

# INFO CHANGE

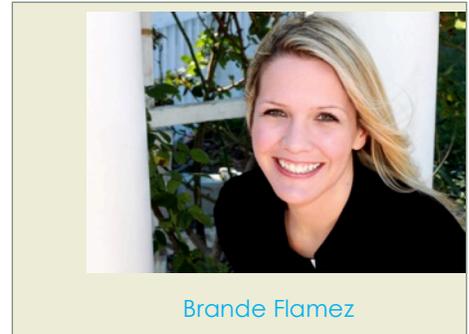
ASSOCIATION FOR HUMANISTIC COUNSELING

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear AHC Members,

These are exciting times for members of the Association for Humanistic Counseling.

One of my favorite professors had a sign hanging in his office. The sign read, "To give real service you must add something which cannot be bought or measured by money, and that is sincerity and integrity." What I have come to discover serving just a few months as AHC President is that every person you will read about below has put in countless hours and done so from a sincere and genuine commitment to service. There are several wonderful things going on within our division. I would like to take this time to inform all of you of the great changes taking place, but most importantly acknowledge the dedicated people who are responsible for these changes.



We are excited to announce the Call for Program Proposals for the AHC National Conference, which will be held June 5-6, 2015 in Cleveland, Ohio. The theme for this year's conference is "*Humanistic Counseling in Contemporary Times*." We are honored to have as our keynote speaker, Dr. James T. Hansen from Oakland University. The conference hotel is located in the theater district, and there are lots of fun sites to see. For further details, visit our Association website and click on the conference picture on the homepage. The deadline for submitting a program proposal is December 31, 2014. This is a great opportunity for professional development, and we are estimating over 300 attendees. The conference will include content sessions, round tables, and poster presentations, and attendees can earn up to 12 CEUs.

A big thank you goes out to AHC national conference chair, Martina Moore, conference associate, Stacey Litham, and the conference committee: Dr. Gary Szirony, Dana Matthews, Luis LaCourt, Lisette Colon-Perez, Chelsea Barnes, and Jeanne Taylor. I had a chance to visit with this committee and plan in September. I was blown away by their dedication and passion, as well as the amount of work they have done in such a short period of time. This committee has worked tirelessly to secure a conference hotel, create the proposals, involve the community and secure sponsors, and launch registration and proposals all online for the first time.

The Mission and Vision Committee chaired by Dr. Matthew Truelove and Dr. Mark School created a new AHC mission and vision statement that was approved by the AHC Executive Board. Thank you to all the committee members that helped revise and update our vision: Dr. Colette Dollarhide, James Hansen, Joel Givens, Linwood Veereen, Belinda Lopez, Megan Speciale, and Nazak Dadashazar.

The Bylaws/Ethics Committee, chaired by Drs. Donna Sheperis and Michelle Perepiczka, is working hard to update the bylaws of AHC. Our previous bylaws were over ten years old! The AHC Executive Committee has met several times this year to help finalize the bylaws and provide feedback to the committee. We are grateful for the work of the following committee members: Dr. Matthew Truelove-Lemberger, Dr. Mike Walsh, Dr. Mark Scholl, Cynthia Taylor, Paula Sanchez, and Rebecca Nate. Please

know how much the AHC Executive Board appreciates your feedback, thorough questions, and revisions.

The Emerging Leader program has updated their application process and the call for applications is now open! For the first time in AHC history, we will now have a total of 5 emerging leaders! Drs. Victoria Kress and Rick Cichetti have worked very hard to create a strong mentorship between the Emerging Leaders and officers. Each Emerging Leader is now paired with a committee member within the Emerging Leader Committee. In addition, the Emerging Leader is mentored by the chair of the committee he or she may be serving on. Thank you to Drs. Stephanie Erbert and Kathy Trebatoski for serving as mentors to the ELs. And thank you to all the committee members: Paul Smith, Stacey Litham, and Laurie McArthur for all your hard work!

The Awards Committee launched a call for AHC national award nominations. AHC is pleased to announce the call for nominations for AHC national awards and the Make a Difference Grant. Please consider nominating a counselor, colleague, and/or clinician. A big thank you to the award committee co-chairs: Drs. Jeff Cochran and Tracey Cally for organizing the awards and submitting announcements on various media sites.

We have a new and updated website, Facebook, and Twitter account! Many of you have probably noticed the new website. Elizabeth Hancock and Todd Prater worked extremely hard to update our website and make all conference registration and proposals available online. In addition, they are working with the Membership Chairs: Dr. Laura Haddock and Ann Ordway to create new member login IDs. We are in the process of creating these IDs, to provide upcoming services just for our members. If you have not already done so, please "Like" the AHC facebook page and invite your friends!

