

New Direction Counseling presents



CONFERENCE BROCHURE

Springville Camp and Conference Center Springville, AL

October 28-29, 2025

www.newdirectionweb.com/conference

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome Letter from the Executive Director.....2

New Direction Counseling Board of Directors and Conference Planning Team..... 3

About the 2025 Program..... 4-5

Continuing Education 6

Week at a Glance.....7

Courses at a Glance 8-17

Speakers..... 18-20

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Make sure you sign at the beginning and the end of each session for credit.
- Arrive promptly at the scheduled session times.
- Please silence your cell phone during sessions to minimize disruptions.

WELCOME

Welcome to the 1st Annual Bridging the Gap Conference!

Hosted by New Direction Counseling, Inc.

Dear Friends—both new and familiar,

It is with great excitement that we welcome you to the inaugural *Bridging the Gap Conference*. We are truly honored that you've chosen to join us for this special event.

This year's theme, **"Bridging Faith-Based and Traditional Substance Use Treatment,"** reflects our deep commitment to uniting two powerful approaches in order to provide more holistic, inclusive, and effective care. We believe there is tremendous value in bringing these perspectives together—to not only broaden our understanding, but to strengthen our collective impact in the lives of those we serve.

Over the two days, we invite you to reflect on your own professional and personal journey—where you've been, what you've learned, and how your experience can inspire others. This is also an opportunity to identify new directions for your growth and development. Our hope is that each of you finds the sessions that speak directly to your needs, aspirations, and purpose.

The conference agenda has been thoughtfully designed to offer a diverse range of sessions and experiences.

These include:

- Addressing common challenges in substance use treatment
- Exploring innovative and emerging best practices
- Meeting continuing education, licensing, and credentialing goals
- Prioritizing personal care and wellness
- Fostering meaningful connection and collaboration

We've also invited a select group of exhibitors whose resources and expertise can help expand your network, elevate your practice, and enrich your approach to care. Please take time to engage with them—as well as our sponsors and speakers—throughout the event.

A heartfelt thank you goes to our Board of Directors and Planning Committee. This conference would not have been possible without your vision, dedication, and support.

We hope these next two days will inspire reflection, spark new ideas, and strengthen our shared mission. Let's learn, grow, and bridge the gap—together.

Steve Mason, LPC-S, ADC
Executive Director
New Direction Counseling, Inc.

NEW DIRECTION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NAME

Steve Mason, Executive Director/Founding Board President

Terry Mashburn, Vice President

Zollie Holt, Secretary

Tina Mason, Treasurer

Brian Smith, Development Director

Kip Hubbard, Member-at-large

Planning Committee Members

Judd Drake

Kendra Homsley

Bethany Tyree

John Bayles

Agency

Restoration Springs/Will Bright Foundation

Bradford Health Services

B. Tyree Counseling and Consulting

Recovery Resource Center

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The conference offers a unique opportunity for professional development, information exchange, and networking. It is designed to address the need for knowledge and skill development through advanced training and will begin on Tuesday October 28, 2025 at 8:00 a.m. and end on Wednesday, October 29, 2025 at 4:45 p.m.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES

Advance Registration Deadline: August 20, 2025**		Regular Registration* after August 20, 2025 through September 30, 2025	
Attendance	Rate	Attendance	Rate
2 Day	\$75.00	2 Day	\$85.00
1 Day	\$40.00	1 Day	\$50.00

*Students may register with a 50% discount. Please email info@newdirectionweb.com to register. You must include a copy of the university student ID (with picture).

**Registrations at the conference or postmarked after October 1, 2025, will incur an increased fee.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Participants may register online at www.newdirectionweb.com/conference. Registrations will also be accepted by mail or fax for those who do not have internet access. Organizations may mail/fax a Purchase Order or Voucher for approval with names of participants identified. To request a registration form, contact New Direction Counseling, Inc at 205-207-5688 or info@newdirectionweb.com.

