



Social Work and Religious Diversity: Religion and Spirituality through the Life Course

A continuing education conference for social workers and their colleagues, hosted by the Interfaith Center of New York, in partnership with the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, and the Psychotherapy and Spirituality Institute.

June 17, 2015 • 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY

The Interfaith Center of New York SW CPE is recognized by the New York State Education Department's State Board for Social Work as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed social workers – provider # 0163. Today's conference offers 7.25 contact hours of continuing education for New York State LM/LCSWs.

8:30 - 9:00 Welcome and Registration

Please plan to arrive by 8:45, if possible, as the opening session of the conference will start promptly at 9:00. Coffee, tea, and snacks will be available for participants.

9:00 - 11:00 Plenary Panel: Religion, Spirituality, and Social Work

This introductory panel will examine Jewish, Christian, and Muslim perspectives on social service and social justice, as well as the roles of religion and spirituality in social work practice. After an introduction to the conference, the panelists will explore how their faith traditions have inspired their social work careers, and shaped their relationships with clients. Conference participants will then reflect, through journal writing and small group discussion, on their own religious or secular "call to service." The speakers will be:

- Dr. Henry Goldschmidt, Director of Education Programs, Interfaith Center of New York
- Maryum Khwaja, LCSW, Psychotherapist at the Bleuler Psychotherapy Center, and Co-Founder of Nasiha Counseling
- Rev. Dr. Kelly Murphy Mason, LCSW, Managing Director, Psychotherapy and Spirituality Institute
- Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub, LCSW, Rabbinic Director, Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services

11:00 - 11:10 **Coffee and Snack Break**

11:10 - 12:30 **Dialogue: Faith-Based Perspectives on Child Welfare**

This conversation will examine Hindu and Christian perspectives on the nature of childhood and the needs of children. The panelists will explore similarities and differences in their faith communities' views of parenting and family life, as well as thorny issues for child welfare practice such as faith-based support for corporal punishment. Conference participants will then reflect, through small group discussion and perhaps a role-playing exercise, on a specific case of child welfare practice with a religiously devout foster family. The speakers will be:

- Anindita Chatterjee Bhaumik, LCSW, Community Affairs Coordinator, CONNECT
- Rev. Dr. Alfonso Wyatt, Founder of Strategic Destiny, and Consultant to the Casey Family Programs Faith-Based Child Welfare Initiative

12:30 - 1:45 **Lunch Presentation: Ethical Issues in Faith-Based Social Work Practice**

Following a break to greet colleagues and get lunch (which is provided for all participants), a leading social work educator will explore some of the ethical issues surrounding the use of faith-based, or faith-engaged, intervention strategies. In what contexts, for example, is it appropriate to pray with or for one's clients? To use guided mediations? Scriptural readings? Following a presentation and questions on these issues, participants will continue the conversation at each lunch table, sharing their practical strategies and ethical concerns with their peers. The speaker will be:

- Dr. Mary Ragan, LCSW, Director of the Psychotherapy and Spirituality Institute's Trinity Counseling Center, and Adjunct Professor at the Columbia University School of Social Work

1:45 - 3:00 **Break-Out Workshop: Faith-Based Perspectives on Sexuality and LGBT Relationships**

This workshop will explore Roman Catholic and Jewish perspectives on human sexuality and LGBT relationships. Following brief presentations, questions, and conversation, each speaker will lead a hands-on, experiential learning session, guiding conference participants in the study of biblical, rabbinic, and/or doctrinal texts that have shaped Roman Catholic and Jewish understandings of sexuality. The speakers and workshop leaders will be:

- Father Donald Baker, Pastor of the Church of Saint Teresa, and Member of the Archdiocese of New York and Diocese of Brooklyn's Ad-Hoc Committee for Pastoral Care to LGBT Catholics and Their Families
- Rabbi Dr. Nancy H. Wiener, Director of the Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Center for Pastoral Counseling at Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion

