



THE ASSOCIATION OF MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING & DEVELOPMENT

NEWSLETTER

AN EDITION ON





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PRESIDENT'S NOTE

DR. ANN SHILLINGFORD
PHD, CSC, NCC
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



I have come to appreciate this quote by Emily Dickenson,

*"Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops at all"*

Dickenson portrays a metaphoric description of **HOPE** as a bird. The first line, **"hope is the thing with feathers,"** is a reminder that birds, though delicate, can still soar gracefully in even in times of adversity. The second line, **"that perches in the soul"** informs that hope lives deep within us, even when we don't feel very hopeful. It rests quietly in our innermost being ever present, yet unnoticed. This is followed by my favorite line, **"and sings the tune without the words,"** which communicates that even when we can't feel it, hope lays within us with persistence and reassurance. Ever found yourself just quietly swaying to music that no one else but the spirit within you can hear? That's hope; wordlessly moving within you like a silent, comforting melody. Finally, Dickenson says that **"hope never stops at all."** In the most difficult of times, hope is constant and even when we cannot quite define it, hope is a gently, enduring force that continues to carry us through.

Despite the current threats to civil liberty and dehumanization of individual from marginalized communities in America; when clarity and justice seems unreachable, hold fast to hope. When the very core of who we are is challenged, hope may be faint but know that it is still present. Let your hope take shape through (a) advocacy, voting, and building stronger communities, (b) educating ourselves and those around us, (c) engaging in meaningful dialogue, (d) holding leaders accountable, and (e) creating safe spaces where justice and compassion can thrive. Let that hope rise, quiet as wings, fierce as truth, and let it guide you forward, even when the path is not yet clear.

AMCD remains a beacon of hope, advancing cultural awareness and empowering counselor and counselor educators to lead with courage and compassion. Reach out to us through our website, www.myamcd.org, or send us an email at presidentialtrio@myamcd.org or virtual@myamcd.org.



MIDWEST REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

CLAIRE MARTIN, PHD, LPC, NCC, ACS, BC-TMH

Dear Counselor Educators and Clinicians,

More than ever, the phrase “The personal is political” rings true. We find ourselves in a time where our identities are under relentless scrutiny—shamed, dismissed as “unpatriotic,” or even deemed “outlawed.” These tactics are meant to instill fear, create division, silence communities, and further marginalize those who dare to exist authentically.

In times of darkness, it is important to remember the trails our ancestors and elders have paved for us, their blood that has been shed for our freedom, and the countless sacrifices that have been made for our liberation. Giving up is not an option, nor is it to remain passive and silent. Fighting for justice and liberation is woven into the fabric of our existence—bravery is in our DNA.

This is not the first time our identities have been challenged, and it will not be the last. But history has shown us that we are capable of overcoming adversities while holding onto our pride and integrity. We have survived. We have thrived. And we will continue to rise. Let us draw strength from our purpose by creating, nurturing, building, uplifting, and loving.

When the world feels heavy, remember to tend to your spirit and reclaim your joy. Here’s how we can sustain ourselves in this ongoing journey:

- Rest when your body and mind call for it.
- Seek solace in the company of loved ones.
- Explore new passions that reignite your curiosity.
- Reconnect with the healing power of nature.
- Honor your body and soul through mindfulness and care.
- Release your emotions creatively—write, educate, publish, or express yourself through art.
- Find your tribe and cultivate meaningful and supportive connections.
- Reassess your priorities and reengage in ways that feel purposeful.

Let us be intentional in fueling positivity and fostering hope. Together, we can navigate this treacherous journey and continue the work of building a world that celebrates the power and beauty of all identities.

With hope and solidarity,

Claire Martin, PhD, LPC, NCC, ACS, BC-TMH
AMCD Midwest Regional Representative



WESTERN REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

JOSE ROSALES LOPEZ PHD, CRC,LPC,NCC (HIM/EL)

In a profession often guided by frameworks and theories, I have found that one of the most powerful tools we possess is something far more instinctive: our curiosity. As counselors serving diverse communities, our genuine curiosity becomes the bridge that connects us to our clients' lived experiences, creating space where hope can flourish.

When we approach our clients with intentional curiosity rather than presumption, we communicate something profound: "Your story matters, and I am here to understand it." This simple disposition transforms the therapeutic relationship from a clinical exchange into a journey of mutual discovery. Through curiosity, we acknowledge that we don't have all the answers, and in that humility, we create room for our clients' wisdom to emerge.

For those whose voices have been historically silenced or dismissed, being met with genuine curiosity can be revolutionary. Rather than imposing predetermined narratives, our curiosity invites clients to define their own stories, reclaim their experiences, and imagine new possibilities. This is where hope takes root – in the fertile ground of being truly seen and heard.

