

Interaction

ASERVIC

Volume XIV, No. 1

FALL 2014



Are you caring for your House of God?

By W. Bryce Hagedorn

As I write this column for the current issue of the Interaction, I have the great privilege of traveling through the country of Italy. Navigating the canals of Venice, the museums of Florence, and the bustling fashion capitol of Milan, I am struck with the realization that the center of each city is dominated by the Doumo, which can be translated to "cathedral" or "House of God." These architectural wonders are as different as the cities in which they sit, and similar to how blood vessels lead to and from our heart, all major roadways meet at the Doumo. This realization causes me to pause and consider if I am being intentional enough in my life to ensure that my many daily activities intersect at my own House of God. Am I headed in a specific direction, or am I simply taking random alleyways to other random streets, only to be faced with a canal that I cannot cross and thus have to double back on myself?

Something else that makes me pause in the midst of my wide-eyed, frenzied picture taking walk through these monoliths is how truly old these structures are...the Basilica of Saint Mark in Venice dates back to 1105, the Basilica of Saint Mary of the Flower in Florence was started in 1296 and completed in 1436, and below the Duomo in Milan, we saw a baptistery that was constructed in 335! These cathedrals were built to stand the test of time, and with some assistance (i.e. periodic refurbishing), they have stood witness to *many* hundreds of years. Contemplating the vast history of these structures, I find myself grappling with several questions. First, I acknowledge that my life is but a whisper in human history. How much of a difference will my life make in comparison to the millions of lives that have passed through the Doumos? And second, I learned that hundreds of craftsman contributed to the construction of structures that have stood for more than 700 years. Did they consider the consequences of their choices as they fashioned the stone, fired the gold, and spread the paint that still adorns these monoliths today? Do I take similar care in the decisions I make today given the limited time I have left on this planet?

Finally, my experience touring each Doumo has been made that much richer and meaningful because I've had the opportunity to do it with people that I care about. The shared awe and inspiration, the excitement and anticipation of what lies around the next marble colonnade, and the triumph of reaching the top of 414 steps of a bell tower heighten the experience much more than I could ever experience on my own. This reminds me of the value of sharing my spiritual and religious journey with those whom I love and cherish.

Whereas you may not be touring Italy today, I invite you, ASERVIC member, to consider the condition of your Doumo, to live intentionally, and to seek others with whom to share your spiritual and religious lives.

President

W. Bryce Hagedorn
Bryce.Hagedorn@ucf.edu

Past-President

Carman Gill
cgill@argosy.edu

President-Elect

Elizabeth R. O'Brien
elizabeth-o'brien@utc.edu

Treasurer:

Emeric Imre Csaszar
icsasz1@lsu.edu

Secretary:

Rick Gressard
crgres@wm.edu



What ASERVIC Members Need to Know about the 2014 Code of Ethics (Part 1)

Stephanie F. Dailey, ASERVIC Ethics Committee Chair
ACA Ethics Committee, Co-chair

Earlier this year, the Governing Council of the American Counseling Association (ACA) officially approved the *ACA Code of Ethics* (2014) for professional counselors. Revised approximately every 7-10 years, each iteration of the *Code* is intended to accurately reflect current issues faced by professionals in a variety of settings. In a two part series the *Ethics Corner* will outline specific changes to the 2014 *Code*, focusing on additions/revisions which may impact counselors working within the spiritual and/or religious domain. We begin part one with a general overview of changes and expand on specific changes related to technology. Why do we start this series with technology? Because nearly every counselor, regardless of whether they are working in a Christian based non-profit counseling center, private practice, or at an internship site, will encounter these issues in some form or another.

General Overview of Major Changes

The primary focus of changes, according to ACA Chief Professional Officer David Kaplan and ACA Director of Ethics Erin Martz, was technology, social media, and imposition of counselor values (Kaplan & Martz, 2014a). Other areas of focus included clarifying the values of the counseling profession, how counselors can more practically work with clients who have contagious and life-threatening diseases, and clarifying whether making an appointment is considered confidential information. In addition, the new Code also emphasizes using an ethical decision-making model.

