



TCA 69th Annual Professional Growth Conference Program Guide

November 19-21, 2025

Marriott Marquis | Houston, TX

Preliminary Program as of November 18, 2025

Subject to Change

Wednesday, November 19th | Learning Institutes

(Additional Registration Fee)

9:30AM-5:00PM

A. TAADA Presents: Developing a Robust Treatment Plan Utilizing Consultation from Young to Late Adulthood

Room: Montrose

Topic: Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling

Presenter(s): Stephen Jennings; Christina Meyers; Michele Mahr

Seasoned counselors often discover that a client's initial goal/presenting problem is only a symptom of deeper issues. Utilizing consultation as outlined in the ACA Code of Ethics, this program outlines the development of a generationally appropriate treatment plan from consulting with the client's support network.

B. CEO of Building a Business with Empathy and Ethics: The Culturally Sensitive Business Masterclass We All Missed

Room: Tanglewood

CE Requirement Category(s): Cultural Diversity, Ethics

Topic: Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Terra Wagner

Building a culturally sensitive and ethical counseling practice requires intentionality at every step from your website to termination. An inclusive practice begins with use affirming, non-assumptive language woven throughout all written materials. The website should reflect diversity in imagery, language, and accessibility, ensuring all clients feel welcome. Intake processes must invite clients to share cultural and identity-based information safely and openly. In sessions, clinicians should practice cultural humility, tailoring approaches to fit each client's worldview. Diagnosing should be done with awareness of cultural norms to avoid mislabeling or pathologizing difference. Insurance documentation should be handled with transparency and fairness, ensuring clients understand their rights and costs. Finally, termination should honor the client's journey and needs. When empathy and ethics guide every business decision, counseling becomes not only a service but a safe space for healing and respect across all cultures.

~~CANCELED C. Experiential Activities for Building Intimacy in Couples Counseling~~

D. TMHCA Presents: From Class to Clients: Launching a Legal, Ethical, and Profitable Private Practice

Room: Sugarland

CE Requirement Category(s): Ethics

Topic: Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Kate Walker; Jennifer-Marie Fairchild

Launching a private practice takes more than clinical skill—it requires a strong foundation in ethics, legal compliance, and business strategy. This six-hour pre-conference session is tailored for graduate counseling students and early-career professionals preparing to enter private practice. Participants will explore essential topics including ethical decision-making, risk management, business planning, and emerging trends such as the use of artificial intelligence in marketing, documentation, and client workflows. Special emphasis will be placed on how these innovations align with ethical codes and regulatory standards. Through interactive discussions, real-world case examples, and structured planning, attendees will develop a personalized roadmap to transition from classroom to practice. The session will also address common pitfalls related to supervision, pricing, and technology use. Participants will leave with increased clarity, confidence, and tools to ethically and effectively launch a sustainable private practice in today's evolving mental health landscape.

E. Overparenting at the Intersection of Generativity

Room: Clear Lake

Topic: Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling

Presenter(s): Melodee Alexander

This session presents the progression of research on overparenting extending into midlife. Over the last two decades, a great deal of research has been presented on the impact of overparenting in childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood; however, research is needed to understand the impact of overparenting in midlife. This presentation will cover the impact of overparenting in midlife, consider how these outcomes influence adult sibling relationships, and explore the overarching familial outcomes as parents share the generative stage and move into later life.

Thursday, November 20th | 90-Minute Programs
8:00AM-9:30AM

1. Invisible and Impactful: Elevating Maternal Mental Health in Modern Counseling Practice

RECORDED PROGRAM: Will also be available in the conference app after the program until 12/31/25. Available in TCA Online Learning Center in 2026.

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Westchase

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Wellness and Prevention, Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling

Presenter(s): Rebekah Willis

Maternal mental health spans far beyond postpartum care, influencing lifelong well-being and mental health outcomes. This session explores the impact of perinatal and perimenopausal transitions, including postpartum depression, cognitive stigma, and suicide risk in midlife (Venborg et al., 2023; Nakanishi et al., 2023). Participants will learn how counselors, regardless of specialty, can ethically and effectively support this underserved population using trauma-informed, culturally responsive approaches.

2. Counselor to Counselor: Peer Crisis Support

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Meyerland

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Kimberly Lagge; Deborah Hart; Carrie Beyer; Angela Hardin; Gillian Rodriguez; David Gary

Professional counselors are often at the forefront of the response teams when a crisis hits a community. The skills they bring to support others during a crisis, however, don't always translate to identifying their own symptoms. The goal of TCA's Peer Crisis Support Task Force is to build a team of volunteers across Texas specifically prepared to support and assist the counselors "on the ground" delivering services, similar to emergency responder crisis support programs. Please join us to learn how to distinguish between vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, burnout and impairment along with the related ACA ethical codes. Attendees will leave prepared to help their peers with specific guidelines for more effective support, ready to join the TCA Peer Support Team.

3. Starting Strong: Establishing Your Counselor Identity as a New School Counselor

RECORDED PROGRAM: Will also be available in the conference app after the program until 12/31/25. Available in TCA Online Learning Center in 2026.

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Briargrove

CE Credential Category: School Counseling

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Jacqueline Moreno

New to school counseling? You're not alone. In this engaging and supportive session, graduate students and new professionals will explore how to confidently step into their role as school

counselors. From defining your professional identity to navigating school politics and building culturally responsive relationships, this session will provide practical tools and honest insights into starting strong. You'll leave with strategies for managing the transition, communicating your role clearly, and advocating for your place on the school team—all while maintaining a healthy balance and sense of purpose.

4. Ethical Counseling in Contemporary Practice: Integrating Core Values and Cultural Responsiveness

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Kingwood

CE Credential Category: Ethics

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Wendy Killam

This interactive session will explore core ethical principles, legal responsibilities, and professional boundaries specific to rehabilitation counseling. Participants will review key elements of the ACA Code of Ethics, learn a practical model for ethical decision-making, and examine real-world scenarios involving confidentiality, dual relationships, billing practices, and social media use. Ideal for students, new professionals, and seasoned counselors seeking a dynamic refresher on ethical best practices.

5. Enhancing Multicultural Competence for Counselors

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: River Oaks

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity, School Counseling

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling, Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Cynthia Lee Coronado; Patricia Goodman; Karina Saldana

This presentation equips mental health professionals to integrate cultural self-awareness with responsive counseling practices. Participants will explore multicultural counseling, client worldviews, and social justice models to enhance ethical, effective care for diverse populations.

6. Mindful Change: Using DBT and ACT Together in Clinical Practice

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Hunter's Creek

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship

Presenter(s): K. Michelle Hollenbaugh; Kimberlee Mincey; Chris Leeth; Ada Uzundu

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) are both evidence-based, third-wave cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) approaches that are effective with diverse client populations. DBT and ACT share many aspects in common; they incorporate mindfulness, reality acceptance, and CBT-based skills. However, there are also notable differences—ACT focuses on cognitive flexibility and personal values and purpose, whereas DBT emphasizes a behavioral approach to reducing problem behaviors and enhancing emotion regulation. This session will cover the foundations and basic tenets of both DBT and ACT, including an analysis of their similarities and differences, as well as which clinical situations might be best suited for each. Considerations for diverse client populations will be discussed. Finally, attendees will learn how DBT

and ACT can complement each other in practice to increase positive outcomes, with a focus on skills and interventions.

