839>
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Additional Resources Upon Request/Will be Added to Presentation

Session 4.6 Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

Creative Interventions to Treat Trauma Related to Migration

Shadin Atiyeh

PhD Counselor Education & Supervision

Assistant Professor

Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, US

One of the challenges we're currently faced with as counselors is the growing trauma among the rising numbers of refugees and other displaced individuals worldwide. It is our ethical imperative to bring our interventions to this population in need. Doing so often requires creativity in the type of interventions and the way they are delivered. The presenter will address this need by sharing with counselors and other practitioners creative interventions that might be used in various settings to treat trauma among refugees and other displaced groups. This presenter will integrate expressive therapies and evidence-based treatment for trauma to share intervention strategies for treating trauma among refugees and other displaced groups. The presentation will include an overview of various interventions that counselors can use in groups, individual settings, and telehealth. Each intervention will be described and include examples. Participants will receive a handout with the list of interventions and their descriptions.

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- Stammel, N.; Knaevelsrud, C.; Shock, K; Walther, L. C. S.; Wenk-Ansohn, M.; & Bottche, M. (2017). Multidisciplinary treatment for traumatized refugees in naturalistic setting: Symptom courses and predictors. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 8(2), 1377552-137764. doi:10.1080/200008198.2017.1377552.
- Rowe, C., Watson-Ormond, R., English, L., Rubesin, H., Marshall, A., Linton, K., Amolegbe, A., Agnew-Brune, C., & Eng, E. (2017). Evaluating art therapy to heal the effects of trauma among refugee youth: The Burma art therapy program evaluation. *Health Promotion Practice*, 18(1), 26-33. doi: 10.1177/1524839915626413
- Atiyeh, S., Choudhuri, D., & Dari, T. (2020). Considerations for facilitating refugee acculturation through groups. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 45(4), 353-366. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01933922.2020.1800879>.
- Feen-Calligan, H., Ruvolo Grasser, L., Smigels, J., McCabe, N., Kremer, B., Al-Zuwayyin, A., Yusuf, I., Alesawy, N., Al-Nouri, J., & Javanbakht, A. (2023) Creating Through COVID: Virtual Art Therapy for Youth Resettled as Refugees, *Art Therapy*, 40:1, 22-30, DOI: 10.1080/07421656.2023.2172947
- Salt, R. J., Costantino, M. E., Dotson, E. L., & Paper, B.M. (2017). ""You are not alone"" Strategies for addressing mental health and health promotion with a refugee women's sewing group. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 38(4), 337-343. doi: 10.1080/01612840.2017.1289287.
- Leone, L. (2020). Finding our way together: Exploring the therapeutic benefits of collaborative craft activism. In *Craft in Art Therapy* (pp. 157-176). Routledge.

Session 4.6 Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health.
Marie Louise 1 (Floor 7)

Using EMDR for Crisis Interventions

Rabeea Baloch

M.Ed. Clinical Mental Health Counseling
 Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC),
 Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC),
 CEO, Magnolia Counseling PLLC, Katy/ TX. 77450

Casiah Evans

Graduate psychology student
 Clinical Psychology
 PHD program at Prairie View Texas A&M University
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This presentation explores how Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy can be used in crisis scenarios to help with the pressing health issues that arise from worldwide crises like natural disasters and pandemics as well as social upheavals. The presentation will discuss the underlying principles of EMDR therapy and how it can be applied to process active trauma during crises. Key points to be covered include the neurobiological foundation of EMDR, and how it relates to immediate stress responses. Adaptations of EMDR techniques for handling crises will also be discussed. Previous research has explored the impact of EMDR therapy in reducing the risk of developing Post Stress Disorder (PTSD), particularly when administered soon after experiencing traumatic incidents. Implementing EMDR in crisis settings involving practical factors such as ethical considerations and adjustments to different cultures will also be discussed. The presentation will focus on highlighting the effectiveness of EMDR in offering reliable assistance to individuals and communities dealing with crisis stress and trauma situations. Equipping counselors with crisis intervention techniques based on the Adaptive Information Processing (AIP) theoretical framework from EMDR improves the capacity of the counseling field to address the growing need for mental health services during crises worldwide and foster resilience and wellness in times of instability.

- American Psychological Association. (2023, December 21). What is EMDR therapy and why is it used to treat PTSD? <https://www.apa.org/topics/psychotherapy/emdr-therapy-ptsd>
- Jarero, I., Schnaider, S., & Givaudan, M. (2019). Randomized Controlled Trial: Provision of EMDR Protocol for Recent Critical Incidents and Ongoing Traumatic Stress to First Responders. *Journal of EMDR Practice & Research*, 13(2). <https://doi.org/10.1891/1933-3196.13.2.100>
- Morris, H., Hatzikiriakidis, K., Savaglio, M., Dwyer, J., Lewis, C., Miller, R., Skouteris, H. (2022). Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing for the treatment and early intervention of trauma among first responders: A systematic review. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 35 (3), 778-790. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.22792>.
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- Matthijssen, S. J., Lee, C. W., de Roos, C., Barron, I. G., Jarero, I., Shapiro, E., ... & de Jongh, A. (2020). The current status of EMDR therapy, specific target areas, and goals for the future. *Journal of EMDR Practice and Research*, 14(4), 241-284. <https://doi.org/10.1891/EMDR-D-20-00039>
- Solomon, R. M. (1998). Utilization of EMDR in crisis intervention. *Crisis Intervention & Time-Limited Treatment*
- Shapiro, E., & Maxfield, L. (2019). The efficacy of EMDR early interventions. *Journal of EMDR Practice and Research*, 13(4), 291-301. <https://doi.org/10.1891/1933-3196.13.4.291>

Session 4.7 Multicultural, Social Justice, and Diversity.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

