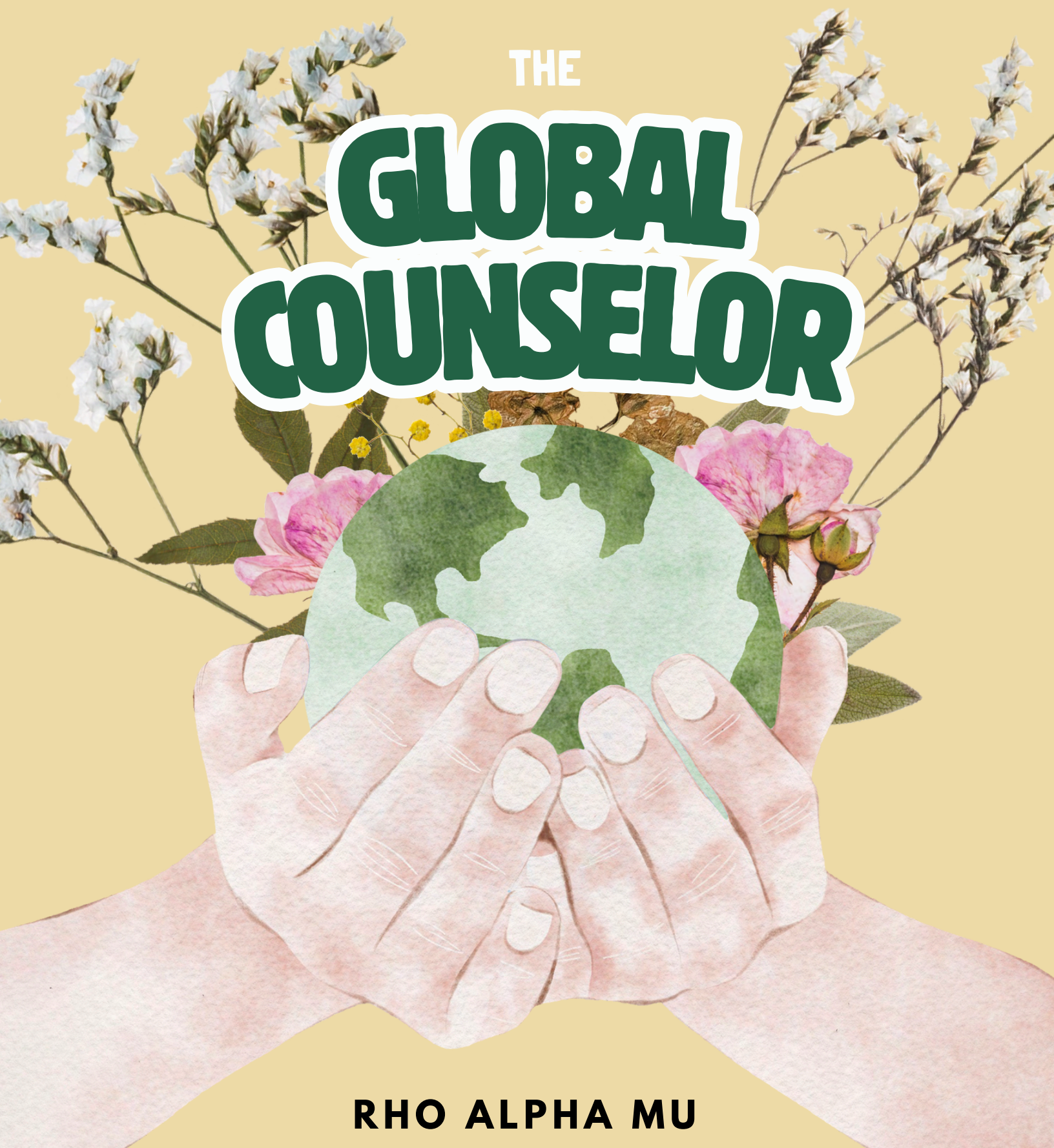


THE RAM REPORT



FALL 2024

THE GLOBAL COUNSELOR



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MEET THE EDITORIAL STAFF

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International Collaborative Research as a Strategy for the Equitable Globalization of the Counseling Profession

SCARLETT IGLESIAS HOYOS

Counseling, as a professional field, has recently emerged compared to other disciplines of mental health, between the late 1890s and early 1900s (Gladding, 2018). Although it has gained recognition in several countries, its global expansion has been a slow and complex process. There are still misunderstandings about the characteristics and objectives of counseling and its distinction from professions such as psychology, social work, or marriage and family therapy. This ambiguity limits the acceptance of counseling practices in various international contexts and hinders the development of global approaches to counselor training. Building on this idea, this essay will examine how the primarily Eurocentric approach to counseling in the United States complicates globalization of counseling further. For the purpose of this essay, globalization is defined as a continuous process of connection and blending between the economies, societies, and cultures of different nations (Lorelle et al., 2012). In addition, the need for greater connection with international communities through collaborative research to make counseling truly inclusive and culturally humble will also be explored.

Professional counselors have the ethical responsibility to develop a deep understanding of social justice and individual differences regarding culture, ethnicity, race, language, gender, and other identities relevant to human beings and apply this knowledge to their counseling practice (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014; Ratts et al., 2015). A requirement of the governing

body of program credentials Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP; 2024) is to include multicultural and diversity competencies in each of the classes within educational programs training counseling students. However, despite these efforts, counseling remains focused on a Eurocentric approach, centering primarily on the experiences of people residing in the United States, limiting its perspective on diversity, intersectionality, and multiculturalism to a global context (Durrah et al., 2022). A clear example is that clients who hold marginalized identities are often conceptualized under Western Eurocentric perspectives, leaving aside the systemic oppression experienced (Durrah et al., 2022; Jamison, 2009).

Along the same lines, national and international counseling organizations (i.e. Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling [AARC] and the American Counseling Association [ACA]) have emphasized the importance of expanding the counseling practice to a global field and equipping the counselor with relevant global level competencies. These organizations' proposals are oriented towards collaboration, dissemination of knowledge, advocacy of international groups, and the incorporation of international students in different educational counseling programs at the master's and doctoral levels. Although these strategies help make the field more diverse by bringing in more international students and professionals to support diverse communities, challenges persist in globalizing and diversifying

the field. For instance, in 2017, about 70.5% of counselors exercising their profession were White (DATA USA, n/d).

A clear example of this duality is the effort of professionals and researchers to develop theories, explanatory models, and personalized interventions to improve understanding of marginalized populations in the United States. These theories and models consider the cultural, ethnic, linguistic background, and identities of each individual. However, because they are based on the experience of diverse populations residing in the United States, their replication, implementation, and evaluation of effectiveness in similar populations outside the U.S. cultural context is complicated. This limitation emphasizes the importance of directly engaging with communities outside the U.S. to fully understand their unique cultural contexts. Without this direct engagement, our comprehension remains incomplete, and risks being overly centered on a U.S. perspective.

How can we fully understand diverse communities if we are not informed, familiarized, engaged, and connected to them? If we want to learn from these communities and serve them with true cultural humility, it is crucial to take a critical stance towards the information we receive. In addition, we must expand our knowledge through direct contact and community work with marginalized populations. Direct contact with marginalized communities globally presents great challenges. However, international collaborative research can

be a key tool to close this gap. By fostering international educational partnerships, counseling has the opportunity to engage in research that not only expands knowledge of the field, but also enhances culturally tailored interventions to the needs of these marginalized communities around the world.

Living in the U.S. provides us with more comprehensive tools, resources, support, and infrastructure to conduct research in comparison with other countries and communities in marginalized positions. There is a significant disparity in resources between researchers in the Global North (developed countries e.g.: USA, Canada, UK, Australia etc.) and the Global South (developing countries e.g.: Mexico, India, Brazil etc.), limiting research production in the latter. In recognizing our positionality with regards to historically marginalized countries and populations, it is essential to establish meaningful working relationships and even use approaches such as participatory action research (Speedlin et al., 2021). As scholars and practitioners, we bear the responsibility to approach knowledge production, development, research, and understanding with cultural humility, intellectual curiosity, compassion, professional rigor, and flexibility. At the same time, we can use our resources to advance the field and globalize counseling practices from a culturally responsive position.

From the first contact with researchers abroad, to attending conferences, networking, and

participating in the design and implementation of research, it is essential that all these stages are carried out considering the cultural and contextual specificities of the communities we are targeting. It is crucial to maintain a critical attitude towards our own belief systems, knowledge, predispositions, and biases. This involves actively reflecting on how our cultural perspectives and assumptions may shape our understanding of the communities we aim to support. For example, questioning our own biases can help us recognize and appreciate the unique cultural and contextual factors that influence each community's needs and strengths while designing and implementing research. By doing so, we become better equipped to approach our collaborative international research with cultural humility, fostering strategies, designs, measurements, and analysis that are genuinely respectful and responsive to the specific realities of marginalized groups.

Similarly, it is essential that international research collaborations are not limited to a unilateral transfer of knowledge from more privileged countries, but that they are an equitable exchange. International researchers and communities have valuable perspectives that can enrich both the theory and practice of counseling with marginalized populations. When collaborating with researchers and international communities, we must ensure that we do not impose our ways of knowing, but rather learn from each other, respecting local practices and traditions that can offer innovative and culturally relevant approaches to mental health issues in today's societies.

