

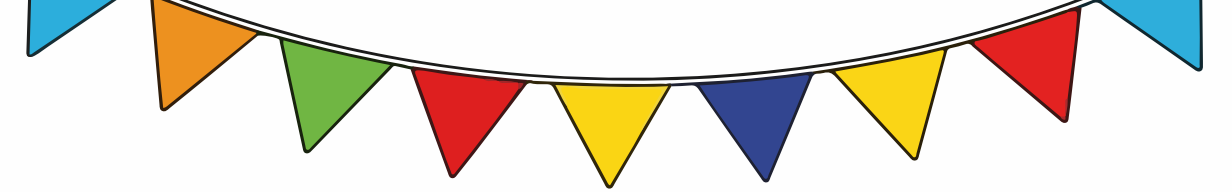
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

2026 SUMMER WORKSHOP

# THE PLAYFUL PATH: EXPLORING AUTHENTIC CONNECTION



June 24 - 28, 2026 | CALLAWAY GARDENS, PINE MOUNTAIN, GA



## **THE PLAYFUL PATH: EXPLORING AUTHENTIC CONNECTION**

We invite you to join us this year in delving more fully into our playful selves. We welcome all parts of you as we enter together into this container—the silly, fun parts, and the angry, resistant, 'not playful' parts. We acknowledge that to some, the idea of accessing our playful parts is joyful, and to others, very uncomfortable. All of these parts will add to the richness of our experience.

We want to acknowledge that our surrounding society and world are not in a playful place. In fact, it seems that every day we are collectively faced with an issue, headline, or news update that reminds us of how violent and dissociated our adult selves can be. Thus, our theme emerged from an acknowledgement that the child within each of us desperately needs our attention. With this, we hold the belief that healing and changes are possible if we can access this child, acknowledge their wounds, and remember our ability to play, and to be joyful and present in each moment.

Our focus is on bringing parts of our inner child back into the fold of our adult selves, allowing our child to teach us, remind us, and be heard, for both their wisdom and wounds. We offer a space for all of us to be reminded that our playfulness can connect us to a perhaps forgotten part of ourselves.

We invite you to open yourselves to re-discovering the child within you—to allow them to play as wildly, loosely, tentatively, happily, angrily, competitively or grumpily as they will. Together, we can reconnect with possibly long-neglected parts of ourselves and offer this wisdom more fully to the communities we serve. We hope you and your inner child will join us!

**Ellen Connell,  
Daryl Gincherman,  
Maria Thestrup,  
*Tri-Chairs***



**"The opposite of play is not  
work. It's depression"**

— Brian Sutton-Smith



# Callaway Resort and Gardens



Located just an hour's drive from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta airport, Callaway Resort and Gardens offers comfortable accommodations and plenty of options for outdoor adventure and play! With recently updated guest rooms and suites, or cozy cottages (perfect for family groups), there are multiple options to choose from for your stay. The Lodge offers 150 guest rooms and suites, all with balconies and views of the lake, woodlands, or gardens. Several cozy, two-bed, two-bath cottages with screened porches provide welcoming meeting places for family groups or groups of friends. While your meals will be provided during our Summer Workshop, the resort also offers other dining options. The Azalea market sells coffee and quick bites, while the Piedmont Dining Room serves eclectic Southern-style cuisine and is open for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. You can also order meals from the Lodge restaurants: the Piedmont Dining Room and Cason's Tap Room or you can call room service.

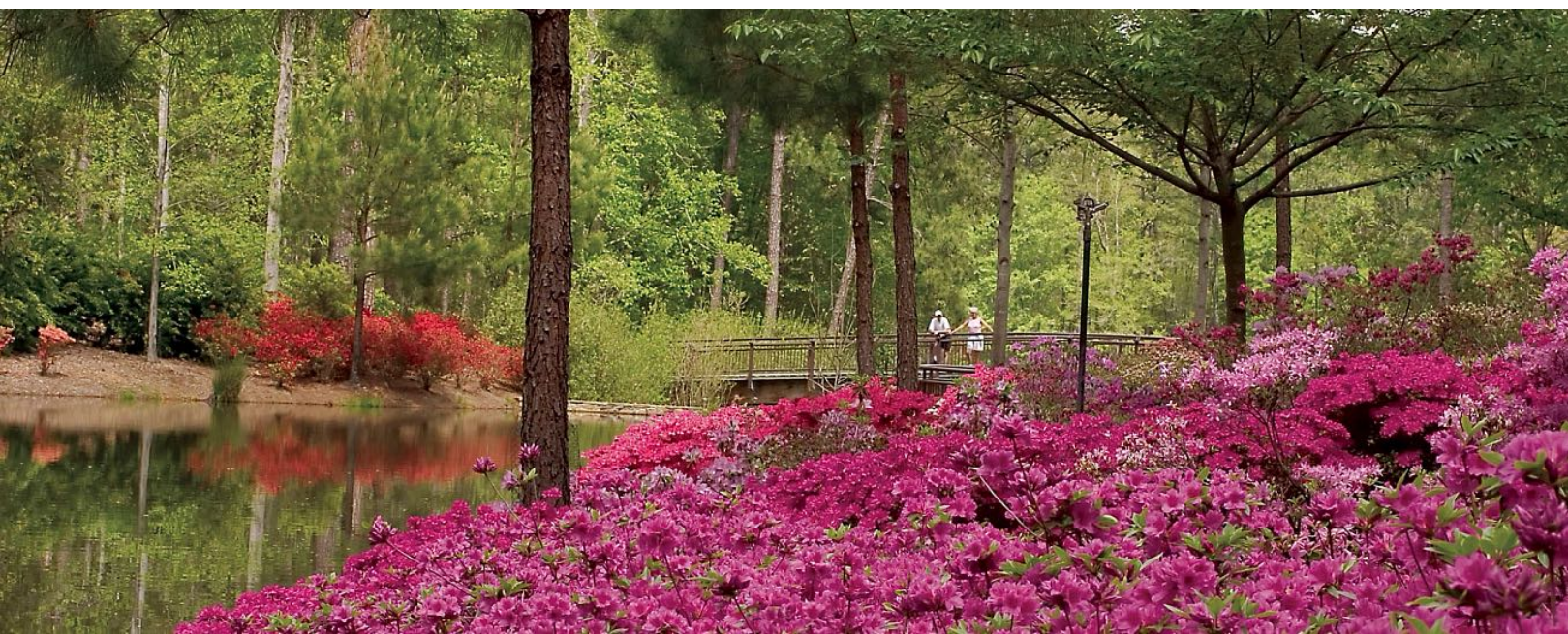


## MAKE YOUR OWN HOTEL ROOM RESERVATION

Members will need to make their own hotel reservations at Callaway. **Please call 1-800-225-5292** to reserve your room, and be sure to **ask for the AAP Summer Workshop 2026 room block to get the discounted rate of \$209/night** (plus taxes). There are two cottages each with two bedrooms with two queen-sized beds in each bedroom being held at a discounted rate on a first-come, first-served basis. If more than two groups want to reserve cottages, others should be available at the normal Callaway rate. Also, check their website for room details, [www.CallawayGardens.com](http://www.CallawayGardens.com). The conference rate will be available from Sunday 6/21 to Wednesday 6/30, in case you'd like to come early or stay after!

## THE RESORT:

Callaway Resort and Gardens provides a perfect setting for embracing your inner child and engaging in play. For awe-inspiring solo play, you can immerse yourself in 2500 acres of woodland trails sprinkled with exhibition centers dedicated to butterflies, birds of prey, pioneer living, and habitats of local flora. Be serenaded by songbirds as you quietly glide over bike paths



or joyfully amble through the woods. Watch the colorful butterflies play at the Cecil B. Day Butterfly Center. Be thrilled by the Birds of Prey demonstration at the Discovery Amphitheater. Glimpse the past and its challenging simplicity while visiting the Pioneer Log Cabin. Soothe your spirit with a journey to the Ida Cason Memorial Chapel. Find solitude in the Meadowlark Garden or the Hydrangea Garden. Grab your friends and engage in water play at Robin Lake Beach, one of the swimming pools, or Aqua Island—the inflatable water park. Enjoy a game of golf at one of the resort's two beautiful golf courses. Arrange ahead for your tee-times at (706-663-699). Thrill seekers can zip-line through the tree tops at the Tree Top Adventure. Or, enjoy the beautiful water views with a kayak or boat excursion. After all the fun, relax with a variety of luxurious treatments by appointment at the Spa at Callaway.

**Explore all that Callaway Gardens has to offer and make your hotel reservations, appointments, and tee-times at [www.callawaygardens.com](http://www.callawaygardens.com) or 1-800-CALLAWAY.**



## SUMMER WORKSHOP 2026 MISSION STATEMENT:

As humans, we learn how to interact with the world and with others through play. We learn about connection and relationships through cooperative play, and we learn about aggression and power through competitive play. Through silliness and fun, we learn to relieve stress and to enjoy our human experience. As adults, however, we sometimes forget the transformative impact that play has on our lives.

The mission of Summer Workshop 2026 is to help members reignite their inner playfulness and explore authentic connection through the eyes of a child at play. We believe that playfulness, whether solitary, cooperative, or competitive, is a resource that can build resilience, creativity, and stronger relationships. Through play-oriented workshops, activities, and environments, we hope to create the possibility of self-discovery that only comes when one accesses their inner capacity for play.



