



INTERACTION

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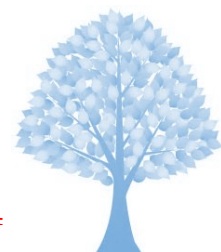
President's Address Dr. Claudia Sadler-Gerhardt

Dear ASERVIC Friends:

I welcome you to this issue of the Interaction as the 2017-2018 President of ASERVIC. Thank you for your continued support of our division and our vision of the integration of spiritual, ethical, and religious values within counseling. If you are reading this newsletter for the first time, I especially welcome you and invite you to consider joining with us in our mission.

We have just returned from the 2017 ASERVIC Conference in Richmond, VA, our fifth biennial and our first annual conference. With nearly 200 attendees, over 60 educational sessions and poster presentations, and Dr. Everett Worthington as our Keynote speaker, it was truly a great conference! There were many opportunities to learn about ethical, spiritual, and religious values in counseling and to network with colleagues and friends. At the Awards luncheon, Dr. Worthington was recognized with the ASERVIC Humanitarian Award, and many ASERVIC members were recognized for service and scholarship. There was much excitement and formation of new and renewed friendships and relationships. We appreciate each of you who attended. We also appreciate our great conference co-chairs: Dr. Jesse Fox and Dr. Patrick Mullen. It definitely takes a village to pull together a quality conference, and we thank every one of you who were involved in conference planning and helped out in a myriad of ways.

Not so long ago, the members of ASERVIC asked for more time together to build relationships and to strengthen one another in this work that we do. As a result, the idea of a yearly conference began to grow. So, it was with great excitement that we announced in Richmond that we are moving to a yearly conference and that the next conference would be in Dallas, TX, in July 2018! Texas has the largest number of LPCs of any state, and Dallas is such a city of diverse people and experiences, that we are expecting another great conference. Details about proposals and registration will be coming shortly.



President's Address continued on page 4

President

Claudia Sadler-Gerhardt

Past-President

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Leila Roach

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Amanda Giordano

Secretary

Isabel A. Thompson

Interaction Editor

Heidi L. Henry

INTRODUCING 2017-2018 ASERVIC EXECUTIVE BOARD



ASERVIC President, Claudia Sadler-Gerhardt

As President of ASERVIC, I provide leadership to the Executive Board and Board of Directors in serving the mission and vision of ASERVIC in empowering and enabling the integration of spiritual, ethical, and religious values in counseling. In addition, I represent ASERVIC to the public and conduct ASERVIC business in accordance with our organizational bylaws.

ASERVIC President Elect, Leila Roach

As president-elect of ASERVIC, my role is to assist the president in implementing our strategic plan, and developing a clear understanding of the governance structure and ASERVIC's relationship to ACA in preparation for my role as president. This involves serving on a number of committees, attending meetings, preparing a list of candidates for committee chairs, and working on ancillary programs for the ACA conference.



American Counseling Association Governing Council, ASERVIC Representative (2013-2018)

Lisa Jackson-Cherry

The Governing Council is comprised of elected members from the ACA divisions and regions who establish the "policies that govern the affairs of the ACA and to oversee the Association" (ACA Policy Manual, July 2016).



ASERVIC Secretary

Isabel A. Thompson

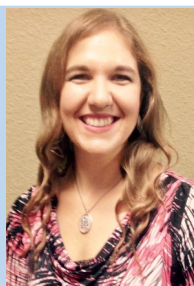


ASERVIC Past President Chair, Nominations/Elections

Stephanie F. Dailey

ASERVIC Treasurer, Amanda Giordano

As treasurer, I work with the ASERVIC board to ensure exemplary financial stewardship by utilizing ASERVIC funds to support the welfare of our membership, the counseling profession, and the clients and students we serve.



Board Members

Hannah Bayne
Stephanie Dailey
Ryan Foster
Amanda Giordano
Harriet Glosolf
Daniel Gutierrez

Patrick Mullen
Marinn Pierce
Leila Roach
Isabel Thompson
Richard E. Watts

COMMITTEE CHAIRS & OTHER LEADERSHIP ROLES

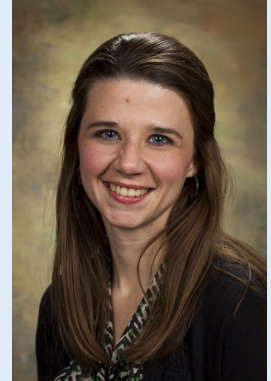
**Co-Chair,
Awards Committee
Joffrey S. Suprina**

As Co-Chair of the ASERVIC Awards committee, I lead the committee that awards grants to state chapters and researchers and recognizes excellence in the counseling and spirituality fields.