Technology, Social Media, and Distance Counseling

The 2014 *Code of Ethics* now has an entire section (Section H) dedicated to distance counseling, technology and social media. This section is applicable to all counselors, regardless of specialty or type of practice, because nearly all professionals utilize electronic forms of communication. In addition to defining social media, the revised *Code* explains that counselors need to be competent in all forms of communication they use with clients. This means being aware of privacy settings and encryption tools (see Standard H.2.d.) as well as understanding relevant laws and regulations where both the counselor and the client live (see Standard H.1.b.). The code does not require practitioners to have a Facebook page, use Skype, or text; but it does necessitate that those counselors who use technology understand all implications and best practices surrounding the use of these tools (Kaplan & Martz, 2014b). Competence to use technology is emphasized, as well as making sure the use of technology is in the best interest of the client. More specifically, this means the new *Code* requires counselors to understand (ACA, 2014):

- ◆ Their responsibility to develop knowledge and skills regarding distance counseling, technology, and social media (Standard F.7.b.; H.1.a.)
- ◆ Applicable legal rights and limitations governing the practice of counseling across state lines (Standard H.1.b.)
- ◆ Accessibility protocols (Standard H.5.d)
- ◆ Applicable laws and licensure regulations regarding distance counseling in both the counselor and client's state/district/territory (Standard H.1.b.)
- ◆ Client's "freedom of choice" regarding the use of social media and technology (Standard H.2.a.)

- ◆ How to maintain appropriate boundaries (e.g., the difference between a personal Facebook page and a professional Facebook page; Standard H.2.b.; H.6.a.)

Definitions found in the ACA Code of Ethics

Distance Counseling – The provision of counseling services by means other than face-to-face meetings, usually with the aid of technology (ACA, 2014, p. 20).

Social Media – technology-based forms of communication of ideas, beliefs, personal histories, etc. (e.g., social networking sites, blogs; ACA, 2014, p. 21).

Personal Virtual Relationship – engaging in a relationship via technology and/or social media that blurs the professional boundary (e.g., friending on social networking sites); using personal accounts as the connection point for the virtual relationship (ACA, 2014, p. 20).

Professional Virtual Relationship – using technology and/or social media in a professional manner and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries; using business accounts that cannot be linked back to personal accounts as the connection point for the virtual relationship (e.g., a business page versus a personal profile; ACA, 2014, p. 20).

- ◆ How to avoid having a personal virtual relationship with clients, former clients, potential clients, or students/supervisees (Standard A.5.e.)
- ◆ Precautions required for counselors to avoid disclosing confidential information (Standard H.6.d.)
- ◆ Limitations to confidentiality (Standard H.2.b.; H.2.c.)
- ◆ The need to verify the client’s identity (Standard H.3.)
- ◆ Privacy violations (e.g., a counselor visits a client’s Facebook page without permission from that client; Standard H.6.c.)
- ◆ Appropriate use of technology with students, supervisees, and others in which the counselor has a professional relationship (e.g., friends/relatives of clients; Standard F.2.c, F.7.b., F.8.a., Section H)
- ◆ Multicultural considerations, including translation capabilities as needed (Standard H.5.d)

Understanding these new guidelines is essential. Because social media and technology are constantly changing, counselors need to routinely familiarize themselves with specific protocols surrounding the use of technology and social media with clients (ACA, 2014). Remember - even if you do not use distance counseling or social media methods, all counselors need to clarify their social media presence with clients (ACA, 2014b). Ignoring a “friend” request from a client or not responding to an email or text from a client is not sufficient – counselors need to openly clarify how they will utilize technology in their work with all parties involved. Anyone looking for more information regarding these, and other, additions/modifications to the *Code* may find the following resources helpful:

Download the *ACA Code of Ethics*: <http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics>

Free ACA podcast: <http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/podcasts/docs/default-source/aca-podcasts/ht043---the-new-2014-code-of-ethics-an-overview>

