

SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE

Friday, May 5, 2017

2:00 - 5:00pm Pre-Conference Institutes
(Lecture Hall, Rooms B164 & B166)

Saturday, May 6, 2017

8:00 - 8:45am Reception & Check-In (Auditorium Lobby)
8:45 - 9:00am Announcements (Auditorium)
9:00 - 9:30am Opening Plenary Session (Auditorium)
9:30 - 9:45am Break
9:45 - 10:45am Concurrent Workshops - Session One*
10:45 - 11:00am Break
11:00 - 12:00pm Concurrent Workshops - Session Two*
12:00 - 1:00pm Lunch (Auditorium Lobby)
1:00PM - 2:30pm Keynote Address (Auditorium)
2:30 - 2:45pm Break
2:45 - 3:45pm Concurrent Workshops - Session Three*
3:45-4:00pm Break
4:00-5:00pm Concurrent Workshops - Session Four*
5:00 - 5:15pm Break
5:15-5:45pm Closing Plenary Session (Auditorium)
5:45pm Closing Announcements
6:00pm Adjournment

*Auditorium, Lecture Hall, Room B164, and Room B166

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Contemporary Relationships 2017

May 5-6



The 4th Annual Conference on Strengthening Relationships in the LGBTQ Community
Council on Recovery • 303 Jackson Hill Street • Houston, Texas 77007



PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The 2017 Program Committee devoted considerable energy and time to reviewing submitted proposals and selecting the presenters featured at the conference. Many thanks to these professionals for volunteering their time to help create this year's program:

- Christine Hatchard, PsyD (*Long Branch, New Jersey*)
- Jeff Zacharias, ACSW, LCSW, CSAT, CAADC (*Chicago, Illinois*)
- Micki Grimland, LCSW-ACP, ACSW (*Houston, Texas*)
- Ieshai Bailey-Davis, PhD Candidate, LMHC, CST (*Jacksonville, Florida*)
- Amelia Coffman, MA, PhD Candidate (*Houston, Texas*)
- David Baker-Hargrove, PhD, LMHC, DAPA, CCFC (*Orlando, Florida*)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Volunteer Coordinator

Mark Flores, LCSW (*Buda, Texas*)

ASL Interpreter

Scott Wallace (*Houston, Texas*)

Volunteers

- Bill Cashion (*Austin, Texas*)
- Frank Marasco, Jr. (*San Antonio, Texas*)
- Kara Kai Kirton, LMSW (*Houston, Texas*)
- Molly Simpson, LCSW, LCDC (*Austin, Texas*)
- Tierra Ortiz-Rodriguez, LPC (*Houston, Texas*)
- Sarah Steinmetz (*Austin, Texas*)
- Sheri Steinmetz (*Austin, Texas*)
- Naushaba Patel, MPH (*Houston, Texas*)
- Matthew Rosbury (*Houston, Texas*)



WELCOME TO CRC 2017!

The political climate has obviously changed in recent months and LGBTQ Americans and their allies still have much work to do. We will be at our strongest when all people are treated fairly and equally, and discrimination is prohibited in employment, housing, public accommodations, classrooms, healthcare facilities and other spaces. For example, while same-sex couples can now get married, it is still legal to terminate an LGBTQ employee in Texas and several other states, and current legislation across the country aims to legalize discrimination by allowing businesses to refuse service to LGBTQ people and dictate where transgender Americans can go to the bathroom.

Today, however, is about celebrating our victories and the love we find in our friendships and families. We are so glad you have decided to participate in CRC 2017 - our fourth annual conference and the first one in Houston! Our speakers have traveled from multiple cities and states and they have important information to share with you, gleaned from both professional experience and social science research. However, YOU are what makes this conference so powerful and we've designed the schedule to create collaboration so that every voice has the opportunity to be included in the conversation.

Please make time to connect with others and have some fun as we learn together and create community. Again, thanks for joining us!

Jeff Lutes, LPC
Conference Founder

Chuck Smith, CEO
Equality Texas

SCHEDULE

Friday, May 5

2:00 - 5:00pm Concurrent Pre-Conference Institutes (choose one):

When Addiction Becomes The Primary Relationship: Clinical Interventions To Heal Partnerships and Families In The LGBT Community (Lecture Hall)

Jeff Zacharias, ACSW, LCSW, CSAT, CAADC

IMAGO: A Proven Codebook For The Marriage Of Your Dreams (Room B164)

Damian Duplechain, MA, LPC, LCDC

Mid-Range Dissociation: Splits Within The Self And With Others - Demystification, Diagnosis, And Creative Integration (Room B166)

Victoria Jones, MA, MEd, LPC-S & Catherine Boswell, PhD

Saturday, May 6

8:00 - 8:45am Conference Check-In & Coffee Reception (Auditorium Lobby)

8:45 - 9:00am Welcome and Announcements (Auditorium)
Chuck Smith, Chief Executive Officer, Equality Texas, and
Mary H. Beck, Chief Strategy Officer, Council on Recovery

9:00 - 9:30am Opening Plenary Session (Auditorium)
Q Marriage Mentors: LGBTQ Couples Passing It On
Jeff Lutes, LPC

9:30 - 9:45am Break

9:45 - 10:45am Concurrent Workshops -Session One (Choose One):
Recreating Safe Spaces Within Our Community, Our Relationships And Ourselves Following The Pulse Nightclub Massacre (Auditorium)
Lindsay Kincaide, MS

OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Harville Hendrix, PhD and Helen LaKelly Hunt, PhD
Dallas, Texas

Harville Hendrix, Ph.D. and Helen LaKelly Hunt, Ph. D are partners in life and work. Their work is to make relational information and skills available to everyone. To do so, they co-created Imago Relationship Therapy as a couples therapy, co-initiated Imago Relationships International as a training institute for couples therapists, co-founded Relationships First as a collaborative mission to create a relational culture and Safe Conversations® as a social experiment to raise the joy index of a whole city.

They believe that how we interact with each other, in all our contexts—family, workplace, schools, etc.—is the key to the emotional, physical, economic and relational well being of everyone, including society and culture. They vision shifting from the age of the individual to the age of relationship and making “relationship” the primary value system of culture.

Dr. Hendrix and Dr. Hunt continue to co-create Imago Relationship Theory and Therapy and make it available in workshops, training programs, lectures, seminars and books. Over 1200 Imago therapists practice in 37 countries. Their professional partnership has produced 10 books including three NYT best sellers (Getting the Love You Want, Keeping the Love You Find, and Giving the Love that Heals). Their latest book is Making Marriage Simple (2013). They are working on a new professional text on Imago theory and therapy.