As a person of color who has witnessed firsthand the need for culturally sensitive services in our communities, I believe that curiosity is not just a counseling skill but a disposition of justice. When we are curious about our clients' cultural contexts, their community strengths, and their sources of resilience, we move beyond deficit-focused approaches toward liberation-oriented practice.

Hope, then, is not something we give to our clients. Rather, it emerges in the space we create through our curiosity – a space where clients can bring their full, authentic selves, where their identities are not just accepted but celebrated, and where healing becomes not just possible but inevitable.

Through comunidad and collective dialogue, we can continue building a profession that is not just hopeful but transformative.

Se Feliz (Mi tio's favorite saying)
Jorge



AMCD LATINX CONCERNS GROUP

CAMILA PULGAR, PHD (SHE/HER)

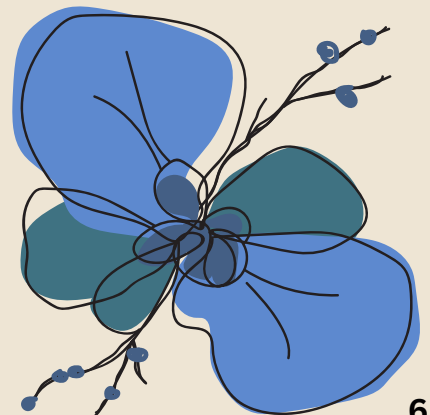
In the first months of 2025, our immigrant community has faced an overwhelming amount of stress, trauma, and fear due to an increase in ICE raids. This kind of trauma is not new to us; it resonates deeply within our bodies and our collective immigrant experience.

In moments like these, it's essential to lean on each other, prepare, organize, and prioritize our mental health. It's okay to not be okay right now. As VP of Latine concerns, I am committed to supporting our immigrant community locally and nationally. When we care so much and carry each other's pain like our own, I would like to share some tips for slowing down, reflecting, and recharge:

- Take a break from social media as much as possible.
- Go for a walk with a friend who brings you joy and talk about anything other than the news.
- Support your local immigrant-owned businesses..
- Seek out a culturally competent therapist who is sensitive to our shared experiences. If you are in NC, please check our website for resources.
- Rest.
- Meditation can work wonders for moments of panic and fear. I have been practicing a brief meditation lately that has helped me feel grounded.
- Rest. I cannot emphasize this enough. Change doesn't happen overnight.

Remember, our community is strong, fuerte, and wise.
Lean into your strengths rather than your panic.

Con cariño,
Camila Pulgar, PhD





NATIVE AMERICAN CONCERNS GROUP

RONI K. WHITE, NCC, LCPC, ACS
NICOLA A. MEADE, PHD, NCC, LCPC

Hope of Becoming

Hope is an essential protective factor when instilled it can be drawn on to produce comfort, courage, and empowerment. Indigenous Nations and Tribes of the United States known ethnically as Native American, American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Pacific Islanders have demonstrated resilience as collective groups throughout history including the innumerable tragedies and traumas endured by colonization and continue to creatively and innovatively contribute to society.

Marginalized communities continue to experience the disadvantages perpetuating from coloniality. There have been multiple centuries of efforts to dismantle racism, eradicate oppression, and advocate for equality and equity. Over the past 60 years the awareness and movement in decolonizing and decolonization as transformed activism, advocacy, sovereignty, and cultural revitalization. Native communities strive to uphold and strengthen sovereignty to continue to evolve as a people.

The recent White House Administration has issued 147 executive orders since the inauguration in January 2025. Several executive orders threaten critical funding for Native communities. This funding supports community human services programs. The executive orders also threaten the Federal application preferences which were set to improve equity in the hiring practices.

The potential new adversity can create adverse psychological and financial distress. It is essential for therapists to assess for these negative effects on wellness. Providing group services can support community, reinforce and build adaptive coping skills, as well as create culturally appropriate spaces. Therapists can utilize research, clinical observations, and expertise to advocate to policy makers to offer guidance on needs to promote wellness, equity, and sovereignty.

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Hope of Becoming (Cont.)

The progress that has been accomplished can continue when we hold onto hope for becoming, support one another, and advocate for the change we want to see. It takes all of us to progress. We encourage all members of AMCD and all the Concerns groups to understand how executive orders can negatively affect multiple marginalized groups. Remember the current time is on our watch, protect your hope to do the work.

With continuous challenges to sovereignty, land, culture, and healing, the path of resiliency leads to hold on to hope in the present day. In the 21st Century there is more awareness and care to the needs, efforts, strengths, and advocacy concerning Indigenous Nations and Tribes of North America. It is encouraged that the concerns groups of AMCD collaborate to further understand the areas we all can unite to strengthen our voices, lift one another up, and be a part of paving the way to increase hope, resilience, equity, and liberation for minoritized and marginalized groups.