Martina Moore along with Dr. Gary Szirony helped establish the first AHC chapter in Ohio! The Ohio Chapter will have a strong presence at the conference.

We are preparing to launch our first AHC webinar. Shahnaz Khwaja, the Public Relations Chair, is helping secure our first AHC webinar to be hosted on our site. Please do reach out to her on our website if you have ideas about webinars you are interested in AHC providing.

Thank you for taking the time to read about all the wonderful things taking place in our division. It is an honor to serve as AHC President, and I look forward to our continued work together. Please do email me if you have any ideas for our division. I am always happy to listen and have our division continue to move in a positive direction.

With gratitude,

Brandee Flamez

## AHC MISSION AND VISION

### MISSION

We value the dignity of the individual and the right for each to function as an agentic human being in the context of social and cultural milieus. We value authentic human relationships that contribute to the actualization of individuals and communities. As such, we are devoted to facilitating the client's development and becoming in the world, holding the experience and authority of the client in the highest regard.

### VISION

To accomplish this Mission, the vision of the Association for Humanistic Counseling is to:

- (a) promote the growing body of theoretical, empirical, and applied knowledge about human development and potential;
- (b) encourage philosophical reflection on counseling practices and outcomes; and
- (c) advocate for counseling, supervisory, and educational policies and practices that benefit individuals within their communities, environments, and cultures.

### AHC Awards: Make a Difference Grant

Are You A Graduate Student in Counseling Conducting or Contemplating Research with Significant Humanistic Content?

If you are a graduate student considering or conducting research with significant humanistic content, which you expect to make a difference in the lives of persons in need, you may want to consider AHC's Make a Different Grant Award. The cost of even small graduate student research projects can really add up. As a way to support research projects with significant humanistic content that will make a difference in the lives of persons in need, AHC provides one Make a Different Grant per year. The grant is \$750 to support the expenses of the study.

In recent years we have been able to support, with funding and/or recognition, projects researching: how congruence, unconditional positive regard, and empathic understanding are actualized in child-centered play therapy; the role of elements of the person-centered counselor-client relationship in creating lasting change for women with serious mental disorders; "empathy for dads," coping and adjusting strategies for fathers of children with autistic spectrum disorders; effects of a teacher consultation model on classroom interactions; and group activity play therapy for behavioral problems of orphans in Uganda. Might your study be next?

Information is available in our AHC National Awards Packet in the Awards & Grant section of our AHC webpage <http://afhc.camp9.org/>. If you have further questions, contact Awards & Grant Committee co-chairs, Jeff L. Cochran & Tracy Calley, at [jcochr11@utk.edu](mailto:jcochr11@utk.edu) and [tkc23@txstate.edu](mailto:tkc23@txstate.edu)

## AHC National Awards

Nominate the Great Humanistic Counselors, Educators and Supervisors in Your Life for AHC National Awards

At ACA in 2014 we were very pleased to present 11 awards to impressively well-qualified nominees. Awardees were selected from a competitive class of great humanistic counselors, educators and supervisors, each honored with beautiful nominations from peers, friends, supervisors, students/former students and/or, in one case, a client. In each case the nominator took the opportunity to recognize the accomplishments and hard work of someone they admire and wish to hold up as an example.

As awards chair of recent years, I have greatly enjoyed facilitating the nominations and awards process, helping to amplify the conveyance of great respect and admiration of nominators to nominees. I have met or gotten to know better quite a number of exemplary humanistic counselors through this work. This year, Tracy Calley joins me as co-chair in this task that is a great honor and joy to undertake.

So, I write this announcement to encourage you to think of who you would like to uphold and honor as a great example of humanism in the counseling field. Nominations will be due in early January. So be thinking of who you would like to nominate!

Open award categories include: Humanistic Clinician, Humanistic Dissertation, Humanistic Advocacy & Social Justice, Humanistic Educator/Supervisor, Humanistic Leadership, Humanistic Impact (our award for a long-standing, influential and exemplary humanistic body of work in the counseling field), and the Joe & Lucille Hollis Publication Award.

Further information is available in our AHC National Awards Packet in the Awards & Grant section of our AHC webpage <http://afhc.camp9.org/>. If you have further questions, contact Awards & Grant Committee co-chairs, Jeff L. Cochran & Tracy Calley, at [jcochr11@utk.edu](mailto:jcochr11@utk.edu) and [tkc23@txstate.edu](mailto:tkc23@txstate.edu)

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## Article Review

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### Dialogical Approach Theory

Hermans, H. J. M. (2014). Self as a society of I-positions: A dialogical approach to counseling. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, 53, 134-159.