**Chair,
Membership Services
L. Marinn Pierce**

I have had the pleasure of serving as ASERVIC's Membership Chair since 2012. My responsibilities include issuing Membership Certificates, monitoring membership trends, and addressing any concerns from ASERVIC members.



**Co-Chair,
Awards Committee
Sean M. Ridge**

As Co-Chair, I facilitate the processes related to the call for nominations and proposals, collection of materials, and decisions regarding ASERVIC awards.



**Chair,
Ethical Values Committee
Richard E. Watts**

The EVC's primary responsibility is educating ASERVIC membership regarding the ethical integration of spirituality/religion into counseling.



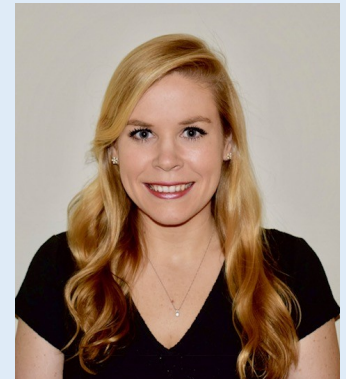
**Chair, Spiritual & Religious Values Committee
Anita Neuer Colburn**

The S/RV Committee helps promote the ASERVIC (2009) Competencies and supports open dialogue regarding religious and spiritual values. Our members represent a wide array of spiritual/religious backgrounds.



**Chair, Webinar & Webmaster
C. Missy Butts**

In my role as ASERVIC's Webinar chair, I organize and advertise each webinar sponsored by ASERVIC and manage the webinar Continuing Education process. As ASERVIC's webmaster, I am responsible for updating the content and resources that are available on ASERVIC's website, www.aservic.org.



**Chair, Media Committee
Co-Chair, 2018 ASERVIC Conference
Ryan D. Foster**

The Media Committee shall oversee all communication vehicles of ASERVIC, including but not limited to the Newsletter, Journal, ACA Connect, and website, and will identify, access, and/or develop resource materials that can aid counselors and counselor educators in integrating spiritual, ethical, and religious values in the practice of counseling and counselor education.



**Chair, State Divisions
Victoria Giegerich**

The State Divisions Chair facilitates communication between ASERVIC state divisions and ASERVIC national, oversees the State Divisions Committee, and assists states in developing state divisions.

**Chair, Innovations Committee, David Hartman
Co-Chair, 2018 ASERVIC Conference, Daniel Gutierrez
Chair, Governing Documents, Harriet Glossoff**

EDITORS



**Editor-in-Chief,
Counseling and Values
Craig S. Cashwell**

As Editor-in-Chief of the ASERVIC journal, I work with authors, editorial board members, ad hoc reviewers, and Associate Editors to promote scholarship related to spirituality, ethics, and religion in counseling.



**Editor
Interaction
Heidi L. Henry**

As Editor of ASERVIC's newsletter, I select and edit submissions, create newsletter layouts, and add graphics in order to produce an informative and visually appealing way to communicate news and scholarship to ASERVIC members.

President's Address Continued

You were able to read in Dr. Dailey's address in the last issue about all the new member benefits that ASERVIC has implemented. I would just like to add to that list that the Members Only Portal on the ASERVIC website is nearly operational, or may actually be up and running by the time the newsletter goes to press. There will be items, such as the ASERVIC eBook (free), best practice resources, innovative ideas, webinar materials and other resources available only to our members. We thank our former webmaster, Donny Behneman, and our new webmaster, Missy Butts, for making the portal happen, and for all the changes to the website over the past couple years.

One of the new endeavors ASERVIC is working towards is intentional conversations and dialogue with members holding divergent religious or spiritual beliefs. We are calling this movement "Room at the Table" from our newest column in the *Interaction*. We held a panel session at the Richmond conference with representatives from the Conservative Christian group, from ACA, and from ASERVIC. It proved to be a respectful dialogue, one which we intend to continue at ACA and the 2018 ASERVIC Conference. There is indeed room at the table for us all, and we need to learn from one another in respectful discourse. We plan to provide sacred spaces for voices to be heard.