**Play is not a luxury.  
Play is a necessity.**

Kay Redfield Jamison

## CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES:

1. Describe at least three developmental or relational functions of play (e.g., connection, stress relief, power dynamics) as they relate to both childhood and adult experiences.
2. Demonstrate increased capacity for spontaneous, play-based engagement by participating in at least two experiential activities designed to evoke cooperative, competitive, or solitary play.
3. Define and apply therapeutic strategies that incorporate spontaneous, play-based engagement by participating in at least two experiential activities demonstrating clinical uses of cooperative, competitive, or solitary play within a psychotherapeutic context.
4. Develop one actionable plan to incorporate play-informed strategies into their clinical or interpersonal work, supported by workshop insights and personal reflection.

# GETTING TO CALLAWAY GARDENS FOR SUMMER WORKSHOP:

Beautiful Callaway Resort and Gardens is located in Pine Mountain, Georgia, 75 miles southwest of Atlanta's Hartsfield Jackson International Airport (ATL - a 60-90 minute drive). Columbus Airport (CSG) is approximately 30 minutes away and is only served by Delta and American airlines. The best ways of traveling to the resort are: carpooling with Atlantans, arranging shuttle transportation (see below), or renting a car. ATL is the world's busiest airport, so allow extra time to get through it.



**Driving:** The resort is spread out over 2,500 beautiful acres so it can be confusing to know exactly where to go. Please review the following most frequently accessed arrival points. If your GPS device isn't cooperating or if you would like to speak to someone, do call the resort at 844-512-3826. We suggest using Google Maps: Lodge and Spa 4500 Southern Pine Drive Pine Mountain GA 31822. If you are using a GPS system, enter the intersection of GA Hwy. 354 and U. S. Hwy. 27. To reach the Lodge and Spa, travel

west approximately one mile, turn left at the large Callaway Gardens sign, take next left at stop sign onto Southern Pine Dr., travel through one stop sign, and take the next left at Lodge and Spa sign and proceed to optional valet service or check in and unload your car at the lodge entrance before self-parking.



**Shuttle:** As of now, we have arrangements for two shuttles to leave Hartsfield Jackson International Airport on Wednesday June 24th, with two trips back to the airport on Sunday morning. The trip should last between 75-90 minutes depending on traffic and since ATL is a large airport we recommend you plan to arrive at least an hour in advance of the shuttle departure to claim your baggage. On the return, you probably want to arrive at the airport about two hours prior to departure. One way trips will also be available.

**The shuttle costs are: Round trip \$100, one way \$60.**

Feel free to contact me if I can be of any assistance with your journey,  
**Darrin Bronfman**, [darrinbronfman@gmail.com](mailto:darrinbronfman@gmail.com) for e-mail. 404-668-2307 Text only please.



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The land that Callaway Gardens sits on was originally owned by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. The Muscogee Creek Nation inhabited land that includes Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida. British Settlers called the Muscogee people "Creek" because of the large amounts of rivers, creeks and streams that were on their land. In 1825, their land was ceded to the State of Georgia through the Treaty of Indian Springs. After the treaty, the remaining Creek people were forcibly removed and relocated due to the Indian Removal Act of 1830.

Cason Callaway purchased the land for Callaway Gardens in 1930. At this time, the land was consolidated from former cotton plantations.

We honor the Muscogee Nation and all those who worked, suffered, lived, and loved the land that we will enjoy during this conference. We are mindful of its history and grateful for the opportunity to connect more deeply with ourselves and others here.



# PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT POLICY - PEP

The Professional Environment Policy (PEP) specifies AAP's process to repair, correct and prevent harmful interactions within sponsored events. The Academy is dedicated to fostering a diverse and inclusive community that develops the person of the therapist through authentic interpersonal engagement. Because our organization values authentic, enlivening process, and connection through which individual and interpersonal learning can thrive, ruptures are inevitable. This is a shared responsibility upheld through the practice of informed consent. Persons who experience harm can contact on-site ombuds to assist and consult with individuals about taking steps to feel safe for the duration of the event. The ombuds for this conference are Charrise Hipol and Ron del Moro. The full policy, including reporting mechanisms, is available on the AAP website, which you can access by clicking on the QR code.



## ADA NOTICE: AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

ADA accommodation will be made in accordance with the law. If you require ADA accommodation, please indicate your needs at the time of registration. We cannot ensure the availability of appropriate accommodations without prior notification.

## NEED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO COME TO SW?

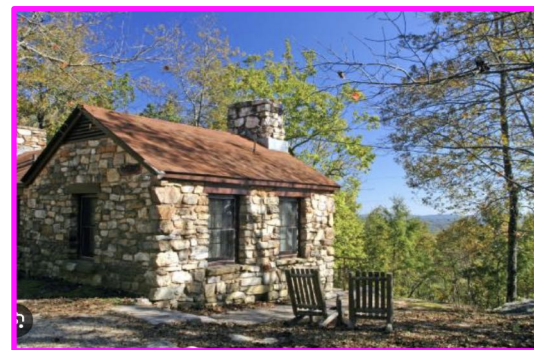
Remember the Relief Trust Fund is available for members who ask for financial relief. Gordon Cohen is Chair of the Relief Trust and Endowment board and [you may request funds directly from Gordon](#). Requests remain confidential and only the RTF Board Chair and AAP Treasurer are privy to this information.

# ACTIVITIES NEAR CALLAWAY GARDENS

## F.D. Roosevelt State Park

Roosevelt State Park includes lots of hiking opportunities. Some are the Pine Mountain Trail and FDR's favorite picnic site, where he hosted family barbecues.

- Roosevelt Stables (FDR State Park) - Book your ride at nearby Roosevelt Stables: 706-628-7463
- Roosevelt's Little White House, Warm Springs, GA - Built in 1932 as a healing retreat for FDR, visitors can tour FDR's home, which has been carefully preserved  
<https://gastateparks.org/LittleWhiteHouse>



## SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES DURING THE SW:

### Slow Running

Jonas Horwitz is leading a slow-running group every morning during Summer Workshop. If you are interested in joining, just meet down in the lobby at 7:00 am. You should find yourself back by 7:45 am.

### Yoga Movement Blend

Come experience morning yoga with a twist with Angela Cerkevich on Thursday morning. This gentle, calming class incorporates flowing movements, passive and supported postures, and simple breath work. Meet Angela in the lobby at 7am on Thursday morning.

### Softball Tournament

Come one, come all! Everyone has a place on the AAP diamond. Bring your lucky mitt. Bats and balls will be provided. Please join us on Saturday afternoon 3:15 - 6:15pm following the community meeting for our SW tradition: the annual softball tournament. Sign-up sheet and transportation information will be posted on the bulletin board at registration. "And it's one, two, three strikes you're IN" for a fun-filled afternoon and memories to last a lifetime. Organized by Anthony Hampton

## 12-Step Meeting

AAP offers a 12-step meeting at lunch on Thursday. In keeping with the spirit of 12-step at AAP, participants from all 12-step programs are welcome. Information will be available at the registration desk on the bulletin board. Debbie Granovsky will host Thursday's lunch meeting.

## Community Meetings:

The daily community meeting is an integral part of the conference--a space for all members to connect on equal footing in a large group format. These meetings challenge us to grow our capacities to listen deeply and speak authentically. As a large group, community meetings are a microcosm of the world we live in--they mirror both the potential for healing and the persistence of historical and cultural divisions that make authentic dialogue challenging. A team of facilitators (Debbara Dingman, Lisa Makstein, Tyler Beach, with guidance from Hallie Lovett) will work to encourage dialogue, listening, and witnessing, to create a container and the opportunity for diverse and creative voices to be heard.



## AAP Town Hall

The AAP Town Hall, hosted by the Executive Committee (Kristie Nies, Meredith Albert, Catherine Clemmer, Lyn Sommer, Kelly Ezickson), will be an inclusive, interactive meeting designed to foster dialogue between leadership and membership. It's a chance for us to engage directly, listen to ideas and concerns, and discuss the direction of AAP as we continue to evolve. The Town Hall will take place from 1:30 - 2:45 on Friday.

Here's a breakdown of the format:

1. Introduction and community updates: Brief news updates and milestones within AAP and our broader community.
2. Open community forum/Q&A Session: A dedicated time for you, as members, to share your thoughts, ask questions, and raise concerns directly with leadership.
3. Recap and plan: A summary of what we've learned together and actionable steps moving forward.

## Open Process Groups:

Open process groups begin Wednesday night after the opening experience. The open process groups are led by experienced Academy members and will occur Wednesday from 8:30 pm - 10:00 pm and Thursday from 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm, with the option to continue without a leader on Friday evening from 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm. These are open to anyone--both first-timers and veteran members who are not currently in a family/peer group. This new group has the potential to develop into a family/peer group. If you want to be in an open process group, you will sign up for it on the registration form, in addition to the workshops that you choose.

### BIPOC Open Process Group

This lightly led group is for members who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color, and provides a connecting space to process the workshop experience. More information regarding meeting times will be made available at the Registration Desk when you arrive at the Summer Workshop.



### Diversity Lunches

Attitudes and terms have changed the terrain of how we might address "isms." The diversity lunch format invites dialogue drawn from reconciliation work and differs structurally from AAP community meetings. We can all learn from each other. All you need to bring is your open mind and sense of curiosity to create space for sharing. Information and lunch location will be posted at registration. \*Thursday and Friday lunch, hosted by Liz Marsh, Hannah Hawkins-Esther, and Renee Burwell.

### THE OPENING EXPERIENCE

As our community sits together for the first time at this workshop, our opening experience invites you to bring yourself into the room, to engage with our theme and to begin your journey.

