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Psychiatry, Psychotherapy, Psychosomatic Medicine, Psychosocial Medicine: A Tribute to Edgar Heim, MD

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**“Healing must be relational.
Psychotherapy must be human.”**
— World Federation for Psychotherapy |
APA 2025, Los Angeles

Psychiatry, Psychotherapy, Psychosomatic Medicine, Psychosocial Medicine: A Tribute to Edgar Heim, MD



Maria Bernadett Carandang, MD
Profiles Editor



Dr. Edgar Heim, President of the International Federation for Medical Psychotherapy, today's World Federation for Psychotherapy, from 1988-1998

Dr. Edgar Heim, during his presidency, renamed the International Federation of Psychotherapy and redefined the organization towards modern innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration. He led the federation through the end of the Cold War - a period of marked geopolitical stress. Dr. Heim revised the WFP's statutes and goals to reflect the progressive needs of the world by expanding regional chapters and establishing relationships with other international organizations. The Asia-Pacific, Africa, and South American chapters were established, truly embodying a global identity of the WFP. (Heim, 1998).

On the occasion of his 95th birthday, the WFP has chosen to honor Dr. Heim by reintroducing him to the community he had nurtured as the person behind his legacy through the perspective of his student, Dr. Ulrich Schnyder.

Psychiatry, Psychotherapy, Psychosomatic Medicine, Psychosocial Medicine: A Tribute to Edgar Heim, MD



Professor Ulrich Schnyder, MD WFP Advisor and Past President

I have known Edgar Heim for more than 40 years, since I first joined his department of outpatient psychiatry and psychotherapy at the University of Bern, Switzerland, as a resident. Ten years later, when he retired as professor and head of department, I left Bern to pursue my academic career in Zurich. A few months ago, Edgar Heim celebrated his 95th birthday. He is in good health, lives independently, rides his e-bike regularly, enjoys visits from his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, and is always interested in the latest developments of our profession. This seems like a good moment to say a few words about a pioneer in many areas of psychiatry and psychotherapy, an influential figure in the growth and maturation of the World Federation for Psychotherapy, a great mentor, and, not least, a long-lasting friend.

Edgar Heim was born and raised in Thun, a small town in the rural area of the canton of Bern, Switzerland. He went to medical school at Bern University, then pursued his specialty training as a psychiatrist and psychotherapist. Starting in 1957, Edgar's psychotherapy training mainly consisted of his supervisors encouraging him to ask patients to lie on the couch and to try to talk to them, complemented by discussing psychoanalytic literature in the evenings twice a week. Only a few years later, in 1964, Switzerland was among the first countries worldwide to introduce the

medical specialty title "psychiatry and psychotherapy", thus emphasizing the importance of psychotherapy as a treatment tool for mental disorders.

Following his training in psychiatry, Edgar Heim moved to the United States for three years, where he received training in psychosomatic research with Peter Knapp at Boston University. He also had a chance to work with George Engel in Rochester, the "godfather" of psychosomatic medicine, who later developed the bio-psycho-social model (Engel, 1977). It was the time of community mental health, social psychiatry, the development of crisis intervention and family therapy, the "holy seven" psychosomatic diseases (peptic ulcer, bronchial asthma, rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis, essential hypertension, neurodermatitis, and thyrotoxicosis). Edgar conducted studies in asthma, using the by then top modern body plethysmography technology to measure airway resistance.

Back in Switzerland in 1965, he soon became head of a large psychiatric hospital (Schlössli Oetwil). During this time (1968-1978), he introduced milieu therapy according to Maxwell Jones's principles of the therapeutic community. However, after ten years of inpatient psychiatry, he was appointed professor

Psychiatry, Psychotherapy, Psychosomatic Medicine, Psychosocial Medicine: A tribute to Edgar Heim, MD



Professor Ulrich Schnyder, MD
WFP Advisor and Past President

and head of the psychiatric outpatient department at the University of Bern, where he spent the last 16 years of his academic career. It was during this period that he, in collaboration with Jürg Willi, developed the concept of “psychosocial medicine”, primarily with the aim of teaching the principles of the bio-psycho-social model during the first years of medical school (Heim & Willi, 1986; Willi & Heim, 1986). Over time, the subject of psychosocial medicine was successfully introduced in the medical curricula in all Swiss universities.

From 1988-1998, Edgar Heim served as president of the International Federation for Medical Psychotherapy (IFMP), today's World Federation for Psychotherapy (WFP). During his presidency, the Federation got rid of the “Medical” and was re-named the International Federation for Psychotherapy (IFP), taking into account that psychotherapy was a field of both research and clinical practice populated by doctors and clinical psychologists alike. Heim expanded the IFP's influence internationally, particularly to Asia and Australia. In 1994, the first IFP World Congress of Psychotherapy took place in Seoul, South Korea. It was under President Heim's leadership that the IFP developed into a global umbrella organization, aiming to promote high professional and ethical standards of

psychotherapy in practice, research, and training, and to foster a worldwide intercultural, interdisciplinary dialogue and mutual learning among psychotherapists, psychotherapy researchers, psychotherapeutic orientations, traditions, and related sciences. Based on his longstanding activities and experiences in the field, he published a comprehensive review of the development of psychotherapy since its early beginnings in a book in German (Heim, 2009) and in a Supplement to Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics, the WFP's official journal (Heim, 2010).

Last but not least, Edgar Heim was one of my most important mentors. With regard to academic psychiatry and psychotherapy, I was a late bloomer. During the years when he was my boss, he kept encouraging me to not only become an enthusiastic clinician but also supported me in taking my first steps as a researcher, thus becoming a physician-scientist. For this, and for his ongoing friendship, I am extremely grateful.

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Editor's Notes

Contextualism as Equity: Why Cultural Grounding is Essential for Psychotherapy in LMICs

Alma Lucindo-Jimenez, MD, FPPA
WFP Secretary General (2023-2026)
Editor, WFP Newsletter



As the field of psychotherapy extends its reach across cultures, one principle is becoming clear: context matters—not only clinically, but ethically. In low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), where mental health systems are often under-resourced but culturally rich, contextualism in psychotherapy is not a luxury. It is equity in action.

This does not mean compromising scientific rigor. On the contrary, contextual grounding preserves the essence of psychotherapy by honoring the common factors that drive change—such as therapeutic alliance, empathy, attunement, and meaning-making—while adapting how these are enacted in specific cultural worlds.

At the 2025 World Federation for Psychotherapy (WFP) Regional Meeting in Manila, this theme emerged vividly. Presentations from the Philippines, Uganda, and Indonesia showcased how local constructs like kapwa, ubuntu, and intergenerational obligation can deepen therapeutic coherence without fragmenting theory.

- In the Philippines, kapwa (shared identity) and pakikiramdam (relational sensitivity) were integrated into Interpersonal Psychotherapy to support clients navigating family-based role transitions.

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- In Uganda, ubuntu (communal humanity) shaped Group Supportive Psychotherapy through peer storytelling and shared rituals, reinforcing group cohesion and emotional processing.
- In Indonesia, psychodynamic training was adapted to reflect social harmony and filial duty, reframing transference and resistance within intergenerational roles.

Editor's Notes

Contextualism as Equity: Why Cultural Grounding is Essential for Psychotherapy in LMICs

Alma Lucindo-Jimenez, MD, FPPA
WFP Secretary General (2023-2026)
Editor, WFP Newsletter



These vignettes reflect a growing reality: adaptation enhances fidelity. When therapy resonates with the patient's worldview, it becomes not only more accessible but more effective.

Contextualism also aligns with structural competency—recognizing how social determinants like poverty, stigma, and collective trauma affect mental health.

Therapists in LMICs often engage clients facing constraints far beyond the consulting room. Cultural grounding enables us to meet patients where they are, without abandoning therapeutic structure.

1. Access – Clients are more likely to seek therapy that feels familiar, safe, and relevant.
2. Engagement – Therapeutic alliance strengthens when cultural values are respected rather than pathologized.
3. Outcomes – Healing is more durable when it aligns with both personal and cultural realities.

I view this shift as both timely and foundational. LMICs are not simply adapting imported models—they are redefining global standards. They show that culturally grounded therapy is not marginal. It is the future.

The challenge for us all—trainers, clinicians, researchers—is to support this evolution. Because psychotherapy that honors both science and soul does more than treat illness. It restores dignity. And dignity, across all cultures, is the bedrock of healing.

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President's Column

César A. Alfonso, MD
WFP President (2023-2026)



This Newsletter includes articles highlighting the contributions of several WFP Past Presidents and role models, and I consider myself fortunate to be in their illustrious company. When I was approached by Driss Moussaoui several years ago and invited to serve on the WFP Council, I witnessed first-hand the vibrancy of WFP, its historic importance, and its educational prominence, due in great part to the work of its charismatic and talented leaders. I was honored, soon thereafter, to accept the nomination to serve as the World Federation of Psychotherapy's 11th President and the first president in 90 years from the Americas. As I gladly prepare to pass the torch to our wise, able, and magnificent President-elect Dilip Jeste, I will use this opportunity to recapitulate and summarize the whirlwind of educational activities organized during my tenure, most of which were accomplished through elegant and enthusiastic collaborations with member societies, affiliated organizations, and prominent individuals.

Educational activities over the last three years of my presidency were delivered in 14 cities worldwide, including Casablanca, Rome, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Istanbul, Marrakech, Mexico City, Los Angeles, Tokyo, Vienna, Prague, Lisbon, Zaláu, and New York. I am indebted to our member and affiliated societies for facilitating these events, and to the individuals involved as generous hosts representing their nations and mental health professions, who welcomed me and other WFP

delegates to deliver lectures, workshops, courses, and symposia in these diverse locations. Our best-attended meetings during this triennium were our Regional Meeting in Rome, cosponsored by the Massimo Fagioli Foundation and Sapienza University, with over 1,400 registrants in hybrid format, and the Regional Meeting in Manila, cosponsored by the Philippine Psychiatric Association, with over 700 registrants in person. Special thanks to **Daniela Polese (Italy)** and **Alma Jimenez (Philippines)** for hosting the WFP in these historic meetings. Having the opportunity to meet psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers, and other psychotherapists in person across all continents and to develop plans for future collaborations has been rewarding and memorable.

As the current Board members complete their dutiful service in June 2026, I am pleased to announce the nominees for election to the Board of WFP for the 2026 to 2029 triennium. They are **Alma Lucindo Jimenez** of the Philippines for President-elect, **Goran Mijaljica** of the United Kingdom and Sweden for Secretary General, **Ekaterina Sukhanova** of the United States for Treasurer, and **Yasser Khazaal** of Switzerland for Member at Large. The elections will take place at the General Assembly Meeting in New York on June 5, 2026, at 12 noon Eastern Time during the World Congress of Psychotherapy. Representatives of WFP member societies are encouraged to attend the General Assembly Meeting to cast

President's Column

César A. Alfonso, MD
WFP President (2023-2026)



their votes. I am grateful to our Board members **François Ferrero** of Switzerland, who served two consecutive terms as Treasurer, **Alma Jimenez** of the Philippines, who served as Secretary General and will become President-elect, **Dilip Jeste** of the United States, who transitions from President-elect to President, and our indefatigable advisors to the Board, **Norman Sartorius** of Switzerland and Croatia, **Driss Moussaoui** of Morocco, and **Ulrich Schnyder** of Switzerland. Working with this group has been edifying and pleasurable. Their enthusiasm and high energy were contagious and refreshing, and our meetings were always cordial, efficient, and productive.

