WFP
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NEWSLETTER

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WFP Board of Directors 2026-2029

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President's Column

Dilip V. Jeste, MD
WFP President, 2026-2029



I am honored to write this brief column as the incoming President of the World Federation of Psychotherapy (WFP) following the WFP Congress in New York on June 4-6, 2026, a truly unique event. A large share of the credit for this highly successful Congress goes to our outgoing President, Dr. Cesar Alfonso. I feel deeply grateful to him for his remarkable leadership of the WFP over the past three years. The Congress was the ultimate fruit of Dr. Alfonso's genuine focus on building a community whose primary goal is to help everyone else - especially people with socioeconomic adversity, which remains the foremost priority for psychotherapists. This was one of the most memorable periods of my life — not only for the wealth of new insights we gained on public health and global well-being, but above all for the quality of human connection we shared in pursuit of our goal of promoting the mental health of people everywhere.

What made this Congress particularly unique was the strong involvement of the faculty from the United Nations (UN) and the City University of New York (CUNY), which enabled the conference to take place in the UN and CUNY premises. Thanks to help from Drs. Sohail Ali and Moussa Ba, we heard directly and powerfully about the UN's role in promoting human dignity and well-being across the globe. We also came to appreciate how Dr. Ekaterina Sukhanova's leadership at CUNY has produced remarkable contributions to interdisciplinary training across all socioeconomic levels.

I have rarely attended a large conference at which every event was so genuinely appreciated by all the attendees. The credit goes to the Parthenon Management staff — specifically Will Shules, Kelsey Jozwik, Tori Smith, Linzi Burks, and Mary Ashley Bateman. I also want to thank Sarah Timm, the CEO of Parthenon, who has built a truly exceptional group that provides extraordinary care and a visionary perspective.

Looking forward, I feel excited about the outstanding individuals with whom I will have the honor of working regularly — Drs. Alma Jimenez (President-elect), Ekaterina Sukhanova (Treasurer), Goran Mijaljica (Secretary General), and Yasser Khazaal (Member-at-large).

In the spirit of building bridges across related fields, I also look forward to collaborating with leading global experts including Drs. Thomas Schulz (President, World Psychiatric Association), Stephan Zipfel (Editor-in-Chief, Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics), Subodh Dave (President, Royal College of Psychiatrists), Myrna Weissman (Creator of Interpersonal Psychotherapy), Hamid Peseschkian (President, World Association for Positive

President's Column

Dilip V. Jeste, MD
WFP President, 2026-2029



and Transcultural Psychotherapy), Helen Lavretsky (Co-Inventor of the Global Brain Health Initiative), Harris Eyre (Executive Director, Global Brain Economy Initiative), Jo-An Occhipinti (Co-Director, Mental Wealth Initiative), and Della Constantine (Chair, WPA Section on Psychotherapy).

My goal is to help our organization to strengthen the science of and training in evidence-based but pragmatic psychotherapies, especially in under-resourced communities. Obviously, this is not an easy task, but let us do our best to promote the growth of the WFP by adding more members, using regular webinars and podcasts, offering meaningful training to diverse groups of trainees including digital therapists, and publishing unbiased reviews of useful psychotherapies.

I feel humbled by the trust that the WFP members have placed in me. I look forward to what we will build together.

***Dilip V. Jeste, MD**, is the President of the World Federation for Psychotherapy for 2026-2029. He is also Director of the Global Research Network on Social Determinants of Mental Health and Exposomics, and Editor-in-Chief of the International Psychogeriatrics. He is also a Former Senior Associate Dean for Healthy Aging and Senior Care, and Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry and Neurosciences at the University of California, San Diego, and is a Former President of the American Psychiatric Association.*

President-Elect's Column

Alma L. Jimenez, MD
WFP President-Elect, 2026-2029



The World Federation for Psychotherapy, rooted in the legacy of Carl Jung and long based in Geneva, stands at a defining moment in its near-century history.

I receive this role of President-Elect with gratitude—and with a quiet awareness of what this moment asks of us.

Over time, the Federation has grown beyond its early geographic and intellectual centers. Our leadership now reflects a broader world—spanning North America, Asia, and the Global South. But this expansion calls for more than representation. It calls for re-centering.

Because in many parts of the world, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, the need for mental-health care is greatest, and access remains most limited.

It is from these settings that I have come to understand psychotherapy not as an abstract discipline, but as something lived—within families, within communities, within relationships shaped by culture, constraint, and resilience.

And so the question before us is no longer whether psychotherapy can travel across contexts.

It is whether it can listen.

In our recent work, one insight has become increasingly clear: context is not peripheral to psychotherapy. It is essential to its ethical and clinical integrity.

To ground psychotherapy in context is not to weaken it. It is to make it more precise—more attuned to the lives people actually live.

In this light, I have come to see psychotherapy in its broader sense: not only as a specialist-delivered treatment, but as a meaningful psychosocial intervention that promotes mental health and helps prevent its deterioration.

Because the processes that allow people to heal—attunement, co-regulation, shared meaning—are not confined to the therapy room.

They are often already present.

In relationships that hold.

In communities that act together.

In moral systems that guide.

In spiritual frameworks that give coherence and hope.

In our work examining Filipino collectivist contexts, we described these as "cultural ecologies"—relational systems through which psychological life is organized. Some sustain

President-Elect's Column

Alma L. Jimenez, MD
WFP President-Elect, 2026-2029



emotional safety. Others mobilize collective strength. Others regulate feeling through dignity and obligation. Others help people make sense of suffering.

These are not substitutes for psychotherapy.

They are reminders of where psychotherapy begins.

And where it must return.

For me, this has implications for how we move forward as a Federation.

We must support forms of care that reach beyond the consulting room—through communities, through shared systems, through partnerships that make care possible where people actually are.

We must train clinicians not only in methods, but in ways of seeing—so that they can recognize culture not as background, but as the very medium through which care is experienced.

And we must widen what we consider evidence—so that the knowledge of communities, and the realities of diverse contexts, are part of how we define what works.

None of this leaves our foundations behind.

It brings us back to them.

Because psychotherapy has always been, at its core, about relationship.

But relationship is never abstract.

It is always situated—in culture, in history, in systems that shape both suffering and recovery.

And so our responsibility becomes clearer:

To make psychotherapy not only evidence-based, but accessible.
Not only theoretically sound, but meaningful.
Not only global in presence, but grounded in place.

Because when psychotherapy is at its best, it does more than treat illness.

It restores dignity.

And dignity—wherever people live—is the beginning of healing.

As I step into this role—and, in time, as the first Asian and first woman to serve as President of the World Federation for Psychotherapy—I hold this not as an individual achievement, but as a reflection of something larger that is unfolding within our field.

A widening.

A listening.

President-Elect's Column

Alma L. Jimenez, MD
WFP President-Elect, 2026-2029



A rebalancing of whose voices shape psychotherapy.

I carry with me the perspectives of settings where care is often built with limited resources, but sustained through strong relational and cultural foundations.

These voices are not at the margins.

They are where the future is being formed.

And if we listen closely, they are already showing us the way.