I am very honored to be your 2017-2018 ASERVIC President. I stand on the strong shoulders of both the Past Presidents, Dr. Stephanie Dailey, immediate Past President, and Dr. Elizabeth O'Brien, the previous Past President. I joined ASERVIC during my doctoral studies, and was President of Ohio's OASERVIC state division, but I did not become involved with ASERVIC until the Myrtle Beach Conference. It was at that conference that I recognized that ASERVIC would become my tribe. I was originally encouraged by one of my doctoral supervisors, Dr. Chris Faiver, who was on the ASERVIC Board at the time, to become the editor of the *Interaction*. I also served on the Board and was Chair of the State Divisions Committee, so I have spent some special times with this great group. ASERVIC is a working body of individuals who care deeply about the organization and each other. I am very, very proud to work with them and with all of you.

I would love to hear from you, especially if you would like to become involved in ASERVIC. To paraphrase Dr. O'Brien (and also President John F. Kennedy) don't ask what ASERVIC can do for you, but ask instead – what gifts and talents can you bring to ASERVIC and how can you serve our profession?

With gratitude,
Claudia



SPIRITUALITY IN THE FIELD

Kelsey Allen

As a marriage and family counseling intern at a faith-based institution located in the Northwestern part of the U.S. I have recently discovered the importance of the role religious and spiritual values play in the counseling context. In January, I began my practicum journey of seeing individuals, couples, and families with a site that maintains several different counseling locations— including a metropolitan area and a small, rural community. The diversity differences between the two locations are drastic; one is a booming capital city, while the rural community was recently named by the *Wall Street Journal* as the poorest town in the state. The population I work with in the latter rural setting are sliding scale and pro bono counseling clients who are predominantly white, low socio-economic status, and have a range of Christian beliefs. To provide additional context, the internship site is affiliated with local churches in each area, which further highlights the function of religious and spiritual values in my internship counseling experience and specifically, aspects of my personal and professional counselor self-awareness.

The development of counselor self-awareness is a theme steadily present in my graduate program. Many courses encourage professional counselor and personal identity self-exploration. These classes (many of which occur before practicum experiences) further affirmed my personal and professional values, such as social justice and traditionalism. In my life, I define social justice as acknowledging and advocating for justice of the current mis-distribution of opportunities and privilege in our society. Traditionalism is valuing aspects of meaningful, culture-specific rituals, beliefs, and practices – observed in racial, ethnic, nationalistic, and religious contexts. Through self-exploration, I found appreciation for the unique traditional rituals and beliefs spanning a myriad of religious and spiritual beliefs, while also valuing social justice, which is occasionally incorporated into the resurrection of these ancient beliefs into modern day. My attitudes, beliefs, and values about spirituality and religion exist within an integration of these values. Personally, these values in my own religious and spiritual beliefs are challenged in multiple ways, as a practicing Catholic attending a Nazarene university and counseling at a Methodist-affiliated counseling site. Having the opportunity to actively explore my values and beliefs within these different religious contexts has contributed to the religious and spiritual growth I have experienced in graduate school.

I have observed a predominant lack of acceptance of the LGBTQIA community in the rural setting. The ideas and philosophies surrounding this lack of acceptance frequently are initiated by clients in counseling sessions. Embedded within my social justice values, I accept, support, and advocate for legal recognition for people who identify as LGBTQIA. I often feel personally conflicted when conversations surrounding this topic arise in session – particularly when sexuality is not a part of the presenting clinical problem that guides clients to counseling. Frequently, homophobic remarks are made and I find myself



resisting a visceral reaction to these comments, as well as resisting in participating in the conversation with my opinion on the matter. Although my social justice values implore me to work with this population, the same population challenges my social justice values through a different avenue.