Our able Secretariat, **Lydia Kurkcuoglu** of Switzerland, who served WFP as Administrator for two terms, starting with the presidency of Driss Moussaoui, announced her well-deserved retirement earlier this year. We appreciate her hard work through the difficult pandemic and post-pandemic years, her availability, and her professional demeanor. The WFP Board hired Parthenon Management as our new administrative headquarters, an organization that serves international and United States-based societies such as the Academy of Consultation Liaison Psychiatry, the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, the International Society of Interpersonal Therapy, the International Society of Marcé Perinatal Mental Health, and the Schizophrenia International

Research Society, among others. Parthenon Management had already provided services, including our most recent website redesign and meeting management as the professional congress organizer for the upcoming World Congress of Psychotherapy. Our key administrator is **Kara Lawrence** of the United States, with assistance from **Will Shutes**. The Board of Directors' decision to locate the central office in the United States was partly to support our incoming President in the United States, but was primarily based on Parthenon Management's excellence and responsiveness in representing international mental health organizations. *WFP remains a nonprofit international organization incorporated in Switzerland.*

The World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy will take place at dual venues, the Headquarters of the United Nations, with conference room assignments pending confirmation in January 2026, when the United Nations releases schedules for calendar year 2026, and the Concourse Level of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, which is confirmed. The dates are June 4 to 6, 2026. The theme is *Psychotherapy, Mental Health, and Human Rights, Caring for Vulnerable Populations, Humanitarian Relief Workers, and Health Professionals*. Both venues are spacious, located in historic, architecturally significant buildings, and conveniently situated within walking distance of Midtown Manhattan.

President's Column

César A. Alfonso, MD
WFP President (2023-2026)



The 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy is cosponsored by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security Critical Incident Stress Management Section, the Association of Women Psychiatrists, the City University of New York Graduate Center, and the City University of New York School of Public Health and Health Policy and Center for Innovation in Mental Health. I offer special thanks to Sohail Ali and his team at the United Nations and to Ekaterina Sukhanova, Victoria Ngo, Joshua Bromberg, and their teams at the City University of New York for their help in orchestrating the program. The members of the Scientific Committee include **Dilip Jeste** of the United States, **Asher Aladjem** of the United States, **Sohail Ali** of the United States and the United Nations, **Chaimaa Aroui** of Morocco, **Amine Larnaout** of Tunisia, **Goran Mijaljica** of the United Kingdom and Sweden, **Nik Ruzyanei** of Malaysia, **Alma Jimenez** of the Philippines, **Daniela Polese** of Italy, **Moussa Ba** of the United Nations and Senegal, **Helene Nissen Lie** of Norway, and **Ekaterina Sukhanova** of the United States. Our PCO staff includes **Kelsey Jozwik**, **Linzi Burks**, **Tori Swinehart**, and **Will Shutes**.

The 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy promises to be a rich academic experience. We have over 300 presenters from 54 nations lined up to deliver 18 plenary lectures, 24 ninety-minute symposia, 7 one-hour interactive expert

panels, 5 one-hour workshops, 3 half-day courses, 54 paper presentations in 11 paper sessions, and 2 poster sessions featuring over 140 posters. To make the meeting more intimate and interactive, and for security reasons at our venues, we will cap registration at five hundred participants. We encourage all interested attendees to register before the end of March 2026. WFP will offer CME and CE credits to registrants attending the Congress. A preliminary schematic program is included in this Newsletter, and a final program will be available online on the WFP website soon thereafter. Exciting social events are being planned for meeting registrants.

Awards at this upcoming World Congress will be presented to 10 Early Career Psychotherapists, 1 Mid-Career Distinguished Researcher, and 1 Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. Our Board of Directors unanimously selected **Myrna Weissman** as the recipient of the WFP Lifetime Achievement Award for Significant Contributions to Psychotherapy. Dr. Weissman is a Professor of Epidemiology and Psychiatry at the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons and the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, and Chief of the Division of Translational Epidemiology at the New York State Psychiatric Institute. Prior to these positions, she was a Professor of Psychiatry and Epidemiology at Yale University School of Medicine and the Director of the Depression

President's Column

César A. Alfonso, MD
WFP President (2023-2026)



Research Unit. Professor Weissman has over 600 publications, including 12 books. She is considered one of the originators of the evidence-based treatment, Interpersonal Psychotherapy. Two of her important books include *The Guide to Interpersonal Psychotherapy*, authored with Markowitz and Klerman and published by Oxford University Press in 2017, and *Interpersonal Psychotherapy: A Global Reach*, authored with Mootz and published by Oxford University Press in 2024.

Another important recent development of note is that the WFP official journal, *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*, which has been published since 1953, has a new Editor-in-Chief, **Stephan Zipfel** of Germany. Professor Zipfel, a prominent researcher and author, previously served on the WFP Board of Directors. We are very pleased with his appointment. **Ulrich Schnyder**, WFP Past President, will remain on the Editorial Board of this prestigious publication. The journal, with a twenty percent acceptance rate, has an Impact Factor of 18.1 and a CiteScore of 24.6, making it one of the most competitive in the field.

Looking ahead, WFP's leadership is at the forefront of devising ways to make psychotherapy services available to those in need living in underserved areas. The present reality is that two-thirds of mental health

clinicians practice in high-income countries, scarcely reaching just one-third of the world's population. Incorporating public health strategies of task sharing, telehealth, and providing group psychotherapy interventions are some of the initiatives that aim to bridge the service needs of persons in areas of the world with limited resources. As WFP expands to become more inclusive, equitable, and diverse, we will continue to seek ways to educate, train, and treat persons in need worldwide. Efforts are underway to recruit additional members and affiliated societies in South America, South Asia, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East, and sub-Saharan Africa.

The World Federation for Psychotherapy continues to adapt to the challenges posed by the changing needs of our complex world. I am honored to have been part of WFP's academic journey during this triennium and to have contributed to protecting psychotherapy within the mental health professions. I pledge to continue supporting the Federation when called upon by our next President and dear friend, Dilip Jeste.

I close this column with an enthusiastic and warm invitation to meet in person at the upcoming 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy in New York City, which promises to be a historic event.

President's Column

César A. Alfonso, MD
WFP President (2023-2026)



24th World Congress of Psychotherapy
New York, New York
June 4-6, 2026

Scientific Co-Chairs:

- Asher Aladjem (USA)
- Sohail Ali (USA/United Nations)
- César Alfonso (USA)
- Chaimaa Aroui (Morocco)
- Moussa Ba (USA)
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- Nik Ruzyanei Nik Jaafar (Malaysia)
- Ekaterina Sukhanova (USA)

WFP world federation for psychotherapy

SCAN ME

Psychotherapy, Mental Health and Human Rights- Caring for Vulnerable Populations, Healthcare Professionals, and Humanitarian Relief Workers

24th WCP Shareable Slide
Available for Download at <https://wfpsychotherapy.org>

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César A. Alfonso, M.D., is Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Columbia University and currently holds visiting or adjunct professorships in four Asian universities. He serves as Editor-in-Chief of the journal Psychodynamic Psychiatry. Dr. Alfonso was President of the American Academy of Psychodynamic Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis from 2010 to 2012. He served as Chair of the Psychotherapy Section of the World Psychiatric Association in 2017-2023, on the Council of the World Federation for Psychotherapy from 2021-2023, and is the current President of the World Federation for Psychotherapy through June 2026.

Global Advocacy in Action: WFP Symposium at The APA Annual Meeting 2025, Los Angeles

Alma Lucindo-Jimenez, MD, FPPA



Psychotherapy on the World Stage: Advancing Cultural Adaptations and Social Determinants at Psychiatry's Largest Global Convention

In a defining moment for global mental health leadership, the **World Federation for Psychotherapy (WFP)** made a significant mark on the international stage by sponsoring a high-impact general session at the **2025 Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association (APA)**, held in **Los Angeles, California**, in May. Attended by over **12,000 of the world's leading psychiatrists**, APA LA remains the largest convocation of psychiatric professionals globally—and WFP's presence in a plenary symposium positioned its advocacy at the very center of contemporary psychiatric discourse. The WFP-sponsored session, entitled **"Psychotherapies: Addressing Social Determinants of Health, Cultural Adaptations, and Mastery of Theory and Techniques,"** was a direct response to the conference theme: **"Positive Lifestyles in Psychiatry."** The symposium offered compelling evidence, cross-cultural insight, and cutting-edge clinical models to deepen the field's capacity for **contextual, humanistic, and socially responsive psychotherapeutic care.**

Leadership at the Helm: A Global Panel of WFP Authorities

Chaired by Dr. Dilip V. Jeste, WFP President and former APA President, the symposium brought together a powerful panel of global leaders who serve or have served in WFP's top leadership posts:

- Dr. Dilip V. Jeste, M.D. (USA): Psychotherapies Targeting Social Determinants of Mental Health
- Dr. César A. Alfonso, M.D. (USA/Philippines): Common Factors and Transtheoretical Formulations to Guide Psychotherapy Practice

- Dr. Vincenzo Di Nicola, M.D., Ph.D. (Canada/Italy): When Therapy Fails: The Fog of Incoherence and the Illusion of Mastery
- Dr. Alma L. Jimenez, M.D. (Philippines): Justifying Collectivist Cultural Adaptations to Psychotherapy

This constellation of academic voices represents North America, Southeast Asia, and Europe, embodying WFP's commitment to multicultural inclusion and intercontinental advocacy.

Key Objectives and Thematic Scope

The session tackled the most urgent questions in modern psychotherapy, emphasizing both universal principles and local nuances in psychotherapeutic success:

1. **Assessing the impact of social determinants** such as trauma, loneliness, and social exclusion.
2. **Formulating transdiagnostic and trauma-informed approaches** applicable across modalities.
3. **Avoiding therapeutic failure** through a clearer understanding of coherence and relational depth.
4. **Implementing cultural adaptations** that respect collectivist norms without compromising core therapeutic values.

Each speaker delivered insights that were both scholarly and deeply human, anchored in lived cultural realities and rigorous research.

Highlights from the WFP Session

- **Dr. Dilip Jeste** opened with research on **loneliness as a modifiable determinant** of mental illness. He presented evidence from the **Wisdom-Enhancement Narrative Therapy** trials and the U.S. VA's **Compassionate Contact Corps**, highlighting low-cost, human-centered interventions that build social connection and resilience.

Global Advocacy in Action: WFP Symposium at The APA Annual Meeting 2025, Los Angeles

Alma Lucindo-Jimenez, MD, FPPA



- **Dr. César Alfonso** traced the **common curative factors** across modalities—empathy, alliance, affect regulation—and advanced the use of **transdiagnostic formulations** that account for early developmental trauma and relational templates. His integrative approach drew upon psychoanalytic, CBT, and global mental health paradigms.
- **Dr. Vincenzo Di Nicola** delivered a bold critique of overconfidence in therapeutic technique, warning against the **“illusion of mastery.”** He proposed **coherence**—a sense of narrative, relational, and conceptual clarity—as a third axis in psychotherapy success. He called for more empirical research into *values-based* and *person-centered* practices.
- **Dr. Alma Jimenez** emphasized the ethical and clinical imperative for **cultural tailoring in psychotherapy**, particularly in **collectivist societies**. Drawing from Southeast Asian practice, she described how constructs such as **family hierarchy, relational harmony, and deference to authority** shape expectations of therapeutic roles. Her framework offered both caution and encouragement for therapists working across cultural boundaries.

Impact and Global Reception

The symposium drew a capacity audience, with spirited engagement during the Q&A session and post-panel conversations that spilled into hallways and roundtables. Participants—many of whom represented training programs, international NGOs, and research institutions—expressed **strong resonance** with WFP's themes, particularly:

- The relevance of **cultural competence in U.S.-based psychotherapy training**,

- Interest in **replicating collectivist-informed therapy models** for immigrant and diaspora populations,
- A growing appreciation for **coherence and narrative integration** as success markers beyond symptom reduction.