### Random Process Groups (No CEs)

On Sunday morning before the conference closing, random process groups are available. We meet in randomly assigned small groups to reflect and process our experience at the conference. These are leaderless groups that often help integrate and expand on your overall conference experience. Group assignments will be posted at the registration desk.

### The Closing Experience:

When the random process groups are over, we begin our closing experience. This the last opportunity to share your experience with the community as we transition from an intense five-day workshop back to family, friends, home, and work.



**"Those who play rarely become brittle in the face of stress or lose the healing capacity for humor."**

— Stuart Brown, MD

# SUMMER WORKSHOP 2026 COMMITTEE

**Ellen Connell, Daryl Gincherman & Maria Thestrup**  
Tri-Chairs

**Susan Diamond & Lisa Smith-Klohn**  
Program Co-Chairs

**Meredith Albert**  
Treasurer

**Darrin Bronfman**  
Transportation

**Wendy Graham**  
CE Consultant

**Charrise Hipol**  
Brochure

**Jenny Leach**  
Rooms

**Jeremy Mohler & Zach Pyne**  
Hospitality Suite

**Gayle Neufeld**  
Activities Coordinator and  
Medical Consultant

**Lori Oshrain**  
Mentor & Advisor

**Daniel Turetsky**  
A/V Consultant

**Linda Tillman**  
Brochure Consultant



## NEW TO SUMMER WORKSHOP 2026?

### As you embark on this journey, join us and connect!

If you have never attended a Summer Workshop with AAP or if you are a brand-new member, we would like to extend a special welcome to you at this Summer Workshop 2026.



As part of this welcome, we invite your participation in two events on Wednesday afternoon. We hold these smaller group gatherings to guide and orient you toward a full and connected experience. There are many treasures available here for you at Summer Workshop.

The first event is the orientation group for all new members and new Summer Workshop attendees. The goal of this one-hour group is to help you map out your own journey in AAP and provide a time to connect with others in a laid-back setting before the workshops begin on Thursday morning. This group will be from 4:00-5:00 on Wednesday. Please arrange your travel accordingly so that you can attend and be with us from the start of this group.

The second opportunity is the Newcomer's Reception at 5:00-5:45 on Wednesday evening, which we will all join immediately following the orientation group outlined above. We will introduce you to the larger group as our honored new members. Everyone is invited to join us at this reception to welcome those who are new to AAP. The reception is immediately followed by dinner and then the opening experience. We look forward to being with you.

### The Membership and Mentoring Committee

Erin McCarthy, Nelia Rivers, Barbara Thomason, Susan Diamond, Abby MacDonald and Elena Scher



### Hospitality Suite

Each evening, Jeremy Mohler and Zach Pyne invite you to the hospitality suite to connect, have fun, and unwind. Continue conversations, meet new people, get a yummy bite to eat, and relax. There may even be a sing-along! Even if you're an introvert or desperately needing a break, we'll offer games and other activities for recharging without the pressure of socializing.

Continuing a longstanding tradition, we invite the AAP community to bring sweet or savory homemade treats to add to the collective experience. We also appreciate anyone willing to take a volunteering shift at the suite—if you're interested, email Jeremy at [jeremyLmohler@gmail.com](mailto:jeremyLmohler@gmail.com). Can't wait to see you there!

ZZZ



### Cookout and Beach Party

Join us outside on Friday evening, on the lawn overlooking the Callaway lakefront, for a relaxed community cookout and beach-themed party. Enjoy classic cookout favorites, with vegetarian options available, while taking in the fresh air and scenic waterfront views. Wear your beach gear if you'd like, and feel free to bring your food and beach chair down to the lakefront. Join in beach or lawn games, take a refreshing swim in the

lake, or simply relax and connect with friends and colleagues. With food, fun, and fellowship, this casual evening offers something for everyone!



# SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24

- 12:00pm — 5:00pm..... Registration
- 2:00pm — 5:15pm..... Training Institutes
- 4:00pm — 5:00pm..... Newcomer Orientation
- 5:00pm — 5:45pm..... Newcomer Reception (cash bar)
- 6:00pm — 7:15pm..... Opening Experience/Community Meeting
- 7:15pm — 8:30pm..... Dinner/Cash Bar
- 8:30pm — 10:00pm..... Open Process Groups/Family Groups

## THURSDAY, JUNE 25

- 7:00am — 8:00am..... Yoga/Slow Running
- 7:30am — 11:30am..... Grab and Go Breakfast
- 9:00am — 12:15pm..... Workshops and Training Institutes
- 12:15pm — 1:30pm..... Lunch and Diversity lunch, 12 Step meeting
- 1:45pm — 3:00pm..... Community meeting
- 3:15pm — 6:00pm..... Family groups
- 5:15pm — 6:15pm..... Memorial Service
- 6:30pm — 8:00pm..... Dinner
- 8:00pm — 10:00pm..... Open Process Groups/Family Groups

## FRIDAY, JUNE 26

- 7:00am — 8:00am..... Slow Running
- 7:30am — 11:30am..... Grab and Go Breakfast
- 9:00am — 12:15pm..... Workshops
- 12:15pm — 1:15pm..... Lunch, Diversity lunch
- 1:30pm — 2:45pm..... Town Hall
- 3:00pm — 4:00pm..... Community Meeting
- 4:15pm — 6:15pm..... Open Process Groups/Family Groups
- 6:30pm — 8:00pm..... Dinner--Cookout and Beach party
- 8:00pm — 10:00pm..... Open Process Groups/Family Groups

## SATURDAY JUNE 27

- 7:00am — 8:00am..... Slow Running
- 7:30am — 11:30am..... Grab & Go Breakfast
- 9:00am — 12:15pm..... Workshops
- 12:15pm — 1:30pm..... Lunch
- 1:45pm — 3:00pm..... Community meeting
- 3:15pm — 6:15pm..... Family Groups/Softball Tournament
- 6:15pm — 6:45pm..... Pre-dinner social (cash bar)
- 6:45pm — 8:30pm..... Dinner, Awards, Recognition
- 8:30pm — 11:30pm..... DANCE!

## SUNDAY, JUNE 28

- 7:30am — 11:30am..... Grab & Go Breakfast
- 8:15am — 9:15am..... Random Process Groups
- 9:30am — 11:00am..... Closing Experience

**“Sometimes people forget  
that play is learning and  
learning is play.”**

- Peter Dixon



## TRAINING INSTITUTES

### TI<sub>A/B</sub>. Sex Therapy and Consultation Training Institute

(6CEs, 8 Participants)

*Note: CEs will be approved individually for each session attended. This is part two of a two-year program, limited to those who attended part one last summer.*

Sexuality plays a significant role in human development, relationships, and life in general. Sexuality is foundational to human development and relationships, yet clinical training frequently underprepares providers to address sexual concerns competently, revealing a significant gap in clinical expertise. This Training Institute (TI) meets annually at summer workshops and runs for two years, ending in 2026. Each six-hour TI meeting includes a three-hour presentation and feedback/discussion on a topic relevant to sexuality and relationships, and three hours for case consultation/discussion on the topic of the meeting.

#### STEVE EICHEL

Steve K. D. Eichel is a licensed, board-certified psychologist with over 40 years of experience. He holds MS and PhD degrees from the University of Pennsylvania and advanced certificates in sex therapy, addictions, and clinical hypnosis.

#### ANNI TUIKKA

Anni Tuikka is a psychosexual therapist and supervisor. She provides individual, relationship, and sexuality therapy in Georgia. She has a PhD in clinical sexology from Modern Sex Therapy Institutes (Florida). Her research focuses on societal factors that may contribute to consensual non-monogamy becoming more common.



**“Fun does not come in sizes”**

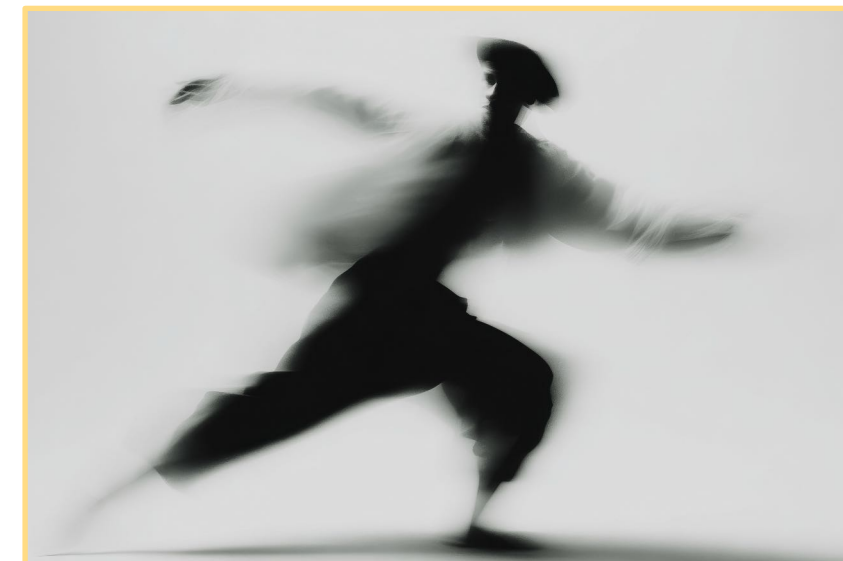
- Bart Simpson

## TWO DAY WORKSHOPS, THURSDAY/FRIDAY - 9 AM - 12:00 PM

### 1<sub>A/B</sub>. Play in the Midst of Disaster

(6CEs, 12 Participants)

Participants will connect with their inner child parts and embody positive parenting. We will invoke the power of experiencing movement, imagination, play, and creative flow, individually, in dyads, and as a group. This workshop models how to safeguard vulnerable internal experiences and translate them into clinical environments that support a full range of emotional expression—from distress and disconnection to curiosity, play, and relational repair. Participants will examine how these strategies can be adapted for treatment planning and client interventions to promote regulation, coping skill development, and emotionally supportive care.