Understanding Cultural Competence and Humility in International Counseling: A Universal Ethical Imperative

Euchay Ngozi Horsman PhD

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 Associate Professor, Clinical Mental Health Counseling
 Southern Arkansas University Magnolia
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 Consulting clinical supervisor to the Lartey Wellness
 GroupBalanced Life Counseling & Training Services
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Today more than ever, counselors need the knowledge, skills, and self-awareness necessary to serve clients from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. Cultural competence emphasizes acquiring knowledge and skills to work effectively with different cultural groups, while multicultural competence expands this framework to include systemic and intersectional considerations. Cultural humility, on the other hand, challenges counselors to adopt a lifelong, reflective stance that prioritizes openness, self-examination, and collaborative relationships with clients and counselors-in-training. In this presentation, we will explore and highlight how these frameworks can be integrated into practice to create more inclusive, responsive, and ethical counseling and supervision approaches. Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of how to balance cultural knowledge with humility, fostering meaningful therapeutic and supervision connections while addressing systemic barriers that impact clients' and supervisees' well-being.

- Davis, D. E., DeBlaere, C., Owen, J., Hook, J. N., Rivera, D. P., Choe, E., Van Tongeren, D. R., Worthington, E. L., & Placeres, V. (2018). The multicultural orientation framework: A narrative review. *Psychotherapy (Chicago, Ill.)*, 55(1), 89-100. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pst0000160>
- Fisher-Borne, M., Cain, J. M., & Martin, S. L. (2015). From mastery to accountability: Cultural humility as an alternative to cultural competence. *Social Work Education*, 34(2), 165-181. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2014.977244>
- Hook, J. N., Davis, D. E., Owen, J., Worthington, E. L., & Utsey, S. O. (2013). Cultural humility: Measuring openness to culturally diverse clients. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 60(3), 353-366. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032595>
- Kondili, E., Isawi, D., Interiano-Shiverdecker, C., & Maleckas, O. (2022). Predictors of cultural humility in counselors-in-training. *Counselor Education and Supervision* 61(2), 129-140.
- Qi, D., & Ho, E. Y. (2022). Cultural humility. In *The International Encyclopedia of Health Communication*. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119678816.ieh0922>
- Sue, S. (2001). In search of cultural competence in psychotherapy and counseling. *American Psychologist*, 56(11), 440-448. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.56.11.440>
- Sue, D. W., Arredondo P., & McDavis, R. (1992). Multicultural counseling competencies and standards: A call to the profession. *Journal of Counseling and Development* 70(4), 477-486. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.1992.tb01642.x>
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- Waters, A., & Asbill, L. (2013). Reflections on cultural humility. Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence. **Retrieved** from <https://nccc.georgetown.edu/documents/CulturalHumility.pdf>

Session 4.7 Multicultural, Social Justice, and Diversity.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

Reimagining Culture Through a Restorative Lens: Centering Marginalized Voices in Cross-Cultural Education

Jennifer Stover

PhD Assistant Professor

Sam Houston State University , Houston, Texas, US

Warren Wright

PhD, Director and Clinical Assistant Professor

St Edwards University, Austin, Texas, US

Brittany Glover

PhD Assistant Professor

San Diego State Universitt

San Diego, California, US

Reimagining Culture Through a Restorative Lens: Centering Marginalized Voices in Cross-Cultural Education invites participants to explore how restorative practices can be used to teach cultural concepts in a way that prioritizes relationship, repair, and student voice. This session will highlight the use of restorative circles as a tool for creating community, deepening cultural humility, and supporting emotionally safe learning environments. Participants will examine how traditional pedagogical models may inadvertently silence marginalized perspectives, and how a restorative approach can shift classroom dynamics to be more inclusive, healing-centered, and justice-oriented. Practical strategies and circle prompts will be shared for immediate classroom use.

Adamson, Craig & Bailie, John. (2012). Education versus learning restorative practices in higher education. *Journal of Transformative Education*. 10. 139-156. 10.1177/1541344612463265.

Darling-Hammond, S. (2023). Fostering belonging, transforming schools: The impact of restorative practices. Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/169.703>

Karp, D. (2024). Becoming a restorative university: The role of restorative justice in higher education. *The International Journal of Restorative Justice*, 2(2024), Article TIJRJ-D-23-00019. <https://www.elevenjournals.com/tijdschrift/TIJRJ/2024/2/TIJRJ-D-23-00019.pdf>

Lynn, V., & Chase, A. T. (2023). Circle pedagogy in criminal justice education at a PWI: A student/faculty collaborative autoethnography. *journal of criminal justice education*, 34(4), 553-572. <https://doi-org.shsu.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/10511253.2022.2130382>

Riggs-Zeigen, L., Larson, E., & Dyer, T. (2023). Lean on me: Developing restorative thinking in online higher education faculty. *Transformative Dialogues: Teaching & Learning Journal*, 16(1), 84-104. <https://doi-org.shsu.idm.oclc.org/10.26209/td2023vol16iss11775>

Session 4.7 Multicultural, Social Justice, and Diversity.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

I Counseling Frameworks in Angola: Insights from a Fulbright Specialist's Post-Conflict Wellness Initiative