The session was rooted in recent scholarship, including:

- Cuijpers et al. (2024) – *Meta-analyses on psychotherapeutic outcomes*
- Jeste & Hall (2024) – *Wisdom-enhancing interventions for loneliness*
- Phiri et al. (2023) – *Cultural adaptations in CBT-based therapy*
- Tasman's Psychiatry, 5th Ed. – *Integration of psychotherapy and somatic care*

Looking Ahead: WFP's Advocacy Momentum

This successful collaboration with the APA underscores WFP's central role in **advancing psychotherapy as a globally relevant, socially responsive, and scientifically rigorous discipline**. As we look toward:

- the **24th World Congress of Psychotherapy (New York, 2026)**, and

- regional alliances such as **PRCP Tokyo (2025)**,

WFP renews its commitment to **cross-cultural dialogue, collaborative training, and local-global partnerships** that elevate the mental health field.

Ongoing initiatives—led by Dr. Jimenez and others—include the development of **training modules, case repositories, and empirical publications** that promote ethical cultural adaptation and narrative-informed therapy, particularly in LMICs and diaspora communities.

Join the Movement: To support or collaborate with WFP on upcoming symposia, publications, or training, reach out to: ✉ secretariat@wfpsychotherapy.org
🌐 info@wfpsychotherapy.org

🌿 “Healing must be relational. Psychotherapy must be human.”
— World Federation for Psychotherapy | APA 2025, Los Angeles

Symposium Highlights from the PRCP and WACP Joint Congress in Tokyo, 2025



Maria Lourdes Rosanne E. De Guzman, MD, Ms, Epi, FPPA

The Pacific Rim College of Psychiatrists (PRCP) and the World Association of Cultural Psychiatry (WACP) joint congress held last September 25-28, 2025, featured insightful discussions from across the globe. Such a showcase was the symposium entitled **“Strengthening Mental Health Support and Services for Young People in the Philippines.”**



From L to R: Hiromi Yamauchi, Dr. Maria Lourdes Rosanne De Guzman, Dr. Rose Anelyn Visaya-Ceniza

Dr. Rose Anelyn Visaya-Ceniza, an associate professor and psychologist from Davao Oriental State University - Faculty of

Humanities, Social Sciences and Communication, spoke on **“Catharsis, Healing, and Recovery: Approaches to Helping Sexually-abused Children.”** Sexual abuse recovery requires more than clinical tools, given that the cultural context shapes trauma and resilience. The study presents a model of pluralistic, community-based care that harnesses cultural expression as a pathway to healing. Through music and art, it offers creative therapies that support emotional regulation, self-expression, and cultural resonance. It also creates space for embodied storytelling—through dance, dramatization, and narrative—as powerful forms of catharsis and connection.

“Harassment at the University Campus: What is happening and how can we deal with it?” A pilot study using focus group discussions and interviews that examined strategies for preventing and addressing harassment on campus was presented by **Hiromi Yamauchi**, associate professor and clinical/public psychologist at the Harassment Consultation Office, Hiroshima University. Drawing on her experience as a harassment consultant at universities in Japan, she offered participants fresh perspectives and helped catalyze dialogue around institutional accountability. She emphasized the importance of establishing clear organizational structures within each university to effectively respond to harassment concerns. In the Mindanao region,

Symposium Highlights from the PRCP and WACP Joint Congress in Tokyo, 2025



Maria Lourdes Rosanne E. De Guzman, MD, Ms, Epi, FPPA

where cultural conservatism often discourages students from filing formal complaints, sexual harassment and cyberbullying emerged as the most prevalent issues. In response, universities are adopting flexible, context-sensitive approaches—providing psychological support, developing institutional policies, and promoting awareness campaigns to prevent gender-based harassment and foster safer learning environments.

Dr. Marissa de Guzman, psychiatrist and associate professor of the University of the Philippines- College of Medicine and Philippine General Hospital, presented **“Empowering School-Based Behavioral and Mental Health Programs.”** Childhood and adolescence are pivotal stages for mental and emotional development. According to the 2021 Philippine National Survey for Mental Health and Well-being, 21.15% of Filipino youth aged 4–18 experience mental, emotional, developmental,

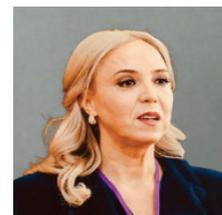
or behavioral disorders—surpassing global averages. Schools are recognized as ideal platforms for early mental health interventions. This study advocates for a School-Based Behavioral and Mental Health (SBBMH) program in public schools, equipping educators, counselors, psychologists, and parent leaders to deliver essential services such as screening, crisis response, mental health literacy, establishing a referral system, and family-strengthening support programs.

These presentations underscored the value of culturally sensitive, community-grounded approaches in caring for the mental health of youths.

Maria Lourdes Rosanne E. De Guzman, MD, is an Associate Professor of the College of Medicine, University of the Philippines, Manila, and the Philippine General Hospital. She is a Fellow of the Philippine Psychiatric Association.

Dialogue Between Medicine and Psychology – Essential Bridges for Holistic Health

Anamaria Roșu, M.A and Paula Neagu, M.A.



In a world where sciences sometimes develop in ivory towers, and specialization can lead to isolation, the national conference “Dialogue Between Medicine and Psychology,” held in Zalău, Romania, from October 10–11, 2025, served as a bridge between two worlds that, though different in language, share the same horizon: the human being. Organized with both heart and knowledge by the MindRestart brand, founded by psychologists Anamaria Roșu and Paula Neagu, the event was not just a conference—it was a call for interdisciplinarity, for healing that goes beyond symptoms to find their true meaning.

It all started with a spark—a conversation between two colleagues who told each other, with emotion and courage, “We can do more! It’s worth more.” From that spark, in a city that might not be academic but pulses with life and dedication, a conference took shape that brought together professionals from medicine, psychology, and education.

Zalău, with its quiet streets and warm-hearted people, became, for two days, a lively space for thought, where ideas grew like in a well-tended greenhouse and dialogues blossomed in unexpected ways.

In Romania, true collaboration between medicine and psychology has long been a beautiful idea, but has rarely been put into practice. Unlike in other countries, where psychologists are a natural part of the multidisciplinary team, here, openness has only recently started to take hold. Psychology is increasingly viewed not just as a theoretical discipline but also as a vital partner in patient care, prevention, treatment, and recovery.

Psychology as a profession in Romania was officially recognized relatively late, with the recognition of psychotherapists coming even later, around 2004. This delay reflected a cultural and educational context in which psychology was seen more as a field of standardization and evaluation than as an essential element for individual health.

For a long time, the role of the psychologist was sidelined, lacking natural integration into medical teams. Only with the official recognition of psychotherapy and the move towards interdisciplinarity has psychology started to be regarded as a profession with purpose, capable of contributing to prevention, treatment, and recovery.

This change is not just administrative, but also one of professional and cultural growth. Today, psychology asserts its rightful place within the health culture, as an indispensable partner of medicine, offering not only methods and theories but also a human dimension: understanding the patient as a whole person, with emotions, meaning, and context.

Therefore, the gesture by the Sălaj College of Physicians to support this conference was more than just a partnership; it was an act of courage and vision. Together with the Sălaj branch of the College of Psychologists from Romania and local community institutions from Sălaj County, this dream became reality.

The event gathered renowned figures from Romania and abroad. Among the distinguished guests was Prof. Dr. César Alfonso, President of the World Federation for Psychotherapy, visiting Romania

Dialogue Between Medicine and Psychology – Essential Bridges for Holistic Health

Anamaria Roșu, M.A and Paula Neagu, M.A.



for the first time. His presence was remarkable: a man of rare inner elegance, with an enveloping presence, words that heal, and a humility that inspires. Professor Alfonso brought not only knowledge but also a deep lesson in humanity—that science, without soul, remains incomplete.

Professor Alfonso delivered four advanced scientific presentations on critical themes for the future of psychotherapy and interdisciplinary collaboration:

- “Trauma, Epigenetic Alterations, and Psychotherapy” – an examination of how psychological trauma can influence genetic expression and how psychotherapy can help rebalance these mechanisms. It was a call to understand the human being beyond mere symptoms, at both molecular and emotional levels.
- “Group Psychotherapy in Medical Settings – Reducing Morbidity, Improving Adherence, and Prolonging Survival” – an evidence-based overview of the effectiveness of group psychotherapy in hospitals, directly improving treatment adherence and quality of life for patients with chronic illnesses.
- “Transtheoretical Common Factors that Guide Psychotherapy Practice” – an analysis of common elements that transcend different therapeutic approaches, highlighting the importance of the therapeutic relationship, empathy, and authentic presence in healing.
- “Silences in Psychotherapy and Emotional Regulation – Contributions from Cultural Anthropology, Neuroscience, and Psychoanalysis” – a profound reflection on silence as a therapeutic tool, studied from multiple perspectives: neuroscientific, anthropological, and psychoanalytic.

Each presentation served as a lesson in balance—between science and humanity, academic rigor and

heartfelt openness. With genuine humility and inspiring clarity, Professor Alfonso fostered a learning environment where participants felt understood, validated, and encouraged to think across disciplines.

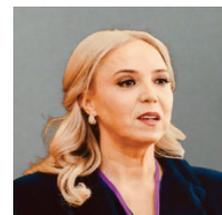


From L to R: Dr. Anamaria Matic, Senior ENT Specialist (Otolaryngologist), Anamaria Roșu, M.A. in Clinical and Public Health Psychology, Dr. César A. Alfonso, MD, Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and President of the World Federation for Psychotherapy, Prof. Psychologist Dr. Melania-Maria Gârdan, Neagu Paula, M.A. in Clinical Psychology and Genetic Counseling

The participation of Prof. Dr. Daniel-Ovidiu David, Aaron T. Beck Professor of Clinical Cognitive Sciences at Babeș-Bolyai University, and Romania's current Minister of Education and Research, marked a moment of academic and professional recognition. As a leading figure in Romanian psychology, author of foundational works, and advocate of evidence-based psychology, Professor David emphasized the importance of education in

Dialogue Between Medicine and Psychology – Essential Bridges for Holistic Health

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fostering a culture of integrative health. His presence added scientific credibility and reinforced that dialogue between fields is not only possible but essential. The conference was attended by numerous university professors, lecturers, researchers, and practitioners from hospitals, clinics, and intervention centers, bringing a variety of perspectives and experiences. This blend between academic and clinical settings was essential for the depth of the debates and the practical relevance of the conclusions.

- Artificial Intelligence in Mental Health
- Heart Transplant and Personal Identity
- The Patient–Doctor–Psychologist Triad in Diabetes Management

Moderated by Prof. Psych. Dr. Melania Gârdan and Dr. Anamaria Matic, the sessions transformed into true workshops of interdisciplinary thinking, where research, clinical practice, and sciences listened to each other with respect and curiosity. The central theme was dialogue—a bridge that heals! It was examined as a form of healing itself: not just an exchange of ideas, but presence, reciprocity, listening, and validation. Without it, psychology risks remaining abstract, and medicine purely physiological. Together, they can see the patient not as a case but as a story—with emotions, silences, and unspoken questions.



Paula Neagu, M.A. in Clinical Psychology and Genetic Counseling



Anamaria Roșu, M.A. in Clinical and Public Health Psychology

The conference had a scientific structure deeply rooted in practice, organized into plenary sessions that covered topics such as:

- Neuroplasticity, Psychotherapy, and Education – The Foundations of Change
- Pain and Mental Health – New Interdisciplinary Perspectives
- Psycho-oncology, Cardiovascular Stress, and the Ethics of Medical Decision-Making

Dialogue Between Medicine and Psychology – Essential Bridges for Holistic Health

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This conference represented a brave beginning—a bridge built with patience, vision, and science. It was about what can be created together, about the courage to say “let’s try”, and about love for the profession and for people.