***Alma L. Jimenez, MD**, is the President-Elect of the World Federation for Psychotherapy for 2026-2029. She is currently an Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Medicine in Manila, Philippines, and a Consultant Psychiatrist at the St. Luke's Medical Center Institute of Neurosciences in Quezon City, Philippines.*

Editor's Notes



Goran Mijaljica, MD
WFP Secretary General, 2026-2029
Incoming Editor-in-chief, WFP Newsletter

Time flies, and it has already been a month since we gathered for the wonderful World Congress of Psychotherapy in New York, held from 4–6 June 2026.

The congress was extraordinary. The opening day at the UN Headquarters, followed by two days at the City University of New York, offered remarkable insights into and innovations in psychotherapeutic practice from around the world.

Meeting colleagues from more than 50 countries and exchanging experiences and ideas was undoubtedly one of the highlights of the event.

Special thanks go to former WFP President Prof. César Alfonso, as well as to the Parthenon team, the CUNY faculty, and everyone whose efforts made this superbly organized congress possible.

During the WFP General Assembly on 5 June, we elected the new WFP Board: Prof. Dilip Jeste as President, Prof. Alma Jimenez as President-Elect, Dr Elena Sukhanova as Treasurer, Prof. Yasser Khazaal as Member-at-Large, and myself as Secretary General. We are eager to build on the excellent work of our predecessors in promoting and strengthening the practice of psychotherapy worldwide.

We will continue to focus on outreach and collaboration with national organizations representing psychotherapists across the globe, while also fostering effective communication and the exchange of ideas among WFP members. An important part of this effort will be the continued regular publication of this Newsletter.

As the newly elected Secretary General, I look forward to working with all of you to ensure the continued success of this WFP publication. I

WFP Newsletter Editorial Team, 2023-2026

Alma Lucindo-Jimenez, MD, FPPA
amljimenez@yahoo.com
Editor-In-Chief

Katrina Therese R. Esling, MD
katrinaesling@gmail.com
Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Internal

Sedric John V. Factor, MD, DSBPP
sedricfactor@gmail.com
Deputy Editor-in-Chief, External

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rowalt.alibudbud@dlsu.edu.ph
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Congress Calendar Editor

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m.aldea.md@gmail.com
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Editor's Notes



Goran Mijaljica, MD
WFP Secretary General, 2026-2029
Incoming Editor-in-chief, WFP Newsletter

warmly invite you to share your ideas, suggestions, and proposals for future editions of the Newsletter.

Finally, I would like to thank Prof. Jimenez and her outstanding Editorial Board for their dedicated work over the past years.

***Goran Mijaljica, MD**, is the Secretary General of the World Federation for Psychotherapy for 2026-2029. He is currently a consultant psychiatrist at the Central and Northwest London NHS Foundation Trust in London, United Kingdom, and at the Transkulturellt Centrum in Stockholm, Sweden. He is also a member of the Ethics Review Committee of the World Health Organization.*

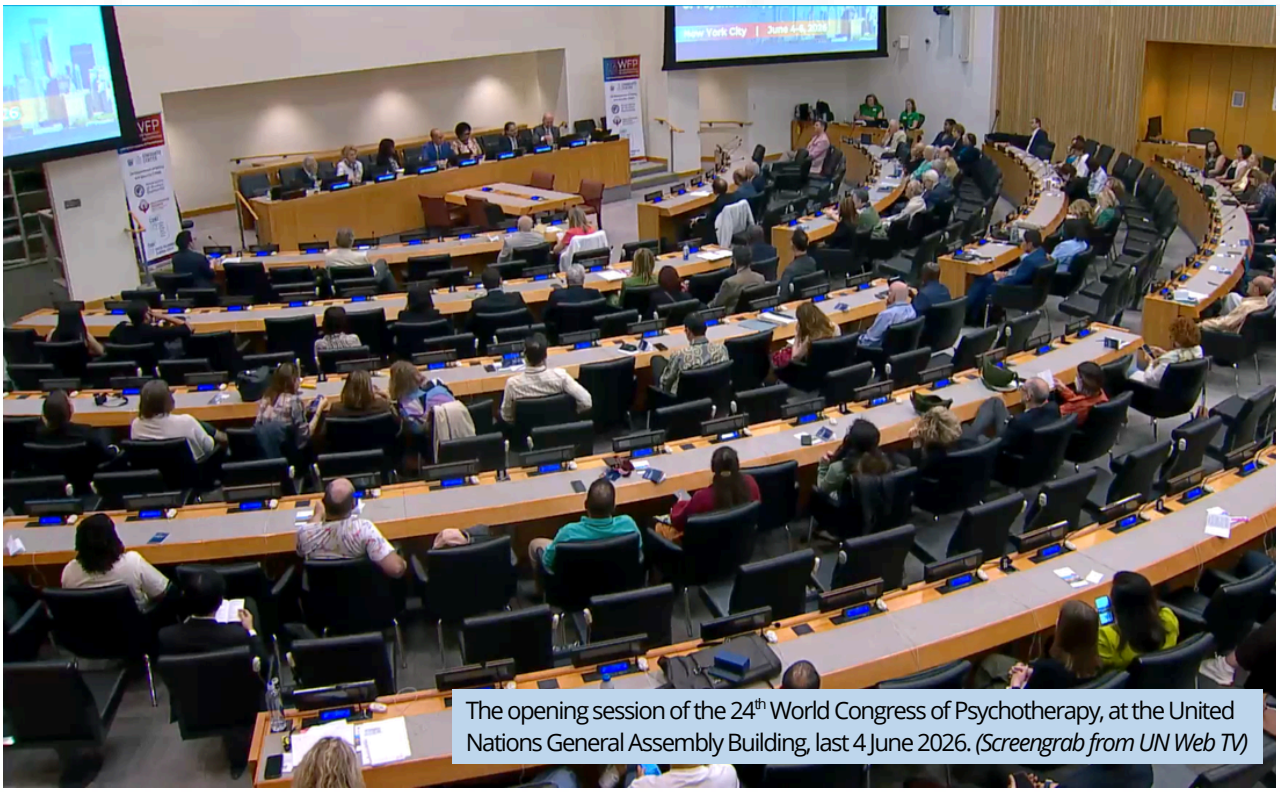
Psychotherapy, Mental Health, and Human Rights: World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy



Cesar A. Alfonso, MD

The World Federation for Psychotherapy (WFP) held its 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy on June 4-6, 2026, at the United Nations Headquarters General Assembly Building and the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center. The theme of the congress was Psychotherapy and Human Rights-Caring for Vulnerable Populations, Humanitarian Relief Workers, and Healthcare Professionals. Nearly 500 delegates from over 50 countries enthusiastically participated in this scholarly congress. Meeting at the UN Headquarters seamlessly aligned with WFP's focus on protecting human rights, caring for vulnerable and underserved populations, and focusing on diversity and inclusion in mental health while promoting and advancing the practice of evidence-based psychotherapies and endorsing public health initiatives to make treatments available worldwide.

