



# Gateways to Spirituality in Psychotherapy and Counselling

The first academic conference in Israel on the integration of  
spirituality in psychotherapy and counselling

Monday, March 11, 2019, University of Haifa, Israel

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Monday, March 11, 2019 - University of Haifa, Israel



## **Academic Committee Chairs:**

Dr. Pninit Russo-Netzer

Prof. Ofra Mayselless

## **Academic Committee Members**

**(in alphabetical order):**

Dr. Dana Amir, Dr. Aviva Berkovich-Ohana,  
Prof. Ofra Mayselless, Dr. Marianna Ruah-Midbar Shapiro,  
Dr. Pninit Russo-Netzer, Dr. Avihu Shoshana,  
Prof. Nurit Yirmiya

## **Conference Coordinator**

Ms. Pnina Ohana

<https://spiritpsych.edu.haifa.ac.il>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/303012997085125/>

## Acknowledgments

We wish to express our gratitude to the Faculty of Education and the University of Haifa for their support.

This conference was also partially supported by a grant from the John Templeton Foundation, and the participation and direction of Brigham Young University. The opinions expressed in this conference are those of the presenter(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the John Templeton Foundation or Brigham Young University.

## Preface

### **The first academic conference in Israel on the integration of spirituality in psychotherapy and counselling**

The interest in spirituality and spiritual development has been an inherent part of human nature throughout generations and across cultures. However, the acceptance of spirituality as a legitimate field of research and science in psychology is relatively new. For many years, psychotherapy's relationship to spirituality was characterized by reservation, suspicion, and separation. In the current high-speed era of constant stimulation and instability, there is a growing recognition of the importance of the spiritual dimension of human existence as well as growing understanding of the centrality of the human longing for the transcendent and the sacred. These insights are reflected in a significant increase in the development of both research and practices, which now seek to integrate spiritual aspects in therapy and counselling as a central and universal element of optimal human development.

This inaugural conference constitutes a historical event in Israel, for it emphasizes the connection between spirituality and psychotherapy and a breakthrough in the academic realization of the significance of the spiritual dimension and its application in psychotherapy. The opening keynote lecture will be given by Prof. Kenneth Pargament, one of the world's leading researchers and clinicians in this field.

The conference also presents some of the varied applications of spirituality in clinical practice as well as the developing research in this area.

We hope that this conference will open gateways to the integration of spirituality in clinical practice and academic research and will promote a dialogue among clinicians and researchers on spirituality as a central dimension of human experience. We also hope that the conference will promote the creation of a community and a network of therapists and researchers interested in further studying and implementing the many possibilities inherent in this combination. There are already various activities aimed at promoting the connection between spirituality and psychotherapy, including the opening of a master's program specializing in integrative psychotherapy mind-body-spirit at the University of Haifa, and the future publication of an issue of the *Journal of the Israeli Psychological Association* that will be devoted to this vital combination of therapy and spirit.

We wish that the gathering of all of us on this day will allow a space in which we can experience grace and kindness and celebrate the unique and remarkable connection between spirituality and psychotherapy.

**Prof. Ofra Mayselless**

**Dr. Pninit Russo-Netzer**

## **The Center for the Study of Spirituality**

### **A multi-university center based at the University of Haifa**

(The center has been approved by the University of Haifa and is currently under construction)

**This inaugural conference is sponsored by the center and reflects one of the avenues by which the center promotes its vision**

#### **The Center's Objectives are:**

- (a) **Advocating for a broad, humanistic and especially pluralistic spirituality** and its benevolent potential, and legitimizing the study and research of spirituality
- (b) **Promoting the study and research of spirituality and spiritual and personal growth processes**
- (c) **Supporting and encouraging the use of such scientifically based knowledge** by individuals, organizations, public institutions and policy makers through a variety of ways of dissemination and through translational research in diverse fields such as education, psychotherapy, the health system, business organizations, and inter-group relations.