An example of a client-initiated conversation surrounding sexual identity was one client who described an instance of workplace, same-sex sexual harassment by several supervisors. After exploring the emotional impact of this incident, my client proceeded to discuss her disgust for individuals who identify with the LGBTQIA community, tied to her restorationist Christian views. As I listened to my client's remarks, I froze – I became immediately aware of my facial and body expressions, in fear that my client would nonverbally perceive a non-neutral response. My internal dialogue consisted of my own counselor self-awareness and my client's worldview – I was aware of the differences in opinion and culture between my client and myself. I came to the conclusion that I needed to address my client in a manner that was authentic to myself but did not influence my client or discount her worldview. I addressed this situation through paraphrasing the meaning my client finds in her religious beliefs as well as feeling reflections tied to her sexual harassment experience.

The Counselor Self-Awareness and Culture and Worldview competencies within ASERVIC address these spiritual and religious value issues that I experience in the counseling setting. Evidenced in my example, these competencies guided me through a decision-making process when faced with value conflicts in a counseling session. Through recognizing and exploring my own religious and spiritual values of social justice and traditionalism, I am able to acknowledge the social justice lens that serves as an influence for me to work in an underserved community. Through the lens of my traditionalism values, I am able to recognize the worldview of clients who practice a range of Christian beliefs and hold negative attitudes towards the LGBTQIA community. As a developing counselor, I find importance in acknowledging the integration of my own values and applying the ASERVIC spiritual competencies with my clients. This bridges the gap in connecting and effectively working with members of this population.



ROOM AT THE TABLE

I am pleased to present my interview with Chigoziri (Chiggie) D. Umuna, Ed.D with whom I connected at the ASERVIC Conference. Dr. Umuna's research on Evangelical Christian students' experiences in secular counselor-training programs (Umuna, 2016) forms the basis for our interview (edited for space).

Can you tell us a little about yourself and why you chose this topic to study?

I am a Licensed Professional Counselor and I work with Marines at a Marine Corp Base. I'm also an affiliate faculty member at Colorado Christian University. I consider myself to be an Evangelical Christian. My undergraduate was in biblical studies, where I attended a Bible College. I obtained my masters and doctorate at secular universities. My personal experiences made me curious as to what other Evangelicals in secular counseling programs were experiencing.

What were some of the findings of your research?

Half of the students described their general experience as positive in the sense that it helped them grow as professionals and individuals, 25% said it was mixed, and the remaining 25% said their experience was challenging. About 81% felt restricted in what they felt they could share and express with regard to their faith. They felt people were not interested or that no value was assigned to what they believed as Christians. They expressed feelings of being dismissed, discriminated against, and felt they were being watched closely as if people were suspicious of them. They expressed there was a lot of ignorance and misconception about what they believed and who they were and, at the same time, felt people were not interested in finding out what evangelicalism was about. All the participants reported unfriendliness. When they shared their faith and what they believed, they described being "attacked" and "bullied." Fifty percent of the participants reported feeling faculty were unsupportive, while 43.8% reported that faculty members were neutral and 25% reported faculty were supportive.



What ways can the environment feel safer for evangelical students?

Institutions and programs could affirm it is okay and acceptable to be an evangelical, just like its okay to hold any other perspective. One of the things I recommend is inviting evangelical preachers and philosophers to give lectures on campus and allow students to ask questions. This would create an environment where people could learn more about what evangelicals believe and also send a message to evangelicals that it's okay to be evangelical.

Another thing we talked about is extending multicultural sensitivity to these particular students. Just like there's multicultural sensitivity expressed toward the LGBT community or African American community or any other cultural group, we could do that for this population as well. Creating a safe classroom environment involves protecting students from attack when they share. Some participants talked about professors not protecting them and even participating in the attack. Having an environment where people are safe doesn't mean safe from challenge. Challenge the ideas but protect the people from attack. All ideas should be on the table. There are some perspectives and ideas that institutions of learning and programs have accepted as fact and those ideas are not challenged. It should be okay for anybody to challenge any idea. An atheist should be able to advance his or her argument to support whatever their views are. But a theist should also be able to advance their ideas to support their perspective. This would create an open debate, an honest exploration of these different ideas instead of stifling different perspectives.

We all need to learn how to have those conversations in a respectful way, a way that is not critical or attacking or not devaluing what someone else holds dear. Many evangelical students feel devalued and dismissed, like they can't really share what they believe. With these kinds of protections they would feel comfortable to be who they are and express those beliefs.

ROOM AT THE TABLE CONTINUED

What suggestions do you have organizationally or structurally?