The World Congress' Opening and Plenary Sessions, held at the United Nations, featured 34 speakers and panelists over 6 hours, including prominent individuals representing the cosponsoring organizations. From the United Nations, plenary speakers included Assistant Secretary General for the UN Department of Safety and Security Unaisi Vuniwaqa, Director of the UN Division of Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety and Health, UN Department of Operational Support Andreas Wladis, UN Workplace Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategic Lead, Global Strategy and Policy Division, Office of Human Resources Nenna Ndukwe-Hertz, UN Department of Safety and Security Critical Incident Stress Management Section Chief Muhammad Sohail Ali, and UN Department of Safety and Security Critical Incident Stress Management Section retired Chief Moussa Ba. Other UN invited plenary speakers included WFP Past President Driss Moussaoui, APA Past President Vivian Pender, and Psychosocial Wellbeing Program Officer Alvin Tay. From the CUNY partnership

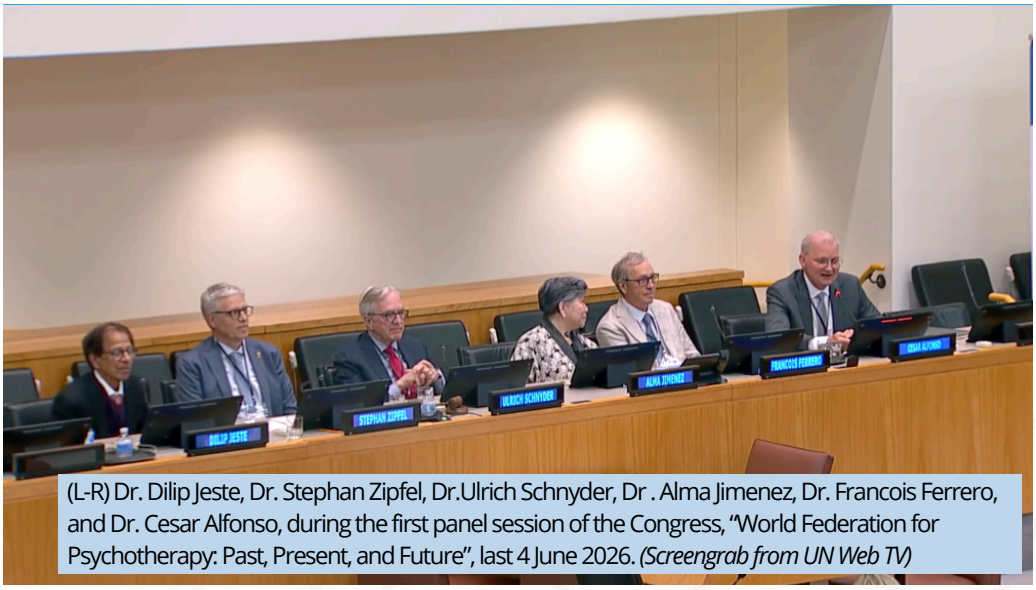


The opening session of the 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy, at the United Nations General Assembly Building, last 4 June 2026. *(Screengrab from UN Web TV)*

Psychotherapy, Mental Health, and Human Rights: World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy



Cesar A. Alfonso, MD



(L-R) Dr. Dilip Jeste, Dr. Stephan Zipfel, Dr.Ulrich Schnyder, Dr . Alma Jimenez, Dr. Francois Ferrero, and Dr. Cesar Alfonso, during the first panel session of the Congress, "World Federation for Psychotherapy: Past, Present, and Future", last 4 June 2026. *(Screengrab from UN Web TV)*

were Ekaterina Sukhanova, Dean Ayman El-Mohandes, Victoria Ngo, Francesca McLaren, Dean Aishi Joshi, Provost Joel Christensen and as a guest from Brazil Gustavo Bezerra. Representing the Association of Women Psychiatrists were Silvia Olarte and Nikole Benders-Hadi. Representing the World Psychiatric Association was President Danuta Wasserman. WFP speakers and panelists at the UN included President (2023-2026) César Alfonso, President-Elect (2023-2026, President 2026-2029) Dilip Jeste, Secretary General (2023-2026, President-Elect 2026-2029) Alma Lucindo Jimenez, Treasurer (2023-2026) François Ferrero, Past President Ulrich Schnyder, Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics Journal Editor-in-Chief Stephan Zipfel, WFP Council Members (2023-2026) Helene-Nissen-Lie, Asher Aladjem, Daniela Polese, Timothy Sullivan, Nik Ruzyanei Nik Jaafar, Constantine Della and Hamid Peseschkian, Secretary General (2026-2029) Goran Mijaljica, and Scientific Committee Members Chaimaa Aroui and Amine Larnaout.

At the CUNY Graduate Center venue, for two consecutive days, interactive educational activities featuring over 250 speakers included plenary sessions, courses, workshops, panels of experts, symposia, paper sessions, and poster presentations. Topics covered included, among others, preventing burnout and moral injury, protecting the mental health of university students, psychotherapy and human rights, advances in psychotherapy theory and practice with emphasis on hybrid models that incorporate artificial intelligence and teletherapy, public health models such as task sharing, inclusion of persons with lived experience in key decision making, responding to disasters and caring for persons in zones of conflict, the provision of group psychotherapy, cultural adaptations of psychotherapy including aspects of spirituality and religion, and caring for the medically ill with multimorbidities.

WFP honored Myrna Weissman, who received a Lifetime Achievement Award for her contributions in the development of Interpersonal Psychotherapy. In addition, 8 Young Investigator Awards were given to Anna Blech (USA), Guida Da Ponte (Portugal), Darien Alfa Cipta (Indonesia), Youssef Ernez (Tunisia), Alessandra Amoroso (Italy), Lina Velásquez (Colombia), Johanna Lindsay Capili (Philippines), and Nicole Yelton Fermín (Dominican Republic). The Young Investigator travel stipends were funded by a gift from the Ellen Violett and Mary Thomas Foundation, generously received with assistance from the Association of Women Psychiatrists. The United Nations and the CUNY School of Public Health generously donated the cost of meeting space and audiovisual support for this historic three-day congress across two venues in Midtown Manhattan.

The World Federation for Psychotherapy is the oldest international psychotherapy organization, founded in 1934 (Helm, 2010), with 22 member societies from all

Psychotherapy, Mental Health, and Human Rights: World Federation for Psychotherapy 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy



Cesar A. Alfonso, MD

continents at present. While the effect size of all evidence-based psychotherapies is similar (Cuijper et al, 2020), certain clinical scenarios merit different approaches (Leichsenring et al, 2024). Dedicated lectures and interactive educational activities incorporated in the scientific program of this Congress helped those in attendance develop their clinical skills and learn how to best attend to the clinical needs of persons with complex disorders and protecting human rights by caring for the disenfranchised, neglected, persecuted, and marginalized.

At the Presidential Address on June 5, 2026, delivered at the CUNY-Graduate Center, the following recommendations were given as potential areas of study and research to be pursued by young investigators:

- Establishing useful biomarkers to measure psychotherapy progress and personalized care.
- Studying the effect size of psychotherapy for complex comorbidities and multimorbidities.
- Developing cultural adaptations of evidence-based treatments.
- Studying the long-term follow-up of short-term treatments.
- Research on task sharing, public health models and group psychotherapy interventions.
- Research on hybrid interventions incorporating in-person with teletherapy and AI/computer-assisted therapy.
- Operationalizing psychotherapy in combination with psycholytic/psychedelic treatments.

At the General Assembly Meeting, the following officers were elected to the WFP 2026-2029 Board of Directors:

President: Dilip Jeste (USA)
President-elect- Alma Lucindo Jimenez (Philippines)
Secretary General: Goran Mijaljica (UK)
Treasurer: Ekaterina Sukhanova (USA)
Member-at-large: Yasser Khazaal (Switzerland)

The 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy will be remembered as an extraordinary academic event and a fruitful collaborative effort. The magnificent venues of the United Nations Headquarters General Assembly Buildong and the CUNY Graduate Center were inspiring, and the scientific program scholarly and clinically relevant.