## **Gateways to Spirituality in Psychotherapy and Counselling**

### **Program Overview**

**08:30-09:00** Gathering and light refreshments

**09:00-10:45** Morning plenary session. Chair: **Dr. Pninit Russo-Netzer**

Greetings: Prof. Hanan Alexander, Dean of the Faculty of Education

Vocals: Shiri Gurfinkel

Keynote address: **Prof. Kenneth Pargament**

An Evidence-Based Rationale for Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy

**10:45-11:15** Break

**11:15-13:15** Seven concurrent sessions that include theory, research, case studies and/or an experiential component:

- **The Role of States of Consciousness in Processes of Change and Development**
- **Spiritual Chaplaincy in Bereavement and Loss**
- **Jewish-Spirituality Integrated Psychotherapy**
- **Body-Mind-Spirit Connections in Personal Development and Therapy**
  - **Logotherapy (meaning-centered therapy)**
  - **The Buddhist Way and Spiritual Psychotherapy**
  - **Psychoanalysis and Spirituality**

**14:00-16:00** Closing plenary session. Chair: **Dr. Pninit Russo-Netzer**

I. Theory and Research

**Prof. Ofra Mayseless:** Spiritual Pathways: An Integrative Model for Spiritual Development

**Dr. Pninit Russo-Netzer:** "Close Encounters of the Third Kind": Meeting points between Positive Psychology and Spirituality

**Dr. Hisham Abu-Raiya:** Religious/Spiritual Struggles among Muslims: Cultural Characteristics and Clinical Implications

II. On the Spiritual Realm in Poetry, Music and Psychotherapy

**Dr. Dana Amir:** From the Random to the Eternal: Reading Rilke's Poetry

**Dr. Moshe Bergstein:** Compassion as an Element of Psychoanalysis in Bion and Wagner

**The Faculty of Education Choir:** Hallelujah by Leonard Cohen



## Detailed program

### Morning Plenary Session

#### Keynote Address: **Prof. Kenneth Pargament**

Kenneth Pargament is professor emeritus of psychology at Bowling Green State University and Adjunct Professor in the Menninger Department of Psychiatry at Baylor Medical School. He has served as Distinguished Scholar at the Institute of Spirituality and Health in Houston. He has published over 300 articles on religion, spirituality, and health, and authored *The Psychology of Religion and Coping: Theory, Research, Practice* (1997) and *Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy: Understanding and Addressing the Sacred* (2007). Prof. Pargament is Editor-in-Chief of the 2013 two-volume *APA Handbook of Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality*. Among his awards are the Oskar Pfister Award from the American Psychiatric Association in 2009, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Ohio Psychological Association in 2010, the Distinguished Service Award from the Association of Professional Chaplains in 2015, and the first Applied Psychology of Religion and Spirituality Award from Division 36 of the American Psychological Association. He received an honorary doctor of letters from Pepperdine University. He was recently cited as one of the 50 most influential living psychologists in the world today. Dr. Pargament has been married 43 years to his wife, Aileen, has two children, two daughters-in-law, and one very new granddaughter.

## **Abstract: An Evidence-Based Rationale for Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy**

This address presents an empirical rationale for why spiritually integrated psychotherapy makes good sense. To place this presentation in a historical context, we begin by reviewing the long-standing tension and antipathy of the mental health field to religion and spirituality. After briefly considering the meaning of the terms “spirituality” and “religion,” we draw on research findings and examples from clinical practice to highlight several reasons for a spiritually integrated approach to psychotherapy and counseling: (1) many people see their lives through a sacred lens; (2) spirituality can be a vital resource; (3) spirituality can also be a source of problems; (4) many people prefer spiritually integrated mental health care; (5) spirituality cannot be totally removed from psychotherapy, and; (6) attention to spirituality may add to the effectiveness of treatment.