While establishing international research collaborations, we must consider a variety of activities to ensure that these collaborations are mutually productive and to benefit marginalized communities. One approach will be to ensure that these collaborations are sustainable in the long term, not only to address immediate problems, but to empower local communities and researchers to strengthen their own capacities in the field of mental health.

Despite the knowledge of multiculturalism that we have gained through our education, there are microcultures in the international context which may differ from our previous knowledge. That is why sensitivity to these differences is essential to design effective and relevant interventions. Finally, we must maintain a strong ethical commitment in our research and interventions, ensuring that the voices of marginalized communities are heard and valued throughout the process, even after research work has been completed.

In conclusion, the globalization of counseling requires a critical and collaborative approach that respects and values the cultural particularities of marginalized communities on a global scale. By fostering meaningful and equitable relationships with international researchers and practitioners, and by engaging these communities in the design and implementation of interventions, we can enrich the field of counseling and offer more effective and culturally responsive practices that can be applied globally. Only through this mutual and sustainable commitment and connection can .



we move towards truly inclusive and transformative counseling at the global level.

References available upon request.

Please see below for this article in the author's native language, Spanish.

Special thanks to guest editor Ana Ayala Cantu for reviewing the Spanish version of this article.

Investigación colaborativa internacional como estrategia para la globalización equitativa de la consejería

SCARLETT IGLESIAS HOYOS

La consejería, como campo profesional, ha emergido recientemente en comparación con otras disciplinas de la salud mental, aproximadamente entre 1980 y los años 1900s (Gladding, 2018). Aunque ha ganado reconocimiento en varios países, su expansión global ha sido un proceso lento y complejo. Aún persisten malentendidos sobre las características y objetivos de la consejería, y su distinción frente a profesiones como la psicología, el trabajo social o la terapia familiar. Esta ambigüedad limita la aceptación de las prácticas de consejería en diversos contextos internacionales y obstaculiza el desarrollo de enfoques globales para la formación de consejeros. Sobre la base de esta idea, el ensayo examinará cómo el enfoque principalmente eurocéntrico de la consejería en los Estados Unidos complica aún más su globalización. Para los fines de este ensayo, globalización se definirá como un proceso continuo de conexión y mezcla entre las economías, sociedades y culturas de diferentes naciones (Lorelle et al., 2012), a pesar de los esfuerzos por integrar la diversidad y la justicia social en su práctica. Además, se explorará la necesidad de una mayor conexión con comunidades internacionales para hacer la consejería verdaderamente inclusiva y culturalmente humilde.

Los consejeros profesionales tienen la responsabilidad ética de desarrollar una comprensión profunda de la justicia social y las diferencias individuales con respecto a la cultura, la etnia, la raza, el idioma, el género y otras

identidades relevantes para los seres humanos y aplicar este conocimiento a su práctica de consejería (ACA, 2014; Ratts et al., 2015). No solo es común, si no un requisito del Consejo de Acreditación de la Consejería y Programas Educativos Relacionados (Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs [CACREP, por sus siglas en inglés]) el incluir competencias de abordaje multicultural y de diversidad en cada una de las clases dentro de los programas educativos. Sin embargo, a pesar de estos esfuerzos, la consejería sigue centrada en un enfoque eurocéntrico, enfocado principalmente en las experiencias de personas que residen en los Estados Unidos, limitando su perspectiva sobre la diversidad, interseccionalidad y multiculturalismo a un contexto global (Durrah et al., 2022; Sommers-Flanagan & Sommers-Flanagan, 2004). Un ejemplo claro es que los clientes que cuentan con identidades marginadas suelen ser conceptualizados bajo perspectivas eurocéntricas occidentales, dejando de lado la opresión sistémica que ellos experimentan (Durrah et al., 2022; Jamison, 2009).

Bajo la misma línea, las organizaciones nacionales e internacionales de consejería (por ejemplo, la Asociación para la Evaluación e Investigación en Consejería [AARC, por sus siglas en inglés] y la Asociación Americana de Consejería [ACA, por sus siglas en inglés]) han puesto énfasis en la importancia de expandir el campo de la consejería a nivel mundial y globalizar al consejero. Las propuestas de estas organizaciones están orientadas a colaboración,

propagación del conocimiento del campo, abogacía de grupos internacionales, y la incorporación de estudiantes internacionales en los diferentes programas educativos de consejería a nivel maestría y doctorado. Aunque estas estrategias ayudan a que el campo de la consejería sea más diverso al atraer a más estudiantes y profesionales internacionales para apoyar a las comunidades diversas, los desafíos en la globalización y diversificación del campo persisten. Un claro ejemplo es que, en 2017, alrededor del 70,5% de los consejeros que ejercían su profesión eran blancos (DATA USA, s/f).

Un ejemplo claro de esta dualidad es el esfuerzo de profesionales e investigadores por desarrollar teorías, modelos explicativos e intervenciones personalizadas para mejorar la comprensión de las poblaciones marginalizadas en los Estados Unidos. Estas teorías y modelos consideran los antecedentes culturales, étnicos, lingüísticos y las identidades de cada individuo. Sin embargo, dado que están basados en la experiencia de poblaciones diversas que residen en Estados Unidos, su replicación, implementación y evaluación de efectividad en poblaciones similares fuera del contexto cultural estadounidense resulta complicada. Esta limitación enfatiza la importancia de interactuar directamente con las comunidades fuera de los Estados Unidos para comprender completamente sus contextos culturales únicos. Sin este compromiso directo, nuestra comprensión sigue siendo incompleta y corre el riesgo de centrarse

demasiado en la perspectiva de Estados Unidos.

¿Cómo podemos entender plenamente a las comunidades diversas si no estamos informados, familiarizados, comprometidos y conectados con ellas? Si queremos aprender de estas comunidades y ofrecerles un servicio con verdadera humildad cultural, es crucial adoptar una postura crítica frente a la información que recibimos. Además, debemos expandir nuestro conocimiento a través del contacto directo y el trabajo comunitario con poblaciones marginalizadas.

El contacto directo con comunidades marginalizadas a nivel global presenta grandes desafíos. Sin embargo, la investigación colaborativa internacional puede ser una herramienta clave para cerrar esta brecha. Al fomentar alianzas educativas internacionales, la consejería tiene la oportunidad de participar en investigaciones que no solo expanden el conocimiento del campo, sino que también mejoran las intervenciones culturalmente adaptadas a las necesidades de estas comunidades marginalizadas en todo el mundo.

Vivir en los Estados Unidos nos brinda herramientas, recursos, apoyo e infraestructura más completos para realizar investigaciones en comparación con otros países y comunidades en posiciones marginalizadas. Existe una disparidad significativa en los recursos entre los investigadores del Norte Global (países desarrollados, por ejemplo Estados Unidos,

Canada, Australia) y del Sur Global (países en desarrollo, por ejemplo Mexico, India, Brazil), lo que limita la producción de investigación en este último. Al reconocer nuestra posición en relación con países y poblaciones históricamente marginalizadas, es fundamental establecer relaciones de trabajo significativas e, incluso, utilizar enfoques como la investigación-acción participativa (Speedlin et al., 2021). Como académicos y profesionales, tenemos la responsabilidad de abordar la producción, el desarrollo, la investigación y la comprensión del conocimiento con humildad cultural, curiosidad intelectual, compasión, rigor profesional y flexibilidad. Al mismo tiempo, podemos utilizar nuestros recursos para avanzar el campo y globalizar el ejercicio de la consejería como profesión desde una posición culturalmente responsiva.

Desde el primer contacto con investigadores en el extranjero, hasta la asistencia a conferencias y congresos, la creación de redes, y la participación en el diseño e implementación de investigaciones, es esencial que todas estas etapas se realicen considerando las especificidades culturales y contextuales de las comunidades a las que nos dirigimos. Es crucial mantener una actitud crítica hacia nuestros propios sistemas de creencias, conocimientos, predisposiciones y sesgos. Esto implica reflexión activa sobre nuestras perspectivas y suposiciones culturales y cómo pueden darle forma a nuestra comprensión de las comunidades con las que pretendemos trabajar. Por ejemplo, cuestionar nuestros propios sesgos

puede ayudarnos a reconocer y apreciar los factores culturales y contextuales únicos que influyen en las necesidades y fortalezas de cada comunidad al diseñar e implementar investigaciones internacionales. Al hacerlo, estamos mejor equipados para abordar nuestra investigación internacional colaborativa con humildad cultural, fomentando estrategias, diseños, mediciones y análisis que sean genuinamente respetuosos y receptivos a las realidades específicas de los grupos marginados.

De igual manera, es fundamental que las colaboraciones de investigación internacionales no se limiten a una transferencia unilateral de conocimientos desde países más privilegiados, sino que sean un intercambio equitativo. Las comunidades locales y los investigadores en el extranjero tienen perspectivas valiosas que pueden enriquecer tanto la teoría como la práctica de la consejería con poblaciones marginalizadas. Al colaborar con investigadores y comunidades internacionales, debemos asegurarnos de no imponer nuestras formas de conocimiento, sino de aprender mutuamente, respetando las prácticas y tradiciones locales que pueden ofrecer enfoques innovadores y culturalmente relevantes para los problemas de salud mental en la sociedad actual.