#### DEVA JOY GOUSS

Deva Joy Gouss, LCSW, is an experiential therapist who works with groups, couples, and individuals. She has evolved her own style of experiential therapy, rooted in psychomotor therapy and the power of ritual. She facilitates the Marrying Yourself Journey and has published books on grief and a workbook for living with illness.

#### KELLY BARCLAY

Kelly Barclay, PsyD, is a licensed psychologist in private practice in Huntington Beach, California. She has been in practice for 30 years and works with older adolescents and adults in individual therapy as well as with couples and families. She believes “play” can be an adaptive coping strategy for people of all ages.



## 2<sub>A/B</sub>. Yes, And: The Playful Path to Authentic Connection

(6CEs, 12 Participants)

Discover how the principles of improvisation—presence, play, and “Yes, And”—can deepen authentic connection with clients in therapeutic work. Through experiential exercises and reflection, participants will explore how improv fosters attunement, empathy, and flexibility in both therapist and client. No performance experience required - just curiosity and a willingness to play!

### LAURA FLEMING

Laura Fleming has been in private practice in Rochester, New York for 35 years. She has been trained in DBT and has led DBT Skills Training groups for many years. She has been studying improv for more than 10 years and firmly believes that improv has improved the quality of her work as a psychotherapist.



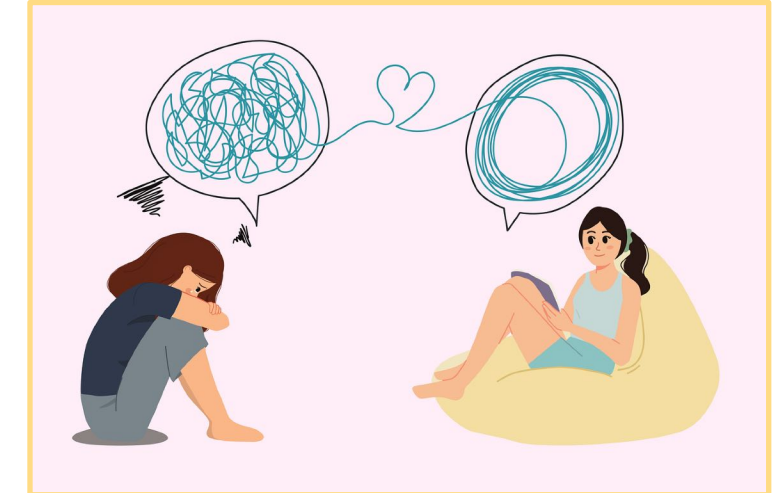
## 4<sub>A/B</sub>. The Power of Symbols in Psychotherapy

(6CEs, 12 participants)

This experiential workshop explores how clinicians can work with symbols to deepen understanding and facilitate transformation in their clients. Integrating multiple theoretical approaches, participants will learn to recognize and engage symbols through case examples and group exercises/process, enhancing their capacity for culturally sensitive, symbolically attuned psychotherapy.

### ROBIN KNOBLACH

Robin Knoblach, PhD, is a clinical psychologist in private practice in Herndon, Virginia, with 29 years of experience working with adults, children, and families. Dr. Knoblach's work emphasizes the healing power of symbols and metaphor in fostering connection, meaning, and psychological growth with clients of all ages.



## 3<sub>A/B</sub>. Play is the Thing to Catch the Conscience of the King

(6 CEs, 15 Participants)

Most men only know how to play when a ball is involved; they have lost the sense of play they had as boys. In this workshop, we will work toward unlearning the restrictions and societal demands that have kept men from knowing how to be playful. As men—and as therapists working with men—it is essential that we know how to be playful and give ourselves and our clients the freedom and ability to play. This workshop for men will be both experiential and didactic.

### MURRAY SCHER

A Past-President and Fellow of AAP and a Fellow of APA, Murray Scher holds a PhD in counseling psychology. Over a 55-year career, his scholarship has examined male gender roles, their relationship to psychotherapy, and the broader dynamics of the psychotherapeutic process. Despite all that, he has not forgotten how to play and be playful.

### MARVICE MARCUS

Marvice D. Marcus, PhD, is a licensed psychologist in Durham, North Carolina. He maintains a private practice and oversees a clinical training program. Marvice is an avid reader with interests ranging from psychoanalysis to cultural studies and critical social theory, to Black epistemologies.



## 5<sub>A/B</sub>. The Joy of Play in Practice: The Ethical Imperative of Enjoying our Work

(6 CEs, 15 participants, ETHICS CEs)

This two-day experiential workshop invites therapists to reconnect with their innate sense of joy as they engage in their work. Playfulness can enhance therapeutic presence, empathy, creativity, and relational depth while mitigating stressful overload and burnout. We will explore the ethics of focusing on work we enjoy doing, creating boundaries that maximize our energy, and enriching connection with colleagues, with the goal of optimizing joy and longevity within our professional lives, enabling us to better serve our clients.

### LYN SOMMER

Lyn Sommer, PhD, ABPP, CGP, enjoys practicing in Connecticut, doing individual therapy, couples work, intensive weekends for couples, and supervision, as well as participating in the Academy!

### GARY C FRANKEL

Gary C. Frankel, PhD, enjoys practicing in Washington, DC, doing individual, group, and couples psychotherapy, as well as individual and group supervision. Dr. Frankel is a past ethics chair with a particular interest in the interface of ethics and countertransference. He also enjoys participating in the Academy.



## 6A/B. The Courage to Play: The Role of Courage In Group Process

(6 CEs, 12 participants)

This workshop will focus on the role of courage in group process. Group therapy relies on authentic engagement and interpersonal risk-taking, yet many clinicians lack structured training in how fear and personal history influence participation and relational presence in groups. This gap can limit group cohesion, inhibit courageous engagement, and reduce therapeutic effectiveness. There is a need for experiential, in-vivo training that helps clinicians recognize inter- and intrapersonal factors shaping group behavior and apply this awareness to clinical group practice. In this workshop, participants will be encouraged to show up more fully with each other, especially in the presence of their own fear.



### NOAH MEYERS

Noah Meyers, PhD, is a therapist in private practice in Washington, DC, working with individuals, couples, and groups. He is consistently curious about the role of courage in his own life, as well as in the lives of others.

## 7A/B. The Relationship with Play and the Development of Attachment Styles

(6 CEs, 15 participants)

This playful, risk-taking workshop will offer experiential activities to explore the relationship between play and the development of attachment styles. Participants will explore cooperative versus competitive play as well as independent and social play. Different forms of play—creative, imaginary, educational, games, and entertainment—will provide opportunities for interpersonal processing. Insights gained will support clinicians in understanding the development of attachment styles in their clients.

### ANNIE PRESCOTT

Dr. Annie Prescott has been a psychotherapist for over 46 years. Starting her career as a recreation therapist, she is an expert in how to have fun. She is a child psychologist and has enjoyed play therapy with all ages. Animal-assisted psychotherapy, dancing, and meditation are some of Dr. Prescott's passions.



## 8A/B. Smile Though Your Heart is Breaking

(6 CEs, 15 participants)

A broken heart may arise from many experiences, including divorce, the end of a relationship, loss of health, the death of a beloved, becoming an empty nester, or other significant transitions. This workshop explores ways to access moments of lightness and even genuine smiles during what can be a prolonged healing process. Participants will revisit the use of fractionated abreactions, learned in the 1990s, to approach grief in small, manageable pieces while embodying moments of peace or joy. The workshop will also highlight how these strategies can support clinicians in helping clients navigate complex grief and maintain emotional resilience in therapeutic work.

### ANGELA GOULD

Angela Gould is a clinical psychologist practicing in Boulder, Colorado, and the US Virgin Islands with 49 years of experience. She specializes in trauma therapy with 20 years of experience at a Boulder hospice facilitating bereavement groups. She is an eclectic psychotherapist utilizing a number of adjunct therapies.

### ELIZABETH E. FIELD

Elizabeth E. Field practices psychotherapy in Charlotte, North Carolina. She specializes in group therapy and has developed several trauma-informed groups. Currently, she has undertaken a deep dive into grief and ritual and is excited to present with Dr. Gould on exploring how to hold the polarities inherent in grief.



# ONE DAY WORKSHOPS, THURSDAY - 9AM-12:00 PM

## 9. The Therapist Online: Ethics of Playfulness, Authenticity, and Self-Disclosure in Our Digital Lives

(3 CEs, 20 participants, ETHICS CEs)

This workshop will explore the themes of authenticity, identity, intimacy, and temptations that arise when therapists and patients have an online presence. Do therapists have a "right" to a personal life online? How do we manage our personal and professional details across contexts? We will explore the areas that are and are not within our control when it comes to "playing" and "working" in the digital realm.



### DIANE CHRISTIE SHAFFER

Dr. Shaffer is in private practice in Swarthmore and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She works with individuals, couples, and groups. She is a member of the AAP ethics committee and will serve on the executive council from 2026-2029.