1:45 - 3:00

Break-Out Workshop: Faith-Based Perspectives on Trauma and Healing

This workshop will explore Buddhist and African diaspora perspectives on trauma and healing, primarily in the context of programs to support refugees and victims of sexual violence. Following brief presentations, questions, and conversation, each speaker will lead a hands-on, experiential learning session, guiding conference participants in a Tibetan Buddhist meditation and a healing invocation of the Orisas. The speakers and workshop leaders will be:

- DeShannon Barnes-Bowens, MS (Iyalorisa Omi Femi Fasina), Founder and Director of ILERA Counseling and Education Services
- Geshe (Ven. Dr.) Lobsang Ngodup, MSW, Director of the Sera Jey Buddhist Culture Center

3:00 - 3:10

Coffee and Snack Break

3:10 - 4:30

Dialogue: Faith-Based Perspectives on End-of-Life Care

This conversation will examine Buddhist and Muslim perspectives on compassionate end-of-life care. The panelists will explore similarities and differences in their faith communities' understandings of death, dying, and the afterlife, as well as their own perspectives on palliative care and end-of-life chaplaincy. Conference participants will then reflect, through small group discussion and perhaps a role-playing exercise, on a specific case of social work practice in end-of-life care with a spiritually conflicted interfaith family. The speakers will be:

- Rev. Dr. Koshin Paley Ellison, LMSW, Co-Founder and Co-Director of the New York Zen Center for Contemplative Care
- Imam Yusuf Hasan, BCC, HealthCare Chaplaincy and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center

4:30 - 5:00

Closing Discussion, Reflection, and Evaluations

Participants will complete written program evaluations, and join an open-ended discussion of social work and religious diversity. What, we will ask, have we learned at this conference? What will we take back to our practice? What next steps are required to make social work, as a field, more responsive to the needs of religiously diverse New Yorkers?

Practical Details to Keep in Mind

Bathrooms are in the basement – down the escalator behind the reception desk in the lobby, then to your left.

If you've ordered a **strictly kosher lunch**, please see ICNY staff at the registration desk during the lunch break.

If you tweet any photos or reflections on the conference, please use the hashtag **#FaithinSW**, or tweet at **@ICNY**.

Please take a moment to fill out your **conference evaluation** after each session. You'll need to submit this form to receive a certificate of completion and CEUs.

Nearly all conference sessions will be held in **Meeting Room C/D**, with the exception of the following breakout workshops (after lunch, from 1:45 to 3:00):

- The faith-based **dialogue on trauma and healing will be held in Meeting Room A/B** (next to Meeting Room C/D, near the Claremont Avenue entrance to the building).
- Immediately following this dialogue, the Buddhist meditation workshop will be held in the **Robing Room** (across the lobby from the meeting rooms, near the Claremont Avenue entrance), and the Orisa healing workshop will be held in the **Orthodox Room** (across the lobby from the meeting rooms, near the Riverside Drive entrance).
- The faith-based **dialogue on sexuality and LGBT issues will be held in Meeting Room C/D**.
- Immediately following this dialogue, the Catholic text study will be held in **Meeting Room C/D**, and the Jewish text study will be held in **Meeting Room A/B** (right next to Meeting Room C/D).



Social Work and Religious Diversity: Religion and Spirituality through the Life Course

Speakers Biographies

Plenary Panel: Religion, Spirituality, and Social Work

Dr. Henry Goldschmidt is a cultural anthropologist, community educator, and scholar of American religious diversity. He is the Director of Education Programs at the Interfaith Center of New York, where he develops community-based education programs for a range of audiences, including secondary school teachers and students, social workers, and the general public. Henry received his Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from the University of California at Santa Cruz in 2000, and has taught religious studies and anthropology at Wesleyan University and elsewhere. Among other publications, he is the author of *Race and Religion among the Chosen Peoples of Crown Heights* (Rutgers U. Press, 2006) and the coeditor of *Race, Nation, and Religion in the Americas* (Oxford U. Press, 2004). He is a life-long, fanatic New Yorker, and lives in Brooklyn with his wife and children.