N.B. A version of this article will appear in the WFP News Section of Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics later this year.

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Professor César A. Alfonso is Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Columbia University, Adjunct Professor at the University of Indonesia, and Visiting Professor at Prince of Songkla University in Thailand, University of the Philippines College of Medicine, and at the National University of Malaysia. He is Editor-in-Chief of Psychodynamic Psychiatry (2020-present). He served as President of the American Academy of Psychodynamic Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis (2010-2012), Chair of the Psychotherapy Section of the World Psychiatric Association (2017-2023) and President of the World Federation for Psychotherapy (2023-2026).

The Geneva Prize for Human Rights in Psychiatry: the first twenty-five years



François Ferrero, MD

For many years, I believed that Human Rights were primarily a legacy of European philosophers from the late 17th century. However, it's important to remember that cultures worldwide also paved the way for and defended these same ideas. The universality of the idea of Human Rights is encapsulated in the remarkable work published in 1968 by the United Nations Organization for Education (UNESCO), under the direction of the Swiss philosopher Jeanne Hersch. This book, "The Right to be a man"[1], presents a collection of more than 1,100 quotes from texts across all eras, countries, and cultures: It recalls that numerous Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim texts insist on love of the neighbor.

After two well-known declarations – the US Declaration of Independence (1776) and the French Declaration of The Rights of Man and of The Citizen (1789) – the United Nations published a new Declaration on Human Rights in 1948. In psychiatry, the World Psychiatric Association published the Hawaii Declaration in 1976 (later revised in Vienna and Madrid). In 2020, it was replaced by the WPA Code of Ethics for Psychiatry. The Code states that psychiatrists must take every opportunity to combat the stigma of psychiatric disorders.

In parallel, in the early 21st century, the United Nations published an essential text in 2006, The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN-CRPD). Since its inception, there has been significant discussion about applying the UN-CRPD to mental health care because it challenges traditional mental health legislation in many ways. Together, the UN-CRPD introduces a paradigm shift in the status of a person with disability "from an object of charity, medical treatment and social protection to a subject with rights, capable of claiming those rights, making choices and actively participating in society" [2-3].
In recent years, two other documents have been published by the UN: the Sustainable Development Goals and Mental Health in 2015, and the Resolution on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in 2023. These documents confirm the impressive dedication of the UN to mental health.

The Geneva Prize for Human Rights in Psychiatry

Founded in 1998, on the 50th anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the Prize recognizes individuals or organizations for exceptional achievements that promote equity and humanity in psychiatric care, reduce discrimination against patients, and encourage the application of Human Rights and Ethics in Psychiatry.

Past laureates include the Global Initiative of Psychiatry (then known as The Geneva Initiative on Psychiatry) of the Netherlands (2000); the Hermanas Hospitalarias Sagrado Corazón de Jesús (2002); Roy McClelland of Northern Ireland (2002); Jorge Luis Pellegrini of Argentina (2005); Semyon Gluzman of Ukraine (2008); Naasson Munyandamutsa of Rwanda (2011); Ka Sunbaunat of Cambodia (2014); ALAS Pro Salud Mental of Guatemala (2017); Grégoire Ahongbonon of Benin (2021); and Valentina Hristakeva of Bulgaria (2024).



The Geneva Prize for Human Rights in Psychiatry

The Geneva Prize for Human Rights in Psychiatry: the first twenty-five years



François Ferrero, MD

The exceptional personalities honored by the Geneva Prize not only impact their communities but also inspire us to recognize that protecting the human rights of people with mental illness is an obligation for all of us, regardless of our position, profession, or nationality.

The **deadline** for the next Prize is on **March 31, 2027**. To know more about the nomination guidelines and previous laureates, please visit **www.geneva-prize.ch.**

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Dr. François Ferrero is a Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry at the University of Geneva, Switzerland, and President of the Foundation of The Geneva Prize for Human Rights in Psychiatry.

A Global Dialogue: The 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy



Katrina Therese R. Esling, MD

The 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy explored the theme of "Psychotherapy, Mental Health and Human Rights- Caring for Vulnerable Populations, Healthcare Professionals, and Humanitarian Relief Workers." The event was held on June 4-6, 2026, bringing together mental health professionals at the United Nations Headquarters & City University of New York Graduate Center in New York. This intellectual endeavor was co-sponsored by the Incident Stress Management Section of the United Nations Department of Safety and Security, the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center, and the Association of Women Psychiatrists (AWP). As Dr. César A. Alfonso, WFP President, states in his welcome letter, the congress advanced psychotherapy through the exchange of diverse ideas.

The scientific co-chairs, representing a global group of visionaries from the USA, Morocco, the Philippines, Tunisia, Sweden, Norway, Italy, and Malaysia, curated sessions that were highly relevant to our times. The congress traversed discussions on rights, treatments, research, and initiatives that furthered our approach to psychotherapy.

The congress co-sponsors started off the learning strong. The WFP led the opening plenary sessions with World Federation for Psychotherapy-Past, Present, and Future, presented by Dr. Dilip Jeste, Dr. Alma Jimenez, Dr. Ulrich Schnyder, and Dr. Stephen Zipfel. UN speaker Dr. Muhammad Sohail Ali delivered From the Frontlines to the Mind: The Hidden Scars of First Responders, Humanitarian Workers and their Families. Dr. Moussa Ba followed with After-action Review: When the Mental Health Professional is Caught Between Human Rights, Humanitarian Work, and Ethics. The UN plenary was continued by Dr. Driss Moussaoui, Dr. Vivian B. Pender, Dr. Alvin K. Tay, and Dr. Nenna Ndukwe-Hertz, lecturing on Intergenerational Trauma and Resilience, Women as Survivors of Systemic Trauma: A Gendered Perspective, Building the Evidence Base for Psychosocial Risk Management in Humanitarian Workforce, and Safeguarding Mental Health in the UN Workplace: Strategic Priorities for Quality, Accountability, and Collaboration, respectively. The AWP spotlighted Women Psychiatrists and the Future of Psychotherapy, discussed by Dr. Nikole Benders-Haidi and Dr. Silvia Olarte. The day ended with a CUNY plenary panel, Health Diplomacy and Mental Health in the Global Era, by Dr. Ayman El-Mohandes, Dr. Ashish Joshi, Dr. Victoria Ngo, and Dr. Norman Sartorius.

The congress was a breadth of knowledge offering workshops, courses, and a multitude of symposia from worldwide thinkers on the 2nd and 3rd days.s. Interactive panels dove into the theme, discussing perspectives of care and psychotherapy applications. Paper sessions showcased ideas on human rights, complex disorders, multi-morbidities, theoretical aspects, and cultural dimensions.

The event reflects the increasingly complex challenges of mental health and the equally nuanced approaches to psychotherapy that require constant evolution of the practice.



Young Investigator Awards Recipients of the 24th World Congress of Psychiatry



Sedric John V. Factor, MD

During the 24th World Congress of Psychiatry last 4-6 June 2026, eight early career mental health professionals from all over the globe were selected to be the recipients of the Congress' Young Investigator Awards. These eight early-career mental health professionals (that is, those within seven years of completing their postgraduate residency training, master's degree, or PhD degree) were chosen from the pool of poster submissions received by the World Federation of Psychotherapy for presentation during the Congress.

