



The God Who is There: Development of the Capacity for Prayer in Therapist and Patient

Marie Hoffman, Ph.D. & Lowell Hoffman, Ph.D. (Presenting Virtually)

June 6, 2025, 8:30 am - 10:00 am

Presented by two internationally prominent voices integrating faith and psychodynamic theory, *The God who is There* explores rich therapeutic concepts, like “the third,” through the powerful lens of a faith held by therapist, patient, or both. Considering prayer specifically, these master clinicians offer the different “kinds of prayer” therapy might reveal and how these might enrich a counselor’s conceptualization of the therapeutic work itself.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the difference between the analytic Third and the Infinite/Personal Third
2. Identify the correlation between Hegel's developmental schema and therapeutic process
3. Describe the development of object usage and the capacity for faith

Drs. Marie and Lowell Hoffman have been practicing as clinical psychologists for nearly 40 years. Their certifications as psychoanalysts were conferred by the New York University Post-Doctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis, where Dr. Marie Hoffman now serves as Adjunct Professor. The Drs. Hoffman were founding co-chairs in 2009 of the Psychoanalytic Track of the Christian Association for Psychological Studies. In 2012, they were founding directors of Brookhaven Institute for Psychoanalysis and Christian Theology. Dr. Marie Hoffman is the author of *Toward Mutual Recognition: Relational Psychoanalysis and the Christian Narrative*, and *When the Roll is Called: Trauma and the Soul of American Evangelicalism*. They are members of the American Psychoanalytic Association and In addition to writing and lecturing, the Drs. Hoffman continue in their practice of psychotherapy, psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic supervision in Pennsylvania and Florida.





Ethical Issues When Addressing Spiritual Matters in Psychotherapy

Randolph K. Sanders, Ph.D.

July 25, 2025, 8:30 am - 12:00 pm

Over time, professional bodies have come to recognize the potential relevance of spiritual and religious matters in therapy. However, addressing these matters in therapy raises important ethical concerns. In this workshop we will consider ethical issues such as the competence of the therapist, the client's welfare and autonomy, and the informed consent process as it applies to addressing spiritual issues. We will discuss the ethics of spiritual interventions such as prayer in therapy. Participants will also learn how the institutional setting in which the therapy takes place affects how spiritual issues are appropriately addressed. And we will consider the importance of therapist-client collaboration throughout the process. Case examples will be used to illustrate points, encourage discussion and consider ways for handling ethical dilemmas.

Learning Objectives:

1. Explain the importance of informed consent when spiritual issues may be a part of therapy.
2. Describe some basic ways to begin a spiritual assessment
3. Explain why therapists who address spiritual issues in therapy need to be self-aware of their own spiritual frame of reference.

3 Ethics CEUs Provided



Randolph K. Sanders, Ph.D. is a Clinical Psychologist from New Braunfels, Texas. With over 40 years of experience, he consults, teaches and writes about ethical issues in psychology. An award-winning author, he is Editor of *Christian Counseling Ethics: A Handbook for Psychologists, Therapists and Pastors*, published by InterVarsity Press and now in its second edition. His workshops and articles on ethical issues in psychology are noted for their practical content. Dr. Sanders served as Executive Director of the Christian Association for Psychological Studies (1994-2005) and was a recipient of the organization's Distinguished Member

Award. He earned his Ph.D. at the Graduate School of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary, and completed undergraduate studies at Baylor University. He is a member emeritus of the National Register of Health Service Psychologists.



Sacred Conversations: Prayer Inside and Outside the Therapeutic Frame

Nathaniel R. Strenger, Psy.D., and Marisol De Jesús-Pérez, Ph.D.

August 15, 2025, 8:30 am - 10:00 am

Drs. Strenger and De Jesús-Pérez integrate empirical and theoretical literature to offer the broader concept of prayer as an invaluable therapeutic phenomenon of both theological and psychological significance. Fodder for such rich therapeutic thinking, prayer considered here can offer a window into the transference and countertransference workings that involve, for a patient, that dynamic trinity: God, therapist, and the early attachment figures. Clinicians learn to more richly consider these in and outside the frame.

Learning Objectives:

1. Familiarize the empirical and theoretical literature on prayer, mental health, and psychotherapy
2. Integrate important developmental concepts as they apply to prayerful expressions of faith
3. Teach of a case conceptualization that integrates transference and countertransference as manifested in relations between God, therapist, and early attachment figures.
4. Consider the psychological significance of clinician prayer-practices outside the therapeutic frame.



Nathaniel R. Strenger, Psy.D. is a licensed psychologist and the Director of Clinical Advancement at The Center. As such he provides a variety of clinical services, supervises training therapists, and develops continuing education opportunities for clinicians and the broader public alike. As part of his studies and professional background, he has taught, lead workshops, and written on topics ranging from trauma, spirituality across the lifespan, theologies in the practice of psychology, emotional regulation in children, teens, and adults, community coordination in care, parenting concerns, and clergy family issues. He has worked in outpatient community clinics, private practice, medical centers, and in university counseling.

In addition to his work at The Center, Dr. Strenger is also President to the APA's Dallas Division 39 chapter, the Dallas Society for Psychoanalytic Psychology (DSPP). Interviews and writings have been featured in such places as Christianity Today and the Dallas Morning News.



Marisol De Jesús-Pérez, Ph.D. is a bi-cultural and bilingual Latina who possesses over ten years of experience in the provision of psychological services to children, adolescents, and families at high-risk. She has worked in numerous outpatient clinics affiliated with the Department of Mental Health in Los Angeles, California. She also has experience providing psychological services to hospitalized children and adolescents suffering from severe medical and psychological conditions in major children's hospitals. She often offers workshops and seminars to parents and community leaders involved in the provision of services to children and adolescents. Dr. De Jesús-Pérez is also an ordained minister of the Free Methodist Church. She has served as an assistant pastor for over 15 years.