Dr. Hendrix is a couple's therapist with over 40 years experience as an educator, clinical trainer and lecturer whose work has been on Oprah 18 times. In addition to Dr. Hunt's partnership with her husband in the co-creation of Imago, she is sole author of Faith and Feminism and has been installed in the Women's Hall of Fame for her leadership in the global women's movement. Helen and Harville have been married for over 30 years, have six children, and six grandchildren and reside in Dallas, Texas and New York City.



Christine Hatchard, PsyD
Long Branch, New Jersey

Christine is an Assistant Professor and Director of the Clinical Psychology Research Center at Monmouth University. She is Director of Mosaic Psychological Associates where she conducts psychotherapy and is a forensic evaluator for sexual abuse civil litigation. She is also the Executive Director of Making Daughters Safe Again which provides services for survivors of mother-daughter sexual abuse. She has been featured on TV, radio, newspaper and documentaries, and speaks and trains clinicians nationally and internationally. She provides exclusive content and programming for Vigoroom, an innovative wellness platform that addresses multiple areas of health. Christine has won multiple awards, most recently a 2015 Early Career Psychologist Achievement Award from the American Psychological Association.



Jeff Zacharias, ACSW, LCSW, CSAT, CAADC
Chicago, Illinois

Jeff is the Clinical Director and Owner of New Hope Recovery Center. He also has a private practice in Chicago, where he works with the LGBTQI community, addiction, mental health issues, HIV/AIDS and trauma. He works with diverse LGBTQI relationship formations and has conducted trainings on LGBTQI cultural competency. He was instrumental in helping pass the conversion therapy ban in Illinois. Jeff is on the boards of NALGAP and NAADAC and has extensive experience speaking at conferences including: NAMI-National, NASW-IL, NASW-National, NCAD, NAADAC, CCSAD, WCSAD, IITAP, Rutgers Summer School, ASI-Columbus, LIC 2015, SASH 2015, National HIV Conference and LGBT Equality Institute Illinois. He was honored as the 2015 NASW-IL Social Worker of the Year.

9:45 - 10:45am **Yeah, It Makes Me Stronger: Finding Resilience In Our Fear And Uncertainty** (Lecture Hall)
Amelia Coffman, MA, PhD Candidate

Older Gay Men Who Fathered Children: Implications For Counseling (Room B164) Nick Patras, PhD, LPC-S

Transgender Americans: Who Are They? What Gains Have They Made? What Remains To Be Done?
(Room B166) Phyllis Frye

10:45-11:00am Break

11:00-12:00pm Concurrent Workshops-Session Two (Choose One):

Black Sexuality And Relationships: The Impact Of Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome And White Supremacy
(Auditorium) Ruby Johnson, LCSW, LCDC

Opening Your Heart To Connected And Healing Relationships: Love vs. Fear (Lecture Hall)
Jill Steward, LCSW and Rhonda Smith

Love Me Dearly: Narcissism, Shame, And Fantasy In Relationships (Room B164)
Michelle Bohls, LMFT, CGP

App Culture (Room B166)
Ty David Lerman, MA, LPC-S, CHT

12:00-1:00pm Lunch (Auditorium Lobby)

1:00-2:30pm Keynote Address - Introductions by Lisa Hinson, LCDC, CAI, Business Development Manager, Starlite Recovery Center
A New Way To Think About Relationships (Auditorium)
Harville Hendrix, PhD and Helen LaKelly Hunt, PhD

2:30-2:45pm Break

2:45-3:45pm Concurrent Workshops-Session Three (Choose One):

Straight Out Of The Closet: Coming Out In Couplehood
 (Auditorium) Angela Pham, LPC-Intern and Joni Ogle, LCSW, CSAT

Relationship Quality Among Monosexual And Nonmonosexual Women In Same-Sex Couples During The First Five Years Of Parenthood (Lecture Hall) Melissa Manley, BA

Rumor Has It: Relational Aggression In LGBTQ Relationships
 (Room B164) Jamie Goodwin, PhD

Open Relationships: Can They Work For Us? (Room B166)
 Dawn Nelson, LCSW, ACSW, SAP, CART

3:45-4:00pm Break

4:00-5:00pm Concurrent Workshops-Session Four (Choose One):

Deeper Wounds: Applying Our Understanding Of Sexual Trauma To Victims Of Homophobia (Auditorium)
 Christine Hatchard, PsyD and Genesis Gonzalez

Understanding The Unconscious Mind Of Gay Men: Why We Do What We Know Will Hurt Us (Lecture Hall)
 Gary Hirshberg, LCSW

Assert Yourself: Personal Boundaries And Effective Confrontation (Room B164)
 Denise O'Doherty, LPC, LCDC, LMFT, RN

Centering Love: Partnerships In Transition (Room B166)
 Colt Keo-Meier, PhD and Becca Keo-Meier, MSW

5:00-5:15pm Break

5:15-5:45pm Closing Plenary Session

Get Married By The First Openly Transgender Judge In America! (Auditorium) Phyllis Frye

5:45-6:00pm Closing Announcements and Adjournment



Lindsay Kincaid, MS
 Orlando, Florida

Lindsay is the Director of Development with Two Spirit Health Services, Orlando's LGBT medical and mental health facility. She was instrumental in facilitating the mental health crisis response after the Pulse massacre through her coordination of nearly 700 volunteer clinicians who provided 1,000 mental health encounters in the weeks following the tragedy. Lindsay combines her background in mental health, public health, and non-profit management to bring innovative health programming to Orlando, including rapid Hepatitis C testing and Two Spirit's low-cost PrEP clinic for the prevention of HIV infection, the first open access PrEP clinic in the region.



Ty David Lerman, MA, LPC-S, CHt
 Houston, Texas

With experience in both private practice and agency work, Ty has a solid working practice spanning numerous treatment topics, with an emphasis on anxiety and work-life balance. He is licensed as a supervisor for LPC-Interns and a certified hypnotherapist (CHt). His public speaking engagements include the Fulbright Commission in Cairo, Egypt; The Jung Center in Houston, Texas; colleges, high schools and community centers; and appearances on KPFT 90.1 radio. He taught as an adjunct professor, and consulted with academic counseling services to provide culturally competent holistic mental health care for students. Ty is married and a father of two Australian Shepherds, holds a black belt in Tae Kwon Do, sings professionally, stage manages, and is currently enjoying country dance lessons.