INDIVIDUAL COURSE REGISTRATION*

Every effort will be made to ensure participants are enrolled in their first choice; however, enrollment is limited, and reservations are made on a first-come, first-serve basis. New Direction Counseling reserves the right to cancel any course for which minimum enrollment is not reached. If a course is cancelled and a transfer is not possible, a full refund of the tuition fee will be made.

*Many courses will be filled prior to **September 1, 2025**. To ensure the class of your choice, **register early!**

ONSITE REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Onsite registration will be offered at the New Registration table at the Conference Center each morning of the conference. However, we highly recommend registering online in advance, as course and session availability cannot be guaranteed and the rate will be \$20 higher. Register early to ensure your spot!

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS: Light snacks, coffee, tea, soft drinks, and water will be served in the mornings. Lunch is served from 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. on both days. Beverages and light snacks will be offered during break times. More details about lunch options will be posted on www.newdirectionweb.com/conference closer to the event.

HANDOUTS/SLIDES: Participants must go to www.newdirectionweb.com/conference starting two weeks prior to the conference start date to download and/or print course-specific handouts/slides. The handouts and certain slides will be available up to December 31, 2025.

SPECIAL NEEDS: Please indicate any accommodations needed when registering for the conference, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. For additional assistance, contact Steve Mason at (205) 207-5688 or email info@newdirectionweb.com.

LODGING/HOTEL: There are hotels available in the Trussville area which is approximately 15 minutes from the conference location. There was no special rate that could be negotiated, so select by your personal preference.

<u>Quality Inn</u> 844-535-3809	<u>Courtyard Marriott</u> 833-325-1342	<u>Holiday Inns and Express Suites</u> 205-594-6364
<u>Hilton Garden Inn</u> 866-306-0945	<u>Comfort Inn</u> 844-535-3809	<u>Hampton Inn</u> 205-655-9777

Please note these are “some” of the lodging options available to you. Certainly, look for others if these do not fit your needs.

Exhibitors/Sponsorship: There are opportunities to sponsor the conference and sponsor attendees that may not be able to afford the conference. There are also a limited number of exhibitor spots left. Exhibitors must fit the vision of the conference. You can contact Steve Mason at smason@newdirectionweb.com for more information.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

CONTINUING EDUCATION HOURS

Continuing Education (CE) acknowledges the commitment of individuals attending approved educational programs. Conference participants can earn up to **14** CE contact hours based on documented daily attendance.

CE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Alabama Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association
National Board of Certified Counselors-Pending
Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners-0827

CE PROVIDER STATEMENTS

New Direction Counseling, Inc has been approved as a Continuing Education Provider with the **Alabama Board of Social Workers Examiners** Provider #0827.

New Direction Counseling is pending approval by **NBCC** as an Approved Continuing Education Provider. All documentation has been submitted and should be approved prior to the conference. New Direction Counseling is solely responsible for all aspects of the program.

To qualify for continuing education (CE) credits, participants must:

- **Register:** Ensure you identify the type of CE requested when registering for the conference. Specific designations will also need to check in at the designated registration desk upon arrival (see below for designations).
- **Attend Sessions in Full:** CE credit is awarded based on full attendance at approved sessions. Partial credit will not be given.
 - ♦ Participants are responsible for selecting the course that meets the requirements of their certifying/licensing body for contact hours and renewal needs.
- **Complete Evaluations:** Submit required conference/session evaluations by the specified deadline to receive credit. If an evaluation is not completed, no credit will be provided.

Verification of Attendance:

Attendance will be monitored through sign-in sheets. Be sure to follow the specific procedures outlined during the conference.

Certificate Distribution:

CE certificates will be issued via email within 6 weeks following the conference, provided all attendance and evaluation requirements have been met. In accordance with CE granting authority guidelines, certificates cannot be issued early, transferred, or awarded for unapproved courses.

WEEK AT A GLANCE

TUESDAY-WEDNESDAY AGENDA

	Tuesday	Wednesday
7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.	Registration	Registration
8:15 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.	<p>Welcome Opening Session “Why bring together traditional treatment and faith-based?”</p> <p><u>Presenters:</u> Steve Mason</p>	<p>Welcome Opening Session Q&A Session about traditional vs faith based</p> <p><u>Presenter:</u> Panel Discussion</p>
9:15 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	Break	Break
9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Workshops	Workshops
12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Lunch*	Lunch*
1:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.	Workshops	Ending Workshop

* Check www.newdirectionweb.com for additional breakfast/lunch.