Roberto Gershon Swazo

PhD Counselor Education

Professor and Counseling Program Director,

Indiana University, Indianapolis, Indiana, US

This presentation explores the implementation of school counseling frameworks in Angola, a country transitioning from decades of civil war and rebuilding its educational system. As the first Fulbright Specialist to Angola, I conducted training workshops for teachers and college professors in Luanda, focusing on wellness, coaching, and the school counseling profession. This emerging professional niche is critical, as Angola's Department of Education currently lacks a formalized structure for school counseling, and no school counselors are present in its schools. Drawing on both qualitative and quantitative data gathered during my Fulbright experience, this presentation will detail the perceptions, challenges, and enthusiasm for integrating school counseling programs into Angola's educational framework. Key findings will include teachers' and administrators' views on the role of school counselors in addressing student mental health and promoting wellbeing amidst the lingering impacts of conflict. Additionally, the presentation will highlight the significance of cultural adaptability, capacity-building efforts, and the importance of advocacy in establishing school counseling as a vital profession in post-conflict settings. Attendees will gain insights into collaborative strategies for supporting wellness and cultivating mental health through innovative program development in under-resourced educational systems. This session aligns with the conference theme, *Counseling in a World of New Challenges: Cultivating Mental Health and Wellbeing*, by addressing the transformative role of counseling in fostering resilience and supporting educational reform in Angola. It underscores the importance of global partnerships in promoting mental health and wellbeing through the development of sustainable counseling practices." "American School Counselor Association. (2019). *The ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs* (4th ed.). American School Counselor Association.

- Chen-Hayes, S. F., Ockerman, M. S., & Mason, E. C. M. (2014). 101 solutions for school counselors and leaders in challenging times. Corwin.
- Cook, C. R., Lyon, A. R., Kubergovic, D., Browning Wright, D., & Zhang, Y. (2015). A support framework for school mental health professionals: Addressing mental health needs of students. *School Mental Health*, 7(1), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-014-9130-5>
- Lambie, G. W., & Blount, A. J. (2016). Advocacy for systemic change in the school counseling profession: Addressing implicit bias and structural inequities. *Professional School Counseling*, 20(1), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.5330/PSC.n.2016-20.1>
- Mutchler, S. E., & Anderson, K. M. (2016). Post-conflict counseling interventions: Rebuilding education systems through a mental health lens. *Journal of School Counseling*, 14(8), 1-25.
- Oberman, A. H., & Mason, K. (2015). School counselor advocacy in international contexts: A systematic review. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*, 37(3), 229-244. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-015-9234-2>
- Sulkowski, M. L., & Simmons, J. (2018). The role of school counselors in promoting mental health and addressing barriers to learning. *Professional School Counseling*, 22(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X18800236>
- World Health Organization. (2021). *Guidelines on mental health at work*. World Health Organization.

Session 4.7 Multicultural, Social Justice, and Diversity.
Marie Louise 2 (Floor 7)

Breaking Stigma: Advancing Mental Health Advocacy and Counseling Skills for Inclusive and Resilient Communities

Flora Ngina Mwale

Diploma in psychosocial counseling, pursuing a bachelor's in psychology.

Psychosocial counselor and national trainer in addiction counseling.

Psychosocial Counsellor Zomba Mental Hospital, Malawi

This presentation explores the critical role of mental health advocacy in reducing stigma and discrimination, focusing on practical strategies for counselors to foster inclusivity and resilience in their communities. It draws from psychosocial counseling theories and real-world experiences to highlight innovative, evidence-based approaches to addressing mental health challenges in diverse settings. Key topics include the intersection of mental health with cultural, social, and economic factors, and how these dynamics influence counseling outcomes. The presentation will cover advocacy strategies, community engagement techniques, and capacity-building for counselors to effectively support individuals, families, and groups facing stigma and mental health issues. The discussion integrates empirical findings and case studies, including examples from Malawi and similar contexts, to demonstrate the application of counseling theories in addressing mental health stigma. Participants will gain insights into how counselors can lead change, foster resilience, and promote well-being despite emerging global challenges such as climate change, economic stress, and social inequality. The presentation aligns with the conference theme by equipping participants with tools to adapt to new challenges in counseling while cultivating mental health and well-being in their practices. It concludes with actionable recommendations for counselors, students, and mental health advocates to build a more inclusive and supportive counseling profession.

Corey, G. (2021). *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning

Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. (2019). *Counseling the Culturally Diverse: Theory and Practice* (8th ed.). Wiley.

World Health Organization (2022). *World Mental Health Report: Transforming Mental Health for All*. WHO Press.

Mcleod, J. (2019). *An Introduction to Counseling* (6th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

American Counseling Association (2014). *Code of Ethics*. ACA Press.

Rogers, C. R. (1951). *Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications, and Theory*. Houghton Mifflin.

Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Program (2023). *International Standards on Drug Use Prevention and Counseling*.

Mental Health Foundation (2023). *The Impact of Stigma on Mental Health Care Access*.

Journals of Counseling & Development (2020-2023). Articles on advocacy, stigma reduction, and community-based counseling.

Posters

Saturday July 12, 2025 15:00-16:30 Grand Ballroom Floor 2

Systematic Review of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Measures Validated in Spanish and/or Brazilian Portuguese

Abigail Balkin

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Baylor College of Medicine,

Houston, Texas, US

This presentation will focus on a systematic review that a team and I conducted covering 27 studies validating various OCD measures in both Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese. The purpose for this study was to identify which measures have previously been validated, along with their reported measures of internal consistency, reliability, and test-retest probabilities. By collecting this data into a systematic review, we highlight the impact of validating previously English-only OCD measures and illustrate what impacts future research could have in this field. The importance of this study focuses on creating equitable mental healthcare for communities across the world. The reported lifetime prevalences of OCD are similar in Mexico City (1.4%), Chile (1.2%), and Puerto Rico (3.2%), and patients in these communities have been shown to have different primary symptom presentations when compared with English-speaking patients. The varying symptom presentations along with language and cultural differences generate a need for OCD measurement tools to be validated in a patient's native language to increase their healthcare accessibility and overall impact. This presentation will include the findings of the systematic review in both a qualitative and quantitative manner by focusing on the findings of each individual study and their reported psychometric properties.

