**AGPA Connect 2023 Presenter Information**

**Course Code:** 38-5

**Course Title:** Integrating one’s own spiritual/religious journey with training, supervision, and leading group therapy

**Course Times:** 2:30 PM - 4:00 PM

**Course Dates:** Friday, March 10

**Instructors:** Lorraine Mangione

**Course Description:** Concerns around spirituality, religion, and existential issues are central to many people. As the country’s religious identity shifts to multifaceted and multicultural, clinicians need to understand and challenge their assumptions and beliefs, as such issues can impact group therapy and have not been salient in traditional training. We explore therapist experiences through personal reflection in a written exercise of one’s religious/spiritual autobiography, share these experiences in small groups, and discuss together how training, supervision, and group therapy can constructively incorporate religious/spiritual diversity.

**Learning Objectives**

The attendee will be able to:‎

1. ‎‎‎‎State at least two frameworks for learning about and incorporating spirituality and religion in one's ‎thinking about oneself as a therapist and in one’s clinical work.‎
2. ‎Identify some of their own areas of comfort, discomfort, or challenge around spirituality, religion, ‎and existential issues.‎
3. ‎List some specific ways in which spirituality, religion, existential issues, and growth in these realms ‎can be addressed in supervision and training of group therapists.‎
4. ‎List some specific ways in which spirituality, religion, existential issues, and growth in these realms ‎can be addressed in creating and leading groups.‎

**Significant Articles:**

Cohen, V. (2019). Spirituality and therapeutic action. Spirituality in Clinical Practice, 6(2), 135-138.‎

Hammer, D. (2018). Cultivating soulfulness in psychotherapy. Spirituality in Clinical Practice. Advance ‎online publication. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/scp0000173"‎

Jacques, J.R. (1998). Working with spiritual and religious themes in group therapy. International Journal ‎of Group Psychotherapy, 48:1, 69-83, DOI: 10.1080/00207284.1998.1149152‎

Mangione, L., & Forti, R. (2018). Beyond midlife and before retirement: A short-term women’s group. ‎International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 68(3), 314-336. ‎

Plante, T. (2021). The integration of Roman Catholic traditions and evidence-based psychological ‎services. Spirituality in Clinical Practice, 8(1), 65-75.‎

**Agenda:**

1. Introductions: My interests in this area, and brief participant introduction (Learning Objective #1; 10 minutes)
   1. Mangione & Forti work on short-term women’s groups: integrating religion, spirituality, and existential issues in a short-term group; short term loss and grief groups; intersectionality and how these issues work with other diversities b. Introduce themselves with either a couple of words that come to mind about this topic or a hope for today (either in small groups or the whole group)
2. What does the clinical, research, and training literature tell us about definitions, models, and competence in this area? (Lecture/Hand-outs/Discussion; Learning Objective # 1; 20 minutes)
   1. Definitions
   2. Hammer’s model of the three parts of a “soulful internal space” for the therapist to cultivate in order to attend to spiritual and religious aspects in therapy
   3. Pearce, et. al.’s model of competency and a training program in this area
   4. Existential issues in life and in groups
   5. What is the role of meditation?
   6. Where does community fit in?
   7. Clinicians and Their Relationships to Spirituality, Religion, and Existential Issues
   8. Jacques article on process groups: looking at group process and the therapist’s attitudes, responses, biases
   9. Issues of implicit bias around religion/spirituality/meaning-making and other intersecting diversities
   10. Spiritual and Religious Inventories
3. Looking at ourselves and our attitudes/responses/values/history around spirituality, religion, meaning in life, and growth (Small Groups/Discussion; Learning Objectives #2; 30 minutes)
   1. Start writing a religious/spiritual autobiography from a hand-out with several prompts.
   2. Share with small groups
4. Discussion (Learning Objectives #3 & 4; 30 minutes)
   1. What do you bring to the enterprise?
   2. What did you learn and not learn in your training?
   3. How can we incorporate this area into training and supervision?
   4. What might trigger deep-seated reactions from you in the clinical setting?
   5. How might you respond, internally and externally?
   6. What are some good coping strategies?
   7. How to incorporate this work into your groups?

**Assessment Questions:**

Question 1 (include possible answers)

Issues of religion and spirituality, and existential issues, can only be addressed in groups designed specifically for: a. Those topics. b. Older people c. All kinds of groups and members d. Long term open-ended groups

Correct Answer 1

C

Question 2 (include possible answers)

Changes in our country over many decades have created a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ world in terms of religious and cultural diversity. a. More heterogeneous b. More restricted c. Totally chaotic d. Apathetic

Correct Answer 2

A

Question 3 (include possible answers)

Most psychotherapists a. Have been well-trained in the areas of spirituality, religion, and existential issues and b. Can easily work with these areas in therapy c. Know absolutely nothing about these areas d. Have had little training in these areas

Correct Answer 3

D

Question 4 (include possible answers)

The following areas of internal space for the therapist are considered important to create a space for spirituality in Dean Hammer’s model (e): a. A space for hospitality and compassion b. A dwelling place for wisdom c. A wellspring of serenity d. None of the above e. All of the above

Correct Answer 4

E

Question 5 (include possible answers)

Exploring countertransference and implicit bias is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ aspect of working with clients in the religious, spiritual, and existential realms. a. Marginally helpful b. Necessary c. Irrelevant d. Very simple

Correct Answer 5

B

Question 6 (include possible answers)

Research has given some evidence that groups can be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for the integration of spirituality and religion into people’s therapy experience. a. Important places b. Almost impossible c. Always harmful d. Not so important

Correct Answer 6

A

Question 7 (include possible answers)

Religious and spiritual themes can reveal rich data revealing group members’ a. Intrapsychic conflicts b. Interpersonal relationships c. Sense of self d. All of the above e. Only b and c

Correct Answer 7

D

Question 8 (include possible answers)

Spirituality and religion are always defined in the psychotherapy literature as: a. The same experience and concept b. Two completely disparate experiences and concepts c. Competing and incompatible areas of experience d. Unimportant to define e. None of the above

Correct Answer 8

E

Question 9 (include possible answers)

Learning about one’s own biases, background, history, and thinking about religion and spirituality can help the education and training field in what ways? a. To better train new clinicians b. To serve our diverse clientele better c. To bring awareness of diversity to the forefront d. To allow for clients to be more open about their own religious/spiritual backgrounds e. All of the above

Correct Answer 9

E

Question 10 (include possible answers)

It is never advisable to understand spiritual or religious themes that emerge in group as metaphor.

Correct Answer 10

False