The awardees are:

- **Alessandra Amoroso, Italy** (*poster submission*: "Early alliance markers in couple therapy consultation: What differentiates continuation from dropout?")
- **Anna Blech, United States** (*poster submission*: "Increasing Access to Psychotherapy for Uninsured Immigrant and Refugee Patients: A Student-Run Free Clinic Model for Medical Education and Human Rights")
- **Darien Alfa Cipta, Indonesia** (*poster submission*: "Sociocultural Adaptation of a DBT-Informed Skills Group for Indonesian MSM: Application of the Deconstruction-Reconstruction Matrix")
- **Guida da Ponte, Portugal** (*poster submission*: "Tailoring Meaning-Centered Group Psychotherapy for Health Care Professionals")
- **Youssef Ernez, Tunisia** (*poster submission*: "Theatre-based Group Psychotherapy to Enhance Social Cognition in Early Psychosis: A Pilot Clinical Study")
- **Johanna Lindsay Capili, Philippines** (*poster submission*: "Strengthening Resilience in Frontline Mental Health Nurses: A Quasi-experimental Evaluation of the Katatagan plus Intervention")
- **Lina Vasquez, Colombia** (*poster submission*: "Mindfulness in the Assessment and Treatment of Suicidal Behavior")
- **Nicole Yelton Fermin, Dominican Republic** (*poster submission*: "When Silence Compounds Loss: Psychotherapeutic Challenges after Perinatal Death in Latin America and the Caribbean")

They were recognized during the closing session of the Congress last 6 June 2026, at the City University of New York Graduate Center. Each awardee was given a certificate of recognition, awarded to them by Dr. Cesar A. Alfonso, WFP President, and Dr. Dilip V. Jeste, WFP President-elect. Each awardee also received a USD 1,000 travel stipend (funded by a gift from the Ellen Violett and Mary Thomas Foundation, with assistance from the Association of Women Psychiatrists), and had their registration fees to the Congress waived.



The eight Young Investigator Award recipients, with members of the WFP Board of Directors, during the closing ceremonies of the 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy last 6 June 2026, at the CUNY Graduate Center. (Photo by Dr. Johanna Lindsay Capili)

Psychotherapy Chapter of the Malaysian Psychiatric Association: Advancing Practice, Education, and Collaboration



Dr. Nik Ruzyanei Nik Jaafar

The Psychotherapy Chapter of the Malaysian Psychiatric Association (MPA) was officially launched on February 21, 2025, marking an important milestone in strengthening psychotherapeutic practice within Malaysian psychiatry. The Chapter's establishment reflects the growing recognition of psychotherapy as an essential component of comprehensive psychiatric care. Guided by a commitment to excellence in clinical practice, education, and research, the Chapter aims to serve as a professional platform for psychiatrists with a special interest in psychotherapy and to foster collaboration across the broader mental health community.

The Chapter's mission centers on three key objectives. First, it aims to strengthen psychotherapy training and competency among psychiatrists and psychiatry trainees by promoting evidence-based psychotherapeutic modalities, structured supervision pathways, and alignment with internationally recognized standards, including those advocated by the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) Psychotherapy Section. Second, the Chapter seeks to advance psychotherapy education and research in Malaysia. Particular emphasis is placed on culturally grounded themes such as transference and countertransference in multicultural therapeutic settings, the influence of religious and collectivist values on the therapeutic process, and culturally mediated expressions of psychological distress. Third, the Chapter promotes interdisciplinary collaboration among psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, psychotherapists, and other allied mental health professionals, consistent with global movements toward integrated, patient-centered care.



The Psychotherapy Chapter of the Malaysian Psychiatric Association (MPA) was officially launched on February 21, 2025.

Since its inception, the Chapter has actively engaged members through a variety of educational and networking initiatives. On September 19, 2025, the Chapter hosted "An Afternoon with Psychotherapy Chapter" at the MPA Office in Petaling Jaya. This interactive gathering served as an icebreaker and open forum, allowing members to connect, exchange ideas, and help shape the Chapter's future direction.



The Chapter hosted "An Afternoon with Psychotherapy Chapter" at the MPA Office in Petaling Jaya on September 19, 2025.

The first Biennial Meeting (BGM) was held on October 25, 2025, during the 29th Malaysian Conference of Psychological Medicine (MCPM), at which its inaugural committee was formally elected. The BGM provided an opportunity to elect office-bearers and to present the Chapter's planned activities and strategic priorities. The Chapter has contributed to the growing discourse on

Psychotherapy Chapter of the Malaysian Psychiatric Association: Advancing Practice, Education, and Collaboration



Dr. Nik Ruzyanei Nik Jaafar

psychotherapy by publishing a Letter to the Editor in the Asian Journal of Psychiatry early this year, reflecting its commitment to scholarship and international engagement.



The first Biennial Meeting (BGM) was held on October 25, 2025, during the 29th Malaysian Conference of Psychological Medicine (MCPM)

The Chapter has worked closely with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) to coordinate psychotherapy training activities. They successfully held a workshop titled An Introduction to Schema Therapy on 10–11 July 2025. Building on this success, the Chapter is planning a full Schema Therapy Level 1 and Level 2 Certification Course set for 7–15 July 2026.

Several new initiatives are in progress. Recognizing the value of reflective practice and clinician well-being, the Chapter launched its first virtual Peer Balint Group for psychiatrists on 2 May 2026. The group aims to meet monthly, offering a supportive space for reflection on doctor-patient relationships, professional challenges, and emotional aspects of clinical work.

Another key partnership with UKM will feature a special lecture by Dr. Rania Awaad, Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Stanford University and Director of Maristan, on 1 July 2026. This lecture is expected to spark discussion on incorporating spirituality into clinical practice for a more holistic healthcare approach.

The Chapter has also increased its international engagement. As a member of the World Federation for Psychotherapy, its representatives—Prof. Dr. Nik Ruzyanei Nik Jaafar, Associate Professor Dr. Aida Syarinaz Adlan, and Associate Professor Dr. Chong Seng Choi—presented at the World Congress of Psychotherapy in New York from 4–6 June 2026. Their participation highlighted Malaysian perspectives on psychotherapy and opened doors for international collaboration.



Representatives of the MPA Psychotherapy Chapter (Prof. Dr. Nik Ruzyanei Nik Jaafar, Associate Professor Dr. Aida Syarinaz Adlan, and Associate Professor Dr. Chong Seng Choi) presented a symposium at the World Congress of Psychotherapy in New York from June 4–6, 2026.

Looking ahead, the Chapter plans to develop a series of educational programs focused on various evidence-based psychotherapy methods, expand supervision and professional development opportunities, and

Psychotherapy Chapter of the Malaysian Psychiatric Association: Advancing Practice, Education, and Collaboration



Dr. Nik Ruzyanei Nik Jaafar

support clinician well-being through regular Balint groups and other peer-support activities. Additionally, the Chapter encourages increased participation in scientific presentations and scholarly activities at both national and international levels, such as the Malaysian Conference of Psychological Medicine and the World Congress of Psychotherapy.

Through these efforts, the Psychotherapy Chapter remains dedicated to advancing psychotherapy practice, enhancing professional skills, and building a lively community of practitioners in Malaysia.

Dr. Nik Ruzyanei Nik Jaafar is a professor in psychiatry at the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia in Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia. She is also the Chair of the Malaysian Psychiatric Association's Psychotherapy Chapter.