### RONDA BOSTICK

Ronda Bostick is a licensed mental health counselor located in Daytona Beach, Florida. She has worked primarily with community-based, non-profit agencies and has a part-time private practice. Ronda has 10 years of clinical experience, specializing in mental health, substance abuse and trauma working with youth and adults.



**"The creation of something new is not accomplished by the intellect but by the play instinct."**

- Carl Jung

## 10. Playing with How We Present

(3 CEs, 12 participants)

This workshop will allow participants to explore issues and play with the idea of appearance and presentation in different spheres. In a process group, they will share and discuss how their relationship with their own appearance, and that of others, affects relationships. Clinicians will gain a deeper awareness of themselves in different environments. This growth in knowledge will enable clinicians to support clients in developing a more nuanced awareness of their presentation behaviors and the personal insights that emerge from them.

### ELENA SCHER

Elena Scher earned a BA in art history from Washington University and an MSSW from the University of Texas at Austin. She has learned that these two different disciplines share many overlapping concepts. This thought has led her to pay attention to how people present themselves. Also, she spends lots of time worrying about how her curly hair looks.

### LIZ MARSH

Liz Marsh is a social worker, art therapist, and group psychotherapist. Liz strives to help each of her clients find their personal agency through understanding the dynamics in their families AND our society as a whole. In this way, Liz sees mental healthcare as a tool for social justice.



## 11. Playing on the Edge: Exploring Our Grief, Fear and Desire of Stepping into the Unknown

(NO CEs, 12 participants)

In the liminal space of a therapeutic playground, a transition into the unknown is often the name of the game. This calls for a clinician's own ability to tolerate uncertainty while staying curious, creative, and brave in support of a client's growth. Whether looking at a relationship shift, a career move, or the end of a life journey itself, approaching change can feel like stepping familiar solid ground into a void, both scary and exciting. In this workshop participants are invited to explore their relationships with upcoming life turns through creative exercises and group process. We can play with new discoveries together.

### SVETLANA KREIMER

Svetlana Kreimer, LMFT, works and plays in California where she serves as a clinical director at Process Therapy Institute. She believes that all therapy is, in essence, play therapy, whether for young children, grown-up children practicing "adulting," or our inner children, often starving for attention and loving playmates.



of a life journey itself,  
off a cliff: from

## 12. Cross-Cultural Play: Deepening Therapeutic Awareness Through Culture and Creativity

**(3 CEs, 12 participants)**

The ways in which children, families, and communities engage in play are deeply shaped by cultural values, norms, and histories. By exploring our own cultural play experiences, we can strengthen our capacity to recognize, honor, and integrate culturally meaningful play within clinical settings. We will invite participants to reflect on the cultural play traditions that have shaped their identities and deepen their understanding of how culture and play intersect in therapeutic work with clients.



### **ARIANA PRAWDA**

Ariana Prawda, PsyD, is a bilingual (English/Spanish) clinical psychologist in Washington, DC, who provides individual, couples, and group psychotherapy. She has been a member of AAP since 2019. She has extensive experience specializing in culturally-informed psychotherapy, trauma, and crisis intervention.

### **IVAN GONZALEZ**

Ivan Gonzalez, LMHC, is a psychotherapist and facilitator focused on healing, emotional growth, and whole-person well-being. He blends evidence-based practice, contemplative wisdom, and relational warmth to support individuals, couples, and communities in navigating trauma, strengthening connection, and cultivating resilience.

## 13. The Art and Fear of Slow Running: Unleashing Your Inner Sloth

**(3 CEs, 12 participants)**

In this workshop we will practice the art of slow running. The aim is to move out of our quick heads and into our slower hearts as we explore the yearning space between us. Brief, very slow 60-second running intervals and group process will help clinicians translate embodied insight into deeper attunement with clients.

### **JONAS HORWITZ**

Dr. Jonas Horwitz is a psychologist in Durham, NC. He is the author of *Stop Feeling So Damn Depressed* (New Harbinger, 2018) and *The Anxiety Brake: Pause the Panic Response & Stop the Spiral of Fear and Worry* (New Harbinger, 2027). Jonas enjoys backpacking in the Appalachian mountains with his family, who are always kind and wait for him to catch up.

## 14. Play, Pleasure, Power, and Pussies: A Workshop for Women

**(3 CEs, 12 participants)**

Clinicians often receive limited training in supporting women's embodied sexual pleasure and confidence, leaving a gap in tools to help clients reconnect with their bodies as sources of empowerment and authentic experience. Historically, women's pleasure has largely been ignored, and therefore many women have shut down their own connection to their bodies as a source of pleasure. You are invited to come play and learn more about your own pussy power in this three-hour experiential workshop for women. We will write, meditate, move our bodies, and process together for greater awakening to promote pleasure and embodied, authentic confidence. In addition, we will explore how these embodied practices can inform and enhance our work with clients.



### **BROOKE BRALOVE**

Brooke Bralove, LCSW-C, is a psychotherapist, AASECT Certified Sex Therapist, and Master Accelerated Resolution Therapy Practitioner. Brooke helps women of all ages let go of perfectionism and move toward greater authenticity, joy, pleasure, and connection. She has been in private practice in Bethesda, Maryland, for 22 years.

## 15. Play, Presence, and Countertransference in Non-Ordinary States: Holding Ourselves While Holding Our Clients in Ketamine-Assisted Psychotherapy

**(NO CEs, 20 participants)**

Ketamine-assisted psychotherapy can evoke powerful emotional and somatic expressions beyond those seen in traditional talk therapy. Using videotaped clips from live ketamine sessions, participants will learn to recognize, interpret, and respond to intense medicine-induced physical and emotional responses. Through didactic teaching and group process, this workshop explores how to stay attuned and grounded while supporting clients in non-ordinary states.

### **DAVID FOGEL**

David Fogel, MD, is an integrative physician and psychotherapist who has practiced for over 30 years doing individual, couples, and group therapy. He is a certified ketamine medical-therapy provider and, using a harm reduction model, administers IM ketamine and psychedelic integration in a ketamine-assisted psychotherapy framework.

# TWO DAY WORKSHOPS, FRIDAY/SATURDAY - 9AM-12:00 PM

## 16<sub>A/B</sub>. Unveiling the Self: Burlesque as Mirror and Muse

(6 CEs, 20 participants)



Throughout history, burlesque has reflected society's desires, tensions, and taboos. Clinicians increasingly encounter clients using embodied and expressive practices to explore identity, sexuality, and empowerment, yet many lack training in how culturally rooted art forms such as burlesque function as symbolic and therapeutic meaning-making processes. This two-day experiential workshop explores its evolution—from ancient origins to its modern role as a form of reclamation and empowerment. Participants will examine the cultural and personal meanings of this subversive art and engage in creative exercises to imagine their own burlesque personas. Each day concludes with a process group to integrate emotional and embodied insights that arise as well as discussion and reflection on ways to utilize insights in their work with clients.

### RACHEL KELLER

Rachel Keller, LCSW-C, is a Baltimore-based psychotherapist and founder of Alive Intimacy. For over a decade, she has guided individuals and couples to heal shame, deepen connection, and reclaim pleasure—believing the heart of sex therapy is discovering the self through authentic intimacy and embodied aliveness.



**“The playing adult steps sideward into another reality; the playing child advances forward to new stages of mastery.”**

– Erik H. Erikson

## 17<sub>A/B</sub>. The Many Forms of Play in Psychotherapy

(6 CEs, 12 participants)

Many of the best moments in psychotherapy feel like play. We will explore the range of play forms, from spontaneous wordplay to board games to construction toys and purely imaginary play. Later, using examples from our own experiences in the workshop, we will identify the elements that make play so useful in psychotherapy, from wish-fulfillment to competition to discovery to stress reduction to intimacy, and so much more. But first: we play.



### JONATHAN FARBER

Jonathan Farber is a clinical psychologist. He provides individual and group supervision and psychotherapy in Washington, DC, and North Carolina. He is a longtime member of AAP and former editor of *Voices*. With his children now out of the house, he is looking around for other ways to play.

## 18<sub>A/B</sub>. To Play or Not to Play ...

(6 CEs, 12 participants)

Clinicians need experiential tools to understand their relational impulses and foster authentic client connections. In this two-day workshop, we will experientially explore the ways we each approach the playfulness of the therapeutic encounter. We may choose to enter the playfulness of the moment, choose not to enter and play, or ambivalently move in and out of our connections with others. Greater awareness of our own cooperative, aggressive, and passive impulses will help us to guide our patients toward the experience of their struggles with authentic connections.



### DEBBARA DINGMAN

Debbara Dingman, PhD, is a clinical psychologist at Pine River Psychotherapy Associates in Atlanta. She enjoys her work with individuals, couples, and groups. Her years in AAP have promoted her ability to be playful, resilient, and somewhat flexible. She is a fellow of AAP and cooperatively plays on multiple committees.

## 19<sub>A/B</sub>. Seriously, Let's Play

(6 CEs, 12 participants)

Each of us develops a characteristic style of relating over the course of our lives, beginning in our earliest relationships and evolving through later ones. The interplay between play, trust, vulnerability, and connection can deepen the bonds between people. Play becomes a rehearsal for trust, a test of safety, responsiveness, and reliability. We will use play, process, and a wee bit of structure to build trust, strengthen attunement, and cultivate more authentic connections. Participants will also explore how these experiential elements translate directly into clinical practice, enhancing therapeutic presence and expanding relational flexibility.