Course registration is available on a first-come, first-served basis, so be sure to register early! If you need assistance during the conference, visit the Registration table.

No Partial Credits will be awarded. You must sign IN and OUT of each course.

COURSES AT A GLANCE

TUESDAY OPENING SESSION 8:15 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. Why bring together traditional and faith-based treatment? Presenter: Steve Mason		
October 28, 2025 9:30am to 12:30pm (3 hours)		
TAM01	Working with Co-Occurring Clients—Introduction	Steve Mason, LPC-S, ADC
TAM02	Working with Grief	Maggie Banger, LPC-S
TAM03	HIV	Ryan Threatt, MA, BCHC
October 28, 2025 1:30pm to 4:45pm (3 hours)		
TPM01	Utilizing Resources	John Bayles, CRSS
TPM02	Working with Shame and Guilt	Steve Mason, LPC-S, ADC
TPM03	Working with Trauma	Beau Armistead, LPC

WEDNESDAY PLENARY 8:15 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. Discussion of traditional and faith-based treatment approaches Presenter: Panel Discussion		
October 29, 2025 9:30am to 12:30pm (3 hours)		
WAM01	Ethics for Professionals	Zach Ludwig, LPC-S
WAM02	Working with Co-Occurring Clients—Intermediate/Advanced	Steve Mason, LPC-S
WAM03	Women's Mental Health in Recovery	Stephanie Galbreath, LPC
October 29, 2025 1:30pm to 4:45pm (3 hours)		
WPM01	Bridging Belief and Practice: Spiritual and Secular Approaches to Working with Clients	Robbie Keeble, Gresh Harbuck, and Steve Mason

COURSES AT A GLANCE

Working with Co-Occurring Clients—Introduction

This engaging 3-hour course provides a comprehensive overview of the brain's functionality as it relates to mental health and substance use. Participants will gain a foundational understanding of how the brain operates, how common mental health disorders develop, and how substance use can alter or exacerbate mental health conditions.

The course will begin with a look at brain anatomy and the neurological underpinnings of behavior and emotion. It will then explore the development and presentation of several common mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, PTSD, and schizophrenia. The session will also examine the complex relationship between mental health and substance use, highlighting how substances affect the brain and complicate diagnosis and treatment.

Participants will review the role of psychiatric medications—how they work, when they are typically used, and common considerations. The course will also introduce evidence-based treatment options that do not involve medication, including therapy modalities, lifestyle interventions, and holistic approaches.

Key Topics Include:

- Basic brain structure and function related to mental health
- Development and symptoms of common mental health disorders
- Interaction between substance use and mental illness
- Overview of psychiatric medications and their role
- Non-pharmacological treatment options and integrated care approaches

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Describe key brain functions related to mental health.
2. Identify symptoms and characteristics of common mental health disorders.
3. Explain how substance use impacts mental health conditions.
4. Understand the role of medication in treatment planning.
5. Recognize effective non-medication-based treatment strategies

Current view of HIV

This 3-hour training (with 1 additional hour credit for post-testing) provides essential education on HIV for professionals working in mental health and substance use treatment settings. Participants will gain a foundational understanding of HIV transmission, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment, with a specific focus on how HIV intersects with mental health and substance use disorders.

COURSES AT A GLANCE

The course will cover the medical aspects of HIV, including current treatment protocols and the importance of adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART). It will also explore psychosocial factors such as stigma, trauma, and co-occurring disorders that often impact individuals living with HIV. Special emphasis will be placed on how providers can create supportive, nonjudgmental environments that encourage engagement in care.

Participants will leave with practical strategies for client education, harm reduction, risk assessment, and interdisciplinary collaboration, empowering them to play a meaningful role in HIV prevention and care.