Some of the Doctors and Psychologists Attending the “Dialogue Between Medicine and Psychology” Conference, October 10–11, 2025 – Zalău

The conference was more than just an event—it marked the start of a movement advocating for a new culture of health: integrative, interdisciplinary, and deeply human. In a Romanian context where psychology is only now becoming naturally integrated into medical teams, this event signaled a sign of professional maturity and openness. It demonstrated that when sciences collaborate, the patient is no longer simply a case but a complete story—with emotions, meaning, and context. And when medicine and psychology come together with respect and curiosity, healing is more than treatment—it becomes understanding.

Paula Neagu is a Clinical Psychologist and Psychotherapist with over 15 years of experience across public and private sectors. She holds a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in Clinical Psychology and Genetic Counseling from Babeș-Bolyai University and currently serves as President of the Sălaj Territorial Branch of the Romanian College of Psychologists. Her professional background includes work with Fresenius NefroCare, Amelias Clinic, CJRAE Sălaj, and the Prader-Willi Association, alongside roles as a teacher, trainer, counselor, supervisor, and mental health volunteer.

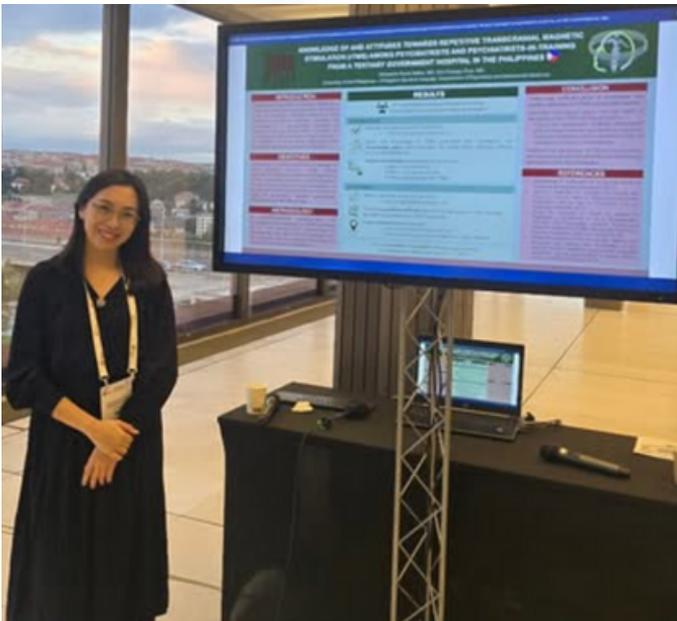
Anamaria Roșu is a Clinical Psychologist with over 15 years of private practice experience. She holds a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in Clinical and Public Health Psychology from Babeș-Bolyai University and completed postgraduate studies in Psychosomatic Medicine at Victor Babeș University. Certified in cognitive-behavioral counseling, she has coordinated a psycho-socio-medical care center for the past decade, fostering interdisciplinary approaches for patients with chronic and neurocognitive conditions, while actively participating in national and international conferences on integrated and ethical care.

The 25th World Congress of Psychiatry: An Early-Career Psychiatrist's Reflections



Michaella Paula M. Aldea, MD, MBA

Last October 5-8, 2025, I had the privilege of attending the World Psychiatric Association's 25th World Congress of Psychiatry held in the Czech Republic's beautiful capital, Prague. As an early-career psychiatrist seeking for more professional growth, it was an event that I greatly anticipated, especially after receiving the news early this year that the abstract of my residency research "Knowledge of and Attitudes towards Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation among Psychiatrists and Psychiatrists-in-Training from a Tertiary Government Hospital in the Philippines" was accepted for e-poster presentation.



Dr. Aldea with her E-poster at the 25th World Congress of Psychiatry

This year's congress theme "The Role of Psychiatry in the Changing World" was an excellent choice. It felt especially relevant to my

practice as a young psychiatrist confronted with the complex challenges and countless opportunities of our ever-changing world.

The scientific program offered us diverse topics. I was particularly drawn to the different sessions on psychiatrists' experiences in humanitarian settings. Through these sessions, I learned about the experiences of psychiatrists who have selflessly offered their skills and innovatively used advancements in our field to be of service to those who suffer from war and violence, ultimately reminding me that humanity is at the core of psychiatry.

Events tailored to early-career psychiatrists were also impactful. Attending the WPA Quiz initiated by the WPA Early Career Psychiatry section allowed me to exchange ideas with fellow early-career psychiatrists while having fun. Having exchanges about research from around the world through the poster presentations helped me understand not only the challenges and breakthroughs in different countries, but also the universality of our desire to improve mental health care worldwide.

I left the congress energized and eager for what lies ahead in our field. I am grateful for the insights and connections that will continue to influence the direction of my work. I encourage colleagues, especially early-career psychiatrists, to attend future congresses to contribute to the future of our field while enriching their respective journeys.

Dr. Aldea is a practicing psychiatrist, holding clinic in Muntinlupa City. She is a courtesy consultant of ManilaMed-Medical Center Manila

AI and Psychotherapy: Understanding Its History, Current Developments, and Future Directions



Maria Bernadett P. Carandang, MD, DSBPP

Artificial Intelligence (AI) was once a science fiction trope- stimulating both fear and fantasy. The diverse ways humans have imagined what an AI-human relationship can be like were compiled by AIPRM (n.d.). The first known depiction of AI in film was in the silent movie "Metropolis" directed by Fritz Lang (1927). The film introduces False Maria, a robot created by the scientist Rotwang from the likeness of his former lover but designed for ultimate obedience. False Maria is positioned against the real human Maria throughout the movie as it explores themes of authentic leadership, influence, manipulation, and technological perversion (Lang, 1927; Kaes, 2010; Petro, 1989). While Metropolis aligns with the fearful depictions of AI, films like the Star Wars saga and WALL-E created AI characters with friendlier relationships with humans. R2-D2 and C3PO were companions not only to the characters but also to the audience. The droids were designed with specific functions in mind: a mechanic and a protocol assistant, respectively. However, as the movie progresses, both droids outgrow the limitations of these preset capabilities because of their capacity to learn. In contrast to False Maria, who became an agent of chaos, the Star Wars droids were not socially disruptive but rather complementary to their human counterparts' lives. However, a similar theme in these movies is the desire to create a being for companionship.

Moving forward to our current state, AI in the present world has come closer to what was imagined in the previous century. AI-human interactions have seen extremely rapid dynamism in the past two years. Marc Zao-Sanders (2025) of the Harvard Business Review wrote about the ways people used Generative AI, comparing 2024 and 2025. An Analysis

of online public data revealed a shift away from practical/technical towards more personal/emotive usage. Personal and Professional support categories increased from 17% of users to 31%. This included use cases such as Therapy/Companionship, Organizing My Life, and Finding Purpose. Therapy was already the #2 use case in 2024. It was elevated to #1. The other two use cases are new entries debuting at #2 and #3. Insights from representative quotes revealed gaps in mental health care availability, accessibility, and support.



Photo from Canva

The idea of using AI to address these gaps has been present since the 1960s. ELIZA, created by Joseph Weizenbaum, used pattern matching to simulate psychotherapy. It became a landmark study on how natural language communication can be experienced between man and machine (Weizenbaum, 1966). During the 1970s-80s, psychopathology models, such as PARRY, and early computer-assisted therapies began to develop (Colby et al., 1971; Colby et al., 1972; Callan et al., 2017). By the 1990s, natural language processing (NLP) technology had made it possible for more targeted types of psychotherapy programs to use NLP for clinical adjunctive materials and self-help tools (Colby, 1995). MoodGYM was then launched in the early 2000s (Christensen et al., 2002; Carrol and Rounsaville, 2011). It was the first internet-based CBT program. Development in the space continued

AI and Psychotherapy: Understanding its History, Current Developments, and Future Directions



Maria Bernadett P. Carandang, MD, DSBPP

to evolve in the 2010s as mobile apps became more accessible and lifestyle-integrated. The mobile apps made self-help psychotherapy tools and resources available, thus priming the consumers for more agentic AI-facilitated engagement (Carroll, 2010; Vaidyam, 2020).

The next landmark came in 2017 with the Woebot RCT (Fitzpatrick et al., 2017). It is a web-based cognitive-behavioral therapeutic app that targets symptoms of depression and anxiety. The trial concluded that such conversational agents have good potential in delivering CBT-type psychological support. Since then, several trials for therapy-agentic AI have been conducted, and continued development has been applied. In 2024-2025, the Therabot RCT (Heinz et al., 2024) showed that a fully generative AI chatbot demonstrated effectiveness in addressing clinical-level symptoms of major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and feeding and eating disorders.

In conjunction with these developments, concerns about ethics and safety have also been at the forefront of the conversation about AI and psychotherapy. In 2025, the US city of Chicago became the first to pass a law banning the use of generative AI for psychotherapy. The Wellness and Oversight for Psychological Resources Act (WOPR) prohibited AI from providing psychotherapy or making any clinical decisions (Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, 2025). This move came from an overwhelming concern about the speed of development and the lack of regulation of the AI products. Other states in the US have followed suit in creating regulations for AI and mental health use. They emphasized that clinical therapy must be performed by

a licensed individual (Easton, 2025). The European Union takes a similar stance, classifying AI mental health/therapy tools as high-risk for diagnostic and treatment purposes. They have proposed frameworks that include risk assessment, transparency, oversight, data protection, and regulatory pathways (Schmidt, 2024).

There is an urgent drive to address the lack of regulation as the general population continues to increase its use of AI for mental health (Alegre, 2025). A study conducted at Brown University revealed that general-use LLMs (i.e., OpenAI's ChatGPT, Anthropic's Claude, and Meta's Llama) are prone to deviating from ethical standards in mental health (Brown University, 2025). They found a lack of contextual adaptation, poor therapeutic collaboration, deceptive empathy, unfair discrimination, and inadequate safety and crisis management. While these violations may stem from the fact that these LLMs were not built for therapeutic use, it cannot be denied that people are using them for such cases. To address the growing concern, developers have invested in creating more safety policies and usage guardrails. OpenAI released a set of usage policies that explicate the proper use of ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2025). They have also released updates that improved the model's capacity to recognize distress situations and respond accordingly (OpenAI, 2025).

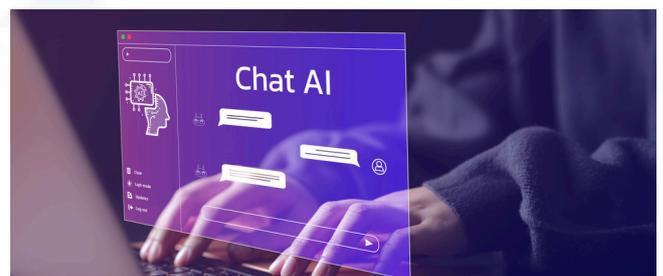


Photo from Canva

AI and Psychotherapy: Understanding its History, Current Developments, and Future Directions



Maria Bernadett P. Carandang, MD, DSBPP

Research and development on AI and Psychotherapy have been more relevant than ever. The mental health community is at an inflection point that can move from unregulated potential towards structured, ethical, and evidence-based AI-supplemented treatments. From a general standpoint, psychotherapists cannot be replaced by AI, as emphasized in the recent legislation. However, it must be noted that Generative AI fills gaps in mental health resources. The shift in the increased usage of Generative AI for mental health reflects a strong societal current that demands mental health support. Hence, psychiatrists and fellow mental health professionals must proactively work with other stakeholders who operate and influence the space. By working at an exosystem level of cooperation, AI can become a tool that facilitates psychotherapy rather than endangering it.