One of the things that stuck out for me was the lack of professors who identify as evangelical in these programs. I think the schools would create more diversity if they would hire more evangelical and conservative faculty members. The students felt positively about the overall multicultural posture of the institutions but they felt like their programs were open except when it came to Christianity and evangelical perspectives.

What would you like more liberal counselors to know?

Value the faith of the client that comes in. Perhaps it's my own perception but it seems to be that when somebody comes in and says I am a Christian there's an attitude that because it's a more formalized form of spirituality it is of less value. Again, this is my perception but there may be dismissiveness towards people who are more organized in their spirituality such as evangelicals. When a client comes in or another counselor expresses these beliefs it's very important that counselors value them and not dismiss them or devalue what they say or what they hold dear. That's why Christians don't go to counselors; when they go to counselors they'd rather go to a Christian counselor who believes what they believe. This is a cultural group and we should extend to evangelical Christians the same cultural sensitivity that we extend to everybody else and value them just as we value everybody else.

In order to have effective dialog we should look for things we agree on and not focus so much on the things we disagree on. There are some important common values we can agree. When we do talk to each other, we do so with respect without being critical. In some of the literature [evangelicals were called] homophobic, hostile to women, judgmental, radical, crazy. Those phrases are not helpful.

On the other hand, for evangelicals, [I recommend] being sensitive to how we as evangelicals look at other people who don't believe as we believe. We should be careful to follow the teaching of Jesus in the way he instructed us to reach out to other people and not conflate that with our own preferences. I think that will create a more productive, respectful exchange between the two populations.

That's a great place for us to end – creating respectful exchanges. Thank you for your time.

Reference

Umana, C.D., Suprina, J.S., and Chabau, M. (2016). Evangelical Christian students' experiences in secular counselor-training programs. *The Practitioner Scholar: The Journal of Counseling and Professional Psychology*, 12 (5), 122-140.

Dr. Joni Miller is a Certified Pastoral Counselor and has a PhD in pastoral counseling from Loyola University Maryland. As the founder of Spiritual Geography LLC, Dr. Miller uses her MBA, background in business, and counseling skills to provide consulting services and workshops to the counseling, faith, and business communities.

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Religious and Spiritual Values Committee Column

The Dangers of Spiritual Abuse: Clinical Implications and Best Practices

By Cyndi Matthews, Ph.D, LPC-S, NCC & Kevin C. Snow, Ph.D, M.A., NCC, ACS

News headlines today are full of incidents where spiritual and religious abuse are evident—stories where terrible abuse is done in the name of a particular deity (e.g., God, Allah, Krishna, Buddha) or in the name of a specific religion. Recent headlines have included: “Woman claims pastor sexually abused her as teen, used Bible as justification” (Williams, 2017); “Polygamist parents have been convicted of child trafficking in Canada” (Berman, 2017); “I joined a cult for 4 years and lost \$1M” (Roberts, 2017); and “Thousands of children at risk of being beaten and prevented from learning English in illegal faith schools” (Fenton, 2016). Such sensational headlines make it easy for us to recognize spiritual and religious abuse and make our hearts ache for the victims and the trauma they have suffered. As counselors we know the long lasting effects of trauma and abuse. Spiritual abuse can come in more subtle forms and may be more difficult to identify, yet have the same long-lasting trauma effects.

As counselors, especially as members of ASERVIC, we pride ourselves in valuing and respecting other people’s religions. However, we may find it difficult to talk about spiritual and religious abuse. Our ASERVIC (2009) competencies speak of not only being aware of our own “attitudes, beliefs and values about spirituality and/or religion,” (Comp. 2) but also about being respectful of our client’s spiritual/religious beliefs and integrating client spirituality and values into our counseling practices (Comp. 8). Identifying and openly discussing spiritual abuse with clients may feel uncomfortable as counselors, almost as if we are not respecting another person’s spiritual/religious practices, but keep in mind our competencies state “when making a diagnosis, the professional counselor recognizes that the client’s spiritual and/or religious perspectives can (a) enhance well-being; (b) contribute to client problems; and/or (c) exacerbate symptoms” (Comp. 10). As counselors we need to be aware of what spiritual/religious abuse is, know how some spiritual/religious practices may undermine mental health and well-being, and know how to counsel and treat those who have been spiritually abused.

What is Spiritual Abuse?