### BARRY WEPMAN

Barry Wepman was in the practice of individual, couples, and group psychotherapy and supervision for 45 years, and he has been a member of AAP since 1980. He has taught in psychiatry departments and in postgraduate institutes. Now retired, he is playing more and spending his time deepening his relationships.

### Z ROSENZWEIG

Having practiced for 45 years, Z Rosenzweig retired at the end of 2019. Throughout his career, he worked with children of all ages (from actual chronologically aged children to adults), coming to value the trust they placed in him as the foundation of their therapeutic relationships. He also appreciated the playfulness that often emerged in their shared pursuit of meaningful exploration.

## 20<sub>A/B</sub>. Playing with the Edges of Vulnerability

(6 CEs, 14 participants)

Clinicians need experiential opportunities to engage their own vulnerability to better support clients' growth. What is your current growing edge—as an individual, in groups, and as a therapist? This workshop invites you to meet vulnerability playfully by offering a creative piece of yourself—movement, memory, art, role-play, or improvisation—for a 15–20 minute shared exploration. Each day concludes with a group process that supports the integration of inner parts and deepens connection at the contact boundary. Clinical applications will be highlighted as participants identify how these experiential methods can enhance work with clients navigating their own edges of vulnerability.

### ANNE M. PINCUS

Anne M. Pincus, a 30-year member of the Academy, has long been drawn to the playful, improvisational, and expressive arts and the body-oriented workshops offered through AAP. From the start of her career, she has resonated with transpersonal and experiential approaches to psychotherapy—often well before these methods were widely embraced.

### MICHELLE LEYDEN

Michelle Leyden, LPC, is an existential psychotherapist educated at the University of West Georgia and professionally raised by the community of AAP. Having used experiential modalities to heal her own fears around physical vulnerability, she now helps clients cultivate deeper mind-body awareness and presence.



## 21<sub>A/B</sub>. To Feel or Not to Feel? Addiction and Play

(6 CEs, 15 participants)

This workshop offers a didactic exploration of the role of substance use in regulating emotional experience, followed by a process group exploring addictive behavior from an attachment perspective. Participants will have the opportunity to explore their own relational dynamics in the group with the goal of better understanding the patterns often seen in clients in recovery.

### ZACH PYNE

Zach Pyne works as a professional counselor in Washington, DC, providing individual, couples, and group therapy services. He started private practice in 2020. One of his specialties is working with clients to address substance addiction and its related issues.

### GRAHAM HALL

Graham Hall is a psychotherapist with a sub-specialty in addiction, practicing in Georgetown, DC. Prior to starting his private practice, he worked as an executive coach and then as the assistant director of the Kolmac Clinic in Washington, DC. He holds a master's degree in organizational counseling and a post-master's certificate in clinical community counseling.

## 22<sub>A/B</sub>. Shared Laughter, Tears and Play: The Essence of the Psychotherapy Relationship

(6 CEs, 15 participants)

Clinicians often lack structured opportunities to develop authentic emotional presence and to deepen relational connections with clients. This workshop offers an experiential, improvisational exploration of how shared laughter, tears, and play deepen the therapeutic relationship and shape the therapist's own personal and professional development. Together, we will examine our growing edges and the ways authentic emotional engagement expands our clinical presence. As Carl Whitaker reminded a patient, "The only difference between us is that I've been a patient longer than you have"—an invitation to embrace the humility and humanity at the heart of our work with clients.



### JACOB MEGDELL

Jacob Megdell, PhD, has been providing psychological services and psychotherapy for individuals, couples, and families for 58 years. His primary focus is the development of effective psychotherapy relationships. He has published research on the role of humor in psychotherapy.

## ONE DAY WORKSHOPS, FRIDAY - 9AM-12:00 PM

### 23. Playing with Writing and Drawing to Unlock Creativity

(3 CEs, 12 participants)

We will use writing and drawing techniques based on author, graphic novelist, cartoonist, and creativity educator Lynda Barry's works, *Syllabus*, *What It Is*, and *Picture This*. As we write and draw, we will explore where play, reverie, memory, ideas, and creativity converge. Participants will learn psychological theories underpinning this method and how to apply them therapeutically in their work with clients. We will focus on playing, learning, and creating together, not the quality of our skills or our results.

#### JENNY LEACH

Jenny Leach is a clinical psychologist in private practice in New York City. She majored in studio art at Wellesley College and continued painting until working in a residence for adults with mental illness led to becoming a therapist. She is enjoying the process of rediscovering drawing and painting.



### 24. Do We Always Have to Play By the Rules?

(3 CEs, 12 participants)

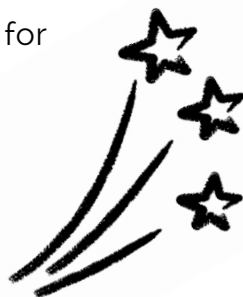
We will explore the role of rules and how they impact play and therapy. Do rules make you feel safer, or do they limit what you feel you can do? Are you someone who likes to push the limits in your work and play or do you feel comforted by the boundaries? How do frames, guidelines and boundaries play a role in group therapy?

#### KELLY EZICKSON

Kelly Ezickson has been practicing since 1989 and works with individuals, couples, and groups in her private practice in Washington, DC. She also LOVES to play.

#### GAYLE NEUFELD

Gayle Neufeld spent the first fifteen years of her career seeing patients mainly for psychopharmacology in consultation with therapists. A desire to connect more with her patients and to enrich her practice through collaboration with colleagues led her to pivot towards providing individual, couples, and group psychotherapy.



## ONE DAY WORKSHOPS, SATURDAY - 9AM-12:00 PM

"Play turns out to be so stunningly essential to childhood; it's like love, sunshine, and broccoli all juiced together."

— Lenore Skenazy



### 25. Cultivating a Playful Attitude in the Relationship Realm? What Could that Look Like?

(3 CEs, 12 participants)

This workshop will provide participants an opportunity to explore their most playful mindset and to play with each other in a creative and interpersonally fun way. Through sharing some of their life stories, participants will be invited to authentically connect with each other by listening, taking risks in sharing, laughing, digging deep and letting go. By playing openly with each other, participants will gain insight into how spontaneous, relational improvisation can translate into more flexible and responsive work with clients.



#### NEIL MAKSTEIN

Neil Makstein is a psychologist in Virginia and Maryland, seeing couples, individuals, and groups as well as consulting to organizations. He has loved being in AAP for 20 years, presenting workshops and serving on Executive Council. Friends call him a "group junkie" as he finds group processes fascinating and delightful to co-create with others.

#### LISA MAKSTEIN

Lisa Makstein is a clinical social worker who has practiced for over 35 years in Maryland and Washington, DC, with a focus on adults, couples, and groups. To her, it is such a privilege to join people on their journey toward a more authentic and joyful life. Participating in AAP has been an important part of her own evolution to do the same.

## 26. That's Funny? The Ethics of Humor in Psychotherapy

**(3 CEs, 15 participants, ETHICS CEs)**

Together we'll explore the use of humor during the therapeutic encounter, by ourselves or our clients, as a reflection of our personal histories, personalities, or therapeutic style. When does humor foster the therapeutic relationship? When does it miss the mark to deflect, defend, or manage anxiety? What ethical considerations guide our use of humor so we can be authentically present, yet demonstrate self-awareness, sensitivity, and good clinical judgment that most benefit the client?

### MARILYN SCHWARTZ

Marilyn Schwartz, PhD, is a psychologist practicing in Washington, DC. She is an AAP Fellow and former ethics committee chair. She has presented ethics workshops on 26 different topics. As her practice bio states that her use of humor in therapy is her trademark, this workshop topic is closest to her heart.

### DAVID CHRISTY

David Christy is a clinical social worker licensed in Maryland, Washington, DC, and Virginia. In his private practice, he works mainly with adult individuals and couples, helping folks grow and build healthier, happier lives. A member of AAP's Ethics Committee, David's focus on ethics has deep roots, including years preventing and extinguishing fires as the chief ethics compliance officer and chair of practice of a law and lobbying firm in Washington, DC.

## 27. Relinquish the Knowing: Stepping Into the Amorphous and Joyous Process of Play

**(3CEs, 12 participants)**

This workshop is designed to invite participants to step out of certainty and into curiosity and play. Participants will explore resistances, loosen control, and rediscover the joy of unstructured discovery. Grounded in contemporary play and connection theories, we will offer a safe yet provocative space to practice "not knowing" as a pathway to deeper creativity and authenticity. Participants will learn how to translate these embodied experiences into interventions that help clients tolerate ambiguity, deepen emotional presence, and engage more playfully in the therapeutic process.

### JENNY SAVITZ-SMITH

Jenny Savitz-Smith, PhD, is a clinician who loves exploring how people connect, heal, and grow. She brings curiosity, humor, and heart to her work—and to this workshop with her colleague, Bradley Lake. Her passion for Pilates and helping people stay grounded in their bodies informs her mindful, embodied approach.

### BRADLEY LAKE

Bradley Lake, LICSW, has been in private practice for over 37 years, offering individual, couples, and group psychotherapy. His clinical passions include supervising engaged and curious therapists in their pursuit of deeper self-knowledge, ultimately enhancing their effectiveness in the therapy room. In 2023, Bradley created Elongate, LLC, offering immersive retreats that integrate a range of therapeutic modalities designed to support well-being for individuals and couples.