Al establecer colaboraciones de investigación internacionales debemos tomar en consideración diversas actividades para asegurar que las colaboraciones sean mutuamente productivas y con la finalidad de beneficiar las comunidades marginalizadas. Un acercamiento será

asegurarnos que estas colaboraciones creadas sean sostenibles a largo plazo, no solo para abordar problemas inmediatos, sino para capacitar a las comunidades locales e investigadores y fortalecer sus propias capacidades en el ámbito de la salud mental. A pesar del conocimiento de multiculturalidad que hemos obtenido a través de nuestra educación, existen micro culturas en el contexto internacional las cuales pueden diferir a nuestro conocimiento previo. Es por ello por lo que la sensibilidad hacia estas diferencias es fundamental para diseñar intervenciones efectivas y pertinentes. Finalmente, debemos mantener un compromiso ético firme en nuestras investigaciones e intervenciones, asegurando que las voces de las comunidades marginalizadas sean escuchadas y valoradas en todo el proceso, incluso después de haber finalizado las labores de investigación.

En conclusión, la globalización de la consejería requiere un enfoque crítico y colaborativo que respete y valore las particularidades culturales de las comunidades marginalizadas. Al fomentar relaciones significativas y equitativas con investigadores y profesionales internacionales, y al involucrar a estas comunidades en el diseño e implementación de intervenciones, podemos enriquecer el campo de la consejería y ofrecer prácticas más efectivas y culturalmente responsivas que puedan ser aplicadas globalmente. Solo a través de este compromiso mutuo y sostenible podremos avanzar hacia una consejería verdaderamente inclusiva y transformadora a nivel global.

Lista de referencias disponible bajo solicitud.

Un agradecimiento especial a la editora invitada, Ana Ayala Cantu, por revisar este artículo es su version en Español.

Be Proactive: The Importance of Broaching Early

COURTNEY DIXON

What is Broaching?

Broaching is an invitation to discuss cultural differences or concerns in a counseling session with a client (Day-Vines et al., 2007). This is an intentional skill used by the counselor to bring the client's identities into the room, and it is a critical skill for counselors, even as early as the first session (Choi et al., 2015; Day-Vines et al., 2013; Day-Vines et al., 2018). Broaching is one way for counselors to address the proverbial elephant in the room: multicultural differences between counselors and clients. Such differences enrich relationships between counselors and clients, but if left unaddressed, can be a source of anxiety for both parties. Clients may not feel authentic within a session, which can significantly hinder their progress and create emotional distress. When White counselors broach the subject of race with clients of color, clients report an improved perception of the counselors' effectiveness (Zhang & Burkard, 2008). Moreover, broaching can demonstrate cultural humility on the part of the counselor, which has improved client satisfaction (Teran et al., 2024). It is critical for clients to see that their counselor knows and cares about their authentic identities because these are central to who the client is. Broaching also leads to powerful conversations that can deepen the therapeutic alliance while also reducing the power imbalance within a session between a client and a counselor (Day-Vines et al., 2021).

Broaching Proactively

Many counselors report that they broach subjects

of culture and marginalized identities, but they wait until clients introduce cultural concerns in the session first (Jones & Welfare, 2017). However, it is important to note that a counselor holds the power in the counseling relationship (Day-Vines et al., 2018). It is critical for counselors to understand the power imbalance within a session, even if they have an egalitarian approach. This is especially true for counselors from majority groups, such as White counselors in the United States whose identities may shift the power imbalance in session even further. If the counselor does not open the door to a discussion about multicultural differences or marginalized identities, it may be difficult for clients to introduce these differences themselves due to the perceived power imbalance (Day-Vines et al., 2018). They may also feel unsure about how the counselor will respond or worry that they may offend their counselor. In other words, the clients may not feel safe enough to discuss cultural concerns unless their counselor introduces the topic first. Therefore, counselors should initiate these types of conversations around cultural differences and power imbalances early in the counseling relationship (Choi et al., 2015; Day-Vines et al., 2013; Day-Vines et al., 2018).

Clients of color terminate counseling prematurely at a higher rate than White clients, particularly after the first session (Kilmer et al., 2019). Furthermore, clients who identify as sexual minorities tend to drop out of treatment prematurely because they feel that their counselor does not understand them or assess them properly (Alfonsson et al., 2024), and clients who identify as Black and as sexual minorities are also



more likely to terminate prematurely (Taylor & Kuo, 2019). It is possible that these premature terminations occur due to a therapist's lack of understanding or acknowledgment of relevant cultural factors, especially in the context of intersectionality. Defined as the complex relationships between identities of a given person (Crenshaw, 1989), the lens of intersectionality is one through which counselors can better understand their clients' experiences as well as conceptualize the systemic challenges, oppression, and differences between people. For example, the experience of a Black woman can be more carefully understood through the lens of intersectionality due to the unique experiences of being both Black and a woman, as well as how the junction between Blackness and womanhood interact to create an entirely unique experience that differs from the experiences of a White woman or a Black man (Crenshaw, 1989). An individual's identity cannot be separated from the course of treatment and the therapeutic alliance. Both counselors and clients bring their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability status, religion, personality, and other components important to their identities to each session, and the interrelated relationships between all these factors are complex and central to the stories that unfold within the counseling sessions. Thus, counselors can demonstrate humility and care for the client's story by acknowledging these vital pieces of their identity. When counselors have high cultural humility, clients tend to rate them higher in terms of satisfaction (Teran et al., 2024). Because clients with marginalized identities are more likely to terminate counseling sessions

prematurely, it is critical for counselors to broach the subject of marginalized identities to demonstrate cultural humility and facilitate an empathic relationship. This highlights the importance of counselors broaching proactively in the counseling relationship; not only can this create safety within counseling sessions, but it can also demonstrate to the client how much the counselor cares about them and their story.

Anxiety About Broaching

This author acknowledges that broaching can be frightening for counselors as well as Counselors-in-Training (CITs). They may feel ill-equipped, awkward, or uncomfortable with direct conversations about cultural issues. In my experience, counselors have reported that discussion of cultural issues has not been relevant to the client's presenting issue, or they worry that they may create an awkward or uncomfortable environment with a client that they have recently met. Counselors may wonder: what if I broach incorrectly? What if I cause a rupture in the relationship or cause harm to the client? The therapeutic alliance tends to be harmed in the event that counselors broach out of a sense of obligation rather than genuine concern for the client (Day-Vines et al., 2021). Counselors might be relieved to know that if they are genuine and authentic in their interactions, they are less likely to damage the therapeutic alliance. Broaching incorrectly or inauthentically may look like a surface-level comment that imposes the therapist's perspective rather than seeking to understand the client's perspective. Appropriate



broaching statements will be explored more below. It is critical to remember that despite concerns or anxiety, it is the counselor's responsibility to create safety in the counseling relationship, and broaching appropriately is key to achieving this safety with culturally diverse clients.

To reduce the fear of broaching, counselors can prepare for sessions in a safe environment. Practicing a statement for the first session can be beneficial for counselors who feel nervous about the first broaching interaction with a client. For example, a White, American, heterosexual counselor might have a client who identifies as Korean American and lesbian. The counselor might create an initial statement for the intake session and practice it with a peer, friend, or colleague. An example of such a statement might follow the structure posed by Day-Vines et al. (2021): "I identify as a White, heterosexual woman who has experienced privileges that you may not have had access to. I wonder how that might affect our work together. What do you think?" There is no one way to craft an initial broaching statement. My own style incorporates some humor and self-deprecation to create a lighter environment, particularly with clients I do not know well yet. In my own experience, I have said to my clients of color who identify as queer, "I am a straight, White lady. I can imagine that you and I have had different backgrounds and experiences! What are your thoughts on working with me in counseling?"

It is also key to note that while this article focuses on proactive, initial broaching statements,

continuous broaching should occur throughout the counseling relationship. Broaching statements are not as complicated as they may seem. In fact, some of the most powerful instances of broaching are the simple acknowledgement that a systemic or cultural issue is at play within the client's life. For example, if a client discusses an interpersonal concern that has been bothering them, a counselor might point out some observations and add, if appropriate, "I wonder if there is also some racism going on in this situation." The client may deny racism in this particular instance, which is unlikely to harm the relationship. However, the client may be more willing to bring up concerns about racism in other areas in future sessions because of the acknowledgement of the client's lived experiences as well as the safe space that the counselor has created. In another example, perhaps a client describes that they feel isolated and left out of family activities due to recently coming out as nonbinary and experiencing rejection. The counselor could observe, "Your family has rejected you because you identify as nonbinary. Even though you feel like you're living more authentically as yourself, it also sounds like you're feeling hurt that they are rejecting you like this." This statement focuses not only on the feeling that the client has, but it also acknowledges the fact that the client has a marginalized identity that is directly related to the rejection they are experiencing from their family. By acknowledging that aspect, which is often avoided in polite society, the client is more likely to feel heard and, most importantly, cared for. Counselors should also strive to improve self-awareness (Day-Vines et al., 2021). It is important



to identify biases and feelings with regard to direct conversations about differences between themselves and clients. Counselors should also be compassionate toward themselves in this process. While broaching, especially for the first time with a new client, can be scary, it can shape the trajectory of the counseling relationship early on if done with compassion. Even if not done perfectly, clients can appreciate honesty, authenticity, and a counselor's genuine concern for their well-being and identity. Moreover, practicing self-awareness and self-compassion are skills that are imperative for all counselors across their careers. Counselors, regardless of how much experience they have, should always strive to learn and improve their practice.

References available upon request.