Spiritual/religious abuse is often associated with more radical religions or cults. However, spiritual abuse can be found in many “common” religious organizations through a variety of leaders and members. These leaders may range from misguided and well-meaning to narcissistic and/or sociopathic. Spiritual abuse can be defined as any abuse or trauma done in the name of religion or the deity associated with that religion. Leaders and members may use their religious power and position to coerce, control, and manipulate their members. As justification, spiritually abusive leaders and church-members may even say they are speaking for God, quote scripture, or quote from faith leaders/founders in order to get their own needs met, thus turning the faith from a refuge to an unsafe place. Abusive religious leaders may also devalue and disrespect members both in private and public and shame and discredit members openly to their congregations. Abuse can also include yelling, threatening, lying, and causing individuals to do things they normally would not do, such as sexual or financial favors. Abusive leaders tend to promote concepts such as not questioning authority, claim they have all the answers, demand allegiance to their religious organization and/or deity, use exclusive language about their religion/congregation, cultivate dependency on the leader, and blame members if the members feel harassed or victimized (Johnson, 2013; Johnson & VanVonderen, 1991).

How to Recognize Spiritual Abuse

Clients will often come in feeling guilt, shame, depression, anxiety, having somatic issues, and believing that the problem lies within them. Upon further investigation and gently probing the client’s story, it becomes evident that their spiritual/religious leaders, doctrines, and even other congregants/family members may be the source of the abuse (Matthews & Salazar, 2014).

Some indicators of spiritual abuse may include:

1. Clients will talk about how they are the cause of their own suffering and they need to be more faithful, read more, go to church more, be more forgiving, etc., in order for their suffering to be alleviated.
2. Clients have a polarized view of their deity – they see their God as either a Santa Claus figure or an extremely vindictive being. This polarized view creates a categorical view of life in terms of all things being good or evil.
3. Clients may display magical thinking, meaning all good things come as a result of good behavior and all bad things come as a result of bad/sinful behavior. Car accidents, illnesses, cancer, and tragedies may all be seen as a result of somehow being their fault and as a result of their sinful behavior.
4. Clients may be very critical of themselves and others. They may have perfectionistic or legalistic thinking in terms of the standards they set for themselves and others.
5. Clients may have a difficult time with boundaries and allow others to disrespect their personal boundaries. They may have a difficult time saying no because of guilt, shame, etc., and have some underlying feelings of resentment towards others because of their boundaries being violated.

Religious and Spiritual Values Committee Column

6. Clients may have a difficult time trusting other people, especially those in authority, and at the same time may display over-reliance on authority.
7. Clients may have a learned powerlessness, too afraid to act because of the fear and anxiety of any repercussions from fellow members, leaders, and even their deity.
8. Clients may experience a number of somatic complaints such as headaches, intestinal problems, chest pains, panic attacks or other body-based symptoms.

Why is Spiritual Abuse Traumatic?

As counselors we know trauma and abuse can have long-lasting, lifetime effects on individuals. Spiritual/religious abuse is particularly traumatic due to being done in the name of a deity. The client's deity is seen as the one who decides the eternal consequences of one's mortal existence, in most cases. The leader representing their deity is seen as the one standing between eternal salvation and our client. Many faithful may believe, even in mainstream religions, that their leaders possess powers to divine the truth of things, to become experts in all kinds of disciplines, and to know, almost magically, special insights from their deity. Thus when leaders make requests, speak from the pulpit about what their deity requires, and also chastise, rebuke, and abuse members, good and faithful members of the religious community comply and acquiesce to their leaders' requests and demands as if their deity has made the demand. Thus the abuse is seen not only at the hands of a mere mortal, but also at the hands of their God, and thus somehow deserved. The resulting trauma is twofold for the client: (a) the normal mental health repercussions because of the trauma, and (b) the guilt and shame associated with believing they are responsible for the abuse.

How Can Counselors Help the Spiritually Abused?