Key Topics Include:

- HIV transmission, prevention, and treatment basics
- Intersection of HIV with mental health and substance use disorders
- Addressing stigma, trauma, and health disparities in HIV-positive populations
- Harm reduction strategies and behavioral risk assessment
- Provider responsibilities in education, referral, and integrated care

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Explain how HIV is transmitted, prevented, and treated.
2. Identify the unique challenges faced by individuals with co-occurring HIV, mental health, and substance use disorders.
3. Describe the role of mental health and substance use providers in HIV prevention and support.
4. Implement harm reduction and behavioral risk-reduction techniques.
5. Utilize culturally sensitive, trauma-informed approaches to care.

Utilizing Resources

This 3-hour training course is designed to equip helping professionals with a comprehensive understanding of the community resources available to support individuals facing complex challenges. Participants will explore how to identify, access, and coordinate services across multiple systems, with a focus on improving client outcomes through effective referrals and advocacy.

The course will cover a broad range of essential resources including substance use treatment programs, mental health services, emergency and transitional housing, medical and primary care access, and basic needs assistance such as food, clothing, and hygiene. Special attention will be given to navigating local systems, building collaborative relationships with service providers, and addressing barriers such as stigma, transportation, eligibility requirements, and systemic inequities.

Through case examples and practical tools, participants will strengthen their ability to match client needs with appropriate services and support long-term engagement in care.

COURSES AT A GLANCE

Key Topics Include:

- Overview of substance use and mental health treatment options
- Housing and transitional living programs
- Medical, dental, and behavioral health resources
- Clothing banks, food pantries, hygiene supply providers
- Building effective referral networks and addressing access barriers

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Identify key categories of community-based resources and services.
2. Match client needs with appropriate local programs and supports.
3. Navigate referral processes and advocate for client access.
4. Address barriers to care such as stigma, documentation, and transportation.
5. Build and maintain collaborative relationships with community partners.

Working with Depression and Anxiety

This 3-hour clinical training is designed to enhance the skills of therapists working with clients experiencing depression and anxiety—two of the most common and frequently co-occurring mental health disorders. The course will provide a comprehensive overview of these conditions, including diagnostic criteria, symptom presentation, and contributing biological, psychological, and environmental factors.

Participants will explore evidence-based therapeutic approaches such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), mindfulness strategies, and strengths-based interventions. Emphasis will be placed on assessment techniques, treatment planning, and culturally responsive care that takes into account trauma, identity, and life context.

Through case discussions and applied tools, therapists will gain practical techniques they can immediately integrate into clinical practice to improve outcomes for clients struggling with depression, anxiety, or both.

Key Topics Include:

- Diagnostic overview and symptom differentiation between depression and anxiety
- Common comorbidities and underlying contributors
- Core components of effective treatment plans
- Evidence-based interventions including CBT, ACT, and mindfulness strategies
- Managing resistance, suicidality, and client disengagement

COURSES AT A GLANCE

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Identify and differentiate key symptoms of depression and anxiety.
2. Apply evidence-based interventions for treating these conditions.
3. Develop individualized treatment plans based on client presentation and needs.
4. Address co-occurring concerns such as trauma, substance use, or personality features.
5. Increase client engagement and improve therapeutic outcomes through tailored strategies.

Ethics for Professionals

This 3-hour continuing education course provides a comprehensive review of ethical standards and decision-making practices essential for today's helping professionals. Grounded in real-world clinical challenges, this training is designed to deepen participants' understanding of professional ethics and enhance their ability to navigate complex situations with clarity and confidence.

The course will explore key ethical principles including confidentiality, dual relationships, informed consent, boundaries, professional competence, and cultural responsiveness. Using case examples and interactive discussion, participants will examine how ethical codes (such as those from NBCC, and NASW) apply in various practice settings and how to manage ethical dilemmas while maintaining client trust and professional integrity.