On the other hand, AI is not the only digital advancement in mental health. There are a multitude of developments in Augmented/Virtual Reality, digital therapeutics, etc. Members of the WFP are encouraged to learn more about these computer-assisted modalities at the 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy, to be held June 4-6, 2026, in New York City, USA.

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Dr. Carandang is a practicing psychiatrist and an assistant training officer at Batangas Medical Center.

People Worth Coming Home To



Kevin Patrick Veneracion, MD, MBA

Mental health care should never be a privilege. Yet for many people living in underserved areas, it often is—something distant, expensive, intimidating, or simply unavailable. Ironically, these are also the places where mental health support is needed most: where access is limited, stigma is strong, and the emotional weight of daily survival is quietly carried without much room to rest.

After six years of medical school—yes, six, which included an extra year courtesy of youthful overconfidence and a few questionable life choices—followed by another four years of psychiatry residency (I would like to blame the pandemic entirely for the extra year, but my consultants—who saw me at my best and my worst—might disagree), I made a decision that surprised some of my mentors and friends: I still chose to come home to General Santos City.

Not because it was easier—I would have happily stayed in Manila, with its convenience, variety, and ability to deliver almost anything to your door at midnight—but because I felt I would be needed more here. It was a decision made with the full blessing and encouragement of my wife, whose love for the beach, slow living, and significantly lower stress levels made “moving to a tiny city” sound less like a sacrifice and more like a very good life plan.

With her background in branding and multimedia work and my clinical training at a large tertiary hospital in the National Capital Region, we shared one conviction early on: help should never be out of reach.

In my first two years of psychiatric practice in Gensan, I was struck by two realities that existed side by side. On one hand, my clinic steadily filled with people finally seeking mental health support. On the other hand, there were many more quietly knocking—asking about free services, more affordable options, or simply whether there was any way they could be helped. It became painfully clear that while mental health care was technically available, it wasn't always accessible.

Not everyone needed medication right away. Some needed to be seen. Others needed to be heard. Many simply needed a safe space—or a community that understood what they were carrying.

So we asked ourselves a simple question that would eventually shape everything that followed: ***What if we built a place where people had more options—where help didn't just look like one thing?***

That question became the foundation of what would later be known as **Gensan Psych Mental Health Hub**.



Gensan Psych Mental Health Hub

We began quietly in February 2025. At the time, the “hub” consisted of me, two psychologists, and a shared clinic space that came alive on weekends—outside of my psychologists' Monday-to-Friday full-time jobs. It was modest, practical, and fueled mostly by belief (and coffee). Slowly, we reached out to schools, organizations,

People Worth Coming Home To



Kevin Patrick Veneracion, MD, MBA

community groups, offering mental health talks and workshops wherever we were invited—often in rooms where mental health had never been openly discussed before.

In April 2025, we took a step that felt both terrifying and deeply necessary: we launched **Region 12's first free mental health support group**, called **Pahulayan**. Once a month, usually on a Saturday, 20 to 30 people from different walks of life would gather—not for diagnosis or prescriptions, but for shared humanity. A psychiatrist or psychologist would open the session with brief psychoeducation, followed by smaller facilitated circles. Stories were shared. Silence was respected. No one was rushed. No one was “fixed.”



Dr. Veneracion Facilitating Pahulayan- Free Monthly Mental Health Support Group

It turns out that when people are given a safe place to speak, they show up—with honesty, courage, and stories they have been carrying for far too long.

We also knew we had to meet people where they already were—online. We began creating mental health awareness and psychoeducation content that was honest rather than performative. We sent regular newsletters and messages of encouragement—not reminders to book sessions, but reminders that they were not alone. In less than six months, our online community grew to over 5,000 people, a number that quietly spoke volumes for a small city like General Santos and its neighboring provinces.



Pahulayan- Free Monthly Mental Health Support Group

By September, we formally opened our physical space. Two consultation rooms. A waiting area that didn't feel like a hospital. We intentionally located ourselves in a commercial building—because mental health care should not always feel like something reserved for emergencies or sterile hallways. It should feel like part of everyday life.

Alongside psychiatric and psychological consultations, we expanded our services to include early intervention

People Worth Coming Home To



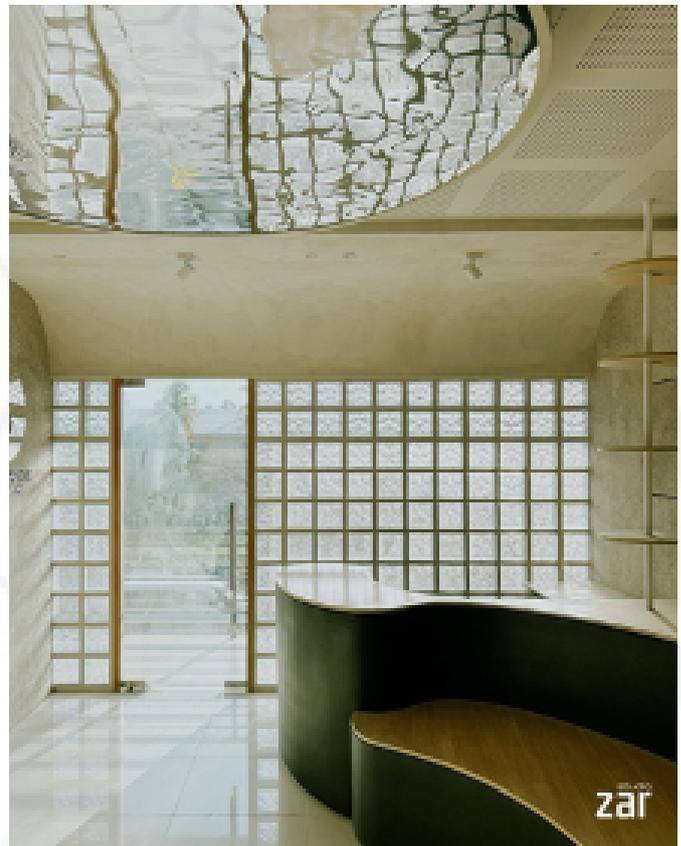
Kevin Patrick Veneracion, MD, MBA

teaching for children with developmental needs, Bright Start programs to prepare young children for school, and marriage, family, and psychospiritual counseling. We continued to receive invitations for school- and organization-based talks and workshops, and leaned into collaborations that made mental health feel communal—reading sessions with a local book club, film screenings with talkbacks, and creative workshops.



Gensan Psych Mental Health Hub

Less than a year since we started, Gensan Psych Mental Health Hub has become the only multidisciplinary mental health center in Region 12 where psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, and teachers work under one roof.



Gensan Psych Mental Health Hub

If there is one thing this journey has taught me, it is this: healing does not begin with clinical interventions alone. It takes root in community, in shared stories, and in the choice to build something meaningful where it is needed most. It begins when someone decides that a place—and its people—are worth coming home to.

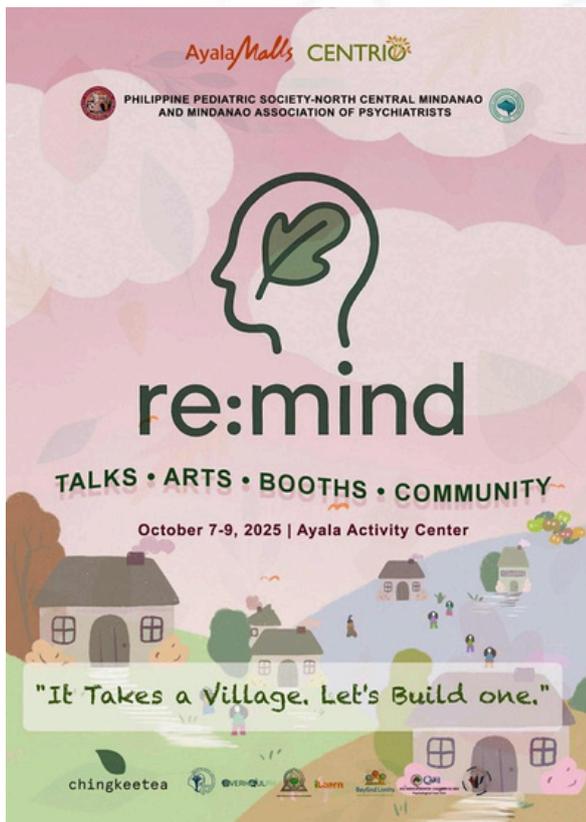
Dr. Veneracion is a practicing general adult psychiatrist based in General Santos City, Philippines. He is a co-founder and program director of Gensan Psych Mental Health Hub.

Re:mind: Building a Village of Care for Mental Health in Northern Mindanao



Katrina Therese R. Esling, MD

Re: Mind brings together advocacies and resources to foster a supportive mental health community in Northern Mindanao, a southern region in the Philippines.



Dr. Christi Annah Hipona, founder of Re:Mind
(Photo c/o Re:Mind Documentation Team)

The event featured lectures, floor activities, interactive booths, merchants, and an art contest, promoting wellness across all ages.

Building on this commitment, the brain-child of Dr. Christi Annah Hipona, a practicing child and adolescent psychiatrist, the event strives to raise awareness on mental health and strengthen collaboration. In its inaugural year, the theme, "It takes a village, let's build one," reflects the value of community in promoting mental health. This foundational idea guided the event's design and activities.

This vision was brought to life during the 3-day event held in October, coinciding with World Mental Health Day and Anti-Bullying Awareness Month.



Dr. Elaine Dawn Butron, Adolescent Medicine Specialist, Lecturing on "The Teenage Brain" (Photo c/o Re:Mind Documentation Team)

Re:mind: Building a Village of Care for Mental Health in Northern Mindanao



Katrina Therese R. Esling, MD

To further deepen engagement, talks during the event addressed diverse concerns across the lifespan, as discussed by experts in their fields. The lectures provided much-needed insight into topics ranging from developmental red flags, bullying, and teen and technology use to workplace mental health and well-being in later life. Psychiatrists, pediatricians, therapists, life coaches, and trainers participated, offering different perspectives.



Art Contest Participants
(Photo c/o Re:Mind Documentation Team)



Merchant and Advocacy Booths
(Photo c/o Re:Mind Documentation Team)

Complementing the lectures, interactive booths introduced resources available in the region, including learning centers, recovery foundations, and psychotherapy centers. Advocates and medical organizations were also present. Demonstrations on regulating emotions, exercise, and martial arts were conducted, further creating a dynamic atmosphere of learning and participation throughout the event.



Lecture Attendees with Psychiatrists from Northern Mindanao
(Photo c/o Re:Mind Documentation Team)



Attendees Participating in Mindful Movement Session
(Photo c/o Re:Mind Documentation Team)

Complementing the lectures, interactive booths introduced resources available in the region, including learning centers, recovery foundations, and psychotherapy centers. Advocates and medical organizations were also present.

Through these efforts, Re:Mind expanded mental health conversations and underscored the role of a strong sense of community in fostering lasting care. Re: Mind is set to be an annual event that will continue to develop mental health support in the area.

WFP 2026 Lifetime Distinguished Research Award



Professor Myrna Weissman

Professor Myrna M. Weissman has been awarded the World Federation for Psychotherapy 2026 (WFP) Lifetime Distinguished Research Award.

This prestigious award is granted to distinguished researchers whose lifetime of scholarly work and publications has made an exceptional and enduring contribution to the advancement of psychotherapy. The award is conferred only once every four years and represents one of the highest international recognitions in the field.