## Concurrent Sessions

### **Symposium 1: The role of States of Consciousness in Processes of Change and Development**

#### 1. **Meditation and self-consciousness**

Dr. Aviva Berkovich-Ohana, University of Haifa

The self is grossly divided by cognitive philosophers to the narrative-self (conceptual, autobiographic identity with continuity across time), and minimal-self (a momentary, perceptual and embodied self). A third, self-transcendent level is suggested, based on accumulating evidence which shows a marked neuroplasticity in the experience of the two self-concepts, as well as their underlying mechanisms, following long-term meditative training.

Dr. Aviva Berkovich-Ohana is part of the Faculty of Education, the Departments of Counselling and Human Development, as well as Learning, Instruction and Teacher Education, and the Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center.

[avivabo@edu.haifa.ac.il](mailto:avivabo@edu.haifa.ac.il)

2. **Mystical experiences and psychedelic assisted psychotherapy**

Dr. Keren Tzarfaty

Dr. Keren Tzarfaty is co-founder of the Hakomi Institute of Israel. MAPS Israel director of clinical research and alliances.

keren.tzarfaty@gmail.com

3. **Spiritual experiences in nature: A gateway to personal transformation**

Lia Naor

Lia Naor is a nature therapist and researcher interested in growth, healing and development processes occurring specifically through the human connection. Shein facilitates journeys, lectures and trains professionals to work in and with nature.

liawaysofknowing@gmail.com

4. **"Nutok" (reincarnation among Druze) at the clinic: Druze therapists' perceptions of and coping in therapy with patients' concerns regarding reincarnation**

Maha Natoon

Maha Natoon is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Special Education, Faculty of Education, University of Haifa. maha\_natoon@yahoo.com

**5. On what is beyond myself - A Zen perspective on spirituality in psychotherapy**

Dr. Oded Arbel

Dr. Oded Arbel MD, is a psychiatrist and psychotherapist. He is the founder and head of the Israeli Desert Mindfulness clinic, Beer-Sheva Mental Health center, Head of the therapist's section of Psycho-Dharma - the Israeli school for the Buddhist study of the mind. Ben Gurion University of the Negev.  
oded.arbel@gmail.com

## **Symposium 2: Spiritual Chaplaincy in Bereavement and Loss**

### **1. How do we continue? Spiritual needs of bereaved families**

Ilan Sharif

Ilan Sharif is a social worker, director of the Department of Sudden Loss and Bereavement, and the Clinic for couples and family therapy, the Ministry of Welfare

ilans@molsa.gov.il

### **2. Walking together: Loss and grief and spiritual care** Fraidie Amitai

Fraidie Amitai was the first spiritual counselor at the Sheba Medical Center and worked for six years as a spiritual chaplain at the Tel Hashomer hospice. Today she is a spiritual chaplain for family members who lost their loved ones in the event of a sudden loss from a car accident, suicide or murder.

fraidie@zahav.net.il

### 3. Opening a window to let the iron ball out

Faida Abdallah

Faida Abdallah is a social worker at the ELA Center for assistance in the Arab society and a qualified spiritual chaplain. Faida worked for 19 years in the Welfare Department in Kafr Kanna, in various areas including violence, family therapy and accompanying families with special needs. She served as a consultant on the issue of women's status in the Kafr Kana Local Council. Since 2012, she has been running an assistance center for Arab families who experienced sudden loss as a result of car accidents, suicide or murder in the northern part of Israel.