The Chapter's Committee: (From left to right): Dr. Nur Iwana Mohd Taib, Dr. Muhammad Hanif Abd Latif (treasurer), Dr. Nathisha Thrichelvam, Dr. Aili Hanim Hashim, Dr. Chong Seng Choi (vice chairperson), Prof. Dr. Nik Ruzyanei Nik Jaafar (Chair), Dr. Johari Khamis, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ruziana Misran, Dr. Farah Nabila Abd Majid (secretary). Committee members not present in the picture: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aida Syarinaz, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nora Mat Zin, Dr. Abdul Hakem Zahari)

International Training in Internal Cohesion Psychotherapy: A Growing Global Initiative

Dr. Fitim Uka



The growing complexity of mental health challenges has heightened the need for psychotherapy approaches that are flexible, integrative, and responsive to the multiple dimensions of human functioning. In recent years, there has been a clear movement toward integrative models that draw on principles from multiple therapeutic perspectives. In this context, Internal Cohesion Psychotherapy (ICP) has emerged as a contemporary integrative approach that is attracting growing international attention among mental health professionals.

Rather than viewing psychological difficulties as isolated symptoms, ICP conceptualizes them as expressions of disturbances within and across interconnected systems of human functioning. These include intrapersonal, interpersonal, professional, and spiritual systems or domains. From this perspective, therapeutic work focuses on helping individuals achieve internal cohesion, a psychological state in which relationships with systems become functional across three temporal dimensions: past, present, and future.

As empirical evidence and interest in ICP expanded internationally, the need for structured professional training became increasingly evident. In response to this demand, an international training program in ICP was established to introduce psychotherapists to the model's theoretical foundations and practical applications. The program was designed not only to teach intervention techniques but also to encourage participants to adopt a more holistic understanding of psychological functioning and psychotherapy practice.

First, the ICP training program was launched in Kosovo in 2022, bringing together a group of both young and experienced psychologists. Since then, the School of Internal Cohesion Psychotherapy has consistently contributed to the education of new generations of integrative psychotherapists in this country, with a

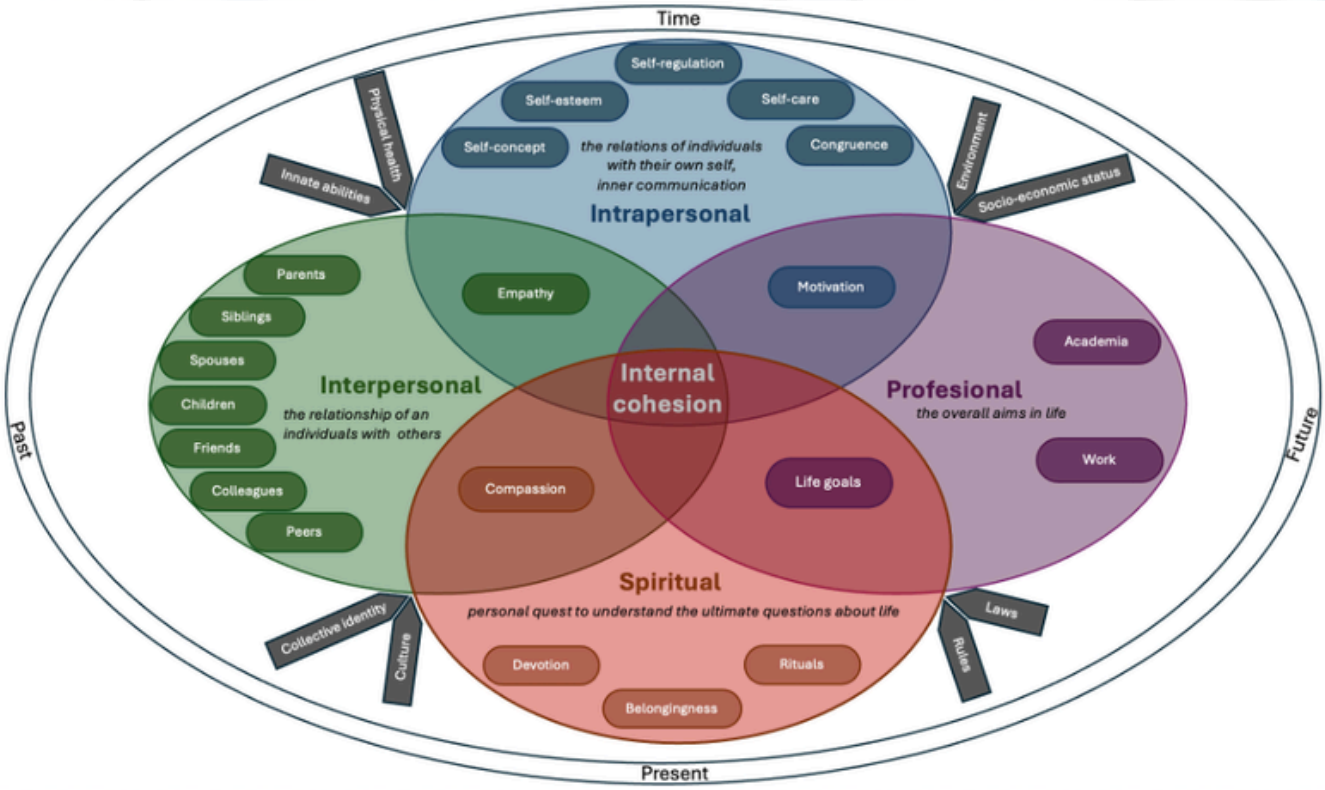


Figure 1. Internal Cohesion Psychotherapy Model

International Training in Internal Cohesion Psychotherapy: A Growing Global Initiative

Dr. Fitim Uka



particular focus on Internal Cohesion Psychotherapy. Each year, the school equips participants with the professional skills and therapeutic competencies needed to support clients in need. Over time, its impact and influence have expanded, not only within Kosovo but also across the wider region.

The first major international training cohort in 2025 brought together more than 30 professionals from diverse countries and professional backgrounds. Participants included academics, clinicians, researchers, graduate students, and practitioners with varying orientations in psychotherapy. This diversity created a rich collaborative learning environment in which participants could exchange perspectives, discuss clinical material, and reflect on contemporary challenges in psychotherapy from different cultural and theoretical standpoints. The training lasted 18 weeks, starting with core concepts in psychopathology and advancing to complex ICP system applications, temporal views, and therapy methods.

A central feature of the training is its strong emphasis on integrating theory and practice. Participants engage in case analysis, reflective exercises, group discussions, supervised learning, and structured self-reflection hours designed to foster personal insight and professional development. As a result, participants frequently described the training as practically useful, conceptually enriching, personally insightful, and professionally transformative. Many emphasized the clarity of the ICP framework for organizing complex clinical material and integrating ideas from different psychotherapeutic approaches into a coherent model. Others highlighted the importance of the time perspective in ICP, which encourages therapists to explore the influence of past experiences, present functioning, and future expectations simultaneously throughout the therapeutic process.

The success of the initial international training cohorts helped drive the program's rapid expansion. Currently, a fifth generation of psychotherapists is undergoing ICP training, underscoring ongoing international interest in the approach. The program has also fostered a growing international community of ICP therapists and researchers engaged in clinical practice, supervision, and the ongoing conceptual development of the model. Importantly, the ICP training initiative has gained increasing institutional recognition.