Maryum Khwaja, LCSW, graduated from the Silver School of Social Work at New York University in 2001. She works as a psychotherapist at the Bleuler Psychotherapy Center in Forest Hills, Queens, and in a private practice called Nasiha Counseling – a practice that specializes in, but is not restricted to, working with Muslim clients. She also volunteers as a Foster Program Specialist with the New Jersey based organization Smile, and with the Interfaith Center of New York, developing relationships with DYFS and ACS to provide support for Muslim children and families in foster care. From 2007 to 2013, Maryum was the Coordinator of Social Services at NYU's Islamic Center, working pro bono in conjunction with Imam Khalid Latif to provide short-term counseling for Muslim students. She has had extensive experience working with children, adolescents, parents, and families in the child welfare system, and with emotionally disturbed children and adolescents. In 2010 Maryum was honored by then Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer for her exemplary service to the borough of Manhattan.

Rev. Dr. Kelly Murphy Mason, LCSW, is Managing Director of the Psychotherapy and Spirituality Institute, and an adjunct faculty member at Columbia University Teachers College. As both an ordained minister and licensed clinician, she is deeply committed to the integration of spiritual

wisdom and psychological insight. Dr. Mason has occupied a number of positions in higher education, faith-based organizations, and counseling centers throughout metropolitan New York, where she makes frequent appearances as a public speaker and workshop leader. Her essays and articles have been published in *The Week*, *Beliefnet*, and *Slate Magazine*, as well as the *Encyclopedia of Psychology and Religion* and other anthologies. She currently serves as a minister in affiliation with the Community Unitarian Church of White Plains. For years, she has blogged on the topic of “What Heals Us in Our Souls” at www.TheReverendDr.com.

Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub, LCSW, serves as Rabbinic Director of the Jewish Board of Family and Children’s Services. Rabbi Weintraub designs and leads workshops on Jewish spiritual resources for living with illness, caregiving, loss, and trauma; develops training seminars for rabbis and health care professionals; creates innovative Jewish healing rituals; and has written and lectured widely on the use of traditional texts and practices for Jewish spiritual healing. Rabbi Weintraub was ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1982, holds a Master’s Degree in Clinical Social Work from Columbia University (1983), and graduated from the Couples and Family Therapy Program of the Postgraduate Center for Mental Health in New York (1988). He is an Adjunct Lecturer in Pastoral Skills at JTS, teaching courses related to Jewish healing, spiritual caregiving, and behavioral health. He helped to design and now teaches in the Post-Master’s Certificate Program in Spirituality and Social Work at NYU’s Silver School of Social Work. Among other publications, he is the author or editor of *Healing of Soul, Healing of Body* (Jewish Lights Publishing, 1994), *Finding Spiritual Strength in Pain or Illness: Reaching In, Reaching Out, Reaching Up* (Jewish Lights Publishing, 2000), and *Guide Me Along the Way: A Jewish Spiritual Companion for Surgery* (National Center for Jewish Healing, 2002). In addition to his writing, teaching, and work at JBFCS, Simkha maintains a private practice in couples and family therapy in New York City, working with couples and families confronting a wide range of issues, including chronic illness, infertility, interfaith concerns, and more. His passions include the nexus of spirituality and mental health, cross-disciplinary innovation, interfaith exchange and intergroup dialogue, and human rights.