Amelia Coffman, MA, PhD Candidate

Houston, Texas

Amelia is finishing her PhD in Social Psychology at the University of Houston, where she integrates her experience and knowledge of the LGBTQ community into research of broad topics, including feelings of love worthiness, depression and anxiety, coping, social norms, and dieting and eating disorders. She has presented at the Contemporary Relationships Conference, Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Society for Personality Assessment, and American Creativity Association. She speaks and writes about eating disorders, and is working to increase the availability of resources specifically for those in the LGBTQ community affected by eating disorders in Houston and beyond. Amelia and her partner look forward to starting their family in Houston, Texas.



Dawn Nelson, LCSW, ACSW, SAP, CART

Rockwall, Texas

Dawn counsels individuals, couples, groups, and families regarding alternative lifestyles, anxiety, anger, depression, grief, sexual trauma, and crisis management. She worked with abuse survivors at Masters & Johnson's Sexual Trauma Treatment Center in New Orleans and helped cancer patients and their families cope with serious illness at The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. Dawn is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, a U.S. Department of Transportation Substance Abuse Professional, a Certified Anger Resolution Therapist, and a Professional Mediator. She is a Clinical Instructor at Texas A&M University-Commerce and a State of Texas Board Approved Social Work Supervisor. She earned her Master of Science in Social Work and Bachelor of Art in Psychology and English degrees from the University of Texas at Austin. Dawn is a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers and the National Association of Social Workers.



Freedom Program

LGBTQIA

L=Lesbian | G=Gay | B=Bisexual | T=Transgender
Q=Gender Queer | I=Intersex | A=Asexual

For clients identifying as LGBTQIA, addiction to alcohol and other drugs can be a complex issue. Some of the primary issues these clients face on their journey to recovery include depression, anxiety, and trauma; feelings of shame, guilt, and rejection; confusion and self-identity conflicts. Research has shown that LGBTQIA-identifying clients benefit from uniquely tailored addiction treatment – treatment that is affirming and integrative. The Freedom Program provides hope and healing in a safe, supportive environment.



Groups meet several times a week and are geared specifically to issues that are unique to those within the LGBTQIA community.

- We use a specialized curriculum that addresses the issues these clients have faced
- Peer support from the community
- Weekly Lambda 12 Step meetings
- Individual counseling is available for significant others and family members, as needed
- Clients are referred to the appropriate resource(s) post treatment for continued care

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For a free confidential assessment by one of our Masters-level clinicians, call 1-877-736-2140 or visit us at www.eatingrecovery.com.

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*Eating Disorders Coalition, *Facts About Eating Disorders: What The Research Shows*



Gary Hirshberg, LCSW
St. Louis, Missouri

Gary received his Masters degree from the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University. He graduated as a psychoanalyst from the St. Louis Psychoanalytic Institute and received his clinical credentials from the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis. He was one of the founders of one of the first mental health agency's in the U.S. created in response to the AIDS epidemic and went on to serve as the Associate Clinical Director of Delta Mental Health Institute. In 1992, he opened his practice working with gay men, artists, patients from diverse cultural backgrounds, and adult male survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Gary has been adjunct faculty at Washington University, St. Louis University, the University of Missouri – St. Louis, and the St. Louis Psychoanalytic Institute. He served as a faculty member and Program Coordinator for residential diversity training programs with youth and adults through the National Conference for Community & Justice. He conducts trainings in the areas of diversity, cultural competency, and intersectionality around cultural constructs.



Victoria Jones, MA, MEd, LPC-S
Houston, Texas

Victoria has been in private practice for 15 years, working with adults, couples, and families. She leads three groups a week, and creative workshops whenever possible. She has completed a two-year internship with the Houston Galveston Trauma Institute, as well as advanced training in the Dissociation through the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISST-D). Past work with physicians in a medical clinic helped her better understand the intricate connection between healing the mind and the body. She is trained in EMDR and Somatic Integration, and pulls from eclectic approaches including: psychodynamic relational work; cognitive-behavioral tools; Freud's defenses; and Jung's archetypes. She founded and directed Writers In The Schools after receiving a master's degree in Creative Writing and Literature.



Ruby Johnson LCSW, LCDC

Plano Texas

Ruby received her Bachelors of Social Work from Texas Women's University and her Masters of Social Work from the University of Texas at Arlington. She has been a clinical practitioner, community and professional development educator, and graduate and under graduate adjunct professor. In private practice, her areas of expertise are substance use disorders, obsessive and compulsive sexual behaviors, attachment disorders, multi-cultural families and couples, gender expression/gender identity issues, consensual non-monogamous partnerships/families, and Kink/BDSM. Ruby is a sex therapist and CEO for with Inamorata LLC and Inamorata LLC Forensics. She has presented at the Society of Social Work Research Conference, Council of Social Work Education Conference, DFW Behavioral Health Symposium, The Association of Black Sexologists and Clinicians, International Institute of Trauma and Addiction Professionals, and The State of Texas Association of Addiction Professionals Conference. Her expertise on race relations, racial profiling, and systemic racism are featured in the encyclopedia, African Americans and the Criminal Justice System, Carol The Sex Addiction Coach Radio Show, Ms. Beautiful Magazine, Vice News, Politiken, Our Sexuality! Magazine, and as a commentator on the Dallas Weekly Radio: First Amendment Show. Ruby is a contributor for Huffington Post.



Catherine Boswell, PhD

Houston, Texas

For over 20 years, Catherine has worked in medical settings and in private practice with individuals, groups, couples, and families. She has a special interest in chronic pain and illness, as well as grief (specifically spousal bereavement in straight and gay couples, a topic on which I publish, and am at work on a book manuscript. She has advanced training in Ericksonian clinical hypnosis as well as EMDR. She has continued extensive trauma training, beginning with a fellowship at the Houston-Galveston Trauma Institute. She taught Master's level psychology courses in Multiculturalism and Women's Studies. and many other subjects, at the University of Houston. For 20+ years she has been an artisan metal-worker and visual artist.