## 28. The Forest as Restorative Playground

**(3 CEs, 12 participants)**

This workshop introduces participants to forest bathing, utilizing individual, solitary experiences and group sharing. Forest bathing is a Japanese healing technique, Shinrin-Yoku, that enhances connection and relationship with trees and forests. Benefits of the practice include reduced depression and anxiety, enhanced mental relaxation, and increased gratitude, selflessness, and wonder. Through experience, participants can share the healing benefits of forest bathing as an effective tool for healing in their clinical work.



### PENELOPE NORTON

Penelope Norton, PhD, practices psychology and psychotherapy in Ormond Beach, Florida. She draws upon the healing power of the natural world as a Certified Forest Bathing Guide, leading group experiences in forests.

## 29. Books as Play

**(3 CEs, 12 participants)**

*"Outside of a dog, a book is a man's (sic) best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read."*

— Groucho Marx

Books as Play is a dynamic, experiential workshop that invites participants to engage with books as catalysts for imagination, connection, and creative exploration. Through shared reading, playful interpretation, and improvisation, participants will actively experiment with multiple ways to "play" (pun noted). The workshop emphasizes embodied engagement and relational sharing, fostering curiosity, emotional expression, and connection as well as reflection on application to work with clients.

### STEPHANIE EZUST

Stephanie Ezust received graduate training at Georgia State University and has practiced as a licensed psychologist for more than 45 years in Decatur, Georgia, working with individuals, couples, and groups. She is a lifelong lover of books, having majored in comparative literature as an undergraduate.

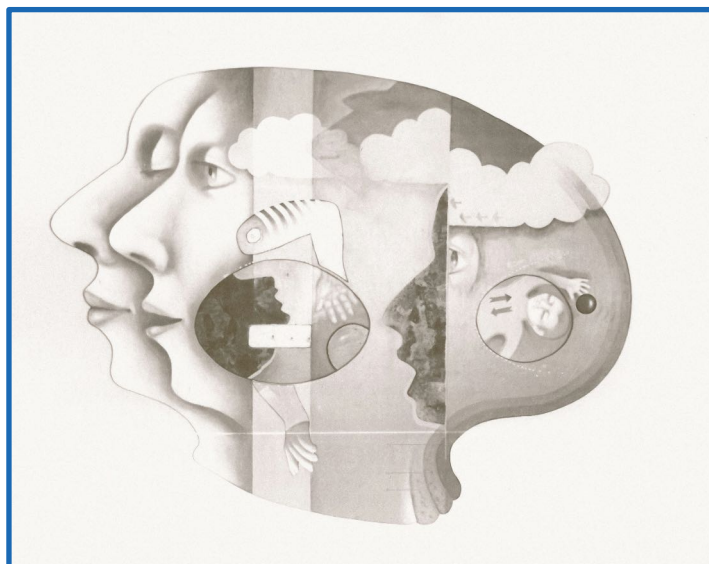
**"This is the real secret of life – to be completely engaged with what you are doing in the here and now. And instead of calling it work, realize it is play."**

– Alan Watts

## 30. Playing With Our Parts

(3 CEs, 20 participants)

We will review four schools of therapy—Gestalt, Transactional Analysis, Satir Transformational and Internal Family Systems—and their approaches to parts work in psychotherapy. Participants will be invited to identify, name and describe their own parts as represented in each system of therapy. Participants will then break into small groups to allow them to embody and interact with their parts as a way to practice various ways of working with parts of the self. Application for working with clients will be discussed.



### MARY GRESHAM

Mary Gresham has been interested in the history of psychotherapy since first being asked to embody Virginia Satir in graduate school at Georgia State. She has become increasingly aware of how few therapies credit their predecessors. Over the years, she has studied and practiced multiple modalities, including Gestalt, Transactional Analysis, Satir's work, and Internal Family Systems (IFS).

## 31. Who Took the Fun out of Dysfunctional? Bringing Stories and More Into the Consultation Room

(3 CEs, 12 participants)

Life is serious! Does therapy have to be? This workshop is designed to affirm the therapist's creative process of bringing stories, anecdotes, parables and humor into one's office. Being able to laugh at oneself is an important life skill. As therapists, we seek ways to sidestep resistance, expand the client's self-awareness, and empower them to abandon historically appropriate ways of perceiving and responding to the world in order to find new paths forward. Let's share and have some fun!



### BOB ROSENBLATT

Bob Rosenblatt has been providing individual, couples and group therapy for over 50 years (OMG!) For 30 years, he has offered training and supervision for mental health providers. Bringing stories, anecdotes, and humor into the process is one of his favorite playful ways of overcoming client resistance in order to facilitate growth.

# WELLNESS GUIDELINES FOR THE 2026 SUMMER WORKSHOP

We're so looking forward to gathering together for the 2026 Summer Workshop. Our time together is meaningful, and caring for one another's health is an important part of creating a safe and welcoming community for everyone.

## If You're Not Feeling Well

If you begin feeling sick in the days leading up to the conference, we kindly ask that you stay home and focus on your recovery. We know how disappointing it can be to miss this time together, but taking care of yourself also protects the health of our whole community.

## Masking and Vaccination

Travel and large gatherings can increase exposure to illness. We encourage attendees to consider masking in crowded spaces such as airports or airplanes while traveling. During the conference, mask wearing will be voluntary unless specific workshop leaders communicate otherwise in advance. We ask everyone to respect one another's individual choices and comfort levels.

While vaccination is not required to attend, we strongly encourage participants to stay up to date on recommended vaccines for their age group. This is one more way we can collectively reduce risk and care for more vulnerable members of our community.

## Testing

We encourage each attendee to bring rapid COVID-19 and flu tests, just in case. If you develop symptoms at any point during the conference, we strongly encourage testing so that we can respond quickly and thoughtfully.

## If You Become Ill During the Conference

If you become symptomatic and/or test positive for COVID-19 or another contagious illness:

- Please begin self-isolating right away.
- Call or text our Medical Consultant, Gayle Neufeld, at (202) 441-9566.

Gayle is available to support you with practical needs such as meal delivery, transportation, contact tracing, and help accessing medication.

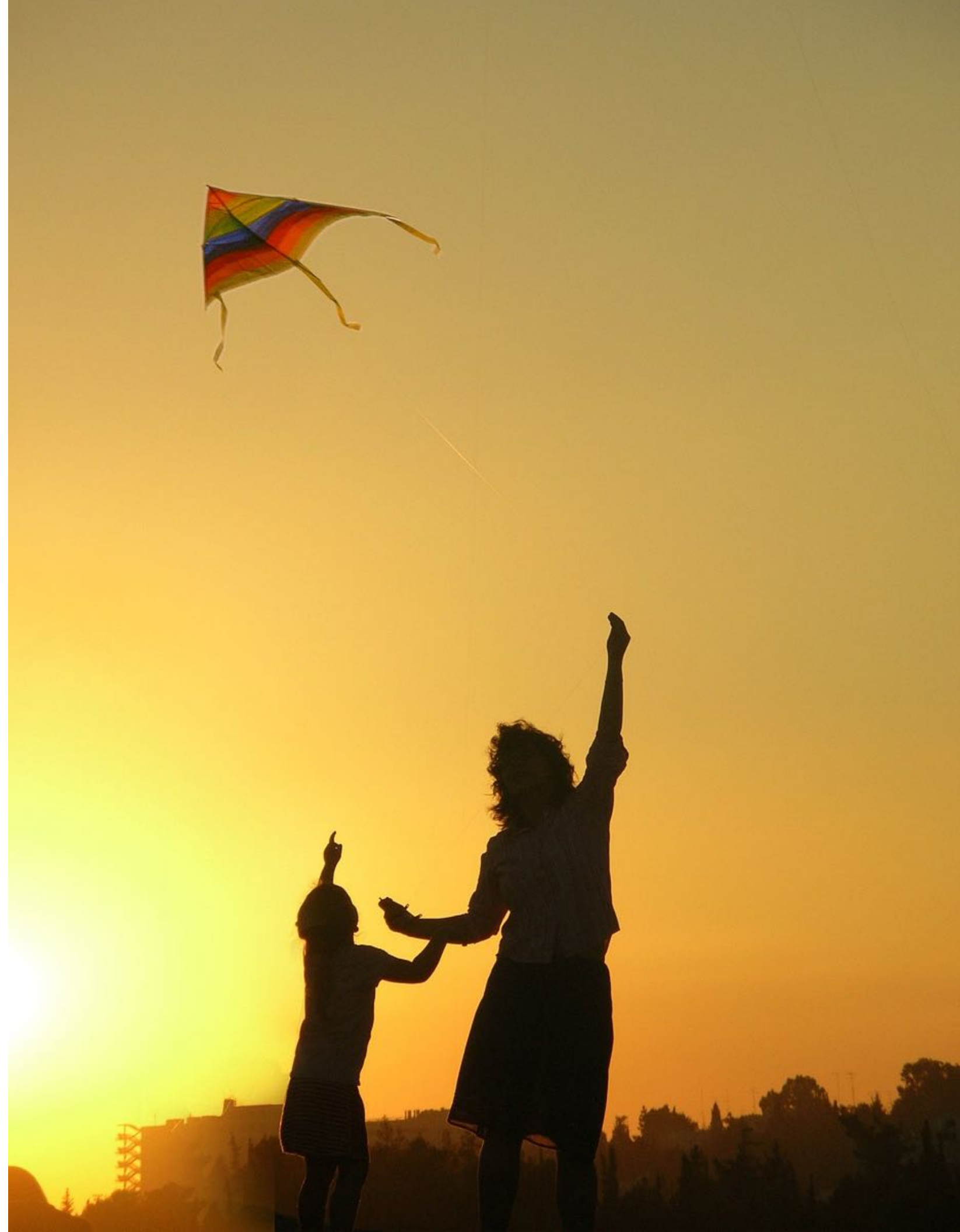
## After the Conference

If you test positive or experience significant illness shortly after returning home, we ask that you notify Gayle so we can manage potential exposures and care for our broader community.