Participants will also gain practical tools for ethical decision-making and documentation, especially when dealing with high-risk clients, technology in practice, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Key Topics Include:

- Overview of ethical codes and principles (NBCC, NASW)
- Boundaries, dual relationships, and managing gray areas
- Confidentiality, informed consent, and record-keeping
- Ethical considerations in telehealth and digital communication

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Participant will increase knowledge about emerging trends and news that impact the helping profession.
2. Participant will increase knowledge about ethical conflicts and considerations in the helping profession.
3. Participant will increase knowledge about boundary setting, dual relationships, and the role of technology in defining these boundaries.

COURSES AT A GLANCE

Working with Trauma

This 3-hour training provides mental health professionals with essential knowledge and tools to work more effectively with clients who have experienced trauma. The course covers both foundational and intermediate trauma-informed interventions, including an introduction to the principles and basic structure of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR).

Participants will begin with an overview of trauma's impact on the brain, nervous system, and emotional regulation. The training will cover trauma types (acute, chronic, complex, developmental), common trauma responses (dissociation, hyperarousal, emotional dysregulation), and clinical strategies to help clients stabilize, feel safe, and build resilience.

Therapists will learn practical grounding, containment, and psychoeducational tools drawn from CBT, somatic-based approaches, mindfulness practices, and trauma-focused models. The course will also introduce the core phases of EMDR therapy, including how it fits into trauma treatment and how to identify when a client may be ready for EMDR or referral to an EMDR-trained clinician.

Key Topics Include:

- Understanding trauma and its neurobiological and psychological effects
- Trauma responses: fight, flight, freeze, and dissociation
- Grounding, stabilization, and affect regulation techniques
- Overview of trauma-informed care principles and treatment pacing
- Introduction to EMDR: basic theory, 8-phase model, and adaptive information processing (AIP)
- Ethical and scope-of-practice considerations when discussing or referring for EMDR

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Identify key trauma symptoms and differentiate types of trauma.
2. Utilize basic trauma interventions such as grounding and emotion regulation techniques.
3. Describe the foundational concepts and structure of EMDR therapy.
4. Assess when a client may be ready for EMDR or trauma reprocessing.
5. Apply trauma-informed principles to enhance client safety and engagement.

Bridging Belief and Practice: Spirituality and Secular Approaches in working with Clients

This 3-hour training is designed to help therapists navigate the nuanced intersection of spirituality and 12-Step recovery principles when working with clients who identify as non-faith-based, agnostic, atheist, or spiritually questioning. With increasing diversity in belief systems and worldviews, clinicians must develop sensitivity and skill in integrating or discussing spiritual frameworks—particularly those rooted in traditional recovery models—without alienating or imposing belief systems on clients.

COURSES AT A GLANCE

The course offers an overview of the spiritual foundations of 12-Step programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA), while providing strategies to interpret and adapt these principles in secular or personalized terms. Participants will explore how spirituality can function as a source of meaning, connection, and healing regardless of religious affiliation, and how to ethically and effectively support clients who may resist or struggle with traditional spiritual language.

Therapists will gain practical tools to work respectfully with clients across the spiritual spectrum while remaining aligned with evidence-based and person-centered care.

Key Topics Include:

- Understanding the spiritual foundations of 12-Step recovery programs
- Distinguishing spirituality from religion in clinical practice
- Adapting 12-Step concepts for non-faith-based or secular clients
- Addressing resistance to spiritual language or practices in therapy
- Culturally responsive and ethical integration of spirituality in treatment

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the spiritual and philosophical foundations of 12-Step recovery models.
2. Differentiate between spirituality and religion when working with diverse clients.
3. Support non-faith-based clients in engaging with 12-Step tools in a meaningful way.
4. Apply strategies to integrate or adapt spiritual language and practices based on client worldview.
5. Promote inclusive, respectful dialogue around recovery, meaning, and personal growth

Women's Mental Health in Recovery

Target Audience: Therapists, counselors, social workers, substance use professionals, and clinical interns working with women in mental health or addiction recovery settings.

Course Description:

This 3-hour training provides therapists with a focused understanding of the unique mental health challenges women face in recovery, with special emphasis on the role of hormonal changes throughout the lifespan. Women's experiences of mental health and substance use disorders are shaped by a combination of biological, psychological, and social factors—including trauma histories, gender roles, caregiving burdens, and fluctuations in hormonal health.