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WORKSHOPS

When Addiction Becomes The Primary Relationship: Clinical Interventions To Heal Partnerships And Families In The LGBT Community

It appears that the LGBT community is clinically more prone to developing issues around addiction, mental health and trauma. Knowing that addiction not only impacts the identified individual but rather their entire family system, it is imperative that clinicians and the community develop more tools to address this epidemic. As the LGBT community often identifies family as not only genetic but rather by choice, previous methods of fighting addiction don't take into account these nuances so flexibility and innovation are needed. Stigma and shame are prevalent in family systems and relationships struggling with addiction so additional tools are indicated to decrease the hidden side of these issues and increase transparency and acceptance of help and guidance. Taking a multi-pronged approach helps heal primary relationships and moves individuals away from behaviors that flourish in the shadows. Attendees will:

- Learn about the triangle of addiction, mental health and trauma from an individual perspective with a systems approach around families of choice
- Develop a broader understanding of enabling and co-dependent behaviors which shift attention from the primary relationship to one of ongoing dysfunction
- Create a collaborative approach with varied tools and interventions which can be immediately utilized from a person centered approach

IMAGO: A Proven Codebook For The Marriage Of Your Dreams

Participants will be taught Imago's essential principles and core assumptions that can help any couple co-create a GREAT Committed Love Relationship (CLRs). They will receive a powerfully effective communication tool for Repairs, a specific communication skill that is the world's best in helping couples navigate the inevitable conflicts in all Marriages. Imago Relationship Therapy / Education can provide every person with a wealth of tool to mend and strengthen their Marriage or Committed Love Relationship. Attempting to fix things without the proper tools and their underlying wisdom usually increases the likelihood of failure to resolve conflicts with positive outcomes. CLRs are perhaps the primary determinant of long term health and happiness for most people, and especially for those in recovery.

- Learn why we fall in love, the Purpose of Marriage, and the Stages of Marriage
- Gain awareness about the Imago Couples Dialogue as a tool for conflict resolution
- Discuss simple ways to protect and strengthen Committed Love Relationships



Damian Duplechain, MA, LPC, LCDC

Bellaire, Texas

Damian has decades of experience passionately helping couples and families realize a better quality of life. A noted marriage and family therapist in Houston, he has presented almost two hundred "Getting the Love You Want" Couples Workshops in Houston and on Galveston Island. As an Advanced Imago Clinician, Damian has long served as Chairperson of the Professional Training & Standards Committee of Imago Relationships International, cocreated by Harville Hendrix and Helen LaKelly Hunt. He has been called "the Dean of Couples Therapists in Houston, Texas," and is associated with the prestigious Hauser Clinic. As Executive Director of the Center for Marriage & Family Relationships, Damian has supervised dozens of therapists and counselors in becoming more capable, highly effective Couples Therapists using Imago. He has frequently shared his expertise about marriage and family therapy and education through live and print media, and by speaking with local organizations.



Nick P. Patras, PhD, LPC-S

Commerce, Texas

Nick is the Assistant Director of the Counseling Center at Texas A&M University-Commerce where he carries a caseload and supervises LPC-Interns and master's level student interns. Nick earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Organizational Communication from St. Edward's University in Austin and a Master's of Science Degree in Counseling and PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision from Texas A&M University-Commerce. Nick is a Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor whose clinical expertise and research interests include gender, sexual, and romantic minorities; family systems theory; trauma and grief; and returning warrior and veteran's concerns. Nick serves as co-chair of the A&M Commerce Safe Spaces Ally Project and is one of two primary trainers for ally designation. He also serves on the University Diversity & Inclusion committee and is a member of the Performance Team for the Department of Athletics.



Genesis Gonzalez
Long Branch, New Jersey

Genesis is a graduate of Monmouth University(NJ) and Honors School, earning a degree in Psychology and double minors in Spanish and Italian. She has presented at several conferences, most recently at the National Collegiate Honors Council Conference in 2016. She completed two senior thesis projects, one related to her Spanish minor and one original research project in Psychology. She is also a member of the Clinical Psychology Research Center at Monmouth University under the direction of Dr. Christine Hatchard where she assists with research and grant-sponsored projects in several areas. She is pursuing a doctorate in Clinical Psychology and hopes to open her own practice so she can work with children and diverse individuals.



Angela Pham, LPC Intern
Houston, Texas

Angela is a Houston psychotherapist who is currently in private practice. Her experience started at Shield Bearer Counseling Center where she helped low income adults and families who were coping with relationship issues around infidelity, addiction, abuse, and transgender identity. Later she served as a family therapist at West Oaks hospital helping patients and families understand the disease of addiction and how family members can support one another during the process of recovery. Currently, Angela works in private practice helping individuals with anxiety, depression, addiction, life transitions, non-traditional families, trauma & PTSD, and sexual & gender identity. Her work is informed by relational and depth psychology. In addition to her passion as a psychotherapist, Angela also works full time in the oil and gas industry holding both a BS and MS in Geomatics and Geospatial Engineering.

Mid-Range Dissociation: Splits Within The Self And With Others - Demystification, Diagnosis, And Creative Integration

Put simply, dissociation is a self-induced, and often unconscious, trance state. When it begins, it is often a child's response to overwhelming emotional distress--one of the only choices s/he has as protection from traumatic life experiences. Dissociation often remains firmly in place in adulthood as familiar, seemingly seamless internal shifts that interrupt intimacy on many levels through: behavior, emotion, sensory experiencing, as well as what we can and cannot consciously know. Therapy and integration for subtle low- to mid-level dissociation involves working with parts of an individual that are not yet functioning in an integrated, coordinated, and flexible way rather than the separate identities or personalities present in high-range dissociation. With creative clinical examples from both gay and straight clients (which will include body maps, photography, and dream work) we will discuss:

- Treatment Implications: From Inception to Identification
- Integration: Bottom Up (Body to Mind) and Metaphoric Right-Brain Healing
- Creative Approaches to Deconstructing Dysfunctional Thinking, Challenging Core Beliefs, and Resolving Inner Conflict

Q Marriage Mentors: LGBTQ Couples Passing It On

Join us for the unveiling and launch of this new program that matches experienced (mentor) couples with less experienced (mentee) couples to build strong and resilient marriages in the LGBTQ community. Together, we will:

- Explore the need for LGBTQ marriage mentors
- Examine how the program will train qualified marriage mentors and match them with mentee couples
- Review the basics of the mentoring process that passes wisdom from couple to couple



Recreating Safe Spaces Within Our Community, Our Relationships And Ourselves Following The Pulse Nightclub Massacre

