



American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work

2025, issue 2

newsletter

From the President

Janice Berry-Edwards, PhD, MSW, LICSW, LCSW-C, BCD

Greetings colleagues,

I hope that you took time this summer to enjoy friends and family. As well as practice self-care. As clinicians we bear the burdens of our society as articulated by the patients we see.

As previously noted, we are in the midst of societal challenges and are practicing during a time of external changes that have the potential to impact practice. We need to assess how external changes affect our patients' lives, both individually and within their families. And consider how these external changes are impacting the context that our patients live in.

Trauma seems to abound and as you well know its experience is devastating and can be debilitating if not addressed. I know that the clinical training that our membership has filtrates our organization and it is your expertise that can be a part of bringing about change and curative treatment clinically needed at this time.

As I reflect on the profiles of our members I am so impressed with what you bring to clinical psychoanalytic and psychodynamic practice. Your insight and abilities bring hope.

We welcome your involvement in our committees (Communication/Outreach, Diversity and Social Action, Education, and Membership). See the AAPCSW website for additional information. We also welcome your creating educational programs for our members.

Our biennial conference will take place in Austin, Texas, November 6–9, 2025. “Dreaming the Future” will feature papers that analyze approaches for moving forward by applying various psychodynamic perspectives to challenges encountered in clinical practice, broader societal contexts, and individual experiences.

We very much look forward to meeting old and new members and being able to share in educational and social activities. What an enjoyable time to connect with each other and share experiences.

Looking forward to our meeting in November.

Best regards, Janice Berry-Edwards

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See Area Representatives on page 10

editor'sword

Christie Hunnicutt, PhD, LCSW



As we enter the fall season, my hope for everyone is that you are holding your lives and practice in the best manner possible for you, your families, and your communities. With autumn, symbolically, comes change and transition, and we hope that you are caring for yourselves and making space for each other in these transitional times.

This issue opens with the President's column, submitted by President Janice Berry-Edwards and highlighting the themes of community and shared practice as ways in which to affect change. Reports from the board administration are offered in order to keep members abreast of reminders, and see the facing page for a new book review from F. T. Perlman, PhD, on *The Power of Connection* by Jane Hall. Our Member News rounds out the issue, with emphasis on recent accomplishments, publications, and event happenings. Please also take a moment to review the conference information shared on page 9 (full details at www.aapcsw.org), since we are fast approaching the event, and please reach out with any interest in the *Newsletter* Editor role.

As always, please send all your wonderful accomplishments, news, thoughts, and ideas to us so that we may fully represent the content that is most relevant, contemporary, and inclusive of subject matter that members are truly passionate about.

Take care, all!

aapcsw

The *AAPCSW Newsletter* is published three times yearly, in Winter (submission deadline January 30), Spring/Summer (submission deadline April 30), and Fall (submission deadline September 30).

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November 6–9 • Austin, Texas

Conference and Registration Details at www.aapcsw.org

aapcsw corevalues

- Recognize the dignity and worth of each human being.
- Acknowledge the intersection of each individual's inner and outer worlds.
- Convey a psychoanalytic sensibility in our work with all populations and in all settings.
- Integrate concerns for social justice with clinical practice.
- Promote inclusivity and affirm the diverse identities of our colleagues and of those with whom we work.
- Cultivate a community of professionals that advocates for open inquiry and respect for difference.

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The Power of Connection

By Jane Hall; International Psychoanalytic Books, 2022; 274 pages

Reviewed by F. T. Perlman, PhD

Jane Hall's most recent book, *The Power of Connection*, is a welcome addition to our professional literature. The book consists of eleven papers written over a span of ten years, along with an introduction that acquaints the reader with Hall's evolving ideas about psychoanalytic treatment. Also included are a memorable interview with Martin Bergmann and a final poem, written by Hall, that captures the heart of her ideas as developed in the preceding chapters.

In a relaxed and conversational manner, Hall invites the reader to contemplate the "power of connection" in psychotherapy—the experience of safety, understanding and relatedness a patient experiences when a therapist relates with empathy, respect, and caring love, or "caritas," a term Hall borrows from Shengold (1999). Connection, she emphasizes, can be of vital importance, especially when working with patients who have suffered deficient or injurious parenting as children. Such patients learn to cope with the adverse conditions of childhood by adopting defensive measures, such as social inhibitions or isolation, excessive compliance, or anticipatory aggressiveness, in order to manage their lives. These measures may well be the best adaptations a child can fashion when young and vulnerable, but reflexive reliance on them can saddle the adult with habitual patterns of life that are painfully maladaptive.