The course will explore how hormonal transitions (such as menstruation, pregnancy, postpartum, and perimenopause/menopause) influence mood, anxiety, and relapse vulnerability. Participants will examine how these factors intersect with trauma, identity, and recovery from substance use, as well as how to provide gender-responsive and trauma-informed care.

COURSES AT A GLANCE

Through case examples, discussion, and practical interventions, therapists will learn how to assess for and address hormonal and gender-related mental health needs as part of a comprehensive recovery-oriented treatment plan.

Key Topics Include:

- Overview of women's mental health in recovery
- Hormonal influences on mood, anxiety, and relapse risk
- Impact of reproductive transitions (menstruation, pregnancy, postpartum, menopause)
- Trauma-informed care for women with co-occurring disorders
- Strategies for gender-responsive treatment planning and support

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Identify common mental health concerns among women in substance use or mental health recovery.
2. Describe how hormonal changes affect mental health and recovery throughout a woman's lifespan.
3. Recognize the impact of trauma, identity, and social roles in women's recovery.
4. Apply gender-responsive, trauma-informed approaches in clinical assessment and treatment.
5. Collaborate with medical providers and clients to address hormonal and psychiatric symptoms in an integrated way.

Working with Co-Occurring Clients—Intermediate/Advanced

This 3-hour advanced training is designed for clinicians seeking to deepen their skillset in treating individuals with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders (also known as dual diagnosis). The course focuses on evidence-based, integrated approaches to care, with an emphasis on practical interventions, clinical decision-making, and supporting treatment compliance in complex cases.

Participants will explore the most widely used and effective treatment modalities for co-occurring disorders, including Integrated Dual Disorder Treatment (IDDT), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Motivational Interviewing (MI), and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). Special attention will be given to understanding the barriers that impact client compliance—such as ambivalence, cognitive impairment, trauma histories, stigma, and system-level challenges—and how therapists can build strong therapeutic alliances to improve outcomes.

This course will also address advanced case conceptualization, engagement strategies, relapse prevention planning, and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

COURSES AT A GLANCE

Key Topics Include:

- Clinical complexity of co-occurring disorders and integrated care principles
- Intermediate and advanced interventions from CBT, DBT, MI, and IDDT
- Factors affecting client compliance and engagement in dual diagnosis treatment
- Practical strategies to support treatment adherence and reduce drop-out
- Coordinating care across mental health, substance use, and medical systems

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the core challenges in treating co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders.
2. Apply intermediate and advanced clinical techniques to support integrated treatment.
3. Identify key factors that influence treatment compliance and client engagement.
4. Use motivational and trauma-informed strategies to improve adherence.
5. Select and tailor appropriate treatment modalities based on client presentation and stage of change.

Working with Guilt/Shame

This 3-hour training explores the critical role that guilt and shame play in emotional suffering, behavioral patterns, and treatment resistance. While often overlooked or misinterpreted, guilt and shame are deeply rooted emotional experiences that can profoundly affect self-concept, relationships, trauma recovery, and overall mental health.

Participants will learn how to differentiate between healthy guilt, toxic guilt, and shame, as well as how these emotions manifest in clinical settings—especially among clients with histories of trauma, addiction, and co-occurring disorders. The training will review evidence-based strategies for helping clients process, reframe, and move through guilt and shame with compassion and insight.

Through clinical examples, skill-building exercises, and discussion, therapists will gain tools to reduce internalized stigma, support emotional regulation, and foster self-forgiveness and resilience in their clients.

Key Topics Include:

- Definitions and differences: guilt vs. shame
- The role of guilt/shame in trauma, substance use, and mental health recovery
- Cultural and developmental factors influencing guilt/shame responses
- The impact of unprocessed shame on treatment resistance and relapse
- Clinical interventions for identifying, exploring, and transforming guilt and shame

COURSES AT A GLANCE

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Differentiate between guilt and shame, including adaptive and maladaptive expressions.
2. Identify how unresolved guilt and shame contribute to mental health and substance use challenges.
3. Use trauma-informed strategies to help clients acknowledge and process these emotions safely.
4. Apply therapeutic tools such as compassion-focused therapy, narrative reframing, and self-forgiveness work.
5. Support clients in shifting from shame-based identity toward empowerment and self-acceptance.