Belloch, A., Roncero, M., García-Soriano, G., Carrió, C., Cabedo, E., & Fernández-Álvarez, H. (2013). The Spanish version of the Obsessive-Compulsive Inventory-Revised (OCI-R): Reliability, validity, diagnostic accuracy, and sensitivity to treatment effects in clinical samples

Canino GL, Bird HR, Shrout PE, Rubio-Stipec M, Bravo M, Martinez R, et al. The prevalence of specific psychiatric disorders in Puerto Rico. *Archives of General Psychiatry*. 1987;44:727-735

Caraveo-Anduaga JJ, Bermudez ED. The epidemiology of obsessive-compulsive disorder in Mexico City. *Salud Mental*. 2004;27:1-6.

Garcia-Delgar, B., Ortiz, A. E., Morer, A., Alonso, P., & do Rosário, M. C. (2016). Validation of the Spanish version of the Dimensional Yale-Brown Obsessive-Compulsive Scale (DYBOCS) in children and adolescents. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, 68, 156-164. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.comppsy.2016.03.003>

Otero, S., et al. (2007). Acomodación familiar en el trastorno obsesivo-compulsivo. *Actas Españolas de Psiquiatría*, 35(2), 99-104.

Pertusa, A., Jaurrieta, N., Real, E., Alonso, P., Bueno, B., Segalàs, C., Jiménez-Murcia, S., Mataix-Cols, D., & Menchón, J. M. (2010). Spanish adaptation of the Dimensional Yale-Brown Obsessive-Compulsive Scale. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, 51(6), 641-648. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.comppsy.2010.02.011>

Psychological Reactions to Climate Change: A Qualitative Study with Implications for Counseling

Dilani Perera

PhD, Chair and Professor,
Fairfield University,
Fairfield, Connecticut (CT), US

Olivia Henderson

BA Master's std in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
Fairfield University,
Fairfield, Connecticut (CT), US

Climate change describes the long-term changes in weather pattern characteristics for different areas around the world (National Aeronautics and Space Administration [NASA], n.d.). While some degree of climate change is considered to be natural, human activities have exacerbated its effects, contributing to some of the more severe weather disturbances that are now observed, such as increased hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and wildfires (NASA, n.d.). With these changes, some individuals are experiencing psychological reactions, such as grief, fear, anxiety, and depression (Padhy et al., 2015). However, the literature is sparse, and there is still much to learn about how these mental reactions manifest in individuals and what supports are needed to help them navigate these reactions and to maintain wellness. Therefore, this study was conducted using a qualitative design with semi-structured interviews to learn more about these reactions, participants' ways of mitigating them, and how mental health providers globally can support clients.

Cunsolo A., & Ellis, N.R. (2018). Ecological grief as a mental health response to climate change-related loss. *National Climate Change*, 8, 275-281. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-018-0092-2>

Dodds J. (2021). The psychology of climate anxiety. *BJPsych bulletin*, 45(4), 222-226.

[https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://doi.org/10.1192/bjb.2021.18__!!KIFmrYtlezdzESbnm_!ICREcdmzh7KgSOLpVr2Gu45PT6-pT-9V74ijTmE6ALEjJWvCo3CjydDd2UZtzTSYYD6vuMa_xzybuG6TNUSm6AXR4QcuTufxtCQ\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://doi.org/10.1192/bjb.2021.18__!!KIFmrYtlezdzESbnm_!ICREcdmzh7KgSOLpVr2Gu45PT6-pT-9V74ijTmE6ALEjJWvCo3CjydDd2UZtzTSYYD6vuMa_xzybuG6TNUSm6AXR4QcuTufxtCQ$)

Fraher, E. & Brandt, B. (2019). Toward a system where workforce planning and interprofessional practice and education are designed around patients and populations not professions. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 33(4), 389-397. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13561820.2018.1564252>

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). (n.d.). What is climate change? NASA Science.

<https://science.nasa.gov/climate-change/what-is-climate-change/>

Padhy, S. K., Sarkar, S., Panigrahi, M., & Paul, S. (2015). Mental health effects of climate change. *Indian Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 19(1).

Peterson, G. H., & Kozlowski, M. B. (2024). Development and initial validation of the Climate Change Counseling Scale. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*. doi: 10.1080/07481756.2024.2303461

Sturm, D. (2025, January). Climate change can lead to mental health issues. *Counseling Today*, American Counseling Association. <https://www.counseling.org/publications/counseling-today-magazine/article-archive/article/ct-jan-2025/climate-change-can-lead-to-mental-health-issues>

McAllister, M., Statham, D., Oprescu, F., Barr, N., Schmidt, T., Boulter, C., Taylor, P., McMillan, J., Jackson, S., & Raith, L. (2014). Mental health interprofessional education for health professions students: bridging the gaps. *The Journal of Mental Health Training, Education and Practice*, 9 (1), 35-45. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JMHTEP-09-2012-0030>

Padykula, N., Berrett-Abebe, J., & Haven, T.J (2020). Helping community partners build capacity within integrated behavioral health: A call to action for social work education. *Advances in Social Work*, 20(2), 266-282. DOI 10.18060/23658

Navigating Silos in Behavioral Health: Creating an Interprofessional Eating Disorders Training Program in the U.S.

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Julie Berrett-Abebe PhD, Social Work
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Fairfield University,
Fairfield, Connecticut, US

Michelle Pagnotta MA, Couns.
Educ., Project Coord.,
BHWET Grant,
Fairfield University,
Fairfield, Connecticut, US

Current research indicates that interprofessional education is "best practice" in the physical health and behavioral health fields to ensure quality care for patients and clients (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2024). However, our academic institutions continue to operate in siloed units of professional identities that does not prepare our students for the new challenges of working in interprofessional teams (McAllister et al., 2014). This poster presentation will describe the process of working against those siloes to develop a revolutionary certificate program that crosses many behavioral health disciplines and two schools at the university (Berrett-Abebe et al., 2023). The struggles and successes along the way will be emphasized, with the goal of providing insights into this challenging endeavor.