Six-part webinar covering various components of the 2014 Code: <http://www.counseling.org/continuing-education/webinars>

Counseling Today’s six-part monthly series titled *New Concepts in the ACA Code of Ethics*: <http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics>

Counseling Today online article *A Living Document of Ethical Guidance*: <http://ct.counseling.org/2014/05/a-living-document-of-ethical-guidance/>

Look to the ACA Website for more resources: <http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics/code-of-ethics-resources>

The *Ethics Corner* will continue to review changes to the *ACA Code of Ethics* (2014) in the Spring edition of *Interaction*. Part two will address how the *Code* clarifies that counselors must make a referral on the basis of skill-based competency, not personal values and other major changes.

References

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

Kaplan, D., & Martz, E. (2014a, July). New Concepts in the ACA Code of Ethics: An overview of the revised ACA Code of Ethics.

Counseling Today, 20-21. Retrieved from http://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/ethics/ethics_july_2014.pdf?sfvrsn=2

Kaplan, D., & Martz, E. (2014a, September). New Concepts in the ACA Code of Ethics: Distance counseling, technology and social media. *Counseling Today*, 22-24. Retrieved from http://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/ethics/ethics_sept_2014.pdf?sfvrsn=2

New Member Spotlight

Kaila Berry

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

I began this journey about a year after my daughter was born. For years I had felt pulled in the direction of counseling, but unsure of whether I was truly capable. This journey aligns with my spiritual story in that the closer I grew to God, the more I felt that He was directing me towards a path of helping others through counseling.

What drew you membership in ASERVIC?

I was drawn to ASERVIC because of the Christian resources available. I currently work as a pastoral care pastor at our church and hope to be able to utilize these resources in my current work and future practice.

How do you see yourself being involved in ASERVIC?

I see myself being involved initially as just a member. However, as I progress in my degree and move into a career, I would like to be more fully involved in this organization.



Russell J. Pyle

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

At an early age I knew that this path was not mine to walk, and by the time I was in high school I found myself on a search that would take me through getting a degree in theology from Eastern Mennonite University and eventually converting to Buddhism when I was 27. It was around this time that I discovered counseling as a preferred profession.

What drew you membership in ASERVIC?

Since I began my doctoral program in counselor education last fall my research interest in spirituality has grown. I first encountered ASERVIC through the Journal of Counseling and Values while writing my first doctoral manuscript. Through JCV, I have come into contact with this wonderful division, and I am excited to become part of the ASERVIC network.

How do you see yourself being involved in ASERVIC?

I hope to continue writing work that is based in spirituality and plan on presenting at like-minded conferences. I currently serve as co-editor of the Association of Humanistic Counseling's newsletter InfoChange and would love to see some inter-division cooperation. I have a strong desire to become an active member in the ASERVIC community and look forward to meeting you all at conferences events in the future.



Spirituality in the Field



David Hartman

There was a time that I dreaded the expression “professional student”, as my non-academic friends often used it to attempt to make sense of my role in the world. I could see their point; I do have a lot of education. It has been a long road through a master’s in sociology, a master’s in clinical mental health counseling, and a brief stint in law school (don’t ask). Presently, I am nearing the end of a doctorate in Counselor Education & Supervision at Seattle Pacific University. I also work as a Project & Research Coordinator at The Prosperity Agenda, a Seattle-based research organization that works to increase economic mobility for impoverished individuals living in Washington State. Throughout my entire academic journey, I have maintained an interest in working with and researching adolescents and emerging adults. In particular, I am interested in researching how they form and maintain spiritual and religious beliefs and practices, and how these impact networks, romantic relationships, and career choices. My primary role in counseling is increasingly moving toward one of research and instruction, but I know that a lot of practicing counselors do not share this excitement of mine.