Join the Native American Concerns group on June 18, 2025, for a webinar on the epidemic of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) where you can earn CEUs.

Roni K. White, NCC, LCPC, ACS

co-VP for Native American Concerns Group of AMCD.

Nicola A. Meade, PhD, NCC, LCPC

Assistant Professor at Rosemont College, co-VP for Native American Concerns Group of AMCD.



WEBINARS YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED!

Panel Discussion: Trauma-Sensitive Group Work with Afro-Caribbean Clients

Sponsored by: The AMCD Midwest Regional Rep and the Association for Specialists in Group Work
February, 28th 4pm EST/5pm CST

Moderators:

Shana Gelin, PhD, LAC, NCC, (She/Her/Hers), Assistant Professor, Kean University

Linzy Andre (she/her/hers), MSED, LMHC, NCC, ACS, Doctoral Candidate, Syracuse University

Panelists:

Claire Martin, PhD, LPC, NCC, ACS, BC-TMH (she/her/hers), Assistant Professor, Webster University

Kathy Altidor, (she/her/hers), RMHC, M.S., Doctoral Student, Florida Atlantic University

Nadiya Boyce, (she, her, hers) PhD, NCC, PMH-C, Assistant Professor, University of Central Florida



Integrating Traditional African Healing Practices in Counseling

Sponsored by: African American Concerns Group & Midwest Regional Representative

March 20, 2025, 6 CST/7 EST Live

CEU: 1 credit hour

Guest Speakers: Obari Cartman Ph.D.

Hosted by: Roseina Britton, Ph.D., LPC, NCC and Claire Martin, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, ACS, BC-TMH

Content: Discuss the integration of traditional African healing practices with modern counseling techniques. Highlight the cultural significance and therapeutic benefits of these practices.

WEBINARS YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED!

Empowering Black communities to heal from the effects of racial trauma.

Sponsored by: African American Concerns Group & Midwest Regional Representative

Wednesday, February 5, 2024

Pre-Recorded Webinar Format

CEU: 1 credit hour

Speakers: Claire Martin, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, ACS, BC-TMH and Roseina Britton, Ph.D., LPC, NCC

Content: This presentation will discuss stigma and systemic barriers impacting mental health access in African American communities impacted by racial trauma. The presenters will also discuss relevant healing practices to combat mental health stigma while empowering communities through advocacy and policy.

The Role of Family and Community in Addressing Racial Trauma and Mental Health in African American Youth

Sponsored by: African American Concerns Group & Midwest Regional Representative

February 12th, 2025

Pre-Recorded Webinar Format

CEU: 1 credit hour

Speakers: Taimyr Strachan-Loudior Ph.D., LMFT

Hosted by: Claire Martin, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, ACS, BC-TMH and Roseina Britton, Ph.D, LPC, NCC

Examine the role of family and community in supporting mental health within African American youth impacted by racial trauma. Discuss family dynamics, community support structures, and effective counseling strategies.

WEBINARS YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED!

AMCD LATINE CONCERNS GROUP PRESENTS:

SUPPORTING IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES: MOBILIZING MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS



Tuesday May, 20th, 2025

6:00-8:00 P.M.

**FRANCISCA
CORONADO**

Founder, Therapist Network



**SELMA
YZNAGA**

Professor, UTGV



**DANIEL
TERMINEL**

Assistant Professor, UTEP



Learning objectives:

1. describe current policies and executive orders related to the Latine/immigrant community
2. identify potential effects of current policies on mental health
3. consider opportunities for advocacy
4. develop strategies to prevent burnout
5. recognize resources for keeping our communities safe

2 CEUs

ARTICLE SUBMISSION:

FINDING HOPE IN UNCERTAINTY: MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

In rural communities, hope develops softly, quietly, & often within the fabric of the culture. Hope is rooted in relationships, cultural identity, & collective resilience like a lifeline for facing intersecting concerns. In the current political climate of the United States, rural communities are facing several challenges, & can be portrayed monolithically such that policies may not reflect the diversity & complexity among rural communities across the country.

Clients in rural communities face challenges such as geographic isolation, provider shortages, economic instability, and limited infrastructure. For clients from diverse backgrounds, the obstacles are compounded by structural racism, anti-queer sentiment, anti-immigrant rhetoric, educational disparities, & healthcare disparities. In rural contexts, counseling must include community voice, cultural strengths, and systemic advocacy. As counselors, we understand the importance of hope as well as the beauty of the cultural differences across rural communities. Counselors working in rural areas have an important role in promoting culturally grounded hope – not blind optimism, but a deliberate belief in resilience, dignity, & change. This may involve connecting clients to culturally affirming support systems, honoring rural identity without romanticizing hardship, & holding space for collective grief & generational trauma.