Navigating Grief and Loss: Understanding, Supporting, and Healing

This 3-hour course offers a deep and compassionate exploration of the grief process, equipping participants with the knowledge and tools to understand and support those experiencing loss. Attendees will learn to recognize the wide spectrum of grief—including anticipatory grief, disenfranchised grief, ambiguous loss, and complicated grief—and how each presents uniquely in different individuals and contexts.

The course will explore how grief unfolds psychologically, emotionally, and even physically, with emphasis on cultural, developmental, and situational factors that impact the grieving process. Special attention will be given to traumatic grief—grief complicated by sudden, violent, or deeply distressing loss—and the ways it can mimic or overlap with PTSD and other mental health concerns.

Participants will gain practical strategies and therapeutic approaches for guiding individuals through the mourning process, fostering resilience, and helping clients move toward integration and healing.

Key Topics Include:

- Understanding the stages and dimensions of grief
- Types of grief: normal, anticipatory, ambiguous, disenfranchised, and complicated
- Techniques for supporting clients through loss and mourning
- Identifying signs of traumatic grief and its psychological complications
- Therapeutic frameworks and tools for grief intervention

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the emotional and psychological process of grief.
2. Differentiate between various forms of grief and loss.
3. Apply supportive techniques to help individuals navigate grief.
4. Identify symptoms and risks associated with traumatic and complicated grief.
5. Integrate appropriate therapeutic responses into client care plans.

SPEAKERS

Beau Armistead

Beau Armistead is the founder and director of Sojourn Counseling. He graduated from Auburn University in 1995 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Since graduating from Auburn, he has worked in various settings, including counseling, case management, software and non-profit work. Beau holds a Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Adams State University in Alamosa, CO. He is a Nationally Board-Certified Counselor with the NBCC, a member of the American Counseling Association, and EMDRIA, the EMDR International Association. He is a Certified EMDR therapist, a Certified Clinical Trauma Professional, certified TBRI therapist, and certified provider of IASIS Micro Current Neurofeedback. Beau has a particular interest in helping people recover from trauma and PTSD.

Maggie Banger

Mrs. Banger is a Supervising Licensed Professional Counselor in the state of Alabama. She also is a Certified Grief Recovery Specialist® through the Grief Recovery Institute, as well as an Advanced Certified Relapse Prevention Specialist® through the CENAPS Corporation. Mrs. Banger worked in a nationally acclaimed long-term residential treatment facility for substance use disorders, working specifically with grief groups and the professionals' program for over a decade. In October of 2017, Mrs. Banger opened Restore Counseling Services, a private counseling practice, to pursue her continued call as a therapist in aiding clients with grief, addiction recovery, spiritual issues, and multiple other mental health and life skills issues. Since that time, Mrs. Banger has also pursued and completed a scholar's and master's certification with The Institute for Conscious Being in Enneagram studies and is an auxiliary staff member of their faculty. Mrs. Banger periodically runs grief intensives in the Birmingham metro-area, in addition to doing individual and group work on grief and addiction recovery. She has written some articles and has done multiple presentations for organizations in Alabama and beyond. Due to Ms. Banger's experience in working with professionals and addiction, she also conducts professional assessments on the outpatient level of care for healthcare and attorneys.

John Bayles

John Bayles, the Program Director at the Recovery Resource Center, a program of the Crisis Center, has worked in the substance use treatment and recovery field for nine years serving as a program manager, community outreach coordinator and treatment guide and crisis consultant. He's a UAB graduate who lived in New York for 10 years working as a journalist and in development for a nonprofit whose mission was ending homelessness in NYC. John is a person in long-term recovery, a father and a husband who finds purpose through helping others. Working for the Recovery Resource Center allows him to be of service to the clients, the community and to other organizations. He also serves as President of the Board of Directors for AARR (Alabama Alliance for Recovery Residences), as a member of the Board of Directors for NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)-Bham, and as Co-Chair of the Treatment and Recovery Committee of the Governor's Opioid Council. He also serves on numerous Community Advisory Boards for organizations including the Southeast Addiction Technology Transfer Center at Morehouse School of Medicine, ASADS Alabama, and the Renewal Project.