- Berrett-Abebe, J., Novella, J. K., & Perera, D. M. (2023). Shared and unique competencies in interprofessional behavioral health: Implications for counselor education. *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision*, 17(5), 5.
- Beck, E.S., Kaplan, D., Smith, H., & Moroco, J. (2000). The behavioral health professional: a mental health professional identity model for the 22nd century. *Counseling and Human Development*, 33(4), 1-10.
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) (2024). Innovation in Behavioral Health (IBH) Model. Downloaded from: <https://www.cms.gov/priorities/innovation/innovation-models/innovation-behavioral-health-ibh-model>
- Fraher, E. & Brandt, B. (2019). Toward a system where workforce planning and interprofessional practice and education are designed around patients and populations not professions. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 33(4), 389-397. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13561820.2018.1564252>
- Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) (2016). Core competencies for interprofessional collaborative practice: 2016 update. Interprofessional Education Collaborative, Washington, DC.
- McAllister, M., Statham, D., Oprescu, F., Barr, N., Schmidt, T., Boulter, C., Taylor, P., McMillan, J., Jackson, S., & Raith, L. (2014). Mental health interprofessional education for health professions students: bridging the gaps. *The Journal of Mental Health Training, Education and Practice*, 9(1), 35-45. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JMHTEP-09-2012-0030>
- Padykula, N., Berrett-Abebe, J., & Haven, T.J (2020). Helping community partners build capacity within integrated behavioral health: A call to action for social work education. *Advances in Social Work*, 20(2), 266-282. DOI 10.18060/23658

Trait Responses to Interpersonal Offenses: A Dyadic Examination of Impact on Romantic Partner Relationship Quality

Marilyn Cornish

PhD Professor.

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Latifat Cabirou

PhD Assistant Professor

Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama, US

As with all types of relationships, romantic relationships will occasionally involve instances of interpersonal harm. When one partner commits a transgression against the other, how they respond next may influence whether the situation resolves or escalates. In addition, these response tendencies, when enacted over time and across transgressions, may either support or hinder the relationship. Research has identified three main response patterns to interpersonal transgressions—self-forgiveness, self-exoneration, and self-condemnation—each with potential relationship consequences (Cornish et al., 2018; 2025; Griffin et al., 2018). We examined these three response tendencies between romantic partners to understand their dyadic effect on relationship quality. In our sample of 216 adults in 108 romantic relationships of at least one year, we found actor and partner effects for trait self-forgiveness, such that one partner's level of trait self-forgiveness positively predicted both their own and their partner's relational quality. We also found actor and partner effects for trait self-exoneration, such that one partner's level of trait self-exoneration negatively predicted both their own and their partner's relational quality. Self-condemnation was not a significant predictor in our model. We discuss implications of these findings for couples counseling and other interventions that support relationships. In doing so, we highlight the potential benefits of promoting self-forgiveness and reducing self-exoneration tendencies. We also discuss the potentially complicated nature of self-condemnation in relationship functioning, addressing ways it could both help and hinder some aspects of the relationship.

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Mental Health and Psychedelics: Exploring Psilocybin and MDMA Through User Experiences

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Psychedelic-assisted therapy has emerged as a promising approach for treating mental health conditions like anxiety, depression, and PTSD (Nichols, D. E., and Johnson, M. W., 2019). Research suggests that substances like psilocybin and MDMA, when used in controlled therapeutic settings, can facilitate deep emotional processing and enhance neuroplasticity (Schenberg, E. E., 2023). However, due to legal and social barriers, much of the real-world use remains undocumented. Anonymous surveys provide a valuable tool for gathering data on individuals' experiences with psychedelic therapy, allowing researchers to assess its effects on mental health indicators without the biases of clinical settings. Anonymous surveys were conducted to explore the potential of psilocybin- and MDMA-assisted therapy. Participants reported limited experience with psilocybin, which was primarily taken without other substances. In contrast, MDMA was used more frequently, often in combination with alcohol or cocaine. The psychological effects of psilocybin and MDMA were assessed across five key areas: stress, anxiety, depression, social anxiety, and life satisfaction. Psilocybin showed consistently positive effects across all areas, with participants reporting reduced stress and depressive symptoms, decreased general and social anxiety, and increased life satisfaction. MDMA also demonstrated strong effects, but responses varied significantly among individuals, sometimes yielding opposite outcomes. The only exception was social anxiety, where MDMA consistently improved symptoms for most participants. These findings suggest that psilocybin holds strong therapeutic potential across a broad range of conditions. In contrast, the benefits of MDMA-assisted therapy may depend on individual differences, with its most promising application being the reduction of social anxiety.

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Inhibitors After Sexual Assaults: Feminist-Informed Recommendations for Colleges

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This presentation examines the factors influencing college students' decisions to report sexual assault and seek campus resources, emphasizing the importance of education and support in improving reporting rates. Research by Holland (2019) and Spencer et al. (2017) highlights the role of trust in campus resources, the negative impact of rape myth acceptance, and the perception of the campus climate on students' intentions to report assaults. Findings suggest that sexual assault education programs can significantly increase reporting by enhancing students' understanding of sexual assault and debunking rape myths. Additionally, a positive campus climate and assurance that reports will be taken seriously are crucial in encouraging students to seek help. However, challenges remain, particularly when the perpetrator is an acquaintance or dating partner, which can deter survivors from reporting. However, a feminist framework can address many of these inhibitors. The presentation applies a feminist theoretical framework to argue for the importance of empowerment and allyship in addressing these issues, advocating for feminist-informed training for student affairs and counseling staff to better support survivors. The presentation makes recommendations for incorporating a feminist-informed training and education for College Counseling, Student Affairs, and similar departments to potentially improve report rates and help-seeking actions for college students after a sexual assault.