For many of us in the LGBTQ community, the Pulse Nightclub Massacre on June 12, 2016, was a violation of our sense of safe spaces. Many have experienced an erosion of safety among the relationships we have with our community, our interpersonal relationships, and even ourselves. In a post-Pulse world, we must redefine what things like safety, trust and being "ok" even mean. We find our greatest strengths through tragedy and pain, but we need to develop a blueprint from which to work. The presenter, directly involved in the mental health mobilization effort following the Pulse Nightclub Massacre will discuss the response and long-term recovery effort. Attendees will learn:

- How to develop an organized, mobilized mental health response and lessons learned from the Pulse mobilization
- What health issues have come up in the long-term recovery plan and how to mitigate them from a public health and private practitioner perspective
- How to address issues of safe spaces, trust-building, and what it means to be "ok" among LGBTQ constituents

Yeah, It Makes Me Stronger: Finding Resilience In Our Fear And Uncertainty

Resilience has been prominent in the LGBT community throughout time. In recent generations, we have navigated through both the everyday struggle of being LGBT in a world that often criminalized or pathologized same-sex behavior, and through major events like Stonewall, the AIDS crisis, and Orlando. Despite the greater acceptance of the LGBT community today, and major victories like the legalization of same-sex marriage in many countries, radical views and actions against our community have increased in recent years. How has our community managed to stay resilient through decades of struggle, and to use some of the greatest difficulties our community has faced to become even stronger? In the context of bullying and harassment, the recent hate crimes directed at the LGBT community, and now the situation in our country's leadership, what does resilience really mean, and how do we keep it up?

- Resilient Characteristics: What is resilience, and what makes resilient people different?
- Resilience as a Process: How can we increase our individual resilience to both sudden and ongoing struggles?
- Resilience as a Force: How can our community be resilient and use major distressing events to become stronger than ever?



Jill Steward, LCSW
Austin, Texas

Jill Steward earned her Masters degree from The University of Texas at Austin in 1994. Jill has been in private practice for 20 years where she has specialized in working with the GLBTQ community. She worked at Austin Regional Clinic for 3 years and prior to that was a Treatment Coordinator at Charter Behavioral Health Hospital. She has volunteered at the Center for Battered Women, OutYouth Austin and was the Chair of the Board of Directors for Waterloo Counseling Center in Austin which serves the GLBTQ community.



Joni Ogle, LCSW, CSAT
Houston, Texas

Joni has more than 25 years of clinical experience working with children, adolescents and adults in addiction, trauma and co-occurring mental health disorders in both a treatment center environment as well as in private practice. She has extensive experience working with the 12 Steps and as a recreational therapist doing adventure therapy, equine therapy, art therapy and other experiential therapies. Joni is a licensed clinical social worker and a certified sex addiction therapist with a master's in social work from the University of Houston. She has additional training in Recreational Therapy, Pia Mellody's Post Induction Therapy and Dr. Brené Brown's The Daring Way™ Shame Resilience Curriculum. Currently, Joni serves as Executive Director for Transcend Texas.





Melissa Manley, BA
Worcester, Massachusetts

Melissa is a second year doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at Clark University in Worcester, MA. Melissa received her B.A. in Psychology from the University of Michigan, where she co-authored a paper on sexual fluidity in polyamorous and monoamorous individuals. After earning her bachelor's, she worked with LGBTQ teenagers and young adults in a support program through a local nonprofit, Ozone House. Her research interests include sexual orientation and identity development, gender diversity, and consensually nonmonogamous relationships. At Clark University, Melissa studies diverse families with her advisor, Dr. Abbie Goldberg. The research she is presenting at CRC is based on a project conducted in collaboration with Dr. Goldberg and Dr. Randi Garcia.



Colt Keo-Meier, PhD
Houston, Texas

Colt is the co-founder of Gender Infinity. He is a Licensed Psychologist specializing in working with sexual and gender health concerns in children, adolescents, families, and adults. He is a clinician, researcher, consultant, and educator in the area of LGBT Health. He has instructed the Psychology of Human Sexuality for four years at UH. He is currently the co-chair of the Student Initiative Taskforce of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH). He teaches Affirmative Counseling for Transgender Clients at Southern Methodist University, Sexual and Gender Health to psychiatry residents at Baylor College of Medicine, and Human Sexuality at the University of Houston. Colt is currently working on a book on the Gender Affirmative Model, a book for psychologists and counselors who work with families with gender diverse children, to be published by the American Psychological Association.

Older Gay Men Who Fathered Children: Implications For Counseling

There are an unknown number of older gay men who fathered children during the mid-1960s to mid-1970s convergence of anti-war and civil rights protests when a strict Western hegemonic masculinity was enforced and homosexuality was pathologized by the medical field. The primary focus of this research study was to gain a better understanding of how older gay men made decisions around heterosexual marriage and fathering children. This qualitative study used a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of older gay men who became fathers as well as varied experiences with coming out to a spouse and children, navigating new family relationships, seeking professional help, their role as a gay grandfather, and the psychosocial developmental stage work they currently are undertaking. Additionally, this study identified different themes that arose from the participant's stories. Implications for counseling regarding the clinical concerns expressed by these older gay men have relevance for contemporary counselors today. Attendees will leave the presentation with a greater understanding of the following:

- The dynamics that guided the decisions made by older gay men who fathered children
- The myth regarding the "gay" life led by the Stonewall generation
- The mental health needs of older gay men who fathered children and the relevance to the needs of the aging gay persons today

App Culture

Whether we are in the dating world or partnered ourselves, our clients are dating in the digital world, and with 15% of the adult population using a dating site/app in 2015 (Pew Research Center), it is important for our clinicians to be familiar with the sites as well as the pros/cons, and even dangers of these digital tools. This presentation will address:

- Specific sites/apps and their attractions
- Pros/cons - Potential dangers
- "Reading" profiles: spotting patterns, lingo, slang, and warning signs

Transgender Americans: Who Are They? What Gains Have They Made? What Remains To Be Done?

Providers and advocates for transgender clients can provide a better service if they are equipped with knowledge of the history of how the Texas (and federal) laws have evolved and impacted transgender young people and adults. From the late 1970's until a mere two years ago, transgender young people had no legal protection in schools and transgender adults had no protection in obtaining legal documents, securing or retaining employment, or being covered by insurance. Marriage or divorce were often nightmarish events.