Today, based on her understanding of her patient's needs, she has been trained as a certified spiritual chaplain at Rambam Medical Center and integrates spiritual chaplaincy in her work

[faida@elah.org.il](mailto:faida@elah.org.il)

4. **Breath and spirit: Spirituality in loss and grief therapy**

Rachel Ettun

Rachel Ettun is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of the organization *Spirit Creates Health*, which works to empower the medical center through spiritual and creative work. She is an expert in accompanying families and individuals coping with illness, crisis and loss. She is also a group facilitator in the helping and medical professions for the development of awareness and spiritual growth

rachel.ettun@gmail.com

5. **Coping with the unbearable: A writing workshop in the wake of disaster**

Riva Shechter, Naava Zohar-Sykes

Riva Shechter is an educational counselor and national instructor in the trauma and emergency unit in the psychology and counselling department of the Israeli Ministry of Education. She is a trained spiritual chaplain and provides such training for educational counsellors. In her work she is called to support and advise professional staffs during disasters and stress situations

Riva\_riva@walla.com



Nava Zohar-Sykes is a social worker, mentor and certified spiritual chaplain who is involved in spiritual guidance development at JDC-Ashalim

<mailto:naavazs@jdc.org>

### **Symposium 3: Jewish-Spirituality Integrated Psychotherapy**



This session sheds light on the surging interest and practice of Jewish Spiritual Psychotherapy and is also part of a research project on spiritually integrated psychotherapies supported by the John Templeton Foundation, with the participation and direction of Brigham Young University. The Principal Investigators of the Israeli research project on Jewish-spirituality integrated psychotherapy are Prof. Ofra Mayselless from the University of Haifa and Dr. Marianna Ruah-Midbar Shapiro from Zefat Academic College.

For further details on the international research project:

[www.bridgesconsortium.net/grant-projects](http://www.bridgesconsortium.net/grant-projects)

For further details on the Israeli research project Jewish-spirituality integrated psychotherapy:

[jewishpsyche@gmail.com](mailto:jewishpsyche@gmail.com)

Chair: Dr. Marianna Ruah-Midbar Shapiro, Zefat Academic College

### 1. **My G-d is not personal**

Ziva Bracha Gidron

Ziva Bracha Gidron, is a psychotherapist, psychodramatist, and doctorate student in psychology with an emphasis on spiritual aspects according to *hasidism*. Director of the Jerusalem Psychodrama Institute.

[zivabg18@gmail.com](mailto:zivabg18@gmail.com)

### 2. **From attachment to relationship - Possible therapeutic implications of the connection to G-d**

Devorah Nov

Devorah Nov (M.A.) is a published author and a practicing therapist, integrating psycho-physical-spiritual methodologies. She mentors professionals in the field and teaches advanced certification courses

[devorah.nov@outlook.com](mailto:devorah.nov@outlook.com)

### 3. **The quiet revolution of Bible therapy: Consciousness, spirit, and intention**

Yael Shafir Garibi

Yael Shafir Garibi is a (M.A) psychotherapist and consultant and an N.L.P Certified Trainer.

[bibletherapy1@gmail.com](mailto:bibletherapy1@gmail.com) [yaligaribi@gmail.com](mailto:yaligaribi@gmail.com)

#### **4. Experiential Workshop: Presenting a clinical model that combines "Conscious thinking" (the "Yemima" teachings) with art therapy**

Liat Zucker

Liat Zucker is an art therapist (M.A) and a doctoral student in the Department of Counseling and Human Development at the University of Haifa. Her MA thesis dealt with conscious thinking ("Yemima"), which is also the focus of her current doctorate research. She also serves as the coordinator of the Israeli Research Project: Jewish-Spirituality Integrated Psychotherapies in Israel  
[liat.zucker@gmail.com](mailto:liat.zucker@gmail.com)

## **Symposium 4: Body-Mind-Spirit Connections in Personal Development and Therapy**

### **1. Everyone has a Self**

Einat Avni Bronstein

Einat Avni Bronstein (MSW) is a psychotherapist, certified IFS therapist, certified IFS supervisor and international trainer. She is co-founder of the Israeli Institute for IFS.  
[einat@ifs-israel.org](mailto:einat@ifs-israel.org)