Summary and Implications

Broaching can induce anxiety for counseling trainees and experienced counselors alike. That being said, counselors should be mindful of the power dynamic within their counseling relationships and recognize that clients may not feel comfortable sharing concerns related to their marginalized identities unless invited to do so (Day-Vines et al., 2018). To open the door to an effective therapeutic alliance, and to reduce the likelihood that marginalized clients prematurely terminate, it is important to broach early on in the relationship (Choi et al., 2015; Day-Vines et al., 2018; 2021). Counselors can take steps toward reducing their anxiety with effective preparation and with improving self-awareness, but the anxiety may never fully disappear. In short, counselors: be scared, and do it anyway.

Global Counseling from an Islamic Perspective

NORAH ALHARBI

Exploring global counseling through an Islamic lens provides essential insights into the cultural, ethical, and spiritual facets vital to understanding and aiding Muslim clients around the world. Since Islam serves as an all-encompassing framework for many followers, integrating its principles into counseling can deepen the alignment between therapeutic support and the client's religious values, ultimately enhancing the counseling process. This approach promotes respect for the cultural and religious beliefs of Muslim clients, creating a more holistic approach to mental health and overall well-being.

1. Islam's Influence on Mental Health and Counseling

Islamic teachings offer valuable guidance on mental health, interpersonal relationships, and resilience. Through the Quran and Hadith (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad), followers are encouraged to practice patience (sabr صبر), trust in God (توكل *tawakkul*), and self-purification (تزكية *tazkiyah*), which all provide a foundation for coping with adversity. The concept of *shura* (شورى consultation) in Islam supports seeking guidance from knowledgeable individuals, much like the modern counseling process, and can reduce isolation by validating the importance of reaching out for help.

Mental health stigma remains a barrier in many Muslim communities, where traditional beliefs may view psychological issues as signs of weak faith or divine punishment, leading some individuals to avoid seeking help. Efforts from Islamic scholars challenges are legitimate health issues requiring

support. By emphasizing that counseling can align with Islamic principles, these professionals help reduce stigma, making mental health care more accessible and culturally relevant.

2. A Holistic Approach in Islamic Counseling

Islamic counseling advocates a holistic approach, addressing the mind, body, and soul, in line with the view of humans as multidimensional beings composed of a soul (روح *ruh*), mind (عقل *aql*), and body (جسم *jism*). Integrating these elements ensures that Islamic counseling aligns with contemporary methods that consider clients' entire well-being, including spiritual, emotional, and physical needs.

Spirituality plays a pivotal role in Islamic healing practices. Islamic counselors may encourage clients to engage in religious practices, such as prayer, supplication, and Quranic recitation, which can boost resilience and inner peace. Quranic verses like, "Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest" (Quran, 13:28) highlight the calming effect of spiritual practice, and dhikr (ذكر remembrance of God) is often incorporated into therapy as a soothing, familiar tool.

3. The Necessity of Cultural Sensitivity in Counseling

Cultural awareness is essential in counseling, especially with diverse clients. For Muslim clients, understanding the values of family, community, and religious practices is crucial. Family support, a key element in Islamic culture,

significantly influences decision-making and coping methods. Thus, involving family members or encouraging family support can enhance the effectiveness of therapy for Muslim clients.

Gender considerations are equally important, as modesty and gender roles are prominent in many Islamic cultures. Counselors may need to accommodate preferences for a same-gender counselor or adjust their approach to respect the client's gender-related beliefs and expectations, particularly in areas like career, marriage, and family responsibilities. Recognizing these cultural and gender sensitivities can lead to a more respectful, supportive counseling environment.

4. Ethical Foundations in Islamic Counseling

Islamic counseling upholds an ethical framework grounded in Shariah (Islamic law), which emphasizes moral conduct, honesty, respect, and compassion, closely aligning with Western counseling standards of confidentiality, nonmaleficence, and beneficence. The principle of *amanah* (أمانة trustworthiness) holds that counselors must protect their clients' confidentiality and manage their struggles with integrity.

A core ethical guideline in Islamic counseling is respecting client autonomy while guiding them according to Islamic values. Islamic counselors aim to facilitate decisions that reflect the client's faith without imposing their interpretations. Additionally, counselors are cautious about discussing practices that may conflict with Islamic teachings, establishing boundaries that respect

both ethical and religious values and build trust with clients.

5. Islamic Therapeutic Practices

Islamic therapeutic interventions complement modern counseling by combining spiritual and psychological support. For example, *tawakkul* (reliance on God) helps clients cope with stress by fostering trust in God's wisdom, allowing them to find purpose and acceptance in challenges. Counselors may encourage clients to reflect on Quranic teachings that reinforce resilience and self-trust, helping them build mental and emotional strength.

Istighfar (إستغفار seeking forgiveness) is another intervention beneficial for processing guilt or regret. Islam promotes seeking forgiveness as a path to emotional and spiritual healing, and counselors can guide clients through this practice to cultivate self-compassion and reduce self-blame. This is especially helpful for clients struggling with guilt or self-criticism, as it helps them reconcile their actions and focus on self-improvement.

The concept of *husn al-dhann* (حسن الظن positive thinking) aligns with cognitive-behavioral strategies that challenge negative thinking. By promoting a positive outlook, counselors can help clients adopt healthier perspectives, consistent with Islamic teachings that encourage positive assumptions and reframing. This not only reinforces a positive mindset but also enhances mental resilience and well-being.

6. The Growing Influence of Islamic Counseling Globally

With a rising global Muslim population, the demand for culturally attuned mental health services that consider Islamic values is increasing. Islamic counseling is becoming more prominent in Muslim-majority countries like Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and Indonesia, as well as in Western countries where Muslims are a minority. Programs, training institutions, and counseling centers dedicated to Islamic psychology are developing to meet these needs, reinforcing the importance of culturally sensitive mental health care.

In Western contexts, organizations such as the Islamic Counseling and Psychotherapy Network (ICPN) and the Muslim Mental Health Association (MMHA) are helping bridge gaps between Western mental health practices and Islamic values. These organizations provide resources and training that enhance counselors' cultural competence, ensuring that Muslim clients receive respectful and appropriate care.

7. Challenges and Opportunities in Islamic Counseling

While Islamic counseling provides a meaningful, culturally sensitive approach, it faces certain challenges. A significant challenge is the shortage of trained Islamic counselors proficient in both Islamic principles and psychological practices. Misunderstandings about mental health within some Muslim communities also persist, with fears of social stigma deterring individuals from seeking

help.

Nonetheless, Islamic counseling is gaining recognition, opening new opportunities for growth. Training programs that combine Islamic teachings with psychology can prepare counselors to meet the unique needs of Muslim clients effectively. Partnerships between Islamic scholars and mental health professionals can further expand the field, fostering a deeper understanding of how Islamic principles and modern psychology can work together to support Muslim clients.

Conclusion

Counseling from an Islamic perspective offers a comprehensive approach to mental health that respects the cultural, spiritual, and psychological needs of Muslim clients. By integrating Islamic values with established therapeutic practices, Islamic counseling fosters a supportive, culturally relevant framework that resonates with Muslim clients' faith and worldview. This approach not only enhances counseling efficacy but also contributes to a more inclusive, compassionate mental health landscape.

Please see below for this article in the author's native language, Arabic.

الإرشاد النفسي من منظور إسلامي

نورة الحربي

الحديث التي تراعي رفاهية العميل من جميع الجوانب، بما في ذلك الاحتياجات الروحية والعاطفية والجسدية. تلعب الروحانية دوراً مهماً في الشفاء في الممارسات الإسلامية. يمكن للمستشارين الإسلاميين تشجيع العملاء على ممارسة الطقوس الدينية، مثل الصلاة والدعاء وتلاوة القرآن، مما يعزز الصمود والسلام الداخلي. آيات قرآنية مثل: "ألا بذكر الله تطمئن القلوب" (القرآن، 13:28) تؤكد تأثير الروحانية المهدئ، ويُستخدم الذكر غالباً كأداة علاجية لتهدئة العملاء.

3. ضرورة الحساسية الثقافية في الإرشاد

تعد المعرفة الثقافية أمراً أساسياً في الإرشاد، خاصةً عند التعامل مع العملاء من خلفيات دينية وثقافية متنوعة. بالنسبة للعملاء المسلمين، يُعد فهم قيم العائلة والمجتمع والممارسات الدينية أمراً حاسماً. دعم الأسرة، وهو عنصر أساسي في الثقافة الإسلامية، يؤثر بشكل كبير على اتخاذ القرارات وطرق التكيف. لذلك، قد تكون إشراك أفراد الأسرة أو تشجيع دعم الأسرة أمراً فعالاً في تعزيز فعالية العلاج.

الحساسية تجاه قضايا النوع الاجتماعي مهمة أيضاً، حيث أن الحشمة وأدوار الجنسين لها مكانة بارزة في العديد من الثقافات الإسلامية. قد يحتاج المستشارون إلى مراعاة تفضيل العملاء للحصول على مستشار من نفس الجنس أو تعديل أسلوبهم ليتوافق مع معتقدات العميل الخاصة بالنوع، خاصة في مجالات مثل الوظيفة والزواج والمسؤوليات الأسرية. إدراك هذه الحساسيات الثقافية والاجتماعية يمكن أن يؤدي إلى بيئة إرشاد أكثر احتراماً ودعمًا.