7. Working with Families experiencing Parent-Child Contact Issues in Litigation

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Montrose

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): R.J. Davis; Angel Acosta

The purpose of this presentation is to educate beginning counselors on an issue that is commonly seen in the counseling world. Divorce and separation are commonplace in the U.S. Based on data from the CDC and the U.S. Census Bureau; there are approximately 2.3 divorces per 1000 people per year. Individuals (CDC; 2024). Courts and lawyers recommend counseling to families experiencing divorce/separation as a way to support their clients through a challenging time in their lives. Mental Health Counselors can help their clients with emotional regulation, support for their decision making, and support health co-parenting strategies. If parents report to their Legal Counselors that their children are having a hard time with parent transitions, they may also recommend the Children see a Mental Health Counselor. All providers who work with children, teens, or parents who have experienced disruption of the family due to separation/divorce.

8. Trailblazers See the Whole Path: Why Dissociation Matters When Doing Healing Work

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Tanglewood

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Assessment in Counseling, Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling

Presenter(s): Audrey Zatopek

Counselors committed to trauma healing may encounter dissociation as a significant but often overlooked barrier in their work. Dissociation is a common, neurobiologically based response to overwhelming experiences, yet it remains widely misunderstood, underdiagnosed, and insufficiently addressed in most clinical training programs. Without recognizing and understanding dissociative symptoms, clinicians may unintentionally retraumatize clients, misread behaviors, or encounter stalled progress in therapy. This presentation introduces foundational knowledge about dissociation's developmental roots, clinical signs, and the limitations of traditional talk therapy in these cases. Participants will explore practical, trauma-informed strategies—including the phasic approach—to support client safety, stabilization, and reconnection. Designed for passionate, ethical helping professionals, this session offers tools to navigate dissociation with greater clarity and care. By deepening their understanding of dissociation, counselors can more effectively meet the complex needs of dissociation-impacted clients, facilitate healing, and honor the full humanity of the people they serve.

9. Integrating sex therapy in couples counseling: An overview of best practices

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Memorial

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship

Presenter(s): Elizabeth Munoz; Kate Walker; Paul Carrola

Many counselors are uncomfortable and hesitant to broach the topic of sex in couples counseling. However, sex is an important part of any healthy intimate relationship and often emerges as an issue to address in couples counseling. Many counselors refer clients out for sex therapy, but this session will provide resources that will help all counselors feel better prepared to address sex and sexuality with their clients. This presentation will 1) debunk common misconceptions of sex therapy, 2) provide information about how to develop foundational competency in sex therapy, and 3) discuss skills and resources that that can be used by both the novice and advanced counselor.

10. Brain Love: Innovative Brain-Based Strategies that Teach Peace and Decrease Behavior Referrals

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Sugarland

CE Credential Category: School Counseling

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling, Wellness and Prevention

Presenter(s): Lyndsay Morris

Understanding how the brain functions under stress is key to building safe, inclusive, and emotionally supportive learning environments. This interactive session provides the blueprint for not only teaching emotional regulation, but also creating spaces that promote self-regulation and well-being. It empowers graduate students, new professionals, and experienced counselors with practical, brain-based strategies to teach emotional regulation and reduce behavior referrals through a culturally responsive lens.

11. Project Empathy: The Neuroscience of Addiction Meets Positive Psychology

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Clear Lake

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Wellness and Prevention

Presenter(s): Drew Dutton

Project Empathy is a transformative workshop designed to reduce stigma and reshape how we understand substance use disorders. Grounded in neuroscience, this session explores how addiction affects the brain and why traditional approaches often fall short.

You'll learn practical strategies rooted in solution-focused therapy, strength-based practices, positive psychology, and empathy. Whether you're in a professional setting or everyday conversation, discover how to bring compassion and effectiveness into substance use-related interactions. This workshop also highlights the unique challenges adolescents face with substance use, offering up-to-date data and developmental insight. Participants walk away with tools to build more meaningful, supportive, and evidence-informed responses.

Canceled: 12. Restoring the Healer: Wellness Through Movement-Based Yoga

TCA Membership Meeting
Thursday, November 20th | General Session
Texas Ballroom DE | 10:00AM-11:30AM

Keynote Speaker: Rebecca Chow

The Power of You: Embracing Your Brilliance to Shape Generations

Your nervous system is our superpower—it helps you adapt, connect, and empower across generations. Gen Z, Millennials, and beyond all need different things, and when you tune into your own regulation, you can show up with the presence, awareness, and energy to truly make an impact. Co-regulation, intuitive listening, and embodied awareness aren't just buzzwords – they're how you create safety, build trust, and model resilience. When you regulate you don't just support others – you inspire, lead, and shape the future. It's time to embrace your brilliance and step fully into the power of you!

Thursday, November 20th | 90-Minute Programs
12:30PM-2:00PM

13. The Impact of Nutrition on Mental Health: Overlooked Factors in Counseling

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: Westchase

Topic(s): Wellness and Prevention

Presenter(s): Kristina Nelson; Malinda Fasol

Research has consistently shown that nutrition has a significant impact on mental health, yet the counseling profession seems to overlook this factor. Food is a part of everyone's life and is often influenced by culture. Counselors have the opportunity to enhance theoretical approaches to treatment by incorporating psychoeducation and appropriate resources surrounding nutrition to help clients address their mental health concerns. We will present research on the effects of nutrition, water intake, and exercise on mental health, and introduce strategies for counselors to ethically broach these topics with clients.

14. ADHD and the Virtual World

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: Meyerland

CE Credential Category: School Counseling

Topic(s): Group Dynamics and Counseling

Presenter(s): Kimberly Gaskil

The participants will be presented with information and strategies that will assist them in connecting with an individual as they engage in this ever-changing world. Next, individuals who work with students that have been identified as having ADHD/ADD are given tools and skills. These will assist them when working with individuals to increase focus and engagement. The virtual world is a tool that provides an environment where the individual can thrive while being part of this immersive and engaging environment.

15. Reclaiming Pleasure: A Culturally Responsive Approach to Working with Black Women
Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: Briargrove

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Presenter(s): Angela Jones

This session invites counselors to rethink how sexual pleasure, especially for Black women, is explored in therapy. Too often, these conversations are avoided, minimized, or filtered only through trauma. This session offers a culturally responsive approach that views pleasure as essential to emotional, relational, and cultural well-being. Grounded in Relational Cultural Theory and research on race, gender, and embodiment, we will explore how stereotypes, silence, and generational expectations shape Black women's relationship with rest, softness, and desire. Rather than centering trauma alone, participants will learn how to engage clients in affirming conversations about pleasure as part of healing. Using clinical vignettes, personal narrative, and research, attendees will gain tools to support this work ethically and with cultural care. This is not about becoming a sex therapist. It is about honoring the full human experience and helping clients reclaim parts of themselves long left unspoken.