Reviewed by Greg A. Meyer, Northeastern State University

In a recent publication of the *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, Hermans embarked on a complex, fascinating, and intense journey into a dialogical approach to counseling. From the outset, Hermans' premise was that 'self' is considered as a minisociety of relatively autonomous I-positions that simultaneously function as part of the larger society.

The self, as stated by Hermans, is subjected to an increasing process of fragmentation, or disorganization of the self. Coherence and unity are also factors that must be recognized and

developed to prevent the self from falling apart. Hermans explained that both centering movements and decentering movements are necessary for an individual's adaptation and development. Decentering movements, which consist of multiplying, diversifying, and the recognition of multiplicity of the self, are strongly emphasized in postmodernist conceptions focused on a balanced view of self and identity. Centering movements, which consist of unifying, coherence-promoting, and organizing of the self, have been self-evident in modernist views focused on continuity and adaptation of the self. Hermans viewed these seemingly opposing positions as equivalent and mutually complementing phases, which formed the base of a broader and more balanced view of self and identity.

A brief background regarding the extension of self was then provided. Proposed by William James, the extension of the self relates to the idea that people and things in the environment, as far as they are felt as mine or as belonging to me, are considered to be properties of an extended self. In a similar way, Hermans provided a brief background of Bakhtin's polyphonic novel, composed of a number of independent and mutually opposing viewpoints, embodied by characters involved in dialogical relationships. Each "my" is not subordinate, but are standing beside him, disagreeing, rebelling, and interacting with their creator.

Complete with figures and charts, the dialogical self-theory was developed in detail, prior to demonstrating its utilization in a case study regarding a 38-year-old man, named Richard. In its most concise formulation, the dialogical self can be conceived of as a dynamic multiplicity of relatively autonomous I-positions in the society of mind. As in the larger society, these I-positions can receive a voice and address each other in a variety of ways. Following the case study, Hermans discussed the emergence of a dialogical space, which is described as an invisible arena with semipermeable boundaries from its surroundings, where participants are involved in interchanges in which experiences, insights, and discoveries emerge, not reducible to either party, but have resulted from the generative dialogical process itself. Essentially, the author asserted that the value of the theory is to assist the client in finding a dialogical space, whatever it may be.

Metaposition was then discussed as an overview of a greater variety of specific positions, which included mutual links and associated voices with three functions. In its unifying function, it brings together different positions to prevent fragmentation. In its executive function, it assists in decision making and choosing directions. In its liberating function, it halts automatic and habitual behavior produced by maladaptive patterns of positions.

Hermans then addressed the difficulty, in the current globalized existence, to develop a multivoiced and dialogical self. Following this stance, the author introduced methods for investigating and stimulating the dialogical self, which included the PPR method, and the Composition method. The PPR method provides a systematic and verbal research procedure, based on a stage metaphor that can be explained to the client. The emphasis of the PPR method is on an explicit, verbal, cognitive, conscious, scientific, and systematic approach to taking metapositions and their dialogical processing. The Composition method is more artistic and nonverbal, as well as more sensitive to the less conscious layers of the self. The composition work allows entrance into implicit, nonverbal, affective, less conscious, artistic, and expressive realms of the self.

In this article, the author did many things. Hermans expressed how his intention in writing the article was to explain the psychology of I-positions and their possible relevance to counseling. The article is lengthy and complex. It is simply not an article you can expect to spend less than an evening diving into and comprehending the complexity of Hermans' theory. In fact, reviewing the article proved to be cumbersome, not because of a lack of quality, but because of the depth and nuance of ideas presented throughout the 25 pages. I compare the experience of reading it to reading a chapter in a book on theories.

The theory itself is presented in a clear way with attention to detail, and particular intentionality paid to informing readers of the background used to construct such theoretical thought. Each piece of

background information was followed with a section using those previous frameworks to draw attention to their relevance in Hermans' theory. Unlike some articles suggesting fresh theoretical ideas that focus more on the conceptual presentation, this article provided a case study to help drive home the theory in a practical manner. The organization and attention to detail of the author help make this a valuable read.

While reading the article, I continued referencing back to a thought that remained in my mind- why is this published in the *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*? I found a few explanations for this repeated question. One's experiences are nuanced and distinct. The language we use with clients may often be reductionistic, focusing on roles and the process of making sense of those roles. However, this theory allows sensitivity to be applied to the variety of oppositional and contradictive parts of the self. From this, clients might be able to explore, connect with, and experience their fragmentation, which is a hallmark of growth and development. Likewise, the theory brings into focus the mutual nature of centering movements which unify and balance the self, symbolizing the integration of new challenging frameworks. Another explanation regards the increase in a client's cognitive complexity. The ability for a client to consider multiple lenses of a specific occurrence is a byproduct of the theory. Lastly, the theory is practical to nearly any client with any concern.