Counselors can take many measures to explore spiritual abuse and work with it (Matthews & Salazar, 2014). Firstly, they should recognize that spiritual/religious leaders, doctrines, and other-church members can be sources of a client's mental health symptoms (Comp. 10). Next, they should listen to the client's story – assess for past abuse and trauma, make a safety plan if the client is in immediate physical danger, and contact appropriate authorities if children/elderly are in physical danger. Counselors should educate clients about mistaken/dysfunctional beliefs. REBT, CBT, and Adlerian theory may help in working through these beliefs by (a) helping clients recognize polarized thinking such as good/evil or heaven/hell and help clients see and understand a more balanced perspective, and (b) help clients recognize magical thinking on the part of clients/religion, such as life's trials are not punishments and good things are not necessarily blessings from their god.

Other steps counselors can take include: (a) teach decision making skills and how to weigh things out in their own minds; (b) help clients understand that mistakes are okay and model this with them directly; (c) help clients trust their inner voice/instincts – the warning bell that goes off when they realize something is off or not right; and (d) approach the counseling relationship as an egalitarian relationship. As a counselor it is essential that we do not practice another hierarchical relationship that may impose our values on the client. We need to trust our clients that they will come to healthy conclusions through our work with them and the work they do on their own.

Lastly, we should not tell clients that their church/organization/leader is wrong as clients may become defensive and no longer listen to or seek out our assistance. If the client still belongs to their religion, and when/if appropriate (working backward from negative symptoms) we can explore the idea of a loving deity, and how such a deity would not want followers to suffer the symptoms they are suffering. Counselors can also teach the narcissistic abuse cycle, demonstrating how some abusive leaders will preach they are never wrong and the client is always the perpetrator, or cause of the abuse, which in turn re-victimizes the victim. Even though it may be emotionally difficult for us as counselors to address spiritual/religious abuse, it may be necessary to address these abuses in order to help our clients work towards healing.

The ASERVIC competencies addressed in this article include competencies 2, 8, and 10. To view the ASERVIC competencies, please visit the website: <https://www.aservic.org/resources/spiritual-competencies/>.

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NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Zoeniete Vega



How do you see yourself working alongside ASERVIC?

I see myself working alongside ASERVIC by building a community of professionals dedicated to its mission. I am looking to network with others, attend annual conferences and learn more about my field. I would love to be an active member and participate in events whether it is by speaking, hosting, or helping to set up. I am available to travel and would like to assist ASERVIC whenever the opportunity presents itself.

What drew you to membership in ASERVIC?
The moment I read the mission of ASERVIC, I knew this was the place for me. My goal is to surround myself with like-minded people and incorporating spirituality is necessary for me. I believe that learning never ends and because of this, I chose to be a member of ASERVIC so that I can continue to grow my knowledge regarding ethics, religion, and spirituality in the counseling world.

How did you get here? What is your spiritual story?

I am a graduate student at The University of Houston-Victoria in the Clinical Mental Health Program. It is only by the grace of God that I am here. Growing up in The Bronx, NY I never would have imagined moving to Orlando, FL to attend The University of Central Florida to become the first in my family to graduate college. From New York to Orlando to Houston, I have interacted with diverse groups of people.

My spiritual journey began two years ago, when I began to question the purpose of my life. I was working two jobs, 12 hour shifts, while going to school full-time and not having a vehicle. I had been an atheist my entire life and the thought of spirituality or a higher power seemed like a fairytale. It usually takes an individual to hit rock bottom before they can come out on top and that is what happened with me. The night I hit the bottom was the first time in my life that I prayed. The next morning, I met a woman who gave me her card and invited me to attend church with her. This was the beginning of my journey and interest in religion and spirituality.

I met with monks at temples, meditated with Buddhists and ate with Muslims. From having zero faith and knowledge of spirituality to interacting with people from different backgrounds, cultures, and religions, I started searching for the piece to complete the puzzle of my life. I became fascinated with the idea of the spiritual realm and became aware of my soul. Two years later, I have a lifestyle website called Smile-WithFaith.com dedicated to uniting believers worldwide. This platform is created to bring awareness to self and reach new levels of self-actualization, peace, and prosperity through the word of God and growing in faith.

ETHICS CORNER

The ASERVIC Ethical Values committee's primary responsibility is educating ASERVIC membership regarding the ethical integration of spirituality/religion into counseling. As part of this mandate, the committee is responsible for the "Ethics Corner" in *Interaction*. In each issue of *Interaction* a committee member will provide a brief article on ethical issues specific to spirituality/religion in counseling. Consequently, I'd like to introduce you to the members of the ASERVIC Ethical Values Committee for 2017-2018.