16. Updates from the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: River Oaks

CE Credential Category: Ethics

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Lia Amuna; Brian Eby; Loretta Bradley (Professional Members); Nadia Stewart (Public Member); Cristina DeLuna (Staff)

Join members of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors (TSBEPC) for an informative panel presentation and interactive Q&A session. This discussion will address current licensing and ethics issues impacting Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) across Texas. Board members and staff will also share important updates on the licensing application process, address common causes of processing delays, and share recent improvements and regulatory developments.

17. Igniting Resistance: Launching Culturally Responsive Counseling Against SpaceX-Led Colonization and Gentrification in Brownsville

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: Hunter's Creek

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Presenter(s): Rachelle Morales; Yanixa Camacho; Kaitlyn Mata; Eileen Rodriguez

As SpaceX rockets launched over Brownsville, so did waves of displacement, ecological grief, and cultural erasure for Latine and Indigenous communities in the Rio Grande Valley. Drawing from the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies, this session will challenge attendees to examine grassroots responses to gentrification and colonization and how to transform passion into resilient ethical action. Through community narratives, ecological awareness, and case analysis, participants will explore strategies for integrating advocacy and healing in direct practice. Whether you plan to teach, counsel, supervise, or organize, this session fuels your commitment to social

justice and helps you, your clients, supervisees, and/or students blaze a trail of meaningful, sustainable support and resistance . Expect a dynamic, interactive space with creative reflection, advocacy tools, and takeaways ready for immediate action because when communities are under threat, counselors must rise where roots run deep.

18. Where There's a Spark, There's Fire: Dimming the Burnout, Not the Flame by Embracing AI to Streamline Counseling Administrative Tasks

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: Sugarland

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue, Wellness and Prevention

Presenter(s): Misty Solt; Kasey Key

Clinical paperwork can dim the passion that draws counselors to their work. This session invites participants to blaze a sustainable trail by using large-language-model tools to carry the heaviest embers of documentation so counselors can keep their therapeutic fire bright. Grounded in emerging research on AI scribes and mental-health specific language models, the workshop demonstrates how prompt recipes, ethical checklists, and careful editing can reduce note-taking time, sharpen conceptual thinking, and keep records squarely within Texas rules and the ACA Code of Ethics. Through two live demonstrations and guided hands-on practice, participants will learn to steer AI toward concise, payer-ready language while safeguarding privacy and minimizing bias. They will leave with a reusable prompt template, an ethics checklist, and the confidence to let AI handle the ashes of paperwork while they tend the flame of real presence.

19. The School-Based Mental Health Collaborative: Ongoing Efforts to Build the School Counseling Workforce for Underserved Areas in SE Texas

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: Clear Lake

CE Credential Category: School Counseling

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue, Wellness and Prevention

Presenter(s): Jeffrey Sullivan; Tershundrea Branch; Abbie Strunc; Jaime Coyne; Victoria Hollas

We are facing a critical nationwide shortage of mental health professionals in our schools, which directly impacts the well-being and success of our students. Through our innovative partnership, funded by the Department of Education, the School-Based Mental Health Collaborative program has the potential to alleviate this shortage by providing a pipeline to a committed pool of novice school-based mental health professionals who have been extensively trained in supporting students in high-needs schools. Attendees will learn about this ongoing effort and how first and second year school counseling students are bolstering mental health support in participating school districts. Attendees will also learn about strategies to engage community partners through a mentorship/counselor education model that's meeting the growing need for mental health resources for children and teens in schools.

Thursday, November 20th | 3-Hour Programs

1:00PM – 4:00PM

New Program: 20. FOO Mapping: Changing the Patterns That No Longer Serve

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 1:00 - 4:00p

Room: Kingwood

CE Credential Category: Supervision

Topic(s): Group Dynamics and Counseling

Presenter(s): Crystal Collier

FOO Mapping is a unique, integrated, brief therapy technique to map a client's cognitive, affective, somatic, and behavioral patterns. Learn how to implement a technique that takes client's through five neurodevelopmental stages to map how negative core beliefs, emotional triggers, negative behavioral patterns, and somatic issues become anchored in neural networks. Once mapped, learn how to help clients create targeted treatment plans for each area that can be practically applied in every day life.

21. From Subpoena to Stand - Guiding Mental Health Clinicians Through Court

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 1:00 - 4:00p

Room: Montrose

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Kristy Donaldson; Briana Gongora

Mental health clinicians may be subpoenaed to testify in criminal cases, a process that can be unfamiliar and intimidating. This presentation will equip clinicians with essential knowledge and practical strategies to navigate legal proceedings with confidence and professionalism. Topics will include understanding the subpoena process, differentiating between fact and expert witness roles, preparing for testimony, and maintaining ethical standards while protecting patient confidentiality. Through case examples and practical guidance, clinicians will learn how to fulfill their legal obligations while upholding professional integrity in a courtroom setting.

22. Raising Critical Consciousness: Five Interactive Strategies for Counselor Educators to Develop Ethical and Culturally Responsive Clinicians

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 1:00 - 4:00p

Room: Tanglewood

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity, Supervision

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling, Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship

Presenter(s): Kimberly Parker

Now more than ever, counselor educators and supervisors must cultivate critical consciousness to better see, validate, and support clients while reducing early dropout rates. This interactive session introduces five structured activities grounded in Freire's (1970) critical consciousness framework, the MSJCC (Ratts et al., 2016), and intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1989) to foster self-reflection, address privilege and oppression, and enhance case conceptualization skills. Participants will engage in experiential exercises that integrate cultural humility, bias awareness, and advocacy into their teaching and supervision practices, leaving with research-based tools to create inclusive and ethical training environments.

23. Unmasking the Wound: Empowerment-Focused Group Therapy & Ethical Dimensions for Female Survivors of Narcissistic Abuse

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 1:00 - 4:00p

Room: Memorial

CE Credential Category: Ethics

Topic(s): Group Dynamics and Counseling

Presenter(s): Shannon Higgins-Hailey

Women who have survived narcissistic abuse often present with complex emotional wounds, including diminished self-worth, identity confusion, and lingering trauma symptoms such as anxiety, hypervigilance, and emotional dysregulation. Group therapy can be a powerful vehicle for recovery by providing community, validation, and structured psychoeducation. However, facilitating such groups demands a trauma-informed, ethically grounded approach, given the heightened vulnerability of this population.

Thursday, November 20th | 90-Minute Programs
2:30PM-4:00PM

24. Distance Supervision of Rural Graduate Students and New Professionals

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 2:30 - 4:00p

Room: Westchase

CE Credential Category: Supervision

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Karl Witt; Christine McNichols; Kristopher Garza

Graduate students and new professionals need quality supervision, but this can be challenging to obtain or provide a challenge in rural areas. Paralleling the remote provision of counseling services, distance supervision is an option but special considerations must be taken into account. This session will focus on best practices for distance supervision of rural practitioners.