In counselor education, counselor educators must equip future clinicians with the tools necessary to navigate the sociopolitical realities & culture of rural communities. Students should receive the knowledge necessary to understand the implications of legislation on the mental health of rural communities as well as competencies for effective counseling. Educators can model hope by affirming that advocacy, cultural attunement, & ethical resistance are integral to clinical work.

In rural multicultural counseling, hope is embodied in the stories clients tell, the relationships they nurture, & the quiet resistance to being forgotten. Hope reminds us that healing is a radical, political, act & that transformation is possible, even now.

Kayla Acklin, PhD, LPC, PMH-C, NCC

Chair & Assistant Professor; Department of Counseling, Mississippi College



AMCD'S SECRETARY & NEWSLETTER EDITOR

SRAVYA GUMMALURI, LAC(NJ), NCC,
MA (SHE/HER)

MELISSA CARMONA PHD, NCC, LMCHC
(SHE/ELLA)



A message of hope for immigrant communities:

Immigrant communities are under increased violence from the current administration through xenophobic legislation and other means of oppression. Our immigrant students, educators, clients, peers and communities are experiencing an increased sense of fear and unsafety due to the fear instilled by constant racial profiling and xenophobic attacks on immigrant communities. It's our moral and ethical obligation to protect our clients, and peers from harm.

With the threat of detention and deportations and family separations due to racial profiling of migrant communities and the police force used by ICE and Customs and Border Patrol, migrant communities are at a high risk of experiencing PTSD, and other mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression due to the continued threat to their safety. Being part of immigrant communities ourselves, we have noticed a lack of attention to our outcry of the injustices and harm being experienced by this community. The counseling profession has been silent when it comes to attacks on immigrant communities, some of the silence being from ambivalence, indifference, or upholding harmful values such as xenophobia and white supremacy. Those part of immigrant communities, already at risk who are organizing grassroots initiatives, demonstrations, engaging in educational advocacy and other means of advocacy are being silenced. It should not solely fall on immigrant communities, already at risk, to advocate for ourselves and our communities. Collective liberation requires collective advocacy against any type of injustice.

As AMCD we offer this message of solidarity and hope to our immigrant members, and the broader counseling community.

We are living through an administration that is actively targeting marginalized communities—separating families, fueling genocides abroad, and emboldening everyday acts of hate. If you feel fear, stress, burnout, disconnection—know that your feelings are valid. This moment is overwhelming and meant to instill fear by design. Many are dissociating, struggling to access empathy, losing hope.

(Continued →)



A message of hope (Cont.)

And that anger you feel? It matters. Anger reminds us of what we will not stand for, of what must be protected; that being the humanity and dignity of immigrant communities. The work ahead will require us to honor that anger and channel it into a driving force against xenophobia and harm to immigrant communities. Every emotion you carry—grief, rage, love—has a role to play. Every way you show up as an individual and advocate matters. The work takes many shapes and colors, and we need them all.

Amid all of this, hope becomes not an afterthought, but an act of resistance. Hope can be a frightening thought—it means believing that things can get better and that we can help make them better. Hope asks us to keep going even when no clear path is in sight, and without it, this work is not sustainable. Let this be a reminder: protecting our hope is just as vital as protecting each other. If you are tired, you are not alone. If you are scared, you are not alone. If you are daring to hope, despite it all, you are helping to hold the door open for what is yet to come. May we keep choosing hope—fiercely—as we continue this work, together.

The Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD) is rooted in the radical belief that a more just, equitable world is possible—a belief grounded in hope. Since its founding, AMCD has held space for counselors, educators, and advocates committed to uplifting historically marginalized voices and transforming systems of oppression within and beyond the counseling profession. Its mission—to advance multiculturalism, social justice, and advocacy—reminds us that hope is not passive; it is an active, collective force that drives this work forward. In a time when many are feeling disheartened and under attack, AMCD's legacy reminds us that change is possible when we center the lived experiences, wisdom, and resilience of our diverse communities.

As we end this message of hope, we would like to leave you with a quote by Audre Lorde for inspiration, reflection and encouragement to keep living, advocating and healing to empower ourselves and our communities.

"Change, personal and political, does not come about in a day, nor a year. But it is our day-to-day decisions, the way in which we testify with our lives to those things in which we say we believe, that empower us. Your power is relative, but it is real. And if you do not learn to use it, it will be used, against you, and me, and our children. Change did not begin with you, and it will not end with you, but what you do with your life is an absolutely vital piece of that chain."

– Audre Lorde, from a 1989 speech at Oberlin College