Wen-Mei Chou, Associate Professor, University of Mary Hardin Baylor
Anita Neuer Colburn, Core Faculty Member, Walden University
John Harrichand (Student member), Liberty University
Richard Henriksen, Professor, Sam Houston State University
Rosanne Nunnery, Core Faculty Member, Capella University
Sonja Sutherland, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, Richmond Graduate University
Richard Watts (Chair), Distinguished Professor, Sam Houston State University

If you have a question about the ethical integration of spirituality/religion into counseling, please feel invited to contact me. I will bring the matter to the EVC and get back with you as soon as possible. Please remember that the scope of this committee is *specific* to ethical issues related to integration of spirituality/religion in counseling. For more general ethical issues, please refer to the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics, ethics resources on the ACA Website (<https://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics>), or contact Joy Natwick, ACA's Ethics Specialist, at jnatwick@counseling.org.

Blessings to you and yours,

Richard E. Watts, PhD, Chair, ASERVIC Ethical Values Committee
Email: rew003@shsu.edu
Phone: 936/294-4658

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2017 AWARD RECIPIENTS!



Research Award

Mansi Brat
Emily Teague Palmieri
Jodi D. Vermaas

Meritorious Service Award

Dana Levitt

Lifetime Service Award

Richard E. Watts

Biggs-Pine Journal Award

Jessica Lloyd-Hazlett
Julieta Rubio
Eleni Maria Honderich



ASERVIC CROWDSOURCING CAMPAIGN

Recently, ASERVIC started the “Room at the Table” initiative, a plan to increase dialogue among the diverse worldviews of the ASERVIC Membership. Through this process, the ASERVIC Board was reminded of how current events, both large and local, can have a significant impact on our work with clients, and we would like to provide increased support and tools for professional counselors when these events arise. We need your help. We are going to use a crowdsourcing strategy, so please keep us informed of the events and issues impacting your practice and work with clients. These can include, but are not limited to, legislative issues and popular cultural trends. This initiative will be ongoing, so there is no time limit.

When something new comes up, let us know by contacting the Membership Committee Chair, Marinn Pierce (TnLmpierce@yahoo.com), or completing the following form: [ASERVIC Crowdsourcing Campaign](#).

Your contact information will only be used if we some additional information in order to provide the most accurate information and support we can. Thank you, in advance, for your help!



Come chat with us on [ASERVIC CONNECT](#)

If you are a current member of ASERVIC or a current state division member of ASERVIC you should have access to ASERVIC Connect through ACA Connect. To find ASERVIC Connect and make sure you have access, go to ACA’s website to locate ACA Connect and the ASERVIC Community:

- 1) <http://community.counseling.org/home>
- 2) **Select Communities**
- 3) **Select My Communities**
(you may be promoted to login to ACA)
- 4) **Find the ASERVIC Community**

If you cannot find ASERVIC under your communities, be sure that you are a current member.

Questions can be directed to:
Isabel Thompson, ASERVIC Secretary



Submission Request

SPIRITUALITY IN THE FIELD

Do you have ideas or a story to share regarding your practice of spirituality in the field? If so, please submit to the next edition of the *Interaction*.

The Innovation Committee would like to formally invite current ASERVIC members to consider sharing their “Spirituality in the Field” experiences for publication in an upcoming ASERVIC newsletter.

Inquiries and submissions for this special section of the newsletter can be sent to
LYNN BOHECKER (lbohecker@nnu.edu)

- ◇ Follow the ASERVIC newsletter “guidelines for submission.” (See ASERVIC webpage www.aservic.org)
- ◇ Articles include an opening paragraph introducing the author to the readers.
- ◇ Articles include a second paragraph describing how the author incorporates one or multiple Spiritual Competencies in practice.
- ◇ Articles include a concluding paragraph or list of resources (books, trainings, websites/blogs, inspirational quote, etc.) related to the practices and competencies addressed in the article.
- ◇ A professional picture of the author is attached (in .jpeg format) with the article.



**Interested in submitting an article
for the FALL issue of the
Interaction?**

**The deadline is
FRIDAY, October 13, 2017**

Please refer to ASERVIC.org for guidelines for publication or for more information, or email Heidi Henry, *Interaction* Editor, at hlh031@shsu.edu.