25. Stuck: The Convergence of Neurodiversity and Complex Trauma

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 2:30-4:00p

Room: Meyerland

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling, Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling, Wellness and Prevention

Presenter(s): Kara Hurt; Hannah Dahdouh; Diane Smedley

The mental health community's knowledge of neurodiversity and complex trauma are uniquely evolving sectors of clinical understanding, and as such can present unforeseen challenges for practitioners as they work to support their clients. Both current research and scholarly discourse indicate that there is a high comorbidity rate between complex posttraumatic stress disorder and neurodevelopmental diagnoses, particularly autism spectrum and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorders. This necessitates that practitioners receive more training in counseling interventions specific to treating clients with neurodevelopmental and complex trauma concerns, separately and concurrently. This presentation aims to provide clinicians with practical guidance for clinical work at the intersection between neurodivergence and trauma. Informed by relational-cultural and somatic theories, the presenters will offer a less pathologizing framework for supporting clients' growth and development that honors the centrality of growth-fostering relationships and the essential need to authentically reconnect with the multiple dimensions of self.

26. Don't Let Them See You Rest: Working Habits and Identity Crisis in the Achievement Culture Era

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 2:30 - 4:00p

Room: Briargrove

CE Credential Category: School Counseling

Topic(s): Wellness and Prevention, Career Development and Counseling

Presenter(s): Mary Whiting; Leslie Garza Mendoza

In Texas's high-stakes educational and professional landscape—where middle schoolers choose career pathways, top 8% automatic college admission creates intense competition, and workplaces demand constant productivity—achievement culture systematically undermines mental wellbeing.

This session examines how achievement culture systematically erodes identity formation, creates burnout-driven mental health challenges, and perpetuates cycles where rest is viewed as laziness or even failure. Participants will explore the psychological mechanisms underlying achievement addiction and performance-based identity. This presentation addresses the unique pressures facing Texans navigating educational systems that demand early specialization through professional cultures that equate worth with productivity.

27. Looking Back and Moving Forward: A Regulatory and Legislative Update

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 2:30 - 4:00p

Room: River Oaks

CE Credential Category: Ethics

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Darrel Spinks

This presentation provides an in-depth regulatory and legislative update for licensed professional counselors in the wake of the 89th Texas Legislature. It highlights recent statutory changes affecting the profession, as well as key regulatory developments and emerging issues the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council anticipates will shape the 2026–2027 biennium.

28. Roll for Mental Health!: Applications of Tabletop Roleplaying Games for Counseling

RECORDED PROGRAM: Will also be available in the conference app after the program until 12/31/25. Available in TCA Online Learning Center in 2026.

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 2:30 - 4:00p

Room: Hunter's Creek

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship

Presenter(s): Ryan Holliman; Beck Munsey

Tabletop role-playing games (TTRPGs) have gone from niche basement hobby to cultural juggernaut—selling out live shows and drawing massive audiences online. But beyond the fantasy and fandom, these games offer rich, untapped potential for therapeutic use—especially for new professionals looking to build connection, creativity, and engagement in their clinical work. At their core, TTRPGs are collaborative storytelling experiences that promote social interaction, emotional expression, and problem-solving. This presentation is designed specifically for early-career clinicians and graduate students, offering a clear, accessible introduction to the world of role-playing games. Attendees will explore how TTRPGs can support mental health goals, discover key elements that make them effective in therapeutic settings, and walk away with practical tools and implementation strategies to begin using games in individual or group work.

29. Blazing New Trails in Clinical Documentation for Graduate Students & New Professionals

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 2:30 - 4:00p

Room: Sugarland

CE Credential Category: Ethics

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Olivia Wedel

Graduate counseling programs provide a strong foundation for students to enter the profession with a skillset readily available for use. An important part of the profession that is beneficial for students

and new professionals is ongoing training in clinical documentation. Clinical documentation for clients, which is known as the 'golden thread;' from the intake to progress note to the treatment plan, is important for efficient, accurate, and timely record-keeping and effective services. Based on Texas' LPC Rules, the ACA Code of Ethics, and research, this presentation highlights the need for concise and accurate record-keeping, which promotes client welfare and justifies clinical necessity for services in compliance with state laws. The presentation provides a step-by-step process teaching graduate students and new professionals how to complete self-audits for their documentation and how to keep accurate and complete client records as required by the Texas LPC Rules.

30. Weathering the weather: Becoming a climate aware counselor to respond to an urgent crisis

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 2:30 - 4:00p

Room: Clear Lake

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Ashley Hamm

The effects of climate change on our communities, lives, and futures are becoming more and more apparent. Many of us in Texas have weathered hurricanes, wildfires, heatwaves, and more in recent years. Climate scientists attribute many of these recent extreme weather events to climate change, saying that these events are happening more frequently and more intensely because of our warming planet. Your clients may be coming in with complex and difficult questions related to the climate, such as "Should I have kids?", "Should I move somewhere safer?", and "How can I plan for a future that looks so bleak?" As counselors, we are needed more than ever to help our clients navigate their overwhelming thoughts and feelings regarding the climate. This program will outline the basic features of climate distress and how we as counselors can respond in a compassionate, non-pathologizing way.

Thursday, November 20th | 90-Minute Programs
4:30PM-6:00PM

31. Legacies of Pain, Pathways to Healing: Clinical Perspectives on Intergenerational Trauma

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:00p

Room: Westchase

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling, Research and Program Evaluation, Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Presenter(s): Courtney Bowser; Taran McGowen

This presentation will discuss the impact of intergenerational trauma on family system relationships. Topics including attachment styles, parenting styles, and overall family health will be discussed as areas of impact. Specific types of intergenerational trauma including racial trauma, history of abuse, and a history of neglect will be discussed with case study examples from the presenters' clinical experiences. Recommendations for assessment and treatment will be explored as well as recommendations for counselor educators on how to increase competence for clinical training on intergenerational trauma informed care.

32. TCCA Hot Topic: "Fostering Resilience and Belonging: The Role of Culturally Responsive Mentorship in Supporting Underrepresented College Students"

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:00p

Room: Meyerland

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Presenter(s): Adachukwu Uzundu; Jeanette Bunch; Melissa Sutherland

This session aims to equip participants with insights into how mentorship programs, particularly those designed with cultural awareness and inclusivity in mind, can enhance the mental health, academic persistence, and personal development of underrepresented college students. Attendees will learn different mentorship strategies and engage in experiential activities that highlight inclusive mentoring practices used to build supportive relationships and create a sense of belonging among underrepresented college students.

33. Assessing Competency through Clinical Supervision: Gatekeeping Considerations

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:00p

Room: Briargrove

CE Credential Category: Supervision

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Kathy Ybanez-Llorente; Tracy Chiles; Maria Haiyasoso

The role of the supervisor is critical in the evaluation of supervisee competency, from the first client seen in graduate school, through the end of the post-graduate supervised experience. Equally important is a supervisor's ability to fulfill their ethical responsibilities related to gatekeeping by

implementing effective remediation when necessary. This presentation will address common supervision mistakes that jeopardize effective gatekeeping and will provide attendees with the opportunity to evaluate their own supervision processes.