4. الأسس الأخلاقية في الإرشاد الإسلامي

الإرشاد الإسلامي يعتمد على إطار أخلاقي مستمد من الشريعة الإسلامية، التي تركز على السلوك الأخلاقي، والصدق، واحترام الآخرين، والرحمة، مما يتماشى بشكل وثيق مع معايير الإرشاد الغربي من حيث السرية، وعدم

الإرشاد العالمي من منظور إسلامي يوفر رؤى مهمة حول الأبعاد الثقافية والأخلاقية والروحية التي تُعد أساسية لفهم ودعم العملاء المسلمين حول العالم. بما أن الإسلام يشكل نهج حياة شاملاً للعديد من المسلمين، فإن دمج مبادئه في ممارسات الإرشاد يمكن أن يعزز فعالية الدعم من خلال توافق التدخلات النفسية مع معتقدات العميل الدينية، مما يجعل عملية الإرشاد أكثر شمولاً واحتراماً للقيم الثقافية والدينية الخاصة بالعملاء المسلمين.

1. تأثير الإسلام على الصحة النفسية والإرشاد

توفر التعاليم الإسلامية إرشادات قيمة حول الصحة النفسية والعلاقات الاجتماعية والصمود. من خلال القرآن والسنة النبوية، يُشجع الأفراد على ممارسة الصبر (سبر)، والتوكل على الله (توكل)، وتزكية النفس (تزكية)، مما يوفر أساساً قوياً للتعامل مع الشدائد. مفهوم الشورى في الإسلام يدعم فكرة طلب المساعدة والإرشاد من أهل المعرفة، مما يقلل من الشعور بالعزلة من خلال تعزيز أهمية طلب المساعدة.

لوصمة الاجتماعية المتعلقة بالصحة النفسية لا تزال تمثل عائقاً في العديد من المجتمعات المسلمة، حيث تُعتبر المشاكل النفسية في بعض الأحيان ضعفاً في الإيمان أو عقوبة من الله، مما يدفع بعض الأفراد إلى تجنب طلب المساعدة. يعمل علماء النفس والمستشارون المسلمون على توضيح أن التحديات النفسية هي قضايا طبية ونفسية مشروعة تحتاج إلى دعم، ويهدفون من خلال ذلك إلى الحد من هذه الوصمة وجعل خدمات الصحة النفسية أكثر قبولاً وملائمة ثقافياً.

2. نهج شامل في الإرشاد الإسلامي

الإرشاد الإسلامي يدعو إلى نهج شامل يتناول العقل والجسد والروح، بما يتماشى مع الرؤية الإسلامية التي تعتبر الإنسان كائناً متعدد الأبعاد يتكون من روح (روح)، وعقل (عقل)، وجسد (جسم). دمج هذه العناصر يضمن أن يتماشى الإرشاد الإسلامي مع الطرق

تفسير المواقف، وهو ما يتماشى مع التعاليم الإسلامية التي تشجع الافتراضات الإيجابية وإعادة التقييم، مما يعزز المرونة العقلية والصحة النفسية.

6. التأثير العالمي للإرشاد الإسلامي

مع تزايد عدد السكان المسلمين عالمياً، يزداد الطلب على خدمات الصحة النفسية التي تراعي القيم الإسلامية. أصبح الإرشاد الإسلامي أكثر شيوعاً في البلدان ذات الأغلبية المسلمة مثل السعودية وماليزيا وإندونيسيا، وكذلك في الدول الغربية حيث المسلمون أقلية. هناك برامج، ومراكز استشارية، ومؤسسات تدريبية مكرسة لعلم النفس الإسلامي تتطور لتلبية هذه الاحتياجات، مما يعزز أهمية

الرعاية النفسية الملائمة ثقافياً. في الدول الغربية، تسعى منظمات مثل شبكة الإرشاد والعلاج النفسي الإسلامي (ICPN) وجمعية الصحة النفسية للمسلمين (MMHA) إلى سد الفجوة بين الممارسات النفسية الغربية والقيم الإسلامية، مما يوفر موارد وتدريباً يعزز الكفاءة الثقافية لدى المستشارين لضمان تقديم الرعاية المناسبة والمشرفة للعملاء المسلمين.

7. التحديات والفرص في الإرشاد الإسلامي

على الرغم من أن الإرشاد الإسلامي يوفر نهجاً حساساً ومناسباً ثقافياً، إلا أنه يواجه بعض التحديات. من بين التحديات نقص المستشارين المدربين على الدمج الفعال بين المبادئ الإسلامية والممارسات النفسية الحديثة. كما أن المفاهيم الخاطئة حول الصحة النفسية لا تزال قائمة في بعض المجتمعات الإسلامية، حيث يخشى البعض من وصمة اجتماعية قد تمنعهم من طلب المساعدة.

ومع ذلك، فإن الإرشاد الإسلامي يكتسب اعترافاً متزايداً، مما يفتح فرصاً للنمو. يمكن لبرامج التدريب التي تجمع بين التعاليم الإسلامية والمعرفة النفسية إعداد المستشارين لخدمة احتياجات العملاء المسلمين بشكل فعال. ويمكن أن تسهم الشراكات بين العلماء الإسلاميين

الإضرار، والإحسان. مبدأ الأمانة في الإرشاد الإسلامي يفرض على المستشارين حماية سرية عملائهم والتعامل مع صراعاتهم بصدق.

دليل أخلاقي أساسي في الإرشاد الإسلامي هو احترام استقلالية العميل مع توجيهه وفقاً للقيم الإسلامية. يسعى المستشارون الإسلاميون إلى تسهيل القرارات التي تعكس إيمان العميل دون فرض تفسيراتهم الخاصة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يكون المستشارون حذرين عند مناقشة الممارسات التي قد تتعارض مع التعاليم الإسلامية، مما يضع حدوداً تحترم القيم الأخلاقية والدينية للعملاء وتبني الثقة بينهم.

5. التدخلات العلاجية الإسلامية

التدخلات العلاجية الإسلامية تُكمل الممارسات الإرشادية الحديثة من خلال مزيج من الدعم الروحي والنفسي. على سبيل المثال، يساعد التوكل على الله العملاء في التعامل مع الضغوط من خلال تعزيز الثقة في حكمة الله، مما يمكنهم من إيجاد الهدف والقبول في التحديات. قد يشجع المستشارون العملاء على التفكير في التعاليم القرآنية التي تدعم الصمود والثقة بالنفس، مما يساعدهم على بناء قوة عقلية وعاطفية.

يُعد الاستغفار (طلب المغفرة) تدخلاً آخر مفيداً في معالجة مشاعر الذنب أو الندم. يشجع الإسلام المؤمنين على طلب المغفرة كطريق إلى الشفاء العاطفي والروحي، ويمكن للمستشارين مساعدة العملاء على ممارسة هذه العادة لتعزيز التسامح الذاتي وتخفيف الشعور باللوم. هذا النهج يكون مفيداً بشكل خاص للعملاء الذين يعانون من مشاعر الذنب أو النقد الذاتي، حيث يساعدهم على التصالح مع أفعالهم والتركيز على تحسين الذات.

مفهوم حسن الظن (التفكير الإيجابي) يتماشى مع استراتيجيات العلاج السلوكي المعرفي التي تتحدى التفكير السلبي. من خلال تعزيز النظرة الإيجابية، يمكن للمستشارين مساعدة العملاء على تبني طرق صحية في

والمختصين في الصحة النفسية في توسيع هذا المجال وتعزيز الفهم المشترك حول كيفية تكامل المبادئ الإسلامية مع العلاج النفسي الحديث لدعم العملاء المسلمين.

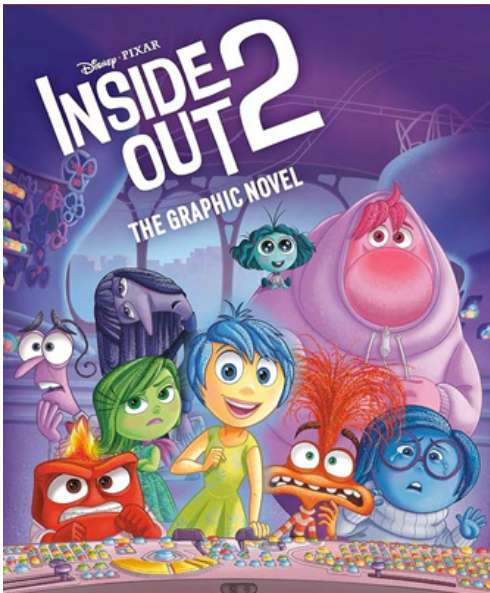
الخاتمة

يوفر الإرشاد من منظور إسلامي نهجاً شاملاً للصحة النفسية يحترم الاحتياجات الثقافية والروحية والنفسية للعملاء المسلمين. من خلال دمج القيم الإسلامية مع الممارسات العلاجية القائمة، يوفر الإرشاد الإسلامي إطاراً داعماً وحساساً ثقافياً يتماشى مع إيمان العملاء المسلمين ونظرتهم للعالم. يعزز هذا النهج فعالية الإرشاد ويسهم في خلق بيئة صحية نفسية شاملة ومتعاطفة.

MOVIE REVIEW : INSIDE OUT 2

Ana Ayala Cantu

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The much-awaited sequel to Riley's Story, Inside Out 2, has finally made it to the streaming platforms. The movie does a great job of enhancing awareness of emotions and their effect on our behaviors, thoughts, and beliefs. Inside Out 2 continues to tell the story of Riley during important developmental stages as she becomes a teenager. The main character faces changes in her life in the form of adjusting to a new place after a cross country move, transitioning to high school, changes in friend dynamics, social pressures, and puberty. All of the life changes make Riley experience and identify new emotions that had not been explored earlier in her life. Those emotions come in

the form of envy, anxiety, embarrassment and ennui. Although we experience all the emotions in all of our developmental stages, those integrated into the sequel are often the most persistent during adolescence. This is also demonstrated by the glimpses we get seeing the emotions of Riley's close friends and parents.