Dialogue: Faith-Based Perspectives on Child Welfare

Anindita Chatterjee Bhaumik, LCSW, MSW, is a clinical social worker, Hindu community activist, and advocate for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. She is currently the Community and External Affairs Coordinator for CONNECT, an organization dedicated to preventing interpersonal violence and promoting gender justice, and has also worked with the Domestic Violence Project of the Urban Justice Center, and with Sanctuary for Families. She also works at the Center for Therapy and Counseling Services in East Brunswick, NJ, where she provides psychotherapy to individuals, couples, families, and teens. She has dedicated her professional life to raising awareness about the perils of violence and its ramifications on children, women, and society at large. Anindita is also a member of the Hindu Temple Society of North America and the Vedanta Society of New York. She is a lifelong adherent and student of Sanatana Dharma, popularly known as Hinduism, and has been studying the religion under the guidance

of Swami Tathagathananda of the Vedanta Society for more than ten years. She has served as a Hindu clergy liaison to the NYPD, and as an official court interpreter for the languages Bengali, Hindi, and Urdu. She also devotes her time and experience to preventing reverse assimilation among new immigrants, and protecting them from guns, gangs, and violence.

Rev. Dr. Alfonso Wyatt is a merchant of hope, and a thought leader for New York City's faith-based and secular nonprofit sector. He has worked with three generations of young people as an educator, counselor, program developer, administrator, mentor, and advocate. He has created innovative programs that respond to the needs of young people in foster care, group homes, public schools, community-based organizations, detention facilities, and the broader faith community. He recently retired as Vice President of the Fund for the City of New York after serving for over two decades, and is the founder of Strategic Destiny: Designing Futures through Faith and Facts. He is on the staff of The Greater Allen AME Cathedral of New York, and serves as an advisor and consultant to numerous government agencies, community- and faith-based organizations, educational institutions, and foundations. He is a sought-after speaker, and the author of *Mentoring from the Inside Out: Healing Boys Transforming Men*, and (with his wife Ouida Wyatt) *Soul Be Free: Poems Prose Prayers*. Dr. Wyatt earned his D.Min from the New York Theological Seminary, with a doctoral dissertation entitled "How to Reach, Teach, and Nurture Teens," and has also attended Howard University, Columbia Teacher's College, The Ackerman Institute for Family Therapy, and the Columbia Institute for Nonprofit Management.

Presentation: Ethical Issues in Faith-Based Social Work Practice

Dr. Mary Ragan, LCSW, is the Area Director of the Psychotherapy and Spirituality Institute's Trinity Counseling Center where, in addition to her primary work as a clinician, she supervises therapists entering the field. She is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the Columbia University School of Social Work and regularly teaches a course on "Spirituality and Social Work." She also serves as adjunct faculty at Hebrew Union College, teaching in the Doctor of Ministry program. In addition to her work as a clinician and educator, Dr. Ragan has served as a consultant to a wide range of faith-based and secular organizations. She has worked for many years for the Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers and Maryknoll Lay Missioners, dealing with cross-cultural adjustment and personnel issues. That consulting work has given her the opportunity to work with missionaries in Bolivia, Guatemala and Venezuela. She has also served as a consultant to hospital management groups and a hospice staff. Her research has explored the specific contours of traumatic grief, its differences from general bereavement, and the clinical interventions that proved most effective. She has done trauma work with first-responders and family members of 9/11 and volunteered in New Orleans and Lake Charles after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. Dr. Ragan's current interest is in addressing the mental health needs of returning veterans and their families. She is a volunteer therapist for Give An Hour, and project director for PSI's initiative for women veterans, called IN OUR OWN VOICE: Women Veterans Tell Their Stories.

Workshop: Faith-Based Perspectives on Sexuality and LGBT Relationships

Father Donald Baker is the Pastor of the Church of Saint Teresa on Manhattan's Lower East Side, and a member of the Archdiocese of New York and Diocese of Brooklyn's Ad-Hoc Committee for Pastoral Care to LGBT Catholics and their Families. He holds an MA and M.Div from St. Joseph's Seminary, in Yonkers, NY, as well as an M.Div from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, in Gettysburg, PA. He was ordained in the Archdiocese of New York in 1995, and has served a diverse cross-section of New York City's Catholic communities. In addition to his pastoral and community work, he directs the religious education program at the Church of Saint Teresa, and has facilitated numerous retreats and public programs for both youth and adults. With his colleagues on the Ad-Hoc Committee, Father Baker has worked to articulate a loving and inclusive approach to questions of sexual orientation within the Church.