- Learn the differences between sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression and why are all three needed in non-discrimination statements and policies effecting your transgender clients
- Learn about the law then and the law now with respect to legal change of name, correction of gender and amendment of birth certificate documents (as well as social security and passports) and why is securing these documents the first best step to begin transition for your transgender clients
- Learning about current job protections, insurance coverage protection, social security coverage, school protections and sex segregated facility (restrooms) laws regarding your transgender clients

Opening Your Heart To Connected And Healing Relationships: Love vs. Fear

This workshop will focus on creating satisfying and healing relationships. When we learn how to create a felt sense of emotional safety in our relationship we invite a very authentic and powerful connection. We need to communicate in a way that our partner can be open to hearing and listen in a way that our partner feels heard. We must learn to take responsibility for what we have control of and get away from blame. It helps to identify our patterns and old wounds that are likely to be reenacted in our intimate relationship and address them in an effective and healing manner. This workshop will draw on Jill's years of experience working with couples and the relationship principles Rhonda's work utilizes in working with horses.

- Understand how to create safety in a relationship to allow the vulnerability needed for intimacy
- Choose to come from a place of love rather than a place of fear so that your heart is open to connection
- Create a partnership that meets the needs of both individuals



Rhonda Smith
Austin, Texas

Rhonda is a graduate of Texas A&M University with a BBA in Finance and a professional background in human resources management. After a near fatal accident involving an 18-wheeler in 1999, she left her corporate job and followed her calling to create a non-profit organization called Spirit Reins. Spirit Reins utilizes horses to work with children and their families who have experienced trauma. Their therapeutic model uses sound principles of equine psychology and an awareness of brain development to repair and enhance all of life's relationships with a focus on self-regulation and building healthy relationships. Rhonda is very involved in the mental health community in Central Texas.



Becca Keo-Meier, MSW
Houston, Texas

Becca is the co-founder of Gender Infinity. Becca is also a social work doctoral student and is on the board of Alliance, the LGBTQIA and ally student organization at the Graduate College of Social Work, University of Houston. Becca currently facilitates local transgender youth and adult support groups and has served as trainer for the Cougar Ally Training at the University of Houston. As a recipient of community and professional awards for work related to gender and sexual diversity, Becca's areas of interest include transphobia, trans-negativity, inclusivity, and equity.



Jamie Goodwin, PhD
Long Branch, New Jersey

Jamie is a Specialist Professor of Counseling Psychology, a Principal Investigator in the Clinical Psychology Research Center, and Field Placement Developer and Coordinator at Monmouth University (NJ). She is a postdoctoral associate (NJ #133-090) at Mosaic Psychological Associates LLC, where she conducts psychotherapy with individuals and couples. Her doctoral dissertation examined the long-term impact of relational victimization and attachment quality on individuals' psychological and social functioning, and she created and validated a retrospective measure of relational victimization experiences. She has presented at conferences and schools, training clinicians and educators how to recognize and respond to relational aggression. She also works with survivors of same-sex abuse individually and through the non-profit organization Making Daughters Safe Again (MDSA), for which she is Assistant Director, and she has presented nationally and trained other clinicians in working with survivors.



Michelle Bohls, LMFT, CGP
Austin, Texas

In her Austin-based private practice, Michelle specializes in working with all types of artists, entrepreneurs, healers, and other highly intuitive and creative people. She specializes in helping individuals and couples overcome emotional blocks rooted in anxiety, shame, and other overwhelming feelings that affect both their work and personal relationships. In addition to individual therapy, EMDR and Imago couples work, she runs two long term process therapy groups as a certified group psychotherapist (CGP). She maintains certifications, membership, and presents for the American Group Psychotherapy Association and Imago Relationships

Black Sexuality And Relationships: The Impact Of Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome And White Supremacy

As a sex therapist and couple's therapist the assessment process and listening to the client's narrative reveals the trajectory of therapy. Human Rights, Social Justice, History, Politics, Racism, Stigma, and Social ills infiltrate the client's systems in all areas including mentally, socially, and emotionally. The insecurity within society is paralyzing. This is the product of a legacy that happened centuries from the client's birth. Inter-generational trauma's legacy is viscerally, emotionally, and mentally impactful on the family, children, individual, and social environment. As a result, the hegemonic sexual scripts are establishing the dynamic and discord. The bread taste of dynamics with liberation and has taken decades backward into suppression. The fear, hopelessness, and disenchantment stifles the intimacy and the trust to be vulnerable. I hope to establish rapport and engagement with the audience from a safe atmosphere. I hope the attendee:

- Understands PTSS and it's implications
- Realizes the exacerbation problems and barriers from legacy through intersectionality
- Explores opportunity hoarding and opportunity mapping which impact people of color and Black Americas from seeking treatment
- Discovers a new found resource to continue their self-learning

Open Relationships: Can They Work For Us?

When a significant other brings up the possibility of open relationships, the partner may feel a range of emotions from excitement to fear. This interactive presentation will focus on helping you decide if the lifestyle is a viable option for you and your loved one. The speaker will explain how to manage your relationship to avoid potential pitfalls if you do decide to pursue an open relationship so that couples can become stronger in the process. A round-table discussion period will be included so the attendees can discuss their own thoughts and concerns in a supportive environment.

- Learn how to evaluate whether an open relationship could be right for your relationship
- Learn how to communicate openly to enhance trust
- Learn how to manage the beginnings of an open relationship

Love Me Dearly: Narcissism, Shame, And Fantasy In Relationships

Narcissism stumps many of us whether it shows up in our medical and psychological treatment rooms or in our personal lives, but there is no need to pathologize the individuals who struggle with narcissism or those who love them. When a child's world view, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression does not conform to the norms of their communities they are more likely to experience a profound invalidation that may drive them to seek external validation, or tangible proof of one's worth. A characterological defense people have called narcissism seeks this through fame, money, attention, and other types of narcissistic supplies. The relationship itself becomes an external source of validation for the co-narcissist. We will explore how these two adaptations play out in relationships in a predictable and destructive narcissistic trance. Learn the three powerful techniques that can be used to assist the narcissist and co-narcissist as they release their defenses, reclaim their personal sources of internal validation, and ultimately feel safer to be more authentic and intimate in their relationships with each other.