Throughout the movie, we can see the dynamics between anxiety and joy, especially the core messages that these emotions may lead a person to incorporate into their worldview. Joy's goal is to motivate Riley and relay the belief that she is a "good person." While anxiety, who also wants to help Riley, does it by trying to prevent any negative event or situation that may affect Riley badly.

Although they use different strategies, the emotions are working to enhance Riley's overall well-being. Having anxiety in our lives helps us to motivate, prepare, and strive to do the best we can; however, when anxiety reaches exceptionally high levels, it can affect our daily lives and is perfectly portrayed in the movie. At first, anxiety helps Riley to make friends, avoid social faux pas, and perform well in hockey. But afterward, it gets to higher levels making Riley experience her first panic attack.

Another incredible portrayal is the development of core beliefs and their relationship with automatic thoughts. Throughout the movie, we can see how Riley's imagination is overridden by anxiety and the anticipation of the future. Those daydreams and goals that often appear as images in the mind are now focused on the what-if scenarios of the future. This results in Riley's experiencing more automatic thoughts that Riley experiences.

MOVIE REVIEW : INSIDE OUT 2

Ana Ayala Cantu

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Furthermore, the automatic thoughts then change her core belief of self without doubts stemming from her anxiety . At the beginning of the movie , we see Riley's core belief as being "I am a good person , " and as her anxiety increases , the belief changes to " I am not good enough." As some psychology theories point out, such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, our experiences shape our thoughts and beliefs about self, others, and the world.

The movie gives people without a background in mental health a great resource to understand emotions, thoughts, and beliefs that connect to shape our future experiences and expectations. It also gives a visual representation of how panic attacks can look like so it can be easily explained to kids. Riley's story can be used in counseling for children and teenagers as it can help to enhance understanding of their self-talk and provide visual representations for emotions. Furthermore, it can help to create empathy for others as we can glance into others' perspectives and the feelings that lead to their behavior. It is a great movie for counselors to watch as well as recommend to clients. It would be interesting to see Riley navigating high school and all of the impactful experiences that occur in adolescence (hopefully in Inside Out 3).

Mann, K. (Director). (2024). Inside out [Film]. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures; Pixar Animation Studios.



SELF-CARE CORNER

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MAKING KANDI BRACELETS

AARON FERRER, 1ST-YEAR MASTER'S STUDENT

Kandi bracelets are originally from rave or festival culture. There is a culture to trade Kandi bracelets during raves or festivals and an idea called PLUR, which stands for Peace, Love, Unity, and Respect. The Kandi community is built on ideologies of mutual respect and sharing creative crafts. A recent, commonly known example, is friendship bracelets that are traded at Taylor Swift's Eras Tour concerts. Making bracelets helps me to stay focused in class, since Kandi crafting has repetitive motions that do not distract me from what is being discussed. Similar to knitting, the repetitive motion helps me to concentrate instead of being distracted by my phone or doing



other things on my laptop. I still take notes that I feel are important, but it allows me to be more present in the class. Now that I have made plenty of bracelets for myself, I give many away for free. I'm also considering creating an Etsy store for it. All of what I've learnt is from YouTube, and the easiest bracelet types to start with, in my opinion, are ladder cuffs or peyote stitch cuffs. There is a helpful tutorial called, 'Multi Stitch Kandi Cuff (With Character Pattern)' by Mood Kandi on YouTube. Bead patterns are available on sites like kandipatterns.com, where you can find patterns for tv shows, movies, character motifs, and more created by other users. These are usually made of 'pony beads' which are sold in kits of rainbow colors: I bought my first kit at Walmart which was about \$13.00 for a total of 2,300 beads in different colors from a brand called 'Hello Hobby'.

WALKING AWAY FROM BURNOUT

ALEXANDRA RABB, 2ND-YEAR MASTER'S STUDENT



Lately, I have been feeling the academic stresses and graduate burnout as we head towards the end of the fall semester. I like to walk around campus, in between classes to relieve anxiety. The pond at the Hintz Alumni center is a beautiful, peaceful spot on campus to touch the grass and watch the fish and ducks swim around. Take a few deep breaths and create a mindful OR mindless moment, just being.

RAM CSI EVENTS - FALL 2024

CHI SIGMA IOTA
RHO ALPHA MU

CSI SNACK & SHARE

Wednesday Sept. 11th **2pm-6pm**

in the Cedar Third Floor Lounge

Stop by to learn more about CSI!

Share about your first few weeks!

Take a short break in between classes!

FREE FOOD & NEW FRIENDS

Questions?
Email: Rachel at rin5096@psu.edu
or Alex at asr168@psu.edu



CSI RAM Exec Board photographed at an event

10/30/2024

CSI - Rho Alpha Mu General Body Meeting

Thank you for being here :)

WELCOME TO CSI! RHO ALPHA MU CHAPTER

Chi Sigma Iota (CSI)

CSI is an international honor society that values academic and professional excellence in the profession of counseling. Our Chapter, Rho Alpha Mu, has been recognized with 2 major CSI grants for our Chapter's efforts.


General Body Meeting

Join us for our upcoming CSI General Body Meeting, where you can connect with peers and learn more about our chapter! This is a great opportunity to share what events you'd like to see and find out how you can get involved in our committees.

Meeting date coming up soon - stay tuned!

Mentorship Program

Interested in the mentorship program? Scan the QR code to sign up as a mentor or mentee and get involved!



Please complete this survey by Wednesday 9/18. We will contact you shortly to provide more information about the program.

Questions?

Contact Alex at asr168@psu.edu or Rachel at rin5096@psu.edu

CSI is open to all master's and doctoral students in Counselor Education.

Departmental Highlights

CONGRATULATIONS TO EVERYONE WHO...

Presented at a conference:

AARC

Scarlett Iglesias Hoyos
Mihee Woo
Fan Fan
SungWon Yoon- Lee
Paris Pruitt
Ravza Aksoy Nur
Dasol Hwang
Qingyun Zhang
Jessie Onyango-Opiyo
Jianuo Li
Saiber Shaikh

NARACES

Linh Le
Fan Fan
Saiber Shaikh
Lucy Kim
Deepika Nantha
Dominic Augustin
Ravza Aksoy Nur
Scarlett Iglesias Hoyos
Jinwon Suh

SACES

Mihee Woo

NCACES

Dasol Hwang

WACES

SungWon Yoon-Lee

DCDT

Cassandra Kam
Vanessa Englehart

Penn State Leadership Summit

Courtney Dixon
Andrew Nadermann
Shyrun Karandikar & Saiber Shaikh

Penn State College of Education

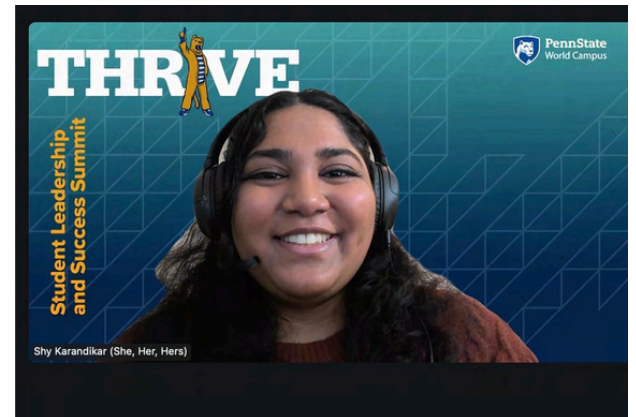
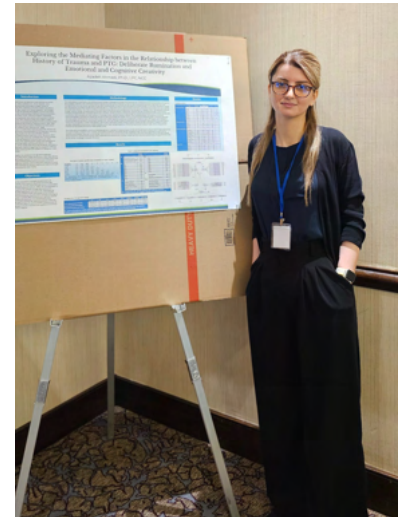
Cassandra Kam