Rabbi Dr. Nancy H. Wiener, is the Clinical Director of the Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Center for Pastoral Counseling at the New York campus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. She was named the Dr. Paul and Trudy Steinberg Distinguished Professor of Human Relations in 2012, and also serves as the rabbinic program's Fieldwork Coordinator. Rabbi Wiener was ordained by HUC-JIR in 1990, where she also received an MA in Hebrew Letters in 1988, and earned a D.Min in Pastoral Counseling in 1994. She is a board certified chaplain with the National Association of Jewish Chaplains and holds a certificate in Pastoral Counseling from the Postgraduate Center for Mental Health, in New York. As Director of the Blaustein Center, Rabbi Wiener has created a program that integrates coursework, fieldwork, supervision, and mentoring, to help rabbinical students reflect on the ways their work and study contribute to their intellectual, spiritual, and psychological lives, and to the lives of those with whom they work. These innovations have led to changes in the pastoral care, counseling, and fieldwork programs at HUC-JIR's other campuses, and at other Jewish seminaries. In addition to her work as an educator, chaplain, and counselor, Rabbi Wiener has been a leading voice for LGBT inclusion in the Reform movement and the broader Jewish community. She helped to draft the resolution passed in 2000 by the Central Conference of American Rabbis on officiating at ceremonies for gay and lesbian couples, created materials for CCAR members to use for pre-marital counseling and same-sex ceremonies, and helped draft the CCAR's first official statement regarding transgender Jews. She served on the Gay and Lesbian Inclusion Committee of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (predecessor to today's Union for Reform Judaism), as well as the URJ Departments of Jewish Family Concerns and Outreach and Inclusion, and a range of UJA/Federation task forces. Rabbi Wiener is the author or co-author of a number of works on Jewish chaplaincy, including *Maps and Meaning: Levitical Models for Contemporary Care* (Fortress Press, 2014). And for 20 years, until recently, she found her part-time work as a pulpit rabbi with the Pound Ridge Jewish Community, a small chavurah in northern Westchester, a source of constant enrichment for her clinical supervision, writing, and teaching.

Workshop: Faith-Based Perspectives on Trauma and Healing

DeShannon Barnes-Bowens, MS, is a psychotherapist, an initiated Orisa priestess in the Yoruba-Ifa spiritual tradition (where she is known by her clergy name, Iyalorisa Omi Femi Fasina), and an Interfaith-Interspiritual minister ordained through the One Spirit Learning Alliance. She has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Missouri, St. Louis, and a Master's degree in Counseling from Pace University. DeShannon is a contributing scholar with *State of Formation* and founder of ILERA Counseling & Education Services. Through ILERA, she works as a psychotherapist and professional development trainer, implementing workshops and programs focused on sexuality and spirituality, sexual abuse, and vicarious trauma and wellness. DeShannon is also the author of *Hush Hush: An African American Family Breaks their Silence on Sexuality & Sexual Abuse* (2007, 2015). The most recent presentations of her work have taken place at Harvard University, the University of Connecticut, Washington University, New York Theological Seminary, Woodhull Alliance's Sexual Freedom Summit, AASECT Institute, and the Values Caucus of the United Nations. Find out more about DeShannon and her work at www.ileracom.com.