### **2. From somatic experience to the soul-spirit domain**

Ayelet De Picciotto

Ayelet De Picciotto holds an MA in clinical psychology and is a Somatic Experiencing practitioner. She is the creator of *Connection- inner guidance workshops* and *Soul Therapy: Awareness and Consciousness: Mind, Body, Spirit, Soul*. She works in private practice.  
[ayeletadep@gmail.com](mailto:ayeletadep@gmail.com)

### **3. Mind-body perspectives - Bringing heart and soul to the therapeutic process**

Dr. Nimrod Sheinman

Dr. Nimrod Sheinman is among the pioneers of integrative medicine in Israel, and founder of Israel's Center for Mind-Body Medicine and Israel's Center for Mindfulness in Education. He trains therapists and educators in Israel, Australia, Europe and USA  
nimush123@gmail.com

### **4. Body-mind spirituality in the NIA technique**

Prof. Nurit Yirmiya, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Prof. Nurit Yirmiya is a clinical psychologist and teaches at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. She practices positive psychology and mindfulness, and has a black belt in NIA.

yirmiyanurit@gmail.com

## **Symposium 5: Logotherapy (Meaning Centered Therapy)**

### **1. The noetic dimension and the call to find meaning**

Dr. Pninit Russo-Netzer, University of Haifa; School of Arts and society, Ono Academic Center

Dr. Pninit Russo-Netzer is a lecturer and researcher, specializing in the fields of meaning in life, positive psychology, existential psychology (and logotherapy in particular), spiritual development, and processes of human change and growth. She is passionate about building bridges – between disciplines and between theory and "real life" practice, in therapy, organizations, and education throughout the lifespan. Dr. Russo-Netzer is a logotherapist (*Diplomate Clinician*), and head of the academic training program for logotherapy at Tel-Aviv University and the co-editor of books on these topics.

[pninit.russonetzer@gmail.com](mailto:pninit.russonetzer@gmail.com)

## **2. On the Logotherapy couch: Authenticity, responsibility and meaning in therapy**

Dafna Baraban

Dafna Baraban is a clinical psychologist. She is an instructor in the psychological-educational services and has a private practice. A graduate of the *Associate in logotherapy* training program at Tel-Aviv University.

Dafna.baraban@gmail.com

## **3. Lego and Logotherapy: Play as a pathway to finding meaning in therapy**

Einav Ribak

Einav Ribak is an art therapist and instructor. She is a graduate of the *Associate in logotherapy* training program at Tel-Aviv University.

Eynav.ribak@gmail.com

## **4. Experiential workshop: "Where are you?" – Socratic questions, experience and creation on the way to meaning**

Dr. Pninit Russo-Netzer , Dafna Baraban , Einav Ribak



## **Symposium 6 : The Buddhist Way and Spiritual Psychotherapy**

### **1. Therapy or practice? A Buddhist approach on the self- perception**

Assaf Sati El-Bar

Assaf (Sati) El-Bar has been practicing, studying and teaching Buddhist philosophy and meditation for over twenty years. His PhD dissertation investigates the Buddhist path from an educational perspective.

a.s.elbar@gmail.com

### **2. At the sky's edge: Loss and grief through a Buddhist lens**

Tali Haalman-Mor

Tali Haalman-Mor is a psychotherapist and group therapist from a Buddhist approach.

tal.h.mor@gmail.com

### **3. Compassion and the wisdom of insecurity**

Maya Laub

Maya Laub is a teacher of theory and meditation practice in "Psycho-Dharma" - a school of Buddhist psychology. She is a psychodrama therapist and a graduate student of the Refined Hakomi method.

mayalaub@gmail.com

## **Symposium 7: Psychoanalysis and Spirituality**

### **1. On the need to have faith: Transformations and expressions of the concept of faith in psychoanalytic thinking and in therapy**

Einat Feldhay

Einat Feldhay is a clinical psychologist and a doctorate student in the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Track in Psychoanalysis, Department of Counselling and Human Development, University of Haifa. She works in private practice.