However, I was struck by the wording of the 10th ASERVIC spiritual competency (ASERVIC, 2009) about gathering spiritual religious information “from the client *and/or other sources*” [italics mine]. I believe that counselors need to consider research as one of these “other sources”. As counselors, we often serve a population that has some

commonalities. In my case, I work predominantly with college students. As important as it is to do investigative work with individual clients about their religious and spiritual beliefs/practices, it is also vital to understand developmental and contextual backgrounds. These backgrounds can help counselors understand what types of questions that clients need religion and spirituality, as powerful sources of meaning making, to answer. For example, if you work with clients attempting to recover from chemical dependency, there's a good chance that these clients are using religion/spirituality in specific ways that differ slightly from other clients. In working with emerging adults in college settings, my research on developmental trajectories, social network tendencies, identity theory, and surveys of college student values and struggles has proven invaluable. While I work with individual clients to discover how spirituality and religion matter (or do not matter) specifically to them, I approach them with a general understanding of their stage of life.

Every client's story is certainly unique, but the common bonds of humanity and being situated in cultures and subcultures ensures that no one is immune to larger social and biological forces. Research is important, even in areas like spirituality and religiosity, as these areas are typically involved in client meaning making. If you find yourself working with clients that largely share a common background, it is important to consider research as an important component of the "other sources" referenced above. This can aid you in asking good questions to help illuminate a client's religious and spiritual world. I am in no way saying that research eclipses the value of discovery and inquiry with individual clients. However, research may help as a guide to understand and frame informed questions around the areas that religion and spirituality are attempting to address in a client's life.

If, like me, you are interested in understanding something of the world of college students in the US, here are some resources for you to consider:

Arnett, J.J., & Tanner, J.L. (2006). *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Barry, C.M., & Abo-Zena, M.M. (2014). *Emerging adults' religiousness and spirituality: Meaning-making in an age of transition*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Clydesdale, T. (2007). *The first year out: Understanding American teens after high school*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) – The Freshman Survey (yearly survey of freshman attitudes and demographics from 1966 to present). See <http://www.heri.ucla.edu/tfsPublications.php>

Jay, M. (2012). *The defining decade: Why your twenties matter and how to make the most of them now*. New York: Hachette Book Group.

Johnson, J., Rochkind, J., Ott, A.N., & DuPont, S. *With their whole lives ahead of them: Myths and realities about why so many students fail to finish college*. New York: Public Agenda. Retrieved from: <http://www.publicagenda.org/files/theirwholelivesaheadofthem.pdf>

Smith, C. (2009). *Souls in transition: The religious and spiritual lives of emerging adults*. New York: Oxford University Press.

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ASERVIC. (2009). *Competencies for Addressing Spiritual and Religious Issues in Counseling*.

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 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 Jodi Bartley (jlbartl2@uncg.edu).

- ◇ Follow the ASERVIC newsletter “guidelines for submission” as published in the most recent newsletter publication (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 Winter issue of
the
Interaction?

Deadline is ***January 23, 2015***

Please refer to ASERVIC.org for guidelines for publication or contact the editor at cgerhard@ashland.edu for information.

Grace

Jodi L. Bartley

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

“Grace has been defined as the outward expression of the inward harmony of the soul.”

~ William Hazlett

Somewhere deep inside, we all have the potential to fall to our knees. It’s perhaps one of the most heartbreaking – and maybe even paradoxically beautiful – images in religious art: the individual, humbled to her or his knees, pleading for mercy. Sometimes, if we watch closely, we can catch a glimpse of the internal fall to the knees slightly masked in peoples’ eyes... the subtle pleading in a downcast glance, the gaze that pauses just a little too long, the wandering stare into the distance, “I’m drowning, please help.” Even shrouded in the confidence of an upturned chin, some corner of a broken heart whispers. And it’s in these moments that we grasp onto the wise musical refrain that once came before us, “Amazing grace... that saved a wretch like me.”