34. They Didn't Teach Us This: Training and Supervision Gaps in Addressing Race-Based Trauma in the South

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:00p

Room: Kingwood

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Presenter(s): Cecily Batiste Dawson

This session explores race-based trauma among Black clients in the Southern U.S., highlighting findings from original research on counselor competency and preparedness. Attendees will learn culturally responsive strategies, broaching techniques, and practical tools to address gaps in training and build more effective, empathetic therapeutic relationships.

35. Updates from the Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:00p

Room: River Oaks

CE Credential Category: Ethics

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Jodie Elder (Professional Member)

Hear from members of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists about recent rule changes and the licensing process from initial application to upgrading to full licensure and/or supervisor. Learn about CEs, supervision requirements, and licensure mobility, as well as common ethics violations and how to avoid them. You'll leave this session equipped to practice ethically as an MFT!

36. TMHCA Presents: The Art of Supervision: Exploring AI as a Medium for Expressive and Creative Techniques

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:00p

Room: Hunters's Creek

CE Credential Category: Supervision

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue, Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling

Presenter(s): Loretta Bradley; Lori Hollingsworth; Bret Hendricks

In a rapidly evolving digital world, clinical supervisors are well-positioned to leverage emerging technologies in creative and ethical ways. This interactive session explores how artificial intelligence (AI) can be utilized as a reflective and expressive tool in counseling supervision. Participants will examine how AI-driven platforms, such as generative text, image, and metaphor-based tools, can support supervisees' insight, creativity, and the development of their professional identity.

The session will highlight how supervisors can integrate AI into expressive arts techniques, journaling prompts, role-play scripting, and narrative development, all while maintaining the relational depth of supervision. Emphasis will be placed on ethical considerations, the importance of human judgment, and safeguarding the supervisory alliance.

37. Self-Care in Action: Practical Tools for Counselors Working with Sex Trafficking Survivors

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:00p

Room: Montrose

Topic(s): Wellness and Prevention

Presenter(s): Katherine McVay; Devon Romero; Claudia Interiano-Shiverdecker; Andrea Mendoza; Chris Leeth

Sex trafficking research continues to be in demand for many counselors. With an ethical obligation to practice self-care, counselors should be aware of how working with survivors of sex trafficking can impact their professional self-care strategies. This presentation will highlight findings from several qualitative studies on counselors working with sex trafficking survivors. Attendees will learn about current sex trafficking research, gain an awareness of counselors' self-care practices when working with survivors of sex trafficking, and learn strategies from the empirical findings of the interviewed counselors from these studies.

38. When Clients Deconstruct: How Our Way-of-Being Facilitates the Healing of Spiritual Struggles

RECORDED PROGRAM: Will also be available in the conference app after the program until 12/31/25. Available in TCA Online Learning Center in 2026.

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:00p

Room: Tanglewood

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Assessment in Counseling, Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Mentanna Campbell

For many clients, religious and spiritual beliefs serve as the foundational lens through which they interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world around them. When adversity strikes, they often turn to their faith as a way of attributing meaning to their suffering. However, when the distress is too severe, this interpretive grid can fall short, leaving these individuals experiencing great spiritual pain and going through a season of what has become known as religious deconstruction. This seminar addresses the importance of assessing for spiritual pain and addressing these spiritual struggles in a multiculturally competent manner. The religious coping literature provides the empirical base to understand this spiritual pain while common factors research highlights the most efficacious way to walk alongside strugglers. Participants will learn how their "way of being" creates the type of alliance necessary to facilitate the healing of spiritual wounds.

New Program: 39. TCA Legislator Ambassador Program Kick-off

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:00p

Room: Memorial

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Elizabeth Rogers; Noah Jones

TCA is excited to begin the rollout of our new District Ambassadors program. By combining the efforts of dedicated members across the state, we can plant the seeds for a promising 2027

legislative session. Reaching out to your legislators in their home districts gives you the opportunity to educate them and create public policy solutions that will benefit not only professional counselors, but all Texans. Please join the Public Policy Committee and TCA staff to learn more about this exciting, new initiative.

40. The Texas Association for Humanistic Counseling Board Presents: Embracing Practical Humanism as a New Professional

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:00p

Room: Sugarland

Topic(s): Career Development and Counseling, Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue, Wellness and Prevention, Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship

Presenter(s): Pedro Blanco; Liesl Hecht- Ryan Foster; Beck Munsey; Rachelle Morales; Ryan Holliman

Entering the counseling field can be both exciting and disorienting—especially when professional environments demand approaches that may not align with a counselor’s humanistic values. In this session, the Texas Association for Humanistic Counseling (TAHC) Board will introduce themselves and provide an overview of humanism as a foundational counseling philosophy. The presentation will highlight common challenges new professionals face, such as being required to adopt specific theories due to agency, school, or insurance constraints. Through dialogue and shared experiences, the TAHC Board will offer practical strategies and creative solutions for integrating humanistic principles into mandated frameworks. Attendees will leave with renewed encouragement and a set of actionable ideas to uphold their theoretical integrity while navigating real-world clinical settings. This session is ideal for early-career counselors seeking affirmation, support, and realistic ways to stay grounded in their values.

41. Redefining Counseling and Supervision: Transitioning from Crisis Management to Preventative Care

RECORDED PROGRAM: Will also be available in the conference app after the program until 12/31/25. Available in TCA Online Learning Center in 2026.

Thursday, 11/20/2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:00p

Room: Clear Lake

CE Credential Category: Supervision

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship

Presenter(s): Tara Fox; Rikki Collier

This presentation focuses on transitioning from crisis-oriented counseling and supervision to preventive approaches. Attendees will explore the necessity of proactive strategies, examine evidence-based interventions in counseling and supervision, and discuss the critical role of supervisors in fostering preventive care within clinical training and practice to enhance client well-being.

Friday, November 21st | 90-Minute Programs
8:00AM-9:00AM

42. "We will wear new bones again": Facilitating hope through poetry therapy

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Westchase

CE Credential Category: Supervision

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship

Presenter(s): Christine McNichols

The development, maintenance, and preservation of hope is vital to successful counseling outcomes. Hope plays an important role in imagining possibilities for growth and change within the therapeutic and supervisory context. Strengths-based approaches emphasize the co-creation of hope within the client-counselor and supervisor-supervisee relationship. Using poetry in counseling is a viable way to connect clients, supervisees, and clinicians to hope. During this interactive session, participants will explore how to use poetry to cultivate and co-create hope in the context of counseling and supervision.

43. Understanding Immigration Law: Providing Culturally Affirming Counseling to Immigrant Clients

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Meyerland

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Presenter(s): Angelica Tello

Immigration reform has been at the forefront of national discussions. However, these discussions often include anti-immigration rhetoric that provides the public with misinformation on the experiences of undocumented individuals and immigration policy. The presenter will provide an overview of immigration policy, the experiences of immigrant clients, and implications for counselors.