The decision was made unanimously by the Board of Directors of the World Federation for Psychotherapy, in recognition of Professor Weissman's groundbreaking and sustained contributions to psychotherapy research, particularly her seminal role in the development, evaluation, and global dissemination of Interpersonal Psychotherapy.

Dr. Weissman has been a consultant to many private and public agencies, including the World Health Organization, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, the John D. and

Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Science.

She has been the author or a co-author of over 550 scientific articles and chapters, and 11 books, including *Interpersonal Psychotherapy of Depression*, Basic Books, New York, 1984; *A Comprehensive Guide to Interpersonal Psychotherapy*, Basic Books, New York, 2000; and *Treatment of Depression: Bridging the 21st Century*, API Press, 2001 and *A Clinician's Quick Guide to Interpersonal Psychotherapy*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY: 2007.

The official award ceremony will take place during a social event at the 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy, on Friday, June 5, 2026, at 7:30 PM, held at the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center in New York City.

Professor Weissman's work has profoundly shaped contemporary psychotherapy research and clinical practice worldwide. This award not only honors her extraordinary scientific legacy but also highlights the lasting global impact of Interpersonal Psychotherapy.

WFP 2026 Young Investigator Award Recipients



Congratulations to the following Young Investigators who will be honored at the WFP 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy in New York on June 5, 2026:

Awardees Poster Presentations:

Alessandra Amoroso (Italy)

Early alliance markers in couple therapy consultation: What differentiates continuation from dropout?

Anna Blech (USA)

Increasing Access to Psychotherapy for Uninsured Immigrant and Refugee Patients: A Student-Run Free Clinic Model for Medical Education in Psychiatry and Human Rights

Darien Alfa Cipta (Indonesia)

Sociocultural Adaptation of a DBT-Informed Skills Group for Indonesian MSM: Application of the Deconstruction-Reconstruction Matrix

Guida Da Ponte (Portugal)

Tailoring Meaning Centered Group Psychotherapy for Health Care Professionals

Youssef Ernez (Tunisia)

Theatre-Based Group Psychotherapy to Enhance Social Cognition in Early Psychosis: A Pilot Clinical Study

Johanna Lindsay Capili (Philippines)

Strengthening Resilience in Frontline Mental Health Nurses: A Quasi-Experimental Evaluation of the Katatagan plus Intervention-

Roy Naipaul (France)

Mental Health among Myanmar Merchant Seafarers during Extended Voyages: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Ashandi Prawira (UK)

“Ruang MENdukung”: Exploring the Impact of an Online Male Support Group on Help-Seeking Behaviors

Lina Velásquez (Colombia)

Mindfulness in the Assessment and Treatment of Suicidal Behavior

Nicole Yelton Fermín (Dominican Republic)

When Silence Compounds Loss: Psychotherapeutic Challenges after Perinatal Death in Latin America and the Caribbean

INVITATION



24th World Congress of Psychotherapy New York, New York June 4-6, 2026

Scientific Co-Chairs:

- Asher Aladjem (USA)
- Sohail Ali (USA/United Nations)
- César Alfonso (USA)
- Chaimaa Aroui (Morocco)
- Moussa Ba (USA)
- Dilip Jeste (USA)
- Alma Jimenez (Philippines)
- Amine Larnaout (Tunisia)
- Goran Mijaljica (Sweden/Norway)
- Helene Nissen-Lie (Norway)
- Daniela Polese (Italy)
- Nik Ruzyaney Nik Jaafar (Malaysia)
- Ekaterina Sukhanova (USA)

Psychotherapy, Mental Health and Human Rights- Caring for Vulnerable Populations,
Healthcare Professionals, and Humanitarian Relief Workers

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Thursday, June 4, 2026

(United Nations Headquarters, Room Assignment Pending Confirmation)

9:00 AM-10:00 AM **Registration**

10:00 AM-10:45 AM **Opening Session**

WFP President César Alfonso, WFP President-Elect Dilip Jeste, United Nations DSS CISMS Director Muhammad Sohail Ali, CUNY Chancellor Felix Matos, WFP Council Members Ekaterina Sukhanova, Silvia Olarte, and Hamid Peseschkian, CUNY Graduate Center President Joshua Brumberg, CUNY School of Public Health Dean Ayman El-Mohandes, WPA President Danuta Wasserman, AWP President Nikole Benders-Hadi, UN Under-Secretary-General, UN-Assistent-Secretary-General.

10:45 AM-11:45 AM **WFP Plenary Panel World Federation for Psychotherapy-Past, Present, and Future**

World Federation for Psychotherapy-Past, Present, and Future

Moderators:

François Ferrero (Switzerland)
César A. Alfonso (USA)

Plenary Speakers:

Dilip Jeste (USA)
Alma Jimenez (Philippines)
Ulrich Schnyder (Switzerland)
Stephan Zipfel (Germany)

11:45 AM-12:15 PM **UN Plenary: Dr. Muhammad Sohail Ali (United Nations)**

From the frontlines to the mind: The hidden scars of first responders, humanitarian workers, and their families

Moderators:

Goran Mijaljica (UK/Sweden)
Moussa Ba (United Nations/USA & Senegal)

Plenary Speaker:

Muhammad Sohail Ali (United Nations, USA & Pakistan)

12:15 PM-1:30 PM **Lunch**

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Thursday, June 4, 2026

(United Nations Headquarters, Room Assignment Pending Confirmation)

1:30 PM-2:00 PM UN Plenary: Dr. Moussa Ba (United Nations)

After-action Review-When the Mental Health Professional is Caught Between Human Rights, Humanitarian Work, and Ethics.

Moderators:

Gustavo Antonio Marcolongo Bezerra (Brazil)

Asher Aladjem (USA)

Plenary Speaker:

Moussa Ba (United Nations/USA & Senegal)

2:00 PM-2:30 PM UN Plenary: Prof. Driss Moussaoui (Morocco)

Intergenerational Trauma and Resilience

Moderators:

Dilip Jeste (USA)

Chaimaa Aroui (Morocco)

Plenary Speaker:

Driss Moussaoui (Morocco)

2:30 PM-3:00 PM UN Plenary: Prof. Vivian B. Pender (USA)

Women as Survivors of Systemic Trauma: A Gendered Perspective

Moderators:

Helene A. Nissen-Lie (Norway)

Nik Ruzyanei (Malaysia)

Plenary Speaker:

Vivian B. Pender (USA)

3:00 PM-3:30 PM Break

3:30 PM-4:00 PM UN Plenary: Dr. Alvin Tay (United Nations)

Building the Evidence Base for Psychosocial Risk Management in Humanitarian Workforces

Moderators:

Timothy Sullivan (USA)

Amine Larnaout (Tunisia)

Plenary Speaker:

Alvin Tay (United Nations/Australia)

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Thursday, June 4, 2026

(United Nations Headquarters, Room Assignment Pending Confirmation)

4:00 PM-4:30 PM UN Plenary: (CISWG)

Safeguarding Mental Health in the UN Workplace: Strategic Priorities for Quality, Accountability, and Collaboration

Moderators:

Alma Jimenez (Philippines)
Constantine Della (Philippines)

Plenary Speaker:

Nenna Ndukwe-Hertz (UK)

4:30 PM-5:15 PM AWP Plenary Panel: Women Psychiatrists and the Future of Psychotherapy

Women Psychiatrists and the Future of Psychotherapy

Moderators:

Helene A. Nissen-Lie (Norway)
Daniela Polese (Italy)

Plenary Speakers:

Nikole Benders-Haidi (USA)
Silvia Olarte (USA)

5:15 PM-6:00 PM CUNY Plenary Panel: Health Diplomacy and Mental Health in the Global Era

Health Diplomacy and Mental Health in the Global Era

Moderators:

Ekaterina Sukhanova (USA)
Francesca McLaren (USA)

Plenary Speakers:

Ayman El-Mohandes (USA)
Ashish Joshi (USA)
Victoria Ngo (USA)
Norman Sartorius (Switzerland)

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Friday, June 5, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

8:30 AM-10:00 AM

CUNY Plenary Panel: Task-Sharing for Scale: Evidence, Innovation, and Next Frontiers – *Task-Sharing for Scale: Evidence, Innovation, and Next Frontiers:*
Victoria Ngo (USA)*, and Milton Wainberg (USA)

9:00 AM-10:00 AM

Workshop - *Narrative Exposure Therapy for PTSD and Complex PTSD*
Goran Mijaljica, MD Chair (United Kingdom)

Workshop - *Cultural Bridges to Healing: A Positive Psychotherapy Approach Based on Psychosocial Transcultural Games for Working with Vulnerable Groups*
Etion Parruca, Msc Chair (Germany)
Ekin Özbey Duygu, PhD Participant (Turkiye)

9:30-10:00 AM

WFP Plenary

10:00-10:30 AM

Coffee Break

10:30 AM-12:00 NN

Symposium - *AWP symposium: Women Psychiatrists Advancing Psychotherapy*

Symposium - *The Society for Psychotherapy Integration Member Society Symposium: Making Psychotherapy Training Accessible to the World:*
Jeffery Smith, MD (USA) Chair, Speaker
Connor Adams, PsyD (USA) Co-Chair
Kenneth Critchfield, PhD (USA) Speaker
Kristin Osborn, MA (USA) Speaker
Clifton Watkins, PhD (USA) Speaker

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Friday, June 5, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

10:30 AM-12:00 NN

Symposium - Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Humanitarian Emergencies: Lessons from the Field:

Moussa Ba, MD, MH, PhD (USA/Senegal) Chair

Muhammad Sohail Ali, MD (USA) Co-Chair

Janvier Rugira, PhD, MBA, MA (USA) Speaker

Anne-Marie Serrano Speaker

Patricia Martins, MSc (USA) Speaker

Madhubhashini (Kalhari) Hewage, PhD (USA) Speaker

Symposium - Exploring Psychotherapeutic Approaches for Vulnerable Communities in Indonesia:

Sylvia Detri Elvira, MD (Indonesia) Chair, Speaker

Frilya Putri, MD (Indonesia) Speaker

Natalia Wardani, PhD (Indonesia) Speaker

Yaniar Mulyantini, MD (Indonesia) Speaker

12:00 NN-1:30 PM

Lunch, Business Meeting, (WFP Board Members, WFP Council Members, Representatives of WFP Member Societies, and WFP Individual Members), Poster Session

1:30 PM-2:30 PM

Interactive Panel -Who Heals the Healers? Psychotherapy, Moral Injury, and the Ethical Duty of Care for Healthcare Workers:

Alma Jimenez, MD (Philippines) Chair

Ulrich Schnyder, MD (Switzerland) Participant

Participant Jared Ng, MD (Singapore) Participant

Interactive Panel - Caring for Refugees, Displaced Persons, Asylum Seekers, and Survivors of Torture:

Asher Aladjem (USA), Goran Mijaljica (UK)*, Amine Larnaout (USA), Aleida Jacobo (USA)

Interactive Panel - Whose Belief Is It Anyway? Navigating Religious and Spiritual Differences in Psychotherapy: Ethical Tensions and Cultural Humility:

Alma Jimenez (Philippines)*, Chaimaa Aroui (Morocco), Sylvia Detri Elvira (Indonesia), Rangsun Sitthichai (USA/Thailand)

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Friday, June 5, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

1:30 PM-2:30 PM

Workshop - *Empowering Communities: Building Capacity through Task-Sharing*: **Victoria Ngo (USA), Alexandra Restrepo (USA), Brianna Baker (USA)**

Paper Session: The Clinical Care of Migrants and Refugees
Co-Chairs: Darien Cipta & Shabnam Nohesara