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The Lived Experiences of Dungeon Masters during a Roleplaying Game: A Qualitative Study

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Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) is a game where players assume the role of a character and interact with a dynamic narrative driven by the Dungeon Master (DM), who facilitates the game's world-building, storytelling, and rule enforcement. Research examining D&D in a clinical setting exists. While much of the research thus far has focused on the benefits of D&D for players—such as fostering creativity, social engagement, and moral development—little attention has been paid to the unique role of the DM. This presentation aims to highlight the therapeutic potential of D&D specifically for Dungeon Masters, an area that has received limited attention in current research, exploring how the act of running a campaign can promote creativity, empathy, and personal growth. The presentation will outline the structure of D&D, emphasizing the dynamic relationship between players, characters, and the DM. The presentation discusses how DMs involvement in storytelling, rule interpretation, and world-building can serve as a tool for personal development. A core theme of the presentation will be the creative and emotional engagement required by DMs to craft compelling narratives and respond to unpredictable player choices. This creative engagement, which has been shown to foster fluency and originality, offers potential emotional growth, including increased empathy and enhanced problem-solving skills. Additionally, there will be discussion of social aspects of D&D, such as group collaboration and the development of moral reasoning, and of how these dynamics impact the DM's personal well-being.

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Is it Harder to Forgive? A Look at Emotions Related to Forgiveness, Karma, And Revenge

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The act of forgiveness is a dynamic process encompassing affect, cognition, and behavior (Enright et al., 1998). Forgiveness may alleviate emotional distress (Balkin, 2021; Enright, 2001) and beliefs about karma and revenge may influence one's capacity to forgive. Understanding emotions related to forgiveness, Karma, and revenge can elucidate the construct of forgiveness with positive implications for clients related to their emotional well-being and ability to address conflict (Balkin et al., 2021). In this poster presentation, participants will be introduced to an intricate research design that addresses the assessment of emotions in a randomized, repeated-measures, experimental design with control for extraneous variables. The presentation will highlight the complex emotions that may correspond to acts of forgiveness, karma, and revenge. Implications for counseling clients struggling with conflict and forgiveness and counselor training will be highlighted.

Anjali, & Mitra, R. K. (2023). Belief in Karma and Subjective Well-being among Adults. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 11(4), 1148-1155. <https://doi.org/10.25215/1104.103>

Balkin, R. S. (2021). *Practicing forgiveness: A path toward healing*. Oxford University Press.

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International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR), 13(5), 1183-1187. <https://doi.org/10.21275/sr24517214938>

JASP Team (2024). JASP (Version 0.19) [Computer software].

Jackson, J. C., Choi, V. K., & Gelfand, M. J. (2019). Revenge: A multilevel review and synthesis. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 70(1), 319-345. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010418-103305>

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Perceptions of Athletes vs Non-athletes on the College Athlete Experience

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Athlete culture describes the unique set of stressors and experiences that collegiate athletes encounter (Despres et al., 2008; Reich et al., 2021). Due to this, student athletes face several mental health challenges, though they tend to not feel comfortable seeking help (Leimer et al., 2014). Non-athlete peers tend to think negatively of their student athlete peers and view them as having more privileges, and student athletes are often aware of these negative perceptions (Stone, 2012). The goal of this study is to determine whether there is a significant difference between non-athletes' perceptions on athlete privilege as opposed to athletes' perceptions. A similar study by Fuller et al. (2019) investigated the prevalence of athletic preferences. In their future directions section, it was stated that it was necessary for future literature to look into the differences between universities with and without "big-time" athletic programs (Fuller et al., 2019). Data was collected via an online survey, in which participants answered a few demographic questions and then marked the privileges they felt that athletes at their university have. Through SPSS analysis, it was found that despite the significant differences found between divisions or athletic involvement and perceptions, there were no significant differences between these two categories and athletes having less stress or mental health struggles, indicating that these perceived perks of collegiate athletics do not necessarily equate to improved psychological well-being. This could be beneficial for college counselors when working with student athletes, as these differences in perceptions could be an influencing factor in deterring student athletes from seeking support for their mental health.

- Despres, J., Brady, F., & McGowan, A. S. (2008). Understanding the culture of the student-athlete: Implications for college counselors. *The Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development*, 47(2), 200-211.
- Fuller, R., Lawrence, S. M., Harrison, C. K., Eyanson, J., & Griffin, W. (2019). College student perceptions of preferential treatment of college athletes. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 13(3), 171-190.
- Leimer, A. D., Leon, R. A., & Shelley, K. (2014). Stigmas and stereotypes: Counseling services for student-athletes. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 8(2), 121-135.
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An Exploration of the Ratio of Elementary School Counselors on Students' Academic Achievement

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This presentation will examine the relationship between school counselor-to-student ratios and academic outcomes in elementary students, specifically in reading and math. While prior research has extensively focused on the impact of school counselors in high schools, this study addresses a critical gap by exploring how counselor access influences academic growth in K-5 students. Using a correlational design, the study analyzed data from the National Center for Education Statistics and the i-Ready diagnostic assessment for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 academic years, focusing on over 10,000 public school districts across the United States.