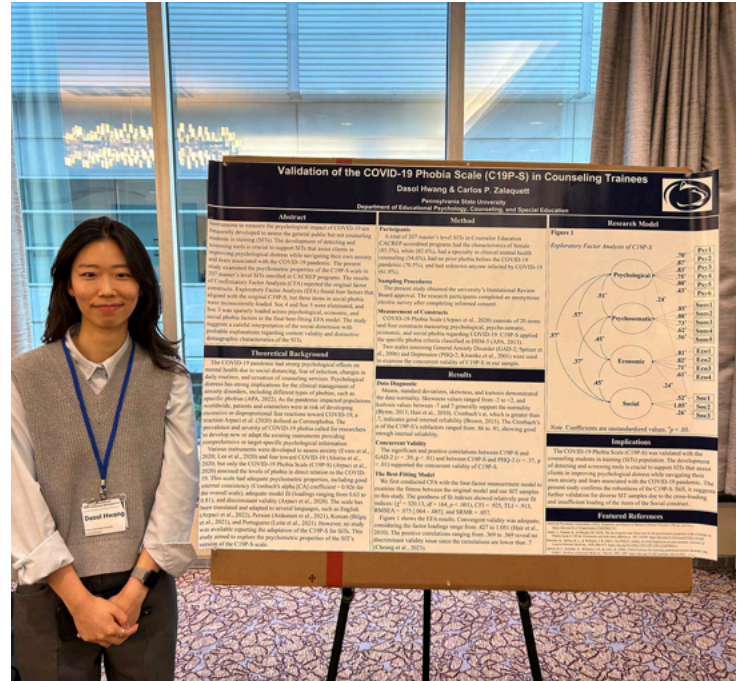
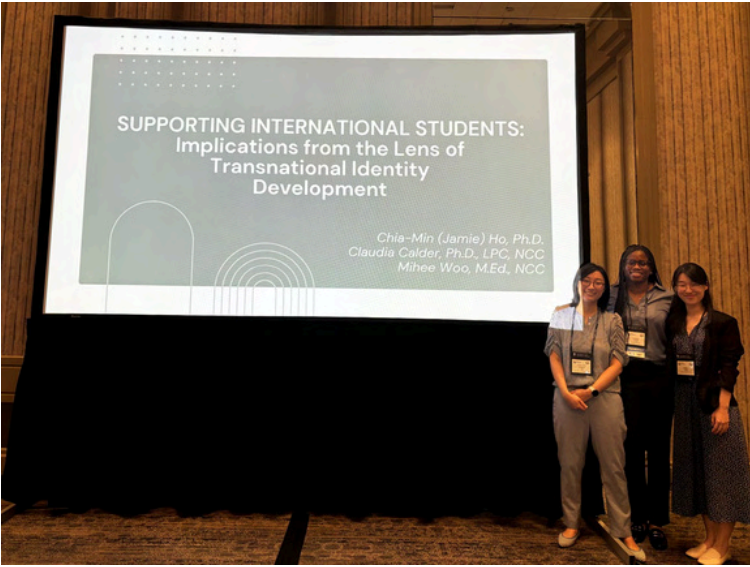
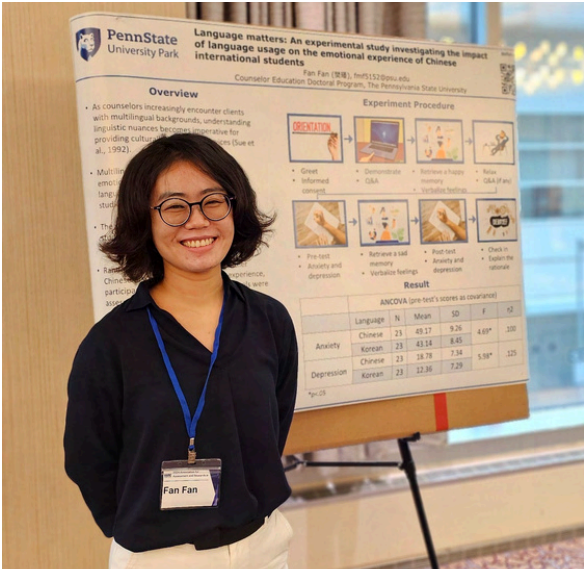
Please see below for pictures from these events!



**Penn State represented at AARC 2024 in Pittsburgh, PA.
(September 6th-9th, 2024)**









**Penn State represented at NARACES 2024 in Atlantic City
(September 26-29, 2024.)**



Departmental Highlights

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

Dissertation Defense

Dr. Meaghan O'Shaughnessy
Dr. Nkenji Clarke

Recognized by Professional Association

NARACES Emerging Leader
Saiber Shaikh

ACES Research Scholarship
Mihee Woo

AARC Research Award
Dasol Hwang

NARACES Diversity Scholarship
Saiber Shaikh

NBCC Foundation Dr. Nicholas Vacc
Scholarship for Doctoral Students
Scarlett Iglesias Hoyos

Publication

Yoon, E., & Yoon-Lee, S. (2024). LGBTQ+ clients' coming out experiences in counseling sessions in South Korea. Journal of LGBTQ Issues in Counseling.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/26924951.2024.238950>

DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Congratulations to everyone who

Passed program milestones :

Comprehensive Exams

Saiber Shaikh

Mihee Woo

Paris Pruitt

Fan Fan

Norah Alharbi

SungWon Yoon-Lee

Dominic Augustin

Ashleigh Johnson

Qualifying Exams

Scarlett Iglesias Hoyos

Deepika Nantha

Alumni Spotlight : Dominiqua M. Griffin, Ph.D.

Q. If you could summarize your experience at the counselor educator program at Penn State in one word, which would you choose and why?

Illuminating – because I learned so much about myself, the process of the doctoral experience, and what we can potentially produce and do after the program. This was a time for me to be reflective, and engage in the different spaces I enjoyed. Several items stood out to me: from the fun times, to learning about the community and engagement. I was active in the Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA) and CORED, which focused on racial, equity, and diversity. I was able to see the policy side and learn about ways to engage. I was the liaison for BGSA and served as their Political Action Committee co-chair and engaged with the mayor while I was there.



Q. Tell us about your emphasis area. In what ways did your experience at Penn State prepare you for your professional life?

My emphasis was comparative and international education, but instead of it just being my emphasis, I was able to earn a dual-title. This meant that my dissertation sat within both programs, which is why I ended up looking at school counseling in Barbados, working with their school counselors, their Ministry of Education, and their association for guidance counselors, to not only begin the process of informing school counseling policy on the island, but also holding the island at the center of the research. I sat with the concept of how we can learn from this small-state population and really gain some skills from them as opposed to centering the American context of school counseling.

My research essentially started to prepare me for engaging with government entities (ex. learning about bureaucracy and ways to engage with different leaders). As I made the transition to policy, I had this international experience under my belt, but I did not have the experience in domestic policy. I needed to gain a deeper understanding in how to engage in the policy space here in the US and I thought about how we could learn from other countries, to learn and grow as a nation and global community.

Q. What is your current position and your daily activities and responsibilities?

I am a political appointee in the Biden-Harris Administration, serving as a policy advisor to the Secretary at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). My daily activities include the following: being responsible for reviewing all items leaving the agency and providing policy analysis regarding SAMHSA, Medicaid (CMS), all behavioral health, gun violence, and some cross-cutting issues such as housing and tribal affairs. I report to the counselor leading these issue areas and support this portfolio.

Alumni Spotlight : Dominiqua M. Griffin, Ph.D.

It's been a joy supporting some of the initiatives in the behavioral health workforce and the gun violence portfolios. At HHS, there's a lot of communication between the White House and all our agencies that report to us, and making sure that we are aligned in how information is being disseminated, and in what spaces that information is being shared. We want to be sure that we are acting on behalf of all people in this country, and that everyone has access to all the information, and that there's a coordinated effort to how we roll out all information, policies, resources, and services.

Q. You've had a fascinating journey so far from earning a PhD in Counselor Education at Penn State to your current role in the Biden-Harris Administration in the role of Policy Advisor to the Secretary at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Could you tell us about some of the pivotal moments that led you from counselor education to working with the NIH, and now to shaping healthcare policy at the federal level? For students who might see themselves crossing disciplines similarly—perhaps starting in mental health but aspiring to influence policy—what specific steps or experiences would you recommend they seek out?

I would suggest applying to fellowships. I applied to the AERA Congressional Fellowship, which is part of the AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellowship. I ended up working for a Senator, on his Health and Education Legislation team, and from there, became an AAAS Fellow at NIH for two years in the Executive branch. So I had this Hill experience, and engaged with constituents and national organizations which was extremely helpful and pivotal in helping me bridge the gap between research and policy.

Q. What is one piece of advice you wish you could have received as a student that you would like to pass on to current students?

I believe that all students should know that they can do above and beyond what is expected of them. Yes, we are graduating from an amazing doctoral program, but just know that you don't have to become a faculty member after. Part of it is being true to yourself and your spirit, and ponder what you would like to accomplish afterwards. Let your path reveal itself to you, because there were some things I did not know as a doctoral student. I did not know it was possible to be in this role. It wasn't until I started my fellowship and I saw a political appointee presenting, I thought, "I don't know what that is, but I'm going to look into it and take on a role like that." As a Black woman I had to see that for myself and affirm that the world is really available to us. We're capable of achieving above and beyond if that's what we want to do. But also, throughout the process, we have to honor our health and wellbeing, pay attention to what our bodies need throughout the process, staying true to that, and knowing that we're capable of more than what might be right in front of us.

Alumni Spotlight :

Dominiqua M. Griffin, Ph.D.

Q. Self-care is a relevant concept that, as counselors, we frequently strive for. How do you balance work, self-care, and your personal life? Any helpful tips for students?

While I was working on my proposal, I was also enrolled in a scuba diving course, and a swimming class, to focus on my breathing. I exercised consistently throughout the program as well. Health is something I have always focused on and prioritized. At every level, we need to learn to care for ourselves in a new way; to honor ourselves and our needs in a different way. Some health challenges have presented themselves to me more recently, and I realized that I was kind to myself in the past, but now this gives me the opportunity to be kind to myself in a new way, which does not take away from all that I have done to care of myself along the way. As we continue to grow, our habits must evolve. Don't get caught up in how you want balance to look, but really think about what is important to you in the moment, and what you need to get through in the moment, and how you can be kind to yourself in a new way at each level.