Hall conceptualizes these problems as "derailments of development" and, most critically, observes that patients crippled by these "derailments" will not be helped by instructions, exhortations, praise, or any of the staples of supportive treatment. Rather, she explains, they will need some form of analytic therapy that enables them to identify their maladaptive behaviors, to revisit the childhood experiences that moved them to adopt those behaviors, and ultimately, to explore prospects for new patterns of living. This process, as all therapists know, is inevitably obstructed by conscious and unconscious

experiences of psychic pain—by feelings of shame, guilt, fear and loss that trigger defensive behavior in treatment—what we call "resistance." Analysts routinely interpret resistance by observation, confrontation, and explanation. But, as Hall argues, interpretation alone does not always help.

To speak freely, some patients need a reliable feeling of safety, which can occur when a therapist listens with respect, care and empathy. This is what Hall means by "connection." An emotional connection with patients can support their freedom to reveal themselves, but the function of connection in treatment goes beyond that. Connection is also a therapeutic agent in its own right. The therapist's care, empathy, and validation all contribute to the patient's experience of being understood, valued, and reliably attuned to. Connection provides vitally needed emotional supplies for patients who feel alone and vulnerable in life. It relieves the pain of aloneness, promotes self-esteem and authenticity, reduces dependency on injurious objects, and helps "get development back on track" (p. xi).

To promote connection, Hall writes, it is important to "level the playing field"—to create a partnership of equals, with both partners working together to understand the patient's history and life problems. Toward this end, Hall recommends that analysts replace interpretations with conversation. Interpretations, she notes, can be experienced by patients as pronouncements from a higher authority. An open-ended conversation, on the other hand, is a collaborative process in which neither partner has all the answers, but working together, they endeavor to "figure out" the patient's problems and the childhood history that illuminates the genesis of those problems. Conversation is key, Hall writes. "Conversation connects us" and gives rise to "moments of laughter, tears, of feeling genuinely caring, cared about, and accepted" (p. 5). As the work proceeds, "the bond they create grows . . . and is healing in and

of itself” (p. 47). An equally important way for therapists to level the playing field, Hall writes, is to adopt an attitude of “benevolent curiosity,” a concept introduced by Sharpe in 1950. Benevolent curiosity communicates the therapist’s genuine humility, the fact that the therapist does not know everything in advance, and, accordingly, depends upon the patient’s participation in order to know. A genuinely benevolent curiosity also conveys the basic assumption that—whatever their current problems—our patients did their best to play “the cards they were dealt in childhood” (p. 13). Whatever the patient’s symptoms or character problems, there is always some good reason that these issues exist. When patients revisit and communicate the challenges of childhood, we see their maladaptive behaviors in context. We “validate” their feelings and their conduct by listening empathically and respectfully. Such validation is healing, Hall writes. It allows patients to tolerate their subjective experience and to understand the contortions of their development with self-respect and in the healing comfort of the therapist’s understanding (see page 84).

A central aim of psychoanalytic treatment is, of course, the development of insight into the origins and dynamics of problematic behavior. Hall is clearly dedicated to the pursuit of this aim. However,

she expands both our approach to the therapeutic process and our potential clinical objectives. In this way, Hall’s emphasis on “the power of connection”—both as a facilitating element in treatment and as a healing agent in and of itself—transcends traditional psychoanalytic thinking.

Hall’s book is a contribution to a more contemporary and humanistic vision of psychoanalysis, one that is contrary to the orthodoxy that has historically characterized much of American psychoanalysis. Hall is certainly not alone in challenging the orthodox model of psychoanalysis. She cites the pioneering work of Leo Stone (1961), who courageously called for analysts to be warm-hearted and open in their relationships with patients. She also cites Hans Loewald’s (1960) more radical assertion that, for some patients, an analyst can serve as a “new object,” a nurturing figure who offers needed emotional nutrients and who, over time, can be internalized by the patient and thus become a source of inner sustainment. This is a point of view Hall clearly advocates and seeks to promote (see page 49). She also cites other analysts, including Shengold, who wrote of the analyst’s love as an important factor in the treatment of some patients. Other analysts in recent decades have also written of “analytic love,” and while their definitions may differ, they all converge

Book Review Instructions

- Reviews should be four to six double-spaced pages.*
- The book title and publisher should appear at the top of the page, followed by the reviewer’s name.
- At the end of the review, the reviewer should include a sentence or two about themselves.
- If any citations or sources are used as part of the review, they should be supplied as a full resource citation.
- Only books (and, occasionally, films) are reviewed, not book chapters or articles.
- The final review should be sent as a Word document or PDF, as an attachment to an email, to Debra Kuppersmith, DebraKuppersmith@gmail.com.