In conclusion, ICP continues to evolve as both a clinical and conceptual framework, with an ongoing emphasis on professional development, supervision, and reflective practice as essential components of its application. This commitment reflects one of the model's central values: the understanding that both therapists and clients remain in a continuous process of growth, reflection, and development. By combining conceptual clarity, integrative thinking, and practical application, ICP offers mental health professionals an emerging framework for understanding and addressing psychological distress in a holistic, evidence-based way.

Dr. Fitim Uka is a psychologist and psychotherapist based in Pristina, Kosovo. He is a professor of psychology at the University of Pristina and the director of the Klinika Empatia multidisciplinary clinic in Pristina.

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8th World Congress of Positive and Transcultural Psychotherapy
Healing across cultures: Where psychotherapy meets the world

The World Association of Positive and Transcultural Psychotherapy

There is a particular kind of professional gathering that changes you in subtle yet lasting ways, not through any single lecture but through the cumulative experience of spending several days alongside colleagues whose clinical realities and cultural contexts expand and deepen your own. The **8th World Congress of Positive and Transcultural Psychotherapy**, taking place from **October 11 to 16, 2026**, in **Budva, Montenegro**, is designed for exactly that kind of experience.

The theme ***"Healing Across Cultures: Positive Mental Health in a Complex World"*** reflects what most clinicians already feel in their work: questions and topics related to culture, identity, migration, trauma, and meaning are no longer peripheral to psychotherapy, but central to it. Positive and Transcultural Psychotherapy, founded by Nossrat Peseschkian, asked these questions before they became mainstream. Its starting point – human capacities rather than deficits, cultural context as a clinical resource rather than a complication – feels less like a school of thought and more like a necessary correction to how the field still tends to operate.

The congress is hosted by the World Association for Positive and Transcultural Psychotherapy (WAPP) – a global professional community of more than 3,000 members from 65 countries across six continents.

The congress will gather 300-350 professionals from over 25 countries, including clinicians, researchers, educators, and students. The program features keynote speeches, workshops, symposia, and panel discussions, with presenters from various continents and disciplines. Notable speakers include Prof. César A. Alfonso (President of the World Federation for Psychotherapy, Columbia University), Prof. Dilip V. Jeste (founder of Positive Psychiatry, former President of the American Psychiatric Association, UC San Diego), Dr. Karen Reimers (Chair of the Section on Positive Psychiatry, World Psychiatric Association), Sofia Matta, MD, FAPA, FASAM (Medical Director at Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma; Chair of the APA Scientific Program Committee), among many other valued contributors.

The program is designed for exchange rather than passive listening: workshops offering practical insights into transcultural work with clients across diverse settings, symposia exploring prevention and community well-being, and panel discussions in which participants from different national contexts bring their local realities into conversation.

It would be incomplete to describe this gathering only in terms of its academic content. WAPP congresses have always held something else alongside the science: a recognition that mental health practitioners are also people who seek their own communities of belonging, encounters with diversity, and moments of perspective change. Budva, a city with warm October evenings where the Adriatic meets ancient stone walls, creates an ideal setting for social interactions. The program features social events and a cultural evening.

Nossrat Peseschkian once wrote that every person carries within them a potential for change and balance. Almost fifty years later, this perspective remains relevant, both as a clinical orientation and as a reflection of what this congress seeks to practice collectively.

WFP and WAPP share a long history of mutual respect and a common purpose. For WFP members working at the intersections of culture, migration, identity, and mental health, this congress offers a rare density of relevant conversation in a short time.

Registration is now open. Full program details, accommodation options, and abstract submission guidelines are available at **wapp2026.org**.

We hope to see you in Montenegro in October.



8TH

WORLD CONGRESS OF POSITIVE & TRANSCULTURAL PSYCHOTHERAPY

11-16 OCTOBER 2026

SPLENDID CONFERENCE & SPA RESORT
BUDVA, MONTENEGRO

HOSTED BY
WORLD ASSOCIATION
FOR POSITIVE AND TRANSCULTURAL
PSYCHOTHERAPY

wapp2026.org

Psychotherapy in Indonesia: Recent Developments and Future Directions

Dr. Frilya Rachma Putri



Indonesia is advancing psychotherapy through improvements in professional education, clinical services, and interdisciplinary collaboration. As mental health care continues to evolve, psychotherapists are increasingly integrating evidence-based approaches with indigenous philosophies and local cultural values to enhance therapeutic relevance and psychological adaptability across diverse populations [1]. At the same time, the rapid expansion of digital mental health services and teletherapy is improving access to care, particularly in underserved regions with shortages of mental health professionals [2]. Together, these developments reflect Indonesia's commitment to delivering psychotherapy that is effective, culturally responsive, and accessible throughout the archipelago.

Strengthening Professional Education and Training

Professional education remains a cornerstone of psychotherapy development in Indonesia. Through the Psychotherapy Section of the Indonesian Psychiatric Association, psychiatrists across the archipelago participate in continuing education programs, including regional scientific meetings, workshops, and case-based learning activities designed to strengthen clinical competencies and expand access to training.

Psychotherapy training programs continue to evolve to meet the increasingly complex needs of patients and communities. Educational activities encompass a range of evidence-based psychotherapeutic approaches, including supportive psychotherapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), psychodynamic psychotherapy, family therapy, and group therapy. Particular attention has been given to strengthening psychodynamic competencies through advanced training programs. The Advanced Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Training organized by the Indonesian Psychiatric Association Psychotherapy Section represents an important step in deepening clinical expertise and enhancing psychiatrists' capacity to address complex psychological and interpersonal difficulties encountered in everyday practice [3].

Contemporary psychotherapy education in Indonesia increasingly emphasizes culturally responsive care, encouraging psychiatrists to integrate evidence-based approaches with local cultural values and community contexts. These efforts continue to strengthen the psychotherapy workforce and support the delivery of accessible, culturally sensitive mental health care throughout the archipelago.

Expanding Public Engagement Through Digital Platforms

Recognizing the importance of mental health literacy and public awareness, the Indonesian Psychiatric Association Psychotherapy Section has broadened its engagement with professionals and the broader community through digital platforms.

Recent efforts include specialized newsletters, such as Ruang Refleksi Psikoterapi (Psychotherapy Reflection Room), which provide updates on scientific developments, professional activities, and educational resources. Social media platforms have also become an important channel for public outreach, enabling the dissemination of mental health information to a wider audience. Interactive Instagram Live sessions have addressed topics ranging from personality disorders and psychotherapy to workplace stress and burnout, encouraging dialogue between mental health professionals and the public. In addition, Podcast SERASI offers accessible discussions on psychotherapy and mental health issues, allowing audiences to engage with expert perspectives in a convenient format.

Through these digital initiatives, Indonesian psychotherapists are strengthening public awareness of mental health, reducing stigma surrounding psychiatric care, and promoting greater access to reliable psychological information across the archipelago.

Psychotherapy in Indonesia: Recent Developments and Future Directions

Dr. Frilya Rachma Putri



International Collaboration and Scientific Exchange

International collaboration is essential to advancing psychotherapy in Indonesia. By participating in regional and global scientific meetings, Indonesian psychotherapists exchange knowledge, clinical experience, and research findings while promoting the adaptation of evidence-based practices to local sociocultural contexts.