44. Supporting Twice-Exceptional Adolescents with Anxiety - Identifying and Addressing signs, symptoms, and strategies

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Briargrove

CE Credential Category: School Counseling

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling

Presenter(s): Ashley Frutos; Sinem Akay-Sullivan; Maryam Siddiqui

Twice-exceptional (2e) adolescents, who are both gifted and have co-occurring learning or psychological challenges, often present with complex emotional and academic needs. This 90-minute session will provide participants with the knowledge and tools to identify the behavioral, emotional, and cognitive signs of anxiety in this population. Presenters will explore how anxiety may manifest as either perfectionism or academic underperformance, and will offer evidence-based strategies to support these students effectively. The session will include case examples and practical interventions

that promote strengths-based, developmentally appropriate, and individualized care for twice-exceptional youth.

45. Responding to Antisemitism: Supporting Jewish Clients and Students with Culturally Competent and Trauma-Informed Approaches

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Kingwood

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling, Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Wellness and Prevention, Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Paulina Flasch; Kristina Nelson

Recent years have seen a troubling rise in antisemitism in the United States and globally. Seventy-seven percent of American Jews report feeling less safe as a Jewish person in the U.S., and 60% say they have altered their behavior out of fear of antisemitism. Despite these distressing findings, counselors may find themselves at a loss in supporting Jewish clients, often complicated by struggles of navigating a complex geopolitical climate. However, failing to attune to Jewish clients' lived experiences may result in traumatic invalidation and harm. We provide an overview of the current climate facing Jewish individuals and bring counselors' attention to person-centered care. We contextualize this session in the MSJCC and the ASERVIC Competencies using real client case studies, invite participants to learn about culturally sensitive and trauma-informed approaches in their work with Jewish clients, and offer an accepting holding space to share challenges and experiences.

~~Canceled: 46. Trauma-Informed Mindfulness: Adapting Interventions to Support Client Needs~~

47. Current Trends in Texas Ethics

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Hunter's Creek

CE Credential Category: Ethics

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Leigh Kirby; Brandi Sawyer

The TCA Ethics Committee will discuss current trends in ethical issues. To increase awareness of ethical practices and professional conduct. Ethical issues are drawn from standards central to recent and common ethics violations. The panel will explore the ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI) and other mental health apps.

New Program: 48. Reclaiming Identity: Supporting LGBTQ+ Individuals through Affirmative Therapy and Trauma-Informed Care

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Montrose

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Presenter(s): Patrick "Brian" Kennedy

In this session, we will explore the concept of covert cultural sexual abuse (chronic verbal, emotional, and psychological assaults against an individual's gender expression, sexual feeling, and behaviors) as the foundation for many problems that LGBTQ individuals face. Using the framework of Cass's Identity model (the 6 Stages of Coming Out), this session will explore common misdiagnoses made in counseling queer populations that can alienate clients while also learning strategies to advocate for clients as they confront their own emotional conflicts.

49. The D.O.P.A.M.I.N.E. Guide: A Brain-Based Approach to Addressing Adolescent Risk-Taking Behaviors

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Tanglewood

CE Credential Category: School Counseling

Topic(s): Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling

Presenter(s): Teandra Gordon

Despite our best efforts, adolescents often engage in high-risk behaviors. This conference session will introduce the BrainAbouts D.O.P.A.M.I.N.E. Guide, an intervention that leverages neuroscience to support teens in overcoming high-risk behaviors. In partnership with Dr. Anna Lembke, psychiatrist, Stanford professor, and author of Dopamine Nation, BrainAbouts offers a structured intervention using the D.O.P.A.M.I.N.E. framework to help reset reward pathways and encourage healthier choices. Participants will learn the neurobiology of high-risk behavior, its developmental effects, and how to implement the BrainAbouts guide with adolescents to facilitate meaningful behavior change. Join us to discover how a brain-based approach can empower teens to regain balance, build resilience, and unlock their full potential.

50. Navigating microaggressions in the counseling profession: A call for safe spaces, critical reflection and real inclusivity

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Memorial

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Presenter(s): Dynetta Clark; Emily Johnson; Gentry Hunter; Aiyannah Lewis

This session centers the experiences of Black women counselors-in-training, highlighting the often-dismissed microaggressions they experience from professors, peers, and supervisors. These harms are frequently minimized, creating unsafe learning and professional environments that undermine inclusion, equity, and ethical practice. Attendees will explore a critical question: If future counselors remain silent when harm occurs among peers, how will they respond when clients face similar dynamics? Through storytelling, guided reflection, and interactive activities, attendees will examine their own positionality and complicity, and gain practical strategies to disrupt performative allyship. Grounded in CACREP standards, BHEC ethics, and the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies, this session invites more than awareness, it demands accountability.

51. Graduate Student Counselors: Classroom to Clinician

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Sugarland

CE Credential Category: Supervision

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Jessica Davis; Carol Parker; Deborah Wilson; Candy Ratliff

This session is designed to support the developmental journey of graduate students in counselor education as they transition from academic coursework to professional clinical practice. Matriculation into the field of counseling is a critical milestone, often marked by a complex interplay of theoretical integration, skills application, and ethical navigation. This transition introduces unfamiliar challenges related to role clarity, supervision quality, and licensure preparedness. This presentation offers an evidence-informed framework that supports counselor educators, supervisors, and graduate students in bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world practice. Emphasizing alignment with the Texas Counseling Association, American Counseling Association, the National Board for Certified Counselors, and Texas LPC Board Ethics, this session highlights both the professional standards and practical competencies essential for emerging clinicians. Participants will gain strategies, resources, and ethical clarity to strengthen supervision experiences and foster successful clinical identity development.

52. Divorce: Helping Children via Play Therapy, Psychoeducation, and Parent Consultation
Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 8:00 - 9:30a

Room: Clear Lake

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship

Presenter(s): Jennifer Baggerly; Brisa Trevizo

Parental divorce can have a negative mental health impact on children such as anxiety and depression as well as misperceptions leading to parent alienation. Counselors can help children blaze a healthy trail by providing advanced Child Centered Play therapy skills of facilitating understanding and enlarging the meaning; playful psychoeducation; expressive arts activities; and parent consultation. Presenters will discuss and demonstrate these strategies in this workshop.

TCA Membership Meeting
November 21st | General Session ,Friday
Texas Ballroom DE | 10:00AM-11:30AM
Keynote Speaker: Ernesto Mejia

My Parents' American Dream

In this heartfelt and motivating keynote, Ernesto Mejia shares his powerful personal journey as the proud son of Mexican immigrants who believed in the promise of education and hard work. Diagnosed with Guillain- Barré Syndrome at 16 and temporarily paralyzed, Ernesto connects with families, students and educators alike – reminding them that challenges don't define us, but choices do. His keynote is a celebration of resilience, cultural pride, and the vital role families play in a child's success. Above all, it's a message of hope: that the American Dream is alive, achievable, and shaped every day by the decisions we make.

Friday, November 20th | 90-Minute Programs
12:30PM-2:00PM

53. Centering Culture in the Tray: Humanistic Sandtray Therapy Through a Multicultural Lens

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: Texas A

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Presenter(s): Ryan Foster; Beck Munsey

This presentation explores multicultural adaptations of Humanistic Sandtray Therapy (HST) using Hays' ADDRESSING model as a framework. Emphasizing cultural humility, the presenters will illustrate how HST can support clients' exploration of intersectional identities, including race, gender identity, socioeconomic status, religion/spirituality, national origin, and more. Attendees will learn to critically assess their miniature collections, design inclusive prompts, and strengthen therapeutic presence in culturally diverse settings through concrete strategies and case-informed applications.