The theory may potentially draw attention to the personality aspects of a globalized self. Additionally, the theory stresses a key point regarding the self's need to experience decentering movements as well as centering movements. This is a useful article that will spark discussion and ideas among counselors. It is a significant commitment to gather and secure all of the rich information and ideas presented in the article, but it is a useful commitment.

## NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE: DR. AMANDA EVANS

Blake Sandusky



This issue of *Infochange* is proud to these articles with how I have been

members. This article is different because am lucky to not only be in contact with Dr. Evans, but to count her as an invaluable assess to my own learning and growth as a counselor education student at Auburn University. I personally know that her determination to help her student to grow and to become the best counselors and educators they can be is at the center of her work as a professor and mentor. I have been able to talk with her about her own experiences with humanistic practice and research along with her own journey in counseling and counselor education.

spotlight Dr. Amanda Evans. I usually start lucky to be in contact with certain

Dr. Evans life path did not always include counseling but she was always focused on wanting to help others. She initially received a degree in religious education. She contributes her shift to studying professional counseling to a Benedictine monk who was also her advisor. Her advisor was able to see her desire to help others as being central to her life goal. After discussions with her advisor she decided to shift her focus to counseling as way to help others who wanted to change and grow.

She first became involved with AHC as a reviewer for the Journal of Humanistic Counseling during her time as a counselor educator at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. She relates this time in her life as being very instrumental in her growth as a researcher and in her connection with humanistic research and practice. She first knew that AHC was going to be her divisional home after meeting members during a JHC editorial board meeting and seeing how open and friendly members were.

Her description of humanistic work as being non-directive, process-oriented, and phenomenological informs her practice and her development as a counselor. She contributes her overall development as a humanistic educator and counselor to "life changing" supervision and her experiences with clients as a doctoral level practicum student. In her work with homeless men she experienced difficulty in trying to help "fix" the issues that her client's faced. It was when she began to look at deeper meanings and to discuss her client's own understanding of himself and the human condition that she was able to develop and learn more about her client than the four previous sessions combined!

She conceptualizes humanistic work as a larger umbrella that can incorporate many different theories and conceptualization of clients and counseling work. The important aspects of humanistic practice include striving to seek the good in people and the appreciation for the human experience. She is always surprised by the human condition and how people are able to see themselves and their own meaning development and purpose.

Finally, her advice to students or counselors who want to incorporate humanistic counseling into their work with clients is to focus on the use of microskills to hear the client's story. She describes her development and difficulty with seeing microskills as being "too simplistic" as a student, but in her development as a professional counselor, coming to see how important and influential these skills can be in the use with clients.

I would like to personally thank Dr. Evans for being influential to me as a developing counselor educator and the many other students she has influenced. Dr. Evans is also the featured member on the AHC website. Go to <http://afhc.camp9.org/Member-Spotlight> to read more from Dr. Evans. If you would like to nominate someone for the member spotlight section please email Blake Sandusky at [wbs0008@auburn.edu](mailto:wbs0008@auburn.edu) or [infochange@gmail.com](mailto:infochange@gmail.com).

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

Greetings, dear readers. It is my pleasure to address AHC in this, our second edition of InfoChange. I would like to reiterate that Jennifer and I appreciate your patience in our continued attempts to find our editorial voice within the newsletter. We have received some suggestions and we are earnestly trying to figure out how to best serve our division through InfoChange.

Finding voice can often be a cumbersome, albeit exciting, undertaking. Authenticity has been a theme in my life over the past few months and continuing working with InfoChange has been an extension of this salient concept. Authenticity can be difficult to find within our respective worlds. We are inundated with voices of others: our families, colleagues, fellow students, professors, and the media to name a few. Discovering our authentic voice in the midst of this postmodern din requires the utmost effort and diligence, but it is something that must needs be accomplished for our sake, and the sake of our client's, students, and families.

The first step is discernment and discovery. We must attune ourselves to our voice, training ourselves to listen to something that is seemingly small in the presence of all the noise that life throws at us. The second step is acting on that voice; a step which requires courage and confidence. Sometimes our

voice will go against the flow, but the authenticity that results is inevitably beneficial, for authenticity births joyful living. Joyful living is infectious and can infiltrate the lives of those around us, families, students, and clients.

I challenge you, dear readers, to find your authentic voice in this changing of seasons. Listen to the whispers that challenge you to be your own person, unique and beautiful. Ask yourself the questions: What do I want? What do I need? How do I want to serve? Take time to reflect on these questions and answer them with your own voice and take delight in the joyful results.

Russell Pyle, 11/1/14

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