Geshe Lobsang Ngodup, MSW, is a Tibetan Buddhist monk, and the Director of the Sera Jey Buddhist Culture Center in New York City. Geshe Lobsang was born in Tibet and grew up in India. He received his Master's degree in Buddhist Philosophy from the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics (a private monastery of His Holiness the Dalai Lama) in Dharamsala, India, and received his Geshe degree (a Ph.D. in Buddhist Philosophy) from the Sera Jey Monastic University in Bylakuppe, South India. He also received his MSW from the Wurzweiler School of Social Work, at Yeshiva University. Geshe Lobsang has taught Buddhism and meditation since 1989, in the United States, Canada, and India. He has also worked with a number of social service agencies in New York City over the past 17 years, including providing counseling services for both psychiatric patients and refugees.

Dialogue: Faith-Based Perspectives on End-of-Life Care

Rev. Dr. Koshin Paley Ellison, LMSW, is the co-founder and co-Executive Director of the New York Zen Center for Contemplative Care, which offers contemplative approaches to end-of-life care through education, direct service, and meditation practice, and is the first Buddhist organization in America to offer fully accredited ACPE clinical chaplaincy training. He is a senior Zen monk, Dharma teacher and student, ACPE supervisor, Jungian psychotherapist, and Director of the NYZCCC's Certificate Program in Contemplative Studies. In order to bring the work to a broader audience, he co-developed the Foundations in Buddhist Contemplative Care Training Program. He also teaches at the University of Arizona Medical School's Center for Integrative Medicine, and is the Academic Advisor for Buddhist students in the Masters in Pastoral Care and Counseling program at New York Theological Seminary. He serves in a number of capacities at the Mount Sinai Beth Israel Medical Center, including as Co-Director of Contemplative Care Services for the Department of Integrative Medicine, Chaplaincy Supervisor for the Pain and Palliative Care

Department, and a member of the Medical Ethics Committee. In addition to his clinical and pastoral work, Koshin's public programs have introduced thousands to the practices of mindful and compassionate care of the living and dying. 30,000 people listen to his podcasts each year, and his groundbreaking work has been widely featured in the media, including on PBS's *Religion and Ethics Newsweekly*, and in the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times*. He is the author or editor of a number of publications, including the forthcoming book *Awake at the Bedside: Contemplative Palliative and End of Life Care* (Wisdom Publications, 2016).

Imam Yusuf Hasan, BCC, is a Staff Chaplain with the HealthCare Chaplaincy Network, working at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. He was the first board certified Muslim chaplain in the Association of Professional Chaplains, and has been an advocate for professional chaplaincy within the Muslim community. Yusuf has been a practicing Muslim for over 40 years, beginning under the leadership of the Hon. Elijah Muhammad and later his son Imam W. Deen Muhammad. He is a member of the historic Malcolm Shabazz Masjid, a former board member of the Muslim Foundation of America, and has been recognized as a leader in the African-American Muslim community since completing his Islamic theological education in 1983. He began his Clinical Pastoral Education in 1991 with the Hospital Chaplaincy (now HealthCare Chaplaincy Network), and has also studied at New York Presbyterian Hospital and Lenox Hill Hospital. He has been a staff chaplain at Memorial Sloan-Kettering since 1994, providing spiritual care to patients and families of all faith traditions and cultures. He has specialized in pediatric spiritual care, but has also worked with geriatric patients at Mt. Sinai St. Luke's Hospital in Harlem. He is also a member of the Red Cross Spiritual Care Response Team and was a first responder after 9/11. Yusuf's work has been profiled in a number of major media outlets, including *Newsweek* magazine, NBC Nightly News, PBS's *Religion and Ethics Newsweekly*, Chicago public radio station WBEZ, the *Muslim Journal*, and the *New York Amsterdam News*. Among many other publications and presentations, he is the coauthor (with Yusef Salaam) of an essay on "Faith and Islamic Issues at the End of Life" in the collection *A Time for Listening and Caring: Spirituality and the Care of the Chronically Ill and Dying* (Oxford U. Press, 2006), and was a plenary speaker at the 2014 national conference of the Association of Professional Chaplains, speaking on "The Art of Chaplaincy: Walking in the Footsteps of Prophets Abraham and Muhammad (PBUH)."