54. Let's Walk and Talk About It!

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: Westchase

Topic(s): Wellness and Prevention, Career Development and Counseling

Presenter(s): Naomi Medina

Historically, counselors conducted therapy in an office opposite the client in a traditional professional setting with chairs, pillows, tables, and pictures on the walls. As research continues to support the power of the natural world on psychological health, nature-based interventions such as Walk Talk therapy have become an alternative to the traditional office setting. This presentation will provide theoretical explanations that speak to the psychological benefits of the natural world and physical movement, especially when combined with talk therapy. The presenter will also address ethical

considerations when implementing this modality, general guidelines for the Walk Talk therapist, and special considerations in determining for whom Walk Talk therapy is suitable and appropriate.

55. A presentation on an experiential group counseling session designed to help participants identify personal stressors and develop strengths and resources for effective stress management

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: Meyerland

CE Credential Category: Supervision

Topic(s): Group Dynamics and Counseling

Presenter(s): Chi-Sing Li; Yu-Fen Lin

This presentation is designed to demonstrate the use of experiential group counseling techniques to help participants identify personal stressors, understand their emotional responses, and build internal and external resources for coping. By engaging in a structured group process—including warm-up activities, stressor identification, and group sharing—participants will experience how group dynamics can foster self-awareness, mutual support, and personal growth.

56. Generosity with Limits: Mentorship, Boundaries, and Cultural Awareness in Counselor Education

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: Briargrove

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Nancy Castellon; Isanely Kurz

Mentorship is the heart of counselor education, particularly for graduate students and emerging professionals navigating identity development, imposter syndrome, and the emotional labor of becoming culturally responsive counselors. This interactive session explores the art of mentorship through a culturally responsive lens while emphasizing the importance of healthy boundaries. As faculty, supervisors, and mentors, how do we hold space generously for our students—especially those from marginalized backgrounds—without compromising our own wellness? How do we teach emerging counselors that generosity does not mean overextension? Participants will leave with insights into mentorship as a teaching philosophy, scripts and boundary-setting strategies, and cultural considerations that deepen relational ethics without sacrificing personal integrity.

57. TCDA Presents: Career Counseling: Navigating Career Growth in an Evolving Workforce

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: River Oaks

Topic(s): Career Development and Counseling

Presenter(s): Dee-Anna Green; Sara Jennings; Ashley Penner; Randi Roanhaus; Greta Davis; Dora Williams

This program is designed to provide counselors (career, mental health & school settings) with the tools and knowledge to address rapid changes in the world of work impacting individuals, leaders, and teams. By integrating career counseling theories with practical strategies, participants will

enhance their ability to support clients through lifelong career transitions and promote overall well-being.

This comprehensive program equips participants with advanced knowledge and practical skills in career counseling and coaching. By integrating contemporary theories and best practices, attendees will be prepared to support diverse career development needs effectively. The program focuses on leveraging artificial intelligence, understanding the current job market, and promoting inclusive practices.

~~CANCELED 58. Color Outside the Lines: Embracing Authenticity as a BIPOC Licensed Professional Counselor~~

59. ACT Against Perfectionism: Acceptance & Commitment Therapy for Perfectionistic Adolescents

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00p

Room: Sugarland

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship, Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Chris Leeth; Andrea Mendoza; Allison Joyal

Perfectionism is a multidimensional construct that involves setting high standards, usually accompanied by self-criticism. Perfectionism is associated with high levels of anxiety, depression, and negative self-talk. Adolescents often face pressures from academics, peers, and social media, which may intensify perfectionist tendencies, especially adolescents with marginalized identities. These external pressures can lead to persistent internal dialogues centered on fear of failure or the need to meet unrealistic expectations. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) provides an evidence-based, developmentally appropriate modality for clinicians working with perfectionistic adolescents. Through the six core processes of ACT, clinicians can help adolescents increase their psychological flexibility, enabling them to accept difficult internal experiences (e.g., thoughts and feelings) while committing to values-driven action. This session will equip clinicians with essential knowledge about perfectionism in adolescence and practical ACT strategies to support perfectionistic adolescents, thereby fostering resilience, self-compassion, and overall well-being.

60. How Family Response Effects the Adolescent Experience of NSSI: Implications for Practice

RECORDED PROGRAM: will be available in the conference app after the program until 12/31/25. Available in TCA Online Learning Center in 2026.

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 12:30 - 2:00

Room: Clear Lake

CE Credential Category: School Counseling

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship

Presenter(s): Krystal Humphreys; Wendy Helmcamp; Michael Moyer

Non-Suicidal Self-Injury has become a common coping strategy during the adolescent years. Family response and cultural considerations have been found to impact the therapeutic outcomes of adolescents who use NSSI to cope. This original research will give you the knowledge, tools, and strategies to prevent and intervene with clients who struggle with NSSI.

Friday, November 21st | 3-Hour Programs

1:00PM–4:00PM

61. Inclusive Therapy in Action - Supporting LGBT+ Clients with Confidence

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 1:00 - 4:00p

Room: Kingwood

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Presenter(s): Abi Smith; Heather Fry; Amara Yachimski

The LGBT+ communities are a historically under-served population in the mental health field, with few graduate programs providing specific training on working with LGBT+ individuals and students. However, the population faces several unique and disheartening mental health challenges with which many counselors feel ill-equipped to work. In this interactive presentation, the presenters will provide psychoeducation on the LGBT+ communities, including a non-judgmental space to ask clarifying questions, as well as common presenting issues within these communities. This presentation will also provide an overview of affirming modalities and how to modify evidence-based practices in order to be more affirming for LGBT+ individuals and students. Anyone can be an affirming counselor - this presentation will provide the education and tools available to counselors, and increase their confidence in implementing them!

62. Ethics and Supervision in Counseling: Balancing Changes and Responsibilities in Dynamic Times

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 1:00 - 4:00p

Room: Montrose

CE Credential Category: Ethics, Supervision

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Bret Hendricks; Loretta Bradley; Lori Hollingsworth; Annette Tommerdahl

This presentation will address current trends, challenges, and responsibilities in counseling and counseling supervision, with a specific focus on ethical decision-making, professional accountability, and the application of updated ethical codes.

The training includes a combination of lecture, interactive discussion, and case study analyses to foster a dynamic and engaging learning environment. Key topics include supervisory roles and responsibilities, managing ethical dilemmas, integrating the ACA Code of Ethics and Texas LPC Code of Ethics in counseling and supervision, and navigating emerging issues such as telehealth and multicultural supervision. Participants will leave the program equipped with practical tools for effective supervision, enhanced ethical judgment, and a deeper understanding of their role in maintaining the integrity of the counseling profession.