Exploring Refugees' Experiences of Psychotherapy in the UK: A Qualitative Study on Cultural and Therapeutic Challenges- **Eva Gharibi, MSc (UK)**

The Atypical Setting: The Challenging Care of Migrants- **Salvatore Bellissima, DPH (Italy)**

Identity, Trauma, and Relational Psychotherapy in Second-Generation Immigrant Adolescents- **Adriana Gutierrez (Spain)**

In the depths of despair, discussing the question "How should life be lived?" turns out to be the answer. Presented by Nicholas Rose, a UK-based Existential Psychotherapist working with refugees and survivors of torture- **Nicholas Rose, Psychotherapist (UK)**

2:40 PM-3:40 PM

Workshop - *From Burnout to Breakthrough: Rewiring the Inner System – A Positive Psychotherapy Lab for Therapists. Transforming Stress into Strength through Narrative, Balance, and Inner Capacities*:
Diana-Iulia Pop, MA Chair (Romania)
Sergiu Maxim, MS Participant (Romania)

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Friday, June 5, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

2:40 PM-3:40 PM

Symposium - *Severe or Complex? Navigating Complex PTSD and Personality Disorders in Clinical Practice:*

Helene Nissen-Lie (Norway)*, Goran Mijaljica (UK/Sweden)*, Flavio Di Leone (Sweden), Marta Lopez-Muñoz (Sweden)

Interactive Panel - *Roundtable: Healthy Cities, Healthy Minds: City-to-City Partnerships for Mental Health:*

Victoria Ngo (USA)*, Michelle Morse (USA), Danielle Greene (USA), Deborah Levine (USA), Patricia Boyce (USA), Sasha Fleary (USA), Ayman El-Mohandes (USA), Nick Freudenberg (USA)

Interactive Panel - *Moral Injury in Humanitarian Emergencies – Invisible Wounds that Run Deep:*

Muhammad Sohail Ali (USA/Pakistan)*, Moussa Ba (USA/Senegal), Mohammad Zaman Rajabi (USA/Afghanistan), Alma L. Jimenez (Philippines)

Paper Session Caring for LGBTQ2S+ persons

Co-Chairs: Gerhard Grobler & Frilya Rachma Putri

Amid Gender Affirmation: Clinical Insight on Psychodynamic Psychotherapy with Gender Dysphoria- **Donatella Laghi, PsyD (Sweden)**

The Body, Self, and Family in Cultural Dilemmas: Challenges and Transformations of Culturally Sensitive Mental Health Services for Sexual Minorities in Contemporary China- **Ren Zhengjia, MD, MPH, PhD (China)**

The Unconscious of Populism: Psychoanalysis, Language, and LGBTQ+ Rights- **Limor Moyal (Israel)**

Co-Adapting a Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)-Informed Skills Group for Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM) in Indonesia: A Community-Based Participatory Research and Implementation Science Protocol- **Darién Cipta, MD, MSc (Indonesia)**

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Friday, June 5, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

3:40 PM- 4:10 PM

Coffee Break

4:10 PM-5:40 PM

Symposium - Faith, Healing, and the Mind: Integrating Spirituality and Religion in Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry (CLP):

Constantine D. Della, MD (Philippines) Co-Chair
Tyrone Paul B. Cammayo, MD (Philippines) Co-Chair
Vivienne Caguioa-Cleofas, MD (Philippines) Speaker
Monina G. Cruz, MD (Philippines) Speaker
Kathryn-Daphne Ong, MD (Philippines) Speaker

Symposium - Dynamic Psychiatry's Contribution to the Diagnosis and Treatment of Identity-Related Disorders-Member Society Symposium:

Michel Botbol, Prof (France) Chair
Maria Ammon, Prof Dr (Germany) Co-Chair, Speaker
Hans-Otto Thomashoff, MD, PhD (Austria) Speaker
Fabian Guénolé, Prof Dr med (France) Speaker
Sieglinde Bast, Medical Specialist (Germany) Speaker

Symposium - Facilitating Support and Collaboration in Learning and Practicing Psychotherapy in Malaysia -Member Society Symposium:

Nik Ruzyanei Nik Jaafar, Prof Dr (Malaysia) Chair, Speaker
Aida Syarinaz Ahmad Adlan, MB (Malaysia) Co-Chair
Chester Chong, MD (Malaysia) Speaker
Nora Mat Zhin, MD (Malaysia) Speaker
Hazli Zakaria (Malaysia) Speaker

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Friday, June 5, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

4:10 PM-5:40 PM

Symposium - *Mental Health on Campus in the Age of AI:*
**Michelle Riba (USA)*, Daniela Polese (USA)*, Alessandro Mazzetta (Italy),
Francesca Fagioli (Italy), Victor I. Schwartz (USA)**

**Paper Session: Psychotherapy and Human Development-Motherhood and Early
Years**

Co-Chairs: Monina Cruz & Ekin Ozbey Duygu

*Neuroscience and New Research Perspectives on Violence as a Risk Factor in
Pregnancy-* **Hamida Ouled Slimane, PhD (France)**

*Parental Alienation as Discourse: Words, Silences, and Performatives Enact
Rupture or Solidarity, Revealing New Insights for Psychoanalysis and
Therapeutic Practice-* **Shiri Hadari, PhD Student (Israel)**

*Toward a Psychological Framework of Black Matrescence: Centering Mother-
Daughter Bonds-* **Brianna Baker, PhD (USA)**

*Working with Adolescents' Emotions from the Emotional Competence
Framework-* **Elena Savina, DPhil (USA)**

*Human Birth Theory and the Critical Role of the Caregiver-Infant Relationship
in the First Year: Promoting Health in Infancy as an Early Preventive Strategy
for Mental Health-* **Ilaria Rocchi, MD (Italy)**

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Friday, June 5, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

5:50 PM-7:20 PM

Symposium - *Psychotherapy Challenges in the Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry Setting:*

Constantine Della, Prof Dr med (Philippines) Chair, Speaker

César A. Alfonso, MD (USA) Co-Chair

Jordi Blanch, MD, PhD (Spain) Speaker

Guida Da Ponte, MD (Portugal) Speaker

Marco C. Michael, MD (USA) Speaker

Paper Session: The Future of Psychotherapy.

Co-chairs: Yasser Khazaal & Faria Ashrafi

The Future of Psychotherapy: Which Role Should AI Play?-**Helene Amundsen Nissen-Lie, Prof Dr (Norway)**

Virtual Reality Exposure Therapy for Social Anxiety in Thai Patients: A Pilot Study- **Warut Aunjitsakul, MD, PhD (Thailand)**

Trauma, Epigenetic Alterations, and Psychotherapy- **Shabnam Nohesara, MD (USA/Iran)**

Is Artificial Intelligence (AI) Serving Dream Interpretation?- **Angélique Christaki, DPhil (France)**

A Call for Clean Air: The Compounding Mental Health Impact of Climate Change and Airborne Neurodegenerative Viruses- **Chinasa Mbanugo (USA)**

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Friday, June 5, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

5:50 PM-7:20 PM

Paper Session: Psychotherapy-Contemporary Challenges and New Paradigms
Co-Chairs: Michael Sionzon & Anna Blech

Becoming a Counselling Psychologist: An IPA Study of Working-Class Women's Experiences of Doctoral Training in the UK- **Stevie Downs, BSc, MSc (UK)**

The Capacity Paradigm in Psychotherapy- **Farid Peseschkian, MSc (Germany)**

Anxiety, Panic and the Deep Effects of Climate: A Second Brain Psychology Perspective- **Armando Ingegnieri, PhD (Italy)**

Self-Efficacy Rates of Bereaved Students and Implications for Retention
Alexandra Weaver, MEd (USA)

Factors Associated with Retention in Online Psychotherapy- **Jonas Eimontas, PhD (Lithuania)**

Paper Session: Psychotherapy and Trauma Recovery
Co-Chairs: Chaimaa Aroui & Katerina Duchonova

Collective Healing beyond the Therapy Room: Culturally Rooted Approaches to Trauma Recovery- **Danielle McDowell, LPC, Virginia Board of Counseling Approved Supervisor (USA)**

We Carry It All: Unpacking Systemic Trauma through the Body and beyond Words- **Danielle McDowell, LPC, Virginia Board of Counseling Approved Supervisor (USA)**

Utilizing Childhood Memories and Natural Avoidance in Trauma Work- **Kate Mikhailouskaya, MA (Australia)**

Makalaya: Trauma-Informed Psychotherapy for a Patient with Intellectual Developmental Disorder and Complex Posttraumatic Stress Disorder-
Annemarie Pamela Torga, MD (Philippines)

The Taboo of Justice: Memory, Trauma, and the Legal Recognition of Childhood Sexual Abuse Survivors' Testimony- **Gal Chen Kleiner, PhD (Israel)**

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Friday, June 5, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

5:50 PM-7:20 PM

Paper Session: Psychotherapy, Suicide, and Violence
Co-Chairs: Amine Larnaout & Iizax Ramirez Espinosa

Someone is to Blame: The Impact of Suicide on the Mind of the Bereaved (including clinicians)- Rachel Gibbons, BSc, Dr Med Sc, FRCPsych (UK)

Psychotherapy in an Age of Violence: Gaza as a Mirror- Raffaele Vanacore, MD (Italy)

Unresolved Crisis at the Stage of the Vision of Different Human Beings and Psychological Violence- Irene Calesini (Italy)

Mental Health Coercion Among Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence- Heather Phillips, MA (USA)

What to Do to Survive a Client's Suicide: Basic Skills to Make Your Own Postvention Protocol- Iizax G. Ramirez-Espinosa, MD (Mexico)

7:30 PM-9:00 PM

Social Event & Lifetime Achievement Award Ceremony to Honor Myrna Weissman

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Saturday, June 6, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

8:15 AM- 10:50AM

Course 1- Preventing Burnout and Moral Injury: Balint Groups for Healthcare Professionals

Course Faculty:

Andre Tay, MD (Singapore) Chair

Glen Roche, MBBS, MRCPsych, FAMS (Singapore) Participant

Course 2 -Psychotherapy for Clinical High-Risk States: Theoretical Underpinnings and Practical Aspects

Course Faculty:

Amine Larnaout, MD (Tunisia) Chair

Warut Aunjitsakul, MD, PhD (Thailand) Co-Chair

Course 3- Introduction to Psychosocial Support in Crisis Situations

Course Faculty:

Muhammad Sohail Ali (USA/Pakistan)*, Mohammad Saman Rajabi (Afghanistan/USA), Javier Rugira (USA/Rwanda), Alvin Tay (USA/Australia), Álvaro Marrero (USA/Uruguay), Maryanne Kithome (USA/Kenya), Madhubhashini (Kalhari) Hewage (USA/Sri Lanka), Anne-Marie Serrano (USA/Spain), Patricia Duarte (USA/Brazil)

9:30 AM- 10:50AM

Paper Session: Psychotherapy and Human Rights

Co-Chairs: François Ferrero & Amarilda Dhrami

*The Journey of the “Unrecognized Heroes” across the Central Mediterranean Route: A Multidisciplinary Study and a Psychological Perspective through the Lens of Massimo Fagioli- **Francesca Amerio, MSc (Malta)***

*Bridging the Silence: Making Mental Health Help More Accessible in Stigma-Dominant Communities- **Chandini Anilkumar Sujatha, MA (Canada)***

*Psychotherapy, Mental Health and Human Rights- **Amarilda Dhrami, BA (Albania)***

*Srebrenica Genocide Survivors: An Exploration of Night Dreams Involving Lost Loved Ones as an Expression of Personal Growth- **Sofia Anastasia Milioritsa, MA (Greece)***