- Explain The Invalidation Wound and how it affects those people marginalized by those in authority
- Give an example of at least two of the four types of adaptations to the invalidation wound
- Explain narcissistic supplies and the narcissistic trance
- Demonstrate one of the three techniques that will improve our effectiveness in the both treatment room and in our personal relationships



Phyllis Frye

Houston, Texas

Phyllis is an Eagle Scout, a former member of the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets, a US Army veteran (1LT-RA 1970-72), a licensed engineer, a licensed attorney, a father, a grandmother and a lesbian wife. She is the first, out, transgender judge in the nation, and retains her senior partnership with Frye, Oaks and Benavidez, PLLC. She is recognized as being the "grandmother" of the national transgender legal and political movement. She is one of the Task Force's 1995 "Creator of Change" award winners. In 1999 she was given the International Foundation for Gender Education's "Virginia Prince Lifetime Achievement" award. In 2001 she was given the National LGBT Bar Association's (a.k.a. Lavender Law's) highest honor, the "Dan Bradley Award." She was honored beginning in 2009 by Texas A&M University with an annual "Advocacy Award" given in her name. In 2013 the Houston Transgender Unity Committee gave her its "Lifetime Achievement Award." In 2015 she was given the National Center for Transgender Equality's "Julie Johnson Founders Award."



Denise O'Doherty, LPC, LCDC, LMFT, RN

Houston, Texas

Denise is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, a Licensed Drug and Alcohol Counselor, Certified IMAGO Relationship Therapist and a Registered Nurse. She has had a full-time private practice in Houston since 1981 working with individuals, couples and families. Denise is an educator who teaches personal development and empowerment classes for adults through Leisure Learning Unlimited of Houston. In the past, she has been a Clinical Instructor for the University of Texas at Houston School of Nursing. Her warm and engaging style combined with her wit and wisdom, provides enlightenment, clarity and insight. She inspires confidence while helping others seek positive change. Denise specializes in Marriage and Relationship counseling, addictive disorders, gender identity issues, depression and anxiety disorders. She has recently published her workbook, "Personal Boundaries and Effective Confrontation".

OUR SPEAKERS



Jeff Lutes, LPC

Austin, Texas

Jeff is the Founder of the Contemporary Relationships Conference and has been in practice for 29 years. He is the co-author of two chapters in *Affirmative Counseling with LGBTQI+ People* (American Counseling Association, 2017), a chapter in the *Handbook of LGBT-Affirmative Couple and Family Therapy* (Routledge 2012), and author of *Okin the Panda Bear Finds His Family* - a children's book about family diversity (Creative House Press, 2011). His articles about LGBTQ relationships and families have appeared on The Bilerico Project and Therapy Matters. He has presented at the conferences of the American Association of Marriage & Family Therapy, the American Counseling Association, and the Texas Psychological Association. The former Executive Director of Soulforce; Jeff has spoken at universities, churches, and rallies around the country, and his social justice efforts have been covered by numerous media outlets, including NPR and CNN.

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A New Way To Think About Relationships

Since relationship is the primary reality, there is no way NOT to be in relationship. Our only choice is HOW, not WHETHER! How we interact with each other is the key to our emotional, physical, economic and social health. Since talking is the medium of our interaction with each other, and since talking is the most dangerous thing most people do, we need a new way to talk that creates safety and connects us beyond our differences. To that end, Harville Hendrix, PhD and Helen LaKelly Hunt, PhD offer Imago Dialogue as a structured process that helps people, in diverse ecosystems, experience safety rather than conflict while they are talking. By teaching a process that facilitates connection beyond difference, Helen and Harville aim to establish "relationship" as this society's primary cultural value and "dialogue" as the relational technology that could lead to greater civil conversation and foster a legacy of stability and peace for generations to come.

- Describe the key difference between relating and connecting
- Discuss the difference between the individual and relational paradigm
- Demonstrate the Imago Dialogue Process
- Explain the outcomes of Imago Dialogue

Straight Out Of The Closet: Coming Out In Couplehood

Coming out is a phenomenon shared exclusively among the LGBT community. For those in the early phases of understanding their sexual identification, it is not uncommon to simultaneously experience both terror and exhilaration. Within every individual's unique story are common themes, struggles, and revelations that we find echoing between our own and another's development of LGBT identity. Transitioning fully into a gay or lesbian lifestyle may also impact couples, especially when one individual is more out than their partner. The McCarn-Fassinger model for gay and lesbian identity development describes four phases common to the process of coming out, these are: 1) developing awareness of same sex attraction, 2) exploring sexual feelings, 3) deepening one's commitment to self-knowledge and self-fulfillment, and 4) developing a healthy internalization of your own LGBT identity. In this lively discussion, through the shared space of laughter, tears, and fears embedded in our own lived experiences, participants will:

- Explore what it means to embrace an LGBT identity
- Understand how relationships are impacted by varying degrees of "out-ness"
- Discuss the stages of coming out where they feel most supported, isolated or stuck

Relationship Quality Among Monosexual And Nonmonosexual Women In Same-Sex Couples During The First Five Years Of Parenthood

Although research has been conducted on same-sex couples' relationship quality, these studies typically examine non-parents, assess couples only at one or two time points, and do not consider the sexual identities of relationship partners. Rather, partners are assumed to be gay or lesbian based solely on partner gender. However, given that nonmonosexual (e.g., bisexual, queer, mostly lesbian/gay) individuals experience unique stressors related to monosexism, individual sexual identity may be important in understanding relationship quality. The current study explores relationship quality (love, conflict, ambivalence, and maintenance) across five time points among 118 women (68 monosexual, 50 nonmonosexual) who are also parents. Analyses revealed that nonmonosexual women reported higher levels of relationship maintenance behaviors (e.g., "working on" the relationship) and conflict than monosexual women, and women with nonmonosexual partners also reported more maintenance and conflict than women with nonmonosexual partners. Sexual identity status was not related to love or ambivalence, suggesting that that affection for one's partner is not a function of partners' sexual identities.

- Gain understanding of how sexual identity matters in the relationship quality of same-sex female couples who are parents
- Examine how factors including sexual identity, internalized homonegativity, depression, and time predict relationship quality in same-sex female couples who are parents
- Discover recommendations for mental health professionals working with same-sex female couples who are parents



Deeper Wounds: Applying Our Understanding Of Sexual Trauma To Victims Of Homophobia

Research consistently suggests that individuals who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual, are more likely to be victims of abuse, bullying and harassment, and demonstrate symptoms of trauma related to these incidents. However, the discussion of the aftereffects of homophobia is often limited to those related to victims' general psychological distress and emotional well-being. The presenters will explain how victims of homophobia experience incidents that can be conceptualized as sexual trauma, and thus result in aftereffects that can directly impact sexuality along multiple domains included in the Model of Sexual Beingness, including gender, intimate relationships, and sensuality. The presenters will also provide clinical strategies for intake assessment and how to apply best practices used in individual and couples treatment of sexual trauma to victims of homophobia. The purpose of this session is to acknowledge the pain caused to victims of homophobia, and discuss how we can empower survivors to process their experiences and reclaim love and acceptance for themselves and their partners.