[einatfz@gmail.com](mailto:einatfz@gmail.com)

### **2. The dove is there, there is no need to point at her – On spirituality in theory and clinical practice according to Jung and Neumann**

Guy Perel

Guy Perel is a Jungian analyst and a doctorate student at the University of Haifa. He teaches at Tel Aviv University and in the College of the Literary Arts in Jerusalem, and works in private practice.

[wabimini@gmail.com](mailto:wabimini@gmail.com)

### **3. How can Psychoanalysis and Kabbalah heal each other?**

Dr. Ruth Kara-Ivanov Kaniel, University of Haifa

Dr. Ruth Kara- Ivanov Kaniel is a lecturer at the Department of Jewish Thought at the University of Haifa. She is a Research Fellow at the Tel Aviv Institute for Contemporary Psychoanalysis and at the Shalom Hartman Institute. Her book *Holiness and Transgression: Mothers of the Messiah in the Jewish Myth* was published by the Academic Studies Press in 2017. Her new book *Human Ropes—Birth in Kabbalah and Psychoanalysis* was published in 2018 by the Series in Criticism Culture and Interpretation .  
rutkara@gmail.com

## **Closing Plenary Session**

### **Theory and Research**

#### **Spiritual Pathways: An Integrative Model for Spiritual Development**

Prof. Ofra Mayselless, University of Haifa

Prof. Mayselless's research focuses on close relationships, caring and spiritual development. She is the former Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Haifa (2006-2012), a clinical psychologist, and experiences and studies spirituality and its infinite realms.

[ofram@edu.haifa.ac.il](mailto:ofram@edu.haifa.ac.il)

#### **"Close Encounters of the Third Kind": Meeting Points between Positive Psychology and Spirituality**

Dr. Pninit Russo-Netzer, University of Haifa; School of Arts and Society, Ono Academic Center

Dr. Pninit Russo-Netzer is a lecturer and researcher, specializing in the fields of meaning in life, positive psychology, existential psychology (and logotherapy in particular), spiritual development, and processes of human change and growth.

[pninit.russonetzer@gmail.com](mailto:pninit.russonetzer@gmail.com)

## **Religious/Spiritual Struggles among Muslims: Cultural Characteristics and Clinical Implications**

Dr. Hisham Abu-Raiya, Tel Aviv University

Dr. Hisham Abu-Raiya is a clinical psychologist, senior lecturer at the social work school of Tel Aviv University, and an internationally known expert in the psychology of religion and spirituality. His main research interest is religious/spiritual coping and struggles. [aburaiya@gmail.com](mailto:aburaiya@gmail.com)

## **On the Spiritual Realm in Poetry, Music and Psychotherapy**

### **From the Random to the Eternal: Reading Rilke's Poetry**

Dr. Dana Amir, University of Haifa

Dr. Dana Amir is a clinical psychologist, supervising and training analyst at the Israel psychoanalytic society, a faculty member at the University of Haifa, poetess and literature researcher. She is the author of six poetry books and three psychoanalytic non-fiction books: *Cleft Tongue* (Karnac, 2014), *On the Lyricism of the Mind* (Routledge, 2016), and *Bearing Witness to the Witness* (Routledge, 2018).

[dana.amir2@gmail.com](mailto:dana.amir2@gmail.com)

## Compassion as an Element of Psychoanalysis in Bion and Wagner

Dr. Moshe Bergstein, Tel Aviv University

Dr. Moshe Bergstein is a psychoanalyst and teaches in various psychotherapy programs. He is head of the Advanced Track of the Tel-Aviv University Psychotherapy Program  
moshebergstein@gmail.com

### Epilogue

*There is in all things ... a hidden wholeness.*

*There is in all things an inexhaustible sweetness and purity, a silence that is a foundation of action and joy. It rises up in gentleness and flows out to me from the unseen roots of all created being.*

Thomas Merton









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