The findings reveal significant variability in counselor ratios, with over 51% of schools having more than 350 students per counselor and nearly 25% reporting no counselors at the elementary level. Results indicate that while math growth remained relatively consistent across all ratios, reading performance showed a notable improvement when the counselor-to-student ratio was below the American School Counselor Association's recommended 250:1. Specifically, schools with fewer than 150 students per counselor saw 69% of students meet their reading growth goals, compared to 61% in schools with higher ratios.

This presentation will discuss the implications of these findings, emphasizing the vital role school counselors play in fostering academic success and social-emotional development in young students. It will also explore policy recommendations for improving counselor access and highlight the potential benefits of staffing elementary schools with either counselors or social workers to better support student outcomes in reading and overall well-being."

"American School Counselor Association (2024). School counselor roles & ratios.

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- Carey, J., Harrington, K., Martin, I., & Hoffman, D. (2012). A statewide evaluation of the outcomes of the implementation of Asca national model school counseling programs in rural and suburban Nebraska high schools. *Professional School Counseling*, 16(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X0001600202>
- Curriculum Associates (2024). Diagnostic assessments. <https://www.curriculumassociates.com/programs/i-ready-assessment/diagnostic>
- Goodman-Scott, E., Sink, C.A., Cholewa, B.E. and Burgess, M. (2018). An ecological view of school counselor ratios and student academic outcomes: A national investigation. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 96, 388-398. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12221>
- Hurwitz, M., & Howell, J. (2014). Estimating causal impacts of school counselors with regression discontinuity designs. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 92, 316-327. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2014.00159.x>
- Kearney, C., Akos, P., Domina, T., & Young, Z. (2021). Student-to-school counselor ratios: A meta-analytic review of the evidence. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 99, 418-428. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12394>
- Meyer, K., & Bell, E. (2023, February 9). The school counselor staffing landscape: Policies and practice. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-school-counselor-staffing-landscape-policies-and-practice/>
- National Center for Education Statistics (2024). Search for public school districts. <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/>

The Emotion Regulation and Relationship Management Skills of School Counselors

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This presentation explores the emotion regulation and relationship management skills of school counselors. This research uses the Test of Regulation in and Understanding of Social Situations in Teaching (TRUST) (Aldrup et al., 2020) to measure participants' social and emotional skills. The study aims to answer two research questions: (1) What is the strength of school counselors' emotion regulation and relationship management skills? (2) Are there demographic differences in these skills among school counselors?

Survey data were collected from 98 practicing school counselors across the United States, and statistical analyses revealed that participants scored higher in both emotion regulation and relationship management compared to pre-service and in-service teachers from prior research, including samples from Germany and the US. These findings emphasize school counselors' strong SEL skills, positioning them as potential leaders of implementing SEL initiatives and fostering positive school climates. While gender differences were identified in relationship management (with women outperforming men), other demographic characteristics, including years of experience, showed no significant impact. This suggests that emotion regulation and relationship management skills may not naturally develop over time and require intentional cultivation.

The presentation will discuss the implications of these findings for counselor education and counselors' professional development. Recommendations will be provided for leveraging school counselors' SEL strengths through ongoing training and leadership opportunities to promote mental health and wellbeing in schools. Limitations of the study and directions for future research will also be addressed.

- Aldrup, K., Carstensen, B., Köller, M. M., & Klusmann, U. (2020). Measuring teachers' social-emotional competence: Development and validation of a situational judgment test. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11(892), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00892>
- Allemand, M., Steiger, A. E., & Fend, H. A. (2015). Empathy development in adolescence predicts social competencies in adulthood. *Journal of Personality*, 83(2), 229-241. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12098>
- Blake, M. K. (2020). Other duties as assigned: The ambiguous role of the high school counselor. *Sociology of Education*, 93(4), 315-330. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040720932563>
- Choi, K. & Hyun, J. (2023). Perceptions and experiences of school counselor trainees on self-care grounded in mindfulness and social-emotional learning. *The Professional Counselor*, 13(2), 113-128. <https://doi.org/10.15241/kmc.13.2.113>
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- Greenberg, M. T. (2023). Evidence for social and emotional learning in schools. Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/928.269>
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Infidelity, Trust, and Relationship Satisfaction: Can Love Bounce Back?

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Tim Smith

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Committed relationships experience a higher level of relationship fulfillment compared to non-committed and dating relationships. However, when a commitment to sexual exclusivity is broken, the infidelity can adversely impact mental health. This study examined how sexual infidelity (oral, vaginal, or anal sex) initiated by themselves or their partner, predicted present relationship satisfaction across a nationwide U.S. sample ($N = 1127$), with about 31% experiencing infidelity. In the first step of a hierarchical regression, age, gender, and a prior experience of sexual infidelity explained only 3% of the variance in present relationship flourishing. However, 42% of the variance was explained when adding a measure of relationship trust. Participants who initiated the infidelity themselves reported lower present satisfaction in both the first and second model ($b = -.16, p < .001$ and $b = -.09, p < .001$). However, infidelity initiated by a partner did not reach statistical significance in the first model, indicating that the present relationship was not necessarily adversely impacted by the prior experience of infidelity. When the measure of trust was added in the second step, a truly remarkable finding occurred among those whose partners had been unfaithful: the association with present relationship flourishing switched directions from a small negative association to a small positive association that reached statistical significance ($b = .07, p = .004$). That is, a prior experience of partner-initiated infidelity became mildly associated with increased present relationship flourishing when accounting for present relationship trust. These findings underscore the pivotal role of rebuilding trust in subsequent relationship satisfaction after infidelity.