## Workshop Planner

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Tla Eichel/Tuikka: Sex Therapy and Consultation	T1b Eichel/Tuikka: Sex Therapy and Consultation		
TWO DAY: Thurs/Fri	1a Gouss/Barclay: Play in the Midst of Disaster	1b Gouss/Barclay: Play in the Midst of Disaster	
	2a Fleming: Yes, And: The Playful Path...	2b Fleming: Yes And: The Playful Path...	
	3a M. Scher/Marcus: Play is the Thing...	3b M. Scher/Marcus: Play is the Thing...	
	4a Knoblach: The Power of Symbols...	4b Knoblach: The Power of Symbols...	
	5a Sommer/Frankel: The Joy of Play in Practice...	5b Sommer/Frankel: The Joy of Play in Practice...	
	6a Meyers: The Courage to Play...	6b Meyers: The Courage to Play	
	7a Prescott: The Relationship with Play...	7b Prescott: The Relationship with Play...	
	8a Gould/Field: Smile Though Your Heart...	8b Gould/Field: Smile Though Your Heart...	
ONE DAY	9 Shaffer/Bostick: The Therapist Online...	23 Leach: Playing with Writing and Drawing...	25 Makstein/Makstein: Cultivating a Playful...
	10 E. Scher/Marsh: Playing with How We...	24 Ezickson/Neufeld: Do We Always Have to...	26 Schwartz/Christy: That's Funny? ...
	11 Kreimer: Playing on the Edge: Exploring...		27 Savitz-Smith/Lake: Relinquish the Knowing...
	12 Prawda/Gonzalez: Cross-Cultural Play...		28 Norton: The Forest as Restorative Playground
	13 Horwitz: The Art and Fear of Slow Running...		29 Ezust: Books as Play
	14 Bralove: Play, Pleasure, Power...		30 Gresham: Playing with our Parts
	15 Fogel: Play, Presence, & Countertransference...		31 Rosenblatt: Who Took the Fun out of Dysfunctional?
TWO DAY: Fri/Sat		16a Keller: Unveiling the Self: Burlesque...	16b Keller: Unveiling the Self: Burlesque...
		17a Farber: The Many Forms of Play	17b Farber: The Many Forms of Play
		18a Dingman: To Play or Not to Play	18b Dingman: To Play or Not to Play
		19a Wepman/ Rosenzweig: Seriously...	19b Wepman/ Rosenzweig: Seriously...
		20a Pincus/Leyden: Playing with the Edges	20a Pincus/Leyden: Playing with the Edges
		21a Pyne/Graham: To Feel or Not to Feel...	21b Pyne/Graham: To Feel or Not to Feel...
		22a Megdell: Shared Laughter, Tears and ...	22b Megdell: Shared Laughter, Tears and...



## THE ECONOMICS OF SUMMER WORKSHOP

**Members (Early)..... \$925**

**Members (After x/xx)..... \$1125**

## \*ADDITIONAL CHARGES AND DISCOUNTS

### Transportation Shuttle

**From Atlanta Airport to Callaway Gardens..... \$60**

**From Callaway Gardens to the Atlanta airport..... \$60**

**Roundtrip Shuttle..... \$100**

**Process Continuing Education credits, CEUs..... \$65**

**West Coast Discount..... Subtract \$100**



## **Tips for registering:**

Review the brochure before registering, and have your choices ready for which workshops you would like to attend, including alternative choices if your preferred workshop has filled.

Review the description of the Open Process Groups, and register for those if you are interested.

## **Make your own hotel reservations:**

Call the hotel at 1-800-225-5292 to make your lodging reservations. If you are staying only Wednesday through Sunday evenings, you can use the hotel link on the registration page to reserve your rooms at the AAP conference rate.

If you would like to reserve rooms at the conference rate for the three days before and after the conference, you will need to call the hotel to have them apply the AAP conference rate.

## **Cancellation Policy:**

Cancellations must be submitted in writing to [aapexecdir@gmail.com](mailto:aapexecdir@gmail.com) no later than 6/7/2026 and will be subject to a nonrefundable fee of \$75. Refunds will not be granted after 6/8/2026.

In case of circumstances beyond our control, AAP reserves the right to make necessary changes in presenters and content of workshops, without notice. All CE designations are pending approval and are not guaranteed at this time.

Please note that departures prior to the end of your hotel reservation, will incur the full hotel reservation charge, per hotel policy.



## Continuing Education (CE) Language Statement

American Academy of Psychotherapists  
2026 AAP Summer Workshop  
June 24, 2026 - June 28, 2026 Callaway  
Gardens, GA

### Joint Accreditation Statement



In support of improving patient care, this activity has been planned and implemented by Amedco LLC and American Academy of Psychotherapists. Amedco LLC is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

Amedco Joint Accreditation Provider Number: 4008163

Professions in scope for this activity are listed below.

### Psychologists



course is co-sponsored by Amedco and American Academy of Psychotherapists. Amedco is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. Amedco maintains responsibility for this program and content. Maximum of 18.00 hours.

*The following state boards accept courses from APA providers for Psychologists/Counselors: AK, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, MA, MD, ME, MN, MO, NC, ND, NH, NE, NJ, NM, NV, OH, OK\*, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WI, WY*

*MA: Accepts APA for all classes of psychology license; does not accept APA for licensed counselors (LMHC, LEP, LMFT, etc.).*

*MI: Accepts courses from APA for Psychologists. No general CE requirement for Counselors.*

*OK: Accepts APA credit for live, in-person activities but not for ethics and/or online courses.*

*The following state boards accept courses from APA providers for MFTs: AK, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, IA, ID, IN, KS, MD, ME, MO, NE, NC, NH, NJ, NM, NV, OH, OK\*, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WDC, WI, WY*

*AL MFTs: Credits authorized by NBCC or any other state licensing agency will be accepted.*

*MA MFTs: Participants can self-submit courses not approved by the MAMFT board for review.*

*MI MFTs: There are no CE requirements for MFTs in MI.*

*The following state boards accept courses from APA providers for Addictions Professionals: AK, AR, CO, CT, DC, DE, GA, IA, IN, KS, LA, MD, MO, MT, NC, ND, NE, NJ, NM, NY (held outside NY ONLY), OK\*, OR, SC, UT, WA, WI, WY*

*The following state boards accept courses from APA providers for Social Workers: AK, AR, AZ, CA, CO, DE, FL, GA, ID, IN, KY, ME, MN, MO, NE, NH, NM, OR, PA, VT, WI, WY*

### Social Workers



As a Jointly Accredited Organization, Amedco is approved to offer social work continuing education by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program. Organizations, not individual courses, are approved under this program. State and provincial regulatory boards have the final authority to determine whether an individual course may be

accepted for continuing education credit. Amedco maintains responsibility for this course. ASWB Content Level: Advanced. Social workers completing this course receive up to 18.00 continuing education credits.

*The following state boards accept courses offering ASWB ACE credit for Social Workers: AK, AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NM, NJ, NV, OH, OK\*, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VT, VA, WA, WI, WV\*, WY OK: Accepts ASWB ACE for live, in-person activities but not for ethics and/or online courses.*

*WV: Accepts ASWB ACE unless activity is held live in West Virginia.*

*The following state boards accept courses offering ASWB ACE credit for Counselors: AK, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, FL, GA, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, MA (LEP ONLY), MD, ME, MO, ND, NE, NM, NH, NV, OK\*, OR, PA, TN, TX, UT, VA, WI, WY*

*MI: No CE requirement for licensed counselors.*

*The following state boards accept courses offering ASWB ACE credit for MFTs: AK, AR, AZ, CA, CO, FL, IA, ID, IN, KS, MD, ME, MO, NC, NE, NH, NM, NV, OK\*, OR, PA, RI, TN, TX, UT, VA, WI, WY*

*AL MFTs: Credits authorized by NBCC or any other state licensing agency will be accepted.*

*MA MFTs: Participants can self-submit courses not approved by the MAMFT board for review.*

*MI: No CE for requirement for licensed MFTs.*

*The following state boards accept ASWB ACE credit for Addictions Professionals: AK, CA, CO, CT, GA, IA, IN, KS, LA, MO, MT, ND, NM, NV, OK, OR, SC, WA, WI, WV, WY*

### New York Social Workers

Amedco SW CPE is recognized by the New York State Education Department's State Board for Social Work as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed social workers #0115. 18.00 credit hours.

### New York Psychologists

Amedco is recognized by the New York State Education Department's State Board for Psychology as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed psychologists #PSY-0031. 18.00 hours.

### FL Board of Behavioral Sciences

Amedco is approved by the Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage & Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling. Provider BAP#39 - Exp.3-31-2027. 18.00 GENERAL Hours.

**You must request your certificate within 45 days of the activity to meet the deadline for submission to CE Broker. Credits are generally reported during the first week of each month for those who claimed during the month prior.**



**AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PSYCHOTHERAPISTS  
2026 SUMMER WORKSHOP**

**THE PLAYFUL PATH:  
EXPLORING AUTHENTIC CONNECTION**

**JUNE 24 - 28, 2026 | CALLAWAY GARDENS, PINE MOUNTAIN, GA**