*The Enforced Disappearances in a War context: From Oblique Narration towards Narrative Formation- **Hakima Megherbi (France)***

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Saturday, June 6, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

11:00 AM- 12:30PM

Symposium -Psychotherapy in the Philippines: Bridging Culture, Psychotherapy and Human Rights-Member Society Symposium:

Timothy Sullivan, MD (US) Chair

Constantine Della, Prof Dr med (Philippines) Co-Chair, Speaker

Michael Sionzon, MD (Philippines) Speaker

Anna Marie Garcia-Lantano, MD (Philippines) Speaker

Tyrone Paul Cammayo, MD (Philippines) Speaker

Symposium - The Importance of Play in an Increasingly Non-Playful World:

Steven Tuber, PhD (USA) Chair, Speaker

Laurel Silber, PhD (USA) Co-Chair, Speaker

Francine Conway, PhD (USA) Speaker

Larry Rosenberg, PhD (USA) Speaker

Symposium - Positive Psychotherapy in a Multicultural World: Tools, Research, and Clinical Approaches-Member Society Symposium:

Hamid Peseschkian, MD (Germany) Chair, Speaker

Diana Pop, MA (Romania) Co-Chair

Ekin Özbey Duygu, PhD (Turkey) Speaker

Elif Unsal Ozberk, PhD (UK) Speaker

Roman Ciesielski, PhD (Poland) Speaker

Symposium - Healing the Healers in a Divided World: Trauma-Informed Approaches to Caring for Healthcare Professionals:

Christina Khan, MD, PhD (USA) Chair

Ethan Hoffmann, PhD (USA) Co-Chair, Speaker

Kayla Jimenez, PsyD (USA) Speaker

Aparna Atluru, MD (USA) Speaker

Ripal Shah, MD (USA) Speaker

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Saturday, June 6, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

11:00 AM- 12:30PM

Symposium - *Building Bridges, Driving Change: International Coalitions for Global Mental Health Action*

Terry McGovern (USA)*, Victoria Ngo (USA)*, Antonis Kousoulis (UK), Harry Minas (Australia), Peter Varnum (Switzerland), Suzan Song (USA)

12:30 PM- 1:30PM

Lunch/Art Exhibition/Poster Session

1:30 PM- 2:30PM

Workshop - *Effective Use of Interpreters in the Provision of Psychotherapy:*

Goran Mijaljica, MD Chair (UK)

Mary Lyons-Hunter, PhD Participant (USA)

Symposium - *Depth and Devotion: Psychodynamic Psychotherapy across Faith Traditions*

Constantine Della, Prof Dr med (Philippines) Chair, Speaker

Frilya Putri, MD (Indonesia) Co-Chair, Speaker

Poom Chomposri, MD (Thailand) Speaker

Interactive Panel - *Roundtable: Nothing About Us Without Us: Embedding Lived Experience in Mental Health Systems:*

Victoria Ngo (USA)*, Rachel Stephenson (USA), Antonis Kousoulis (UK), Tabitha Ellis (USA), Jono Mckay (USA), Janos Marton (USA), others TBD

2:40 PM- 4:00PM

Symposium - *Group Psychotherapy and Human Rights: A Therapeutic Approach Based on Human Birth Theory:*

Alessio Laconi, PhD (Italy) Chair

Martina Moneglia, MD (Italy) Co-Chair

Francesca Zappacosta, PhD (Italy) Speaker

Rossella Carnevali, MD (Italy) Speaker

Viviana Censi, MD (Italy) Speaker

Daniela Polese, MD (Italy) Speaker

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Saturday, June 6, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

2:40 PM- 4:00PM

Symposium - Caring for Vulnerable Populations and Healthcare Professionals - A Symposium from the Psychotherapy Section, World Psychiatric Association:

Constantine Della, Prof Dr med (Philippines) Chair

Izax G. Ramirez-Espinosa, MD (Mexico) Co-Chair

Timothy Sullivan, MD (USA) Speaker

Katerina Duchonova, MD (Czech Republic) Speaker

Etheldreda Mpungu Nakimuli, PhD (Uganda) Speaker

Symposium – Supporting Healthcare Professionals through Sufi Psychology

Saloumeh DeGood, PsyD (USA) Chair, Speaker

Farnoosh Nouri, PhD (USA) Co-Chair, Speaker

Marjon Fariba, MD (USA) Speaker

Shahzad Movafagh, PharmD, PhD (USA) Speaker

Symposium - An Alliance-Focused Approach to Understanding the Change Process and Improving Treatment Outcomes in Psychotherapy:

John Muran, Prof Dr (USA) Chair

Brian Yim, MA (USA) Co-Chair, Speaker

Charalampos Risvas, MSc (USA) Speaker

Zhiyao Kong (USA) Speaker

Stephen Morales, MA (USA) Speaker

Paper Session: Psychotherapy with Patients with Complex Disorders and Multimorbidities

Co-Chairs: Tyrone Cammayo & José Angel Ramírez

Fragmented Bonds and Restorative Transferences: A Transference-Focused Approach with a Borderline Patient- **Karen Muñoz Sánchez, BSc (Mexico)**

Healing Emotional Trauma and Food Addiction in Vulnerable Populations: A Mind-Body-Spirit Approach for Counselors and Care Providers- **David Amponsah, MD (USA)**

Integrative Psychotherapy for Depression in a Filipina Living with HIV and Complex Medical Illnesses: Upholding Rights and Resilience- **Ziara Carmelli Tan, MD, MBA (Philippines)**

When Pain Becomes Who You Are: Narrative Reconstruction and Lifestyle Interventions in Chronic Pain Psychotherapy- **Wonyun Lee, MD (USA)**

Identity and Forgetting: Psychological Polarities in Dementia and the Ethics of Intervention- **Anamaria Rosu, MSc (Romania)**

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

Saturday, June 6, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center

4:00 PM- 4:30PM

Coffee Break

4:30 PM- 6:00PM

Symposium -Life sentences: Therapy with Violence Perpetrators. This Symposium Will Discuss Therapy with Perpetrators of Different Kinds of violence; the Ethical Issues Associated with This work; and the Training Involved
Gwen Adshead, FRCPsych (UK) Chair, Speaker
Susan Hatters Friedman, FAPA, MD, Prof (USA) Co-Chair, Speaker
Jacob Appel, MD (USA) Speaker
Reena Kapoor, MD (USA) Speaker

Symposium -Psychological Wellbeing among Psychotherapists. The Importance of Having a Team
José Ángel Ramírez- Gutiérrez, MD (Mexico) Chair, Speaker
Constantine Della, Prof Dr med (Philippines) Co-Chair, Speaker
Goran Mijaljica, MD (UK) Speaker
Noor Melissa Nor Hadi, MD (Malaysia) Speaker
Izax G. Ramirez-Espinosa, MD (Mexico) Speaker

Creativity, Art and Psychotherapy- Art and Psychiatry WPA Section Special Symposium
Jennifer Harrison (Australia)*, Gustavo Bezerra (Brazil), Silke Schauder (France), Hans-Otto Thomashoff (Austria), Ekaterina Sukhanova (USA)*

INVITATION

World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy Preliminary Program

**Saturday, June 6, 2026
CUNY Graduate Center**

4:30 PM- 6:00PM

**Paper Session: Psychotherapy-Theoretical Aspects
Co-Chairs: Nik Ruzyanei & Vivienne Caguioa-Cleofas**

Destructive Dynamics and Reconstructing Meaning- **Dan Edmunds, EdD (USA)**

Jung Analytical Psychology: Clinical Implications in the Therapist-Client Relationship and in the Individuation Process- **Paula Neagu, MSc (Romania)**

Beyond Interpretation: Levinas's Saying and the Ethical Stance of the Patient in Psychotherapy- **Dorit Lemberger, PhD (Israel)**

Couple Discourse as a Clinically Actionable framework: Mapping Speech Acts and Dialogical Channels- **Keren Cohen, MA (Israel)**

Rethinking Polymorphous Perversity: A New Discourse on Sexuality in Psychotherapy, Culture, and Society- **Natan Ben David, BA, MA (Israel)**

**Paper Session: Cultural Dimensions of Psychotherapy
Co-Chairs: Ashandi Triyoga & Poom Chomposri**

A Systematic Review of Multicultural Competence among Mental Health Professionals: Implications for Chinese Counsellors- **Jing Deng, PhD (China)**

#MenDoShare: A Pilot Program of Gamified Narrative Therapy for Promoting Mental Health in Indonesian Men- **Ashandi Prawira, MD (UK)**

Beyond the Couch: A Psychoanalytic Lens on Television Drama and the Levinasian Other- **Noa Danziger Geller, MA, MBA (Israel)**

Considering Spirituality when Working with Humanitarian Workers at Risk for Moral Injury- **Angela Bamblett, MA (Australia)**

Why the Department of Health Should Revise OPWDD: Advocacy for Minority Communities with Developmental Disabilities- **Moureen Hossain, BS (USA)**

6:00 PM- 6:45PM

Closing Session & Young Investigator Award Ceremony

CONGRESS CALENDAR



2026

25th World Congress of Social Psychiatry – Caring for the Vulnerable: Making Social Psychiatry Clinically Relevant

January 2026, 15-17

Marrakech, Morocco

<https://waspsocialpsychiatry2026.org/>



19th International Symposium on Neuropsychiatry & HIV

April 2026, 24-25

Barcelona, Spain

<https://www.psychiatry.org>



American Psychiatric Association Annual Meeting

May 2026, 16-20

San Francisco, USA

<https://neuropsychiatry-hiv.com/>



24th World Congress of Psychotherapy: Psychotherapy and Human Rights: Caring for Vulnerable Populations, Humanitarian Relief Workers, and Health Care Professionals

June 2026, 4-6

New York, USA

<https://wfpsychotherapy.org>

EAPM

13th Annual Scientific Conference of the European Association for Psychosomatic Medicine

June 2026, 16-19

Florence, Italy

<https://eapm.eu.com/2026-eapm-conference-florence/>



26th World Congress of Psychiatry

September 2026, 23-26

Stockholm, Sweden

<https://wcp-congress.com/>



World Congress of Asian Psychiatry (WCAP) #11

October 2026, 6-8

Sapporo, Japan

<https://uia.org/s/ca/en/1300608573>



World Congress of Positive & Transcultural Psychotherapy

October 2026, 11-16

Budva, Montenegro

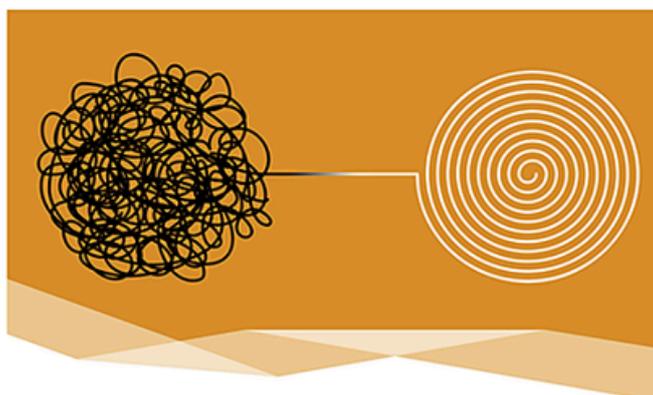
<https://wapp2026.org>

For inclusion in the Congress Calendar of future issues of the WFP Newsletter, please send your congress announcements to
amljimenez@yahoo.com / cesaralfonso@mac.com



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Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics



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Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics

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Felices fiestas

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ハッピーホリデー

节日快乐

Joyeuses fêtes

Frohe Feiertage

Buone feste