- Bozoyan, C., & Schmiedeberg, C. (2023). What is infidelity? A vignette study on norms and attitudes toward infidelity. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 60(8), 1090-1099. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2022.2104194>
- Larzelere, R. E., & Huston, T. L. (1980). The Dyadic Trust Scale: Toward Understanding Interpersonal Trust in Close Relationships. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 42(3), 595-604. <https://doi.org/10.2307/351903>
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- Putney, H. L. (2017). Getting to the Heart of the Matter: Understanding Relational Satisfaction in Modern-Day Couples - ProQuest. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2008124510?accountid=4488&sourcetype=Dissertations%20%20Theses>
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Attachment Support Needs in Children with Disabilities: A Linear Regression Analysis

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Objective: The aim of this study was to identify the factors that influence attachment support needs in children with severe physical and multiple disabilities, as well as children requiring medical care.

Methods: To identify the factors influencing attachment support needs, a self-administered questionnaire survey was conducted with parents of children attending special needs schools nationwide. Linear regression analysis was used to examine these factors.

Results: The results of the linear regression analysis revealed that the following factors significantly influenced attachment support needs. In Model A, the caregiver's economic status ($\beta = 0.135$, $p < 0.01$) and educational background ($\beta = -0.134$, $p < 0.01$) had significant effects. In Model B, the provision of information about the child's disability ($\beta = 0.175$, $p < 0.01$) and support from school nurses and teachers ($\beta = 0.149$, $p < 0.01$) were significant influencing factors. In Model C, economic status, educational background, and school support continued to have significant effects, with the provision of information ($\beta = 0.186$, $p < 0.01$) and psychological support after the announcement of the disability ($\beta = 0.161$, $p < 0.01$) being influential.

Discussion: The factors influencing attachment support needs were found to include the caregiver's economic status, educational background, and school support systems. Information provision about the child's disability and psychological support were significant, providing important insights for improving support structures.

Oppenh, D., Doliev, S., Koren-Karie, N., (2007) Parental resolution of the child's diagnosis and the parent-child relationship:

Insights from the reaction to diagnosis interview. Attachment theory in clinical work with children: Bridging the between research and practice. Guilford Press, pp29-44.

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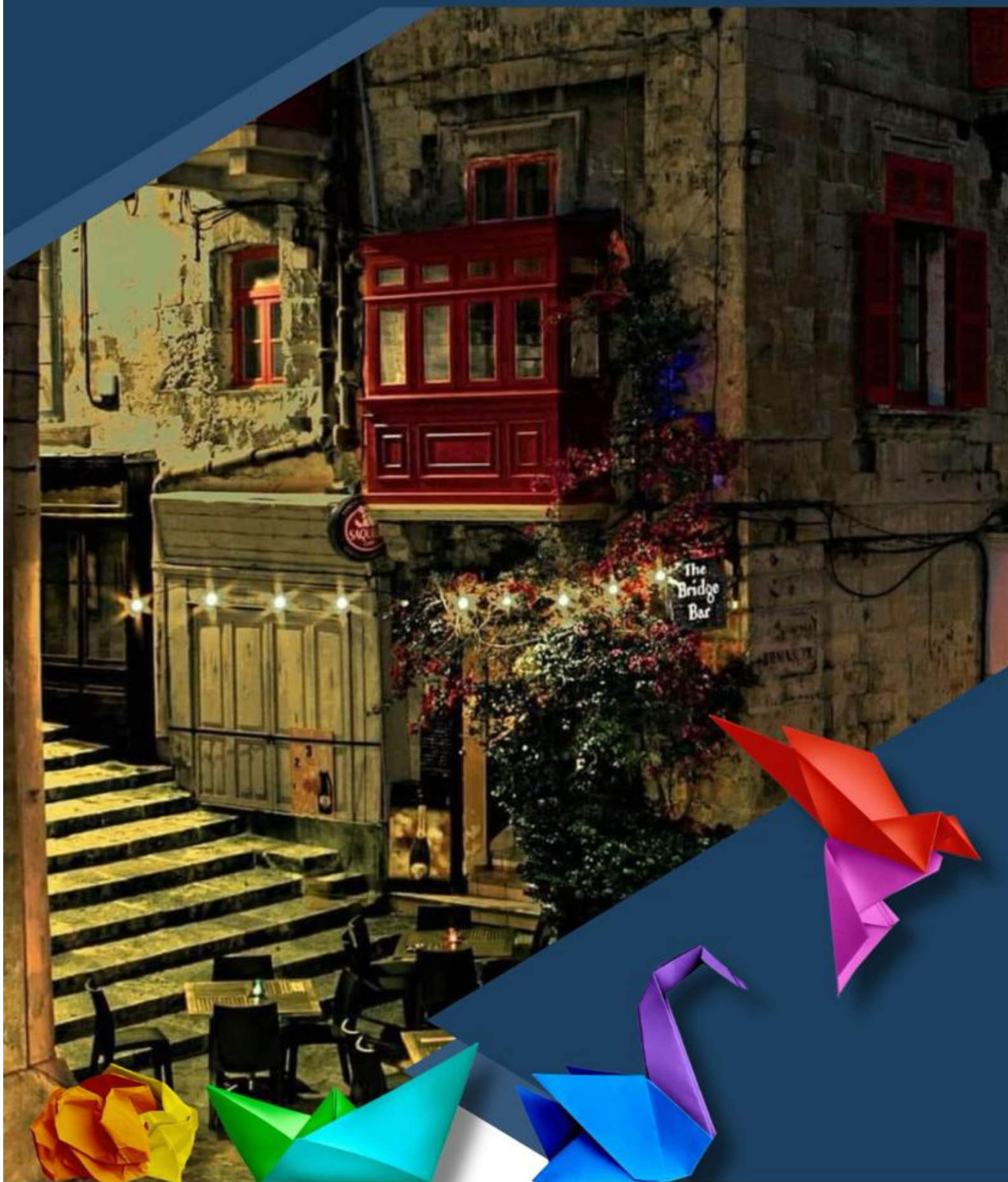
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