63. Moral Injury in Service Members

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 1:00 - 4:00p

Room: Tanglewood

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Assessment in Counseling, Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Presenter(s): Paula Domenici

Counselors are faced with understanding how morally conflicting, traumatic events affects clients' social, spiritual, and psychological well-being. This training offers evidence-based assessment tools and interventions for counseling professionals to use for identifying and addressing moral injury—a serious condition impacting both military and civilian clients, stemming from high stakes situations that clash with a person's deeply-held moral code and values. The emphasis of this workshop will be on helping military clients who struggle with moral injury and the developments in the field.

64. Managing Multiple Roles: The Business of Therapy for New Professionals

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 1:00 - 4:00p

Room: Memorial

CE Credential Category:

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Monica Alharazim

As new mental health professionals, many of us enter private practice with a passion for helping clients and the passion for one day owning our own private practice. Though we have been trained to be mental health professionals, many of us did not learn the skills of running and managing a business. This training is designed to help you navigate the complexities of juggling these diverse roles effectively. We'll explore practical strategies for balancing clinical work with the demands of managing a business, maintaining professional boundaries, and upholding ethical standards.

Whether you're new to private practice or looking to refine your skills, this session will provide you with tools and insights to enhance your practice's sustainability.

Friday, November 21st | 90-Minute Programs
2:30PM– 4:00PM

65. The Advocate's Oasis: Cultivating Compassion Satisfaction Through Meaningful Action

RECORDED PROGRAM: Will be available in the conference app after the session until 12/31/25.

Available in TCA Online Learning Center in 2026.

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 2:30 - 4:00p

Room: Westchase

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue, Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling, Wellness and Prevention

Presenter(s): Kamiron Tran; Reagan Dickson; Sloane Sivek

Counselors are uniquely called to engage in advocacy for minoritized communities, but an ever-changing social climate continues to create barriers to effectively engaging in advocacy. Evolving legislation, compassion fatigue, and scarce availability of resources all hinder the counselor's ability to engage fully in advocacy. In this presentation, attendees will reflect on their own levels of compassion fatigue and compassion satisfaction using the Professional Quality of Life (ProQOL) Scale (Stamm, 2009), a well-established instrument. Furthermore, participants will gain practical strategies and solutions for engaging in sustainable and meaningful advocacy, fostering both personal well-being and impactful social change.

66. Court Testimony for Counselors

RECORDED PROGRAM: Will be available in the conference app after the program until 12/31/25.

Available in TCA Online Learning Center in 2026.

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 2:30 - 4:00p

Room: Meyerland

CE Credential Category: Ethics

Topic(s): Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue

Presenter(s): Lynn Jennings; Stephen Jennings

Graduate counseling programs equip students with a wide range of skills to shape competent, ethical counselors. Most individuals enter the counseling profession with a desire to help others, support healing, and contribute to the well-being of society—not to participate in litigation or testify in court. Formal instruction on navigating subpoenas, court testimony, or legal procedures is often limited or entirely absent in counselor training programs. While participation in legal processes, such as court testimony or depositions, can be intimidating, it is a critical aspect of ethical client advocacy. As Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "The thing we fear is the thing we must do." For counselors, this includes maintaining our professional counseling identity, professionalism, ethical considerations, and integrity in legal settings. This session will demystify court involvement and equip counselors with the tools they need to respond professionally, effectively, ethically, and confidently to subpoenas and in court-related settings.

67. KEYNOTE SPEAKER PROGRAM: Let's Talk for Real: Change Your Questions, Change Their World

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 2:30 - 4:00p

Room: Briargrove**Presenter(s):** Ernesto Mejía

Following his keynote, Ernesto Mejía returns for a powerful 90-minute, interactive fireside chat designed to help counselors and mental health professionals deepen their impact. In a time when educators and families face complex challenges both inside and outside the classroom, the right question can open the door to trust, healing, and meaningful connection. This session explores how shifting the questions we ask and how we ask them can help students and families feel seen, supported, and safe, even in uncertain climates. Through guided discussion and practical activities, participants will reflect on their own communication styles, learn tools to strengthen relationships across cultures and communities, and gain strategies to foster belonging and resilience in every interaction. This is not a lecture but a space to listen, share, and reimagine how small changes in approach can create lasting transformation for those we serve.

68. Supervision 101: What New Counselors Need to Know About Finding a Supervisor and Navigating the Journey to Licensure**Friday, 11/21/2025****Time: 2:30 - 4:00p****Room:** River Oaks**Topic(s):** Counselor Professional Identity and Practice Issue**Presenter(s):** Bernadette Smith; Caren Cooper

This session is designed specifically for counseling students and new professionals who are preparing to begin their journey towards licensure. Attendees will learn how to find a clinical supervisor, what to expect during supervision, and how to take charge of their professional development. The session will include practical tools, ethical insights, and Q&A to help demystify the licensure and supervision process and empower emerging counselors as they confidently step into the counseling profession.

69. Thanks Again: How Practicing Gratitude Impacts Outcomes for Both Counselor and Client**Friday, 11/21/2025****Time: 2:30 - 4:00p****Room:** Hunter's Creek**CE Credential Category:** School Counseling**Topic(s):** Wellness and Prevention**Presenter(s):** Betty White

Engaging in wellness practices is an ethical imperative for both school counselors and therapists. Research has shown that gratitude practice (for counselors) and gratitude interventions (for clients) engenders more positive emotions and fewer negative emotions, helps build better health, stronger relationships, and greater life satisfaction. Simply put, practicing gratitude and helping your clients of any age practice gratitude supercharges your counseling practice. This session will introduce you to what current research has to say about gratitude practice, explore various definitions of gratitude, and allow you to participate in a variety of simple gratitude exercises.

70. Utilizing Cultural Humility and Broaching to Enrich Counseling Relationship and Build Resilience**Friday, 11/21/2025****Time: 2:30 - 4:00p****Room:** Sugarland**CE Credential Category:** Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Counseling Theory/Practice and the Counseling Relationship

Presenter(s): Elsa Leggett; Sandra Garza Ochoa

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. Together they foster resilience. They make it remove barriers to healing and establish a source of strength.

71. Religious Commitment and Objectification as Predictors of Eating Disorder Risk in Indian American Women

Friday, 11/21/2025

Time: 2:30 - 4:00p

Room: Clear Lake

CE Credential Category: Cultural Diversity

Topic(s): Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling

Presenter(s): Swathi Weaver; Anvita Kotha

Eating disorders affect individuals across all cultures. This 90-minute learning session explores the eating disorder risks among women of Indian descent living in the United States, drawing from an original empirical study that used the Eating Attitudes Test-26 (EAT-26), Religious Commitment Inventory (RCI-10), and Self-Objectification Scale (SOS). Findings revealed that higher religious commitment and self-objectification were significant predictors of disordered eating risk among Indian American women. This session begins with an overview of eating disorders across diverse populations, then transitions into a focused examination of Indian American women's experiences. Attendees will learn how cultural expectations, body image pressures, and religious identity interact to influence disordered eating. Emphasis will be placed on translating these findings into culturally responsive counseling strategies. This session is ideal for clinicians, educators, and supervisors. It fosters a deeper understanding and practical tools for supporting Indian American clients.