



March 22 - March 25, 2017
Marriott Courtyard Atlanta Decatur Downtown/Emory
Decatur, Georgia

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Full Day Programs

Thursday March 23rd, 9:00am – 4:00pm

P1: “Soul Shop – Ministering to Suicidal Depression,”

Soul Shop was developed to help pastoral caregivers learn how to make ministry to those experiencing suicidal desperation (and those who live them) a regular aspect of preaching, teaching and pastoral care. Learn how to make your church a community where people who are navigating the dangerous passages of life find a place where they can reinvent themselves.

This workshop is designed for 1) pastoral and lay caregivers to learn how to lead this ministry, and 2) pastoral counselors to learn both how to partner with congregations to bring this ministry to your community. Michelle Snyder is the former Executive Director of the Pittsburgh Pastoral Institute where she was a pioneer in connecting congregations to mental health resources.

presented by: Michelle Snyder, M.Div., LCSW, Director of Soul Shop and Author of *Life, Death, and Reinvention: The Gift of the Impossibly Messed-Up Life*

P2: “The Clinical Use of the Essential Self in Pastoral Counseling”

Mainline American psychology has been slow to identify and embrace a theory of the self, or to be clear about the differentiation of mind and brain. What various thinkers have termed the Self, the Essential Self, Organic Self, Core Self, Inmost Self, Ontological Self, etc.... is even further from standard psychological theory. However, many spiritual and psycho-spiritual traditions embrace such a reality and are providing a cutting edge for the field that will lead us into the future. This workshop will outline a phenomenological description of a larger self-characterized by mindful awareness, compassion, and wisdom, as distinguished from a multiplicity of historically conditioned and more limited parts that comprise one's ego. A number of contemporary theorists have developed theories of the essential self and methods for accessing it in the service of clinical work.

This workshop will experientially and theoretically differentiate ordinary versus contemplative consciousness in relation to the essential self, experiment with a number of



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approaches of contemporary theorists to using knowledge clinically, and provide participants with a packet of notes on the methods not explored for time reasons to experiment with at home.

presented by: **Greg Johanson, M. Div., Ph. D., NCC, LPC is a pastoral psychotherapist-professor-minister-writer-editor who leads trainings throughout the United States and internationally. He is a Senior Trainer of the Hakomi Institute, and an original trainer in Internal Family Systems**



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Half Day Programs

Thursday March 23rd, 9:00am – 12:00pm (P3 or P5)

Thursday March 23rd, 1:00pm – 4:00pm (P4 or P6)

P3/P5: “Clinical and Pastoral Approaches toward Counseling Transgender People of Faith”

In this half-day workshop, veteran “gender therapist” Laura Thor will introduce clinical and pastoral foundations for affirming transgender clients and families. The APA, NASW and ACA have set forth best practices for assessment and treatment planning for the wellbeing of gender dysphoric clients, and the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) has established Standards of Care to guide competent practice. Pastoral counselors serving as witnesses to transgender narratives are called to offer life-affirming theological anthropology supporting the spiritual journeys of those whose bodies do not incarnate their psychological/emotional/spiritual gender. This training will support the pastoral counselor’s own spiritual challenges with Biblical humor and a self-assessment of cultural humility for this work.

Laura Thor has worked with gender dysphoric adults and adolescents since 1994, after her former husband transitioned from man to woman. Her doctoral exit project is a curriculum for spiritual retreats for transgender people of faith. She has given this retreat in Colorado and Wisconsin, including with a Catholic Sister mentored by Laura. Laura’s article, published in the spiritual director’s journal Presence, is “Living in the Image of God: Transgender People in Spiritual Direction,” and can be read at www.transgenderspiritcounseling.com.

***presented by:* Laura A Thor, D. Min., LCSW**

P4/P6: “When Marital Stress Strikes: Differences in Clergy Couples’ Coping Skills”

CANCELLED