The word *grace* seems to be one of those mysterious concepts that is somatically felt into understanding, rather than cognitively apprehended. In fact, the term is somewhat elusive, encompassing quite a few definitions, ranging from a gift of Divine assistance, to a pleasing trait or way of being (e.g., graceful), to a prayer (e.g., say “grace”), and even to a type of musical turn (Merriam-Webster.com, 2014). From the religious perspective, grace has been defined as “. . . the experience of assistance from a supernatural or Divine force outside the self to which was attributed an outcome of positive change. . .” (Bronte & Wade, 2012, p. 186). More specifically, it may include “. . . unconditional love seen as forgiveness (without a demand for justice), moving on (without vengeance), and extravagant offering” (Worsley, 2010, p. 161). Grace can even be envisioned as a gift offered to another, simply taking the form of deep acceptance (Bland, 2009). It is with this last definition that we, as counselors, may embody the power of grace in our sessions with clients.

Clients often come to see us in various stages of falling... perhaps still holding on, perhaps tripping over themselves in pain, or perhaps even cascading into a desperate surrender. As counselors, humbled by our own life stories of frightening free falls, perhaps we can offer that deep acceptance – a moment of grace – to our clients. Perhaps we serve as the person who gives them a second (or third or fourth or hundredth) chance, when they continue to struggle in the grips of addiction. Perhaps we offer a moment of safety and solace in the chaos of domestic violence. We might even serve as a beacon of hope, when the depressive cloak of grief descends. When we see their eyes, shrouded by fear, but pleading for something underneath, we can be a presence of grace... not to communicate that we know the answers – nobody does – but to communicate a sense of “I am with you. In your fall, I am with you.” Grace.

References

- Bland, E. D. (2009). The divided self: Courage and grace as agents of change. *Journal of Psychology & Christianity, 28*(4), 326-337.
- Bronte, J. C., & Wade, J. (2012). The experience of grace: Divine assistance in making a change. *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, 44*(2), 182-200.
- Merriam-Webster.com. (2014). Grace. Retrieved July 5, 2014 from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/grace>
- Worsley, H. (2010). Children's literature as implicit religion: The concept of grace unpacked. *Implicit Religion, 13* (2), 161-171. doi:10.1558/imre.v13i2.161

*Welcome to LaKeitha Poole!!
The new Assistant Editor of the Interaction!*



LaKeitha Poole is a second-year doctoral student in Counselor Education and Supervision at Regent University. She is from New Orleans, LA but currently lives in Baton Rouge, LA while working as a counselor and program coordinator in the Louisiana State University (LSU) Office of Multicultural Affairs. LaKeitha's research interests include counseling services for domestic, ethnic minority populations, family systems, and the integration of counseling and spirituality. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, reading, and playing with her 5-year-old shih tzu, Cody. She is extremely excited about being able to join Dr. Sadler-Gerhardt in working on the ASERVIC newsletter.

Note from Claudia: I am delighted to introduce LaKeitha to ASERVIC Interaction readers. You can see some of her creative work in this issue! Please join me in welcoming her!

Save the Date—July 17-18, 2015

Join us in the Big Apple for the 2015 Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Issues in Counseling Conference!

Network with other counselors, educators, researchers, and graduate students for two days of content, experiential, and poster sessions focusing on issues of *Spirituality, Religion, Ethics, and Values in Counseling.*

Will be held in the beautiful Roosevelt Hotel, in midtown Manhattan, NY <http://www.theroosevelthotel.com/> (with a great room rate of \$199 for single/double, including guest room internet!)

Call for Program Proposals--Revised Form! Deadline to Submit: December 1, 2014

Please go to the ASERVIC website (<http://www.aservic.org>) for instructions and to download the Revised Proposal Form . Please note that we increased the word limits for the program description and made sure that everyone can use word count.

******Please be sure to use the form titled ASERVIC 2015 Conference Proposal Form [rev. 9-30] that is now on our website.**

Information on registration costs and additional conference details will be posted on the ASERVIC website soon.

If you have questions about the conference or proposal, please contact Harriet Glossoff or Elizabeth O'Brien, Conference Co-Chairs, at ASERVIC2015Conference@gmail.com.