- Participants will be able to apply the definition of sexual trauma to the experiences of victims of homophobia
- Participants will be able to explain how to use the Model of Sexual Beingness to assess the after effects of homophobia
- Participants will be able to describe how to apply the stages of recovery used in sexual trauma therapy to treat victims of homophobia



Understanding The Unconscious Mind Of Gay Men: Why We Do What We Know Will Hurt Us

Common practice in addressing rates of smoking, substance use, risky sexual behavior, intimate partner violence, eating issues, addiction issues among gay men most often is either a version of "Just say no," a referral to a 12 Step program or a behavioral health intervention using cognitive-behavioral approaches. This workshop seeks instead to explore some of the deeper unconscious origins of the trauma many gay men have experienced who engage in these self-harming but often self-surviving practices. These issues include: early sexual overstimulation in a world still designed for straight boys; the lack of the gleam in early caregivers' especially father's eyes when their gay boy falls in love with them; the lack of a path that constitutes a gay boyhood, one that is outside the binary and not labeled feminine, and the effects of strain trauma and toxic stress. Finally this workshop will advocate for a relational approach between therapist and client including a more realistic expectations of what their client's can achieve.

- Discuss the early life factors that contribute to a pervasive sense of otherness for gay men
- Describe some of the unique aspects of gay male adolescents in which desire is equated with shame as well as the factors that foster hyper-sexualization in gay male adults
- Demonstrate the way gender binary and cisgender privilege work and affects client's and providers thinking

Assert Yourself: Personal Boundaries And Effective Confrontation

Have you ever thought of the perfect thing to say hours after the discussion or argument ended? What stopped you from it saying then? Having boundaries in relationships means defining what behaviors are OK with you, and which aren't. It's about knowing how to be assertive and maintain your sense of self, while teaching people how to treat you. This class will help you identify and understand the cost and payoff of passive, aggressive, and passive-aggressive personalities, and how to deal with these styles effectively and assertively. Topics such as overcoming: codependency, fear of conflict, criticism, guilt and shame will also be highlighted. Additionally, the class explains a step by step method of how to confront someone effectively, and overcome being manipulated, controlled and intimidated.

- To be able to identify the cost and payoff of passive, assertive and aggressive behavior and how to deal with these style effectively
- To Identify Five Boundary setting Tips to help overcome the sabotage of codependency, fear of conflict, criticism, guilt and shame
- To have a step by step method of how to make an effective confrontation

Rumor Has It: Relational Aggression in LGBTQ Relationships

Relational aggression is a form of bullying which includes acts of ignoring and excluding, gossiping, manipulating social structure and status, and in general damaging important relationships with the intent to harm. While often attributed to girls and children under the label "Mean Girls Syndrome," there is growing research evidence that relational aggression is perpetrated by all genders and age groups in many kinds of relationships, including intimate relationships (through behaviors such as giving a partner the "silent treatment," or "hooking up" with another person to get back at one's partner) and ex-partner relationships (through behaviors such as gossiping about or alienating others from the former partner). Relational aggression may be intensified in groups that are marginalized and devalued – ones where acceptance and approval feel like scarce commodities. For this and other reasons, relational aggression may be all too common among both partner and peer relationships in the LGBTQ community. This session will explore the nature of relational aggression and factors unique to the LGBTQ community and relationships, the potential causes and consequences of this, and how this form of aggression might be viewed and addressed through a clinical lens.

- Participants will be able to explain relational aggression and its impact on both partner and peer relationships and the individual
- Participants will identify factors of the LGBTQ experience that increase susceptibility to relational aggression and victimization
- Participants will describe methods of prevention and intervention in cases of relational aggression and victimization



Centering Love: Partnerships In Transition

Gender is completely personal and completely interpersonal, it is integral to how we know ourselves and how we name ourselves in gender identity and sexual orientation. Not so long ago, therapists who worked with with transgender clients would advise them to divorce from their spouses before transitioning. The beliefs underlying this "advice" were that there was no way for a romantic and sexual relationship to survive the gender transition of a partner and transgender people were mentally unfit to be in meaningful romantic relationships. Fortunately, a huge shift has come about in how the lives and experiences of the transgender population are conceptualized by therapists. This presentation will begin with a brief review of the history of clinical work with and research on partnerships of transgender people. Next, the presenters will share results from Becca Keo-Meier's thesis - highlighting the experiences of cisgender (non-transgender) partners who stayed with their transgender partner through gender transition. These partners centered their journey on loving the person of their partner more than their partner's gender. Insights into how the cisgender partner's own sexual orientation identity formation was impacted by their partner's gender identity development will open up new ideas on how therapists can support both partners as they find their way through gender transition, regardless of the outcome of the relationship. Finally, the presenters, a married couple with a transgender partner and a genderqueer partner, will share their inspiring unexpected love story.

Get Married By The First Openly Transgender Judge In America!

Would you and your significant other like to have your marriage officiated by the first out and open transgender judge in the nation? Judge Phyllis Frye will update the audience on the history of marriage equality in America, and then close the conference by conducting a mass wedding ceremony for LGBTQ and Allied couples. Couples that want to get married DO NOT have to attend the entire conference to be included, but they must:

- RSVP to info@contemporaryrelationships.com
- Have a marriage license from a county in Texas, along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope back to the county official who gave you the license
- Insure license is at a minimum, 72 hours old; maximum 21 days on the marriage date
- Understand that Judge Frye, depending on the number of couples, may not be able to read all names of those getting married at this mass ceremony
- Agree to a non-religious, short and free (no cost) ceremony



PILOT PROJECT

Currently accepting applications from LGBTQ couples willing to invest in the health and wellbeing of another LGBTQ couple for one year. Mentor couples are trained, paired with a less experienced *mentee* couple, and then meet once each month by phone, FaceTime, Skype, or in person when possible. If you and your spouse meet the following qualifications, you may be able to give back to your community in a fun and meaning way:

- Adult lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or gender-queer couple together 8+ years
- Legally married with a reasonably healthy relationship (perfection not allowed!)
- Out in your community as an LGBTQ couple and in a stable place in life
- Not currently struggling with addiction, severe trauma, major loss, or untreated mood disorder
- Able to hold multiple perspectives about relationship styles without judging those different from their own
- Highly motivated to give back to the LGBTQ community by investing in other couples to help them grow

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