Q. What is your proudest achievement outside of your career?

Legacy building is something that is genuinely important to me. Since graduating from the doctoral program, two of my cousins have started their doctoral journeys. That is something that is extremely important to me. I was the only Black person in my cohort, and then I engaged with folks in the Black Graduate Student Association, and they had similar experiences of being the only one in their department or cohort. I want to make sure that people of color and those from historically excluded communities know that they have resources available to them. There is a support system and a community out there making room for more to come along the way. My goal is to not only build within my family, but to consider what does that look like in changing the outlook for our communities.

Q. What else would you like to share with our current students about yourself, the program, or what the future holds for them?

The time is now, for students to really be engaged in what's happening around them, at the local and national level, and see themselves as global citizens. There's a role for us to play. When I was a professor, I used to teach a course on the role of school counselors engaged in advocacy and honestly, students should be willing to fight for social justice issues they are interested in, whether that's within counseling, environmental justice, supporting families, healthcare, mental health, etc. I could literally go down the list. There are so many areas where we really need to engage and push the needle forward. Yes, their careers are important but who are they outside of their careers? What are the issues that are impacting them? How can we try to promote change in those spaces? There's work that needs to be done on all fronts. We all need to be held responsible and accountable for pushing the needle forward.

Alumni Spotlight :

Dominiqua M. Griffin, Ph.D.

Q. Our theme this year is “Global Counselor”, so what makes you a counselor for the global world? Or what practices do you employ in your professional life that make you a global counselor?

This is an interesting question because of the nature of the research I engaged previously. I have always had that “global counselor” mindset. In the past, I completed several study abroad programs, which shaped me. This is why I entered the program at Penn State because I was able to earn the dual title. We all have different worldviews, and these experiences are pivotal in, not only how we engage with each other, but how we engage in our work. Having that mindset---just being willing to listen, to receiving what someone else is sharing--- helps us consider solutions. I still feel like I’m using my counseling skills when I’m working, for example, when I’m managing meetings, behavioral health workforce issues, collecting information from the agencies, listening to the requests from the White House, because all those areas require my counseling skills. I try to be intentional about addressing what is being asked, and how can I contribute to finding a solution, and how can we work together collaboratively in a positive environment. This skillset is at the core of all of the work we do, whether that be domestically, globally, in the classroom, at a meeting or wherever.

Q. If you won the lottery, what would you do first?

I want to pay off my student loans. That is the number one priority for me. Beyond that, I would create a scholarship at all my alma maters-----and I would also enter the real estate industry.

Q. If you had a time machine, would you travel to the future or the past?

If I had a time machine, I would travel into the future. This is an extremely important election, and at the end of the day, there will be some serious long-term impacts depending on how we show up as voters. We should all vote and advocate for policy changes at all levels. I would like to see what the impact is in 50 years because this is such a pivotal moment for us.

Alumni Spotlight : Elizabeth Siegelman, M.Ed, LPC



Q. In what ways did your experience at Penn State prepare you for your professional life?

My time at Penn State prepared me to navigate a variety of institutional structures in order to better advocate for my clients.

Q. Tell us about your emphasis area and your professional experience after graduation.

I chose the Clinical Mental Health in Schools and Communities track because I was already working in the nonprofit sector prior to beginning the program. Post- graduation I have continued working in the non-profit sector and recently took over as Executive Director at the Center for Alternatives in Community Justice (CACJ). I have been working for this nonprofit since 2021; we offer restorative justice practices to help community members manage conflicts without having to go through the court system and to lessen their involvement with the justice

system. I was fortunate as a new graduate to have already had a job. In my new role as Executive Director I am also fortunate to have the autonomy to write grants that support expanding programming at the CACJ, specifically a counseling program for at-risk youth. The CACJ already has a court diversion program for youth (Youth Aid Panel), so the addition of counseling programming would go hand-in-hand with this existing programming.

Q. What is one piece of advice you wished you could have received as a student that you would like to pass on to current students?

Take care of yourself. You cannot pour from an empty cup.

Q. Self-care is a relevant concept that, as counselors, we frequently strive for. How do you balance work, self-care, and your personal life? Any helpful tips for students?

I try really hard not to fall into the trap of urgency—not everything is an urgent matter and I do a better job as a practitioner when I take the time to think through a case. I also don't work on weekends, if I can avoid it. It is perfectly acceptable to take two days off per week to resent and refresh so I can be present for my client's during the week. I am not on call 24/7 and it is okay to leave my work phone and laptop in my office over the weekend.

Alumni Spotlight :

Elizabeth Siegelman, M.Ed, LPC

Q. What is your proudest achievement outside of your career?

Actively cultivating a network of support between myself and my siblings. We grew up in a difficult home with emotionally immature parents (part of the reason for my academic interest in counseling) and in our early adulthood we all came together to provide each other with the care we needed, but couldn't get from our parents. Now, we have an established system of support and feel less lonely in the world knowing that we will always have consistency and understanding in each other.

Q. What else would you like to share with our current students about yourself, the program, or what the future holds for them?

There is a place for you and your unique skill set in the workforce and in the community. If you don't feel "right" in a space, move on and find something else. It can be so difficult to leave a space that you might have worked a long time to break into (believe me, I know) but making a pivot is not giving up, it is simply opening a window into another space that might serve you better.

Q. Our theme this year is "Global Counselor", so what makes you a counselor for the global world? Or what practices do you employ in your professional life that makes you a global counselor?

I use restorative practices in my daily work, which can be broadly applied to nearly everyone because restorative practices focus on human dignity and fair process.

Q. What is your current position and your daily activities and responsibilities?

I am the new Executive Director at the Center for Alternatives in Community Justice (CACJ), my daily activities include grant writing, attending meetings as representative of the CACJ, mediations (divorce and custody), Community Conferences (a restorative practice used to manage groups experiencing a conflict, dispute or a crime either in the county jail and in the community), checking in with staff members as they manage their programming: Youth Aid Panel and Pretrial Supervision Program, managing our Penn State work-study intern, leading a weekly reentry support group at the Centre county jail, co-leading a monthly reentry and career skills class with my colleague from PS CareerLink (grant-funded programming specific to women in the Centre county jail).

Q. If you could give your younger counselor self one piece of advice in the form of a fortune cookie, what would it say, and why?

Don't judge yourself for the time it took to get to this career path—everything you learned along the way helped you to become the counselor you are today.



13TH ANNUAL CHI SIGMA IOTA PA STATEWIDE CONFERENCE

APRIL 2025

CSI'S STATEWIDE CONFERENCE

CSI hosts a statewide conference in Pennsylvania annually, usually attended by 150-200 people.

HOSTED BY RHO ALPHA MU

In April 2025, Penn State's Rho Alpha Mu chapter will host the conference right here in State College!

DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED

More details, such as the date, time, and location of the conference are still to come. Be sure to check your email for updates over the next several months!

GET INVOLVED

OPEN TO ANYONE

Anyone can help put this conference together! Please reach out to Dr. Nadermann to join the conference committee if you are interested. Meetings will take place 2-3 times in the Fall 2024 semester, with more frequent meetings in Spring 2025 (approximately 2-3 hours weekly with biweekly meetings).

PREPARE YOUR SUBMISSIONS

Be on the lookout for submission announcements in the coming months! Consider submitting a poster or a presentation for this conference; it's right in our backyard!

MEET THE AUTHORS

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Scarlett Iglesias Hoyos (she/her/ella) is a second-year doctoral student in the Counselor Education program at The Pennsylvania State University. As a bilingual counselor fluent in Spanish and English, Scarlett combines her expertise in counseling with a commitment to critical research and culturally responsive measurement development. Her work focuses on addressing the needs of marginalized and historically oppressed communities, including BIPOC, Latino/e/x populations, and immigrants. Passionate about fostering equity in mental health care, Scarlett uses trauma-informed, decolonizing approaches to increase awareness and accessibility to mental health services for underserved populations

Courtney Dixon (she/her/hers) is a first-year doctoral student at Penn State's Counselor Education program. Courtney earned a master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Johns Hopkins University in 2021, and she is a licensed clinical professional counselor (LCPC) in the state of Maryland. Currently, she is a supervisor at Penn State's master's and doctoral training clinic, the Dr. Edwin L. Herr Clinic, and her research interests include the development of counselors-in-training, use of training clinics within counselor education, identity development in emerging adults, trauma, and trauma training for entry-level counselors. On the rare occasion that Courtney is not working on her doctoral studies, you will typically find her dancing, working on a hobby art project, or playing a cozy video game.



MEET THE AUTHORS

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Norah Jeza M. Alharbi (she/her/hers) is a PhD candidate in Counseling Education at Penn State. Nora is dedicated to training future mental health professionals to support underserved communities and address their unique challenges. Norah's goal is to influence mental health policies in Saudi Arabia, reduce stigma, and improve accessibility, especially for women. Norah aims to raise awareness, teach essential techniques, and provide hands-on learning opportunities to empower the next generation of counselors.



Ana Ayala Cantu (she/her/hers) is a dedicated counselor at the Herr Clinic, she obtained a B.A. in Psychology, a M.Sc in Work Psychology, and an M.Ed in Counselor Education with a focus on Clinical Mental Health in Schools and Communities. Currently pursuing a doctoral degree in Counseling Education at Penn State, Ana is passionate about supporting children, teenagers, and families through evidence-based practices. Her research interests include the impact of social media and the experiences of neurodiverse individuals. With prior experience in partial hospitalization programs and acute inpatient facilities in San Antonio, Ana brings a wealth of knowledge and compassion to her work.