SPEAKERS

Stephanie Galbreath

Stephanie Galbreath is a licensed Professional Counselor in Alabama with over 17 years of specialized experience in substance use treatment. Currently serving at The University of Alabama at Birmingham, she works extensively with both adults and adolescents within the Family Court System. In addition to her work at the university, Stephanie is also a therapist at New Direction Counseling where she provides general counseling services to individuals seeking support for a wide range of mental health concerns, including substance misuse, life transitions, stress management, and personal growth.

Throughout her career, Stephanie has been instrumental in the development and implementation of several key programs aimed at addressing substance misuse in the Birmingham area. These initiatives include substance use treatment during pregnancy, Family Drug Court, Adolescent Drug Court, Prevention Services, and School-Based Programs. Her expertise and contributions have significantly impacted both the local community and the broader field of counseling.

Robbie Keeble

Robbie Keeble is a Nationally Certified Addictions Counselor, Nationally Certified Peer Recovery Support Specialist, and Fellow of the American College of Addiction Treatment Administrators, with more than 30 years of experience in the addiction treatment field. He is also certified in Florida as a Recovery Residence Administrator. Over the course of his career, Robbie has served as a counselor, instructor, administrator, and owner of addiction treatment programs across Georgia, Alabama, and Florida.

Following his retirement in 2020, Robbie led the development of a certifying agency for recovery residences in Alabama, resulting in the creation of the Alabama Alliance for Recovery Residences—an affiliate of the National Association of Recovery Residences—where he currently serves on the Board of Directors. He also serves on the boards of multiple recovery-focused organizations, continuing to advance quality standards and support for individuals and communities impacted by addiction.

Zach Ludwig

Zach Ludwig is a licensed professional counselor and clinical leader with over a decade of experience in behavioral health. He currently serves as Vice President of Clinical Services & Accreditation at Bradford Health Services, where he oversees regulatory compliance, clinical quality, and program development across multiple states.

Since joining Bradford in 2011, Zach has held a range of roles, including Director of Regulatory Services, Director of Clinical Record Logistics, and Corporate Director of Clinical Programs. His work has focused on clinical operations, staff training, policy development, and quality improvement.

Zach holds a master's degree in Counselor Education from Tennessee Technological University and is licensed in Alabama, Tennessee, and Florida. He is a National Certified Counselor, a CPI-certified instructor, and serves on the Ethics Committee of the Alabama Counseling Association.

SPEAKERS

Steve Mason

Steve Mason is a licensed professional counselor, supervising counselor, and certified addiction counselor with over two decades of experience in the substance use field, beginning in 1999. Throughout his career, he has worked with both adolescent and adult populations across a variety of settings, including outpatient, residential, and home-based programs. He has held multiple roles within substance use treatment programs, ranging from intake coordinator to clinical director. In 2023, he founded New Direction Counseling, Inc., where he currently serves as Executive Director and lead therapist. Steve has presented at numerous trainings and conferences on topics related to substance use, mental health, and leadership. He has also served as adjunct faculty in the Counseling and Psychology program at Alabama A&M University.

Ryan Threatt

Ryan Threatt is a dedicated public health practitioner with a strong academic background in Community Health and Human Services. He currently serves as the Program Manager and Evaluator II at the University of Alabama at Birmingham's School of Public Health where he oversees key initiatives including data analysis, needs assessments, and program evaluation for Maternal and Child Health outcomes. Ryan has published research in MCH, women's health, HIV, obesity, and racial/ethnic health disparities. His early work primarily focused on substance misuse and HIV prevention efforts, utilizing cognitive counseling and evidence-based strategies to support at-risk populations. Ryan's work is driven by a passion for education, advocacy, and systemic change in healthcare and community support.