In recent years, Indonesian psychiatrists and psychotherapists have increasingly contributed to international scientific forums through presentations, workshops, and collaborative discussions. A notable example is the recognition Indonesian representatives received at the 20th Congress of the World Association for Dynamic Psychiatry (WADP) and the International Symposium of the German Academy for Psychoanalysis (DAP) e.V. in Morocco, highlighting the growing visibility of Indonesian contributions to psychotherapy.

Beyond academic achievement, these international engagements strengthen professional networks and foster intercultural dialogue, reflecting a shared commitment to improving mental health care worldwide. By sharing local experiences while learning from global developments, Indonesian psychotherapists continue to advance psychotherapy as a culturally informed and internationally connected discipline.

Future Plans

Moving forward, the Psychotherapy Section of the Indonesian Psychiatric Association aims to strengthen psychotherapy education, expand public mental health literacy initiatives, and promote greater international collaboration. Ongoing efforts will focus on culturally responsive care, digital mental health innovation, and the dissemination of evidence-based practices. These initiatives will also support Indonesia's preparations to host the 2027 WFP Regional Meeting in Bali.

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Dr. Frilya Rachma Putri is a faculty member at the Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Brawijaya, Indonesia. Her interests lie in psychotherapy, child and adolescent mental health, psychotraumatology, forensic psychiatry, women's mental health, and community mental health. Dr. Putri has shared her research at many national and international conferences, including those organized by the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) and the World Congress of Psychotherapy. She actively participates in the Indonesian Psychiatric Association Psychotherapy Section, along with psychiatric education, research, and mental health advocacy in Indonesia.

Emerging Voices at the 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy



Annemarie Pamela V. Torga, M.D.

The 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy, held June 4–6, 2026, at the City University of New York Graduate Center, convened psychotherapists, clinicians, researchers, educators, and mental health advocates from around the world to examine the evolving role of psychotherapy in contemporary society.

Among the Congress participants were two notably young presenters whose poster presentations reflected the breadth of questions shaping the future of the field: Faria Ashrafi, BS, an undergraduate researcher in biology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and Alejandro Alfonso, a rising university freshman from San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Their participation highlighted the Congress's commitment to intergenerational dialogue and to supporting emerging voices in psychotherapy research, education, and mental health systems development.

Artificial Intelligence and Adolescent Relationships

Faria Ashrafi presented "Psychotherapy in a Digital Age: Understanding Adolescent Relationships in the Presence of AI," a poster examining how artificial intelligence is increasingly influencing adolescent learning, emotional development, and interpersonal connection.

Drawing from literature across Scopus, PubMed, and Web of Science, Ashrafi explored the growing use of AI among teenagers in domains such as academic assistance, creative exploration, information organization, companionship, and emotional support. Her work noted that AI-powered platforms may offer personalized learning, increase engagement, and provide accessible forms of comfort or support for young users.

At the same time, the poster raised important clinical and ethical concerns. AI-driven interactions may also contribute to emotional dependency, social withdrawal, algorithmic bias, and altered expectations of human relationships. In particular, the use of chatbots or AI-generated conversations as sources of companionship raises questions about how adolescents understand intimacy, responsiveness, and emotional reciprocity.

Ashrafi's presentation addressed a timely and urgent issue for psychotherapy: how clinicians, educators, and families can better understand the psychological effects of emerging technologies on young people's emotional lives. Her work emphasized that AI may hold promise as a tool for learning and support, but its influence on adolescent relationships must be approached with intention, self-awareness, and careful attention to developmental vulnerability.

Psychotherapy in Puerto Rico: History, Culture, and Access

Alejandro Alfonso presented a poster tracing the development of psychotherapy in Puerto Rico, situating the island's mental health care landscape within its historical, cultural, and political context.

His work described how, under Spanish rule, emotional care in Puerto Rico was largely provided through family systems, clergy, and traditional healers, before the development of formal psychotherapy. Following the U.S. occupation in 1898, North American psychiatric models emphasized institutional care and somatic treatments, delaying the broader development of psychotherapy.

Alfonso's poster then traced the growth of psychoanalytic traditions in the mid-20th century, introduced and expanded by Puerto Rican clinicians trained in the United States and by diaspora psychoanalysts. The 1956 Mental Health Law contributed to the establishment of regional clinics and helped integrate psychotherapy into community psychiatry. Over time, group, family, and community-based interventions became increasingly common, followed by the diversification of psychotherapy into cognitive-behavioral, dialectical behavioral, acceptance

Emerging Voices at the 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy

Annemarie Pamela V. Torga, M.D.



and commitment, humanistic, systemic, and integrative approaches.

Importantly, Alfonso emphasized that psychotherapy in Puerto Rico cannot be separated from the island's broader social realities. Colonial history, migration, natural disasters, socioeconomic adversity, bilingualism, family structures, and collective values have all shaped how psychotherapy is practiced and understood. His poster also drew attention to contemporary workforce concerns, including the migration of professionals and shortages in mental health care providers. To address these gaps, he identified task-shifting and targeted recruitment as possible strategies for sustaining services in the face of limited resources.



Faria Ashrafi (left) and Alejandro Alfonso (right), at the 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy

A New Generation of Questions

Together, the work of Ashrafi and Alfonso demonstrated the intellectual range and social awareness of emerging scholars in the field. One presentation looked toward the future of psychotherapy in an increasingly digital world, asking how AI may reshape adolescent emotional development and relationships. The other looked historically and culturally at psychotherapy in Puerto Rico, highlighting how mental health systems evolve within specific social, political, and cultural conditions.

Both posters reflected a shared concern with access, context, and human development. They asked how psychotherapy can remain responsive to new technologies, culturally grounded, ethically attentive, and accessible to communities facing structural challenges.

Their presence at the 24th World Congress of Psychotherapy served as a reminder that the future of the field will be shaped not only by established clinicians and researchers, but also by students and early-career scholars who are already engaging with some of psychotherapy's most pressing questions.
As the Congress brought together participants from across regions and disciplines, these young presenters offered a compelling example of the next generation's contribution to global psychotherapy: intellectually curious, culturally aware, and attentive to the changing conditions of mental health care in the 21st century.

To contact the featured individuals in this article, you may reach out:

Alejandro Alfonso: alejandromalfonso2026@gmail.com

Faria Ashrafi: fashrafi@umass.edu

Dr. Annemarie Pamela V. Torga is an early-career psychiatrist based in Manila, Philippines.

CONGRESS CALENDAR

2026

World Psychiatric Association 26th World Congress of Psychiatry - Guided by Compassion, Grounded in Science: Psychiatry for our Time

23-26 September 2026

Stockholm, Sweden

https://wcp-congress.com/



8th World Congress of Positive & Transcultural Psychotherapy

October 2026, 11-16

Budva, Montenegro

https://wapp2026.org



2027

WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR DYNAMIC PSYCHIATRY WADP

World Association of Dynamic Psychiatry 21st World Congress

Identity: Person, Group, Society - Implications for Psychotherapy and Psychiatry

22-26 March 2027

Vienna, Austria

https://wadpinternational.com/home/congress-2027-vienna/

World Federation for Psychotherapy Regional Meeting and Joint Congress

Reimagining Global Mental Health: Integrating Culture, Spirituality, and Psychotherapy

15-17 July 2027

Bali, Indonesia

https://balicongress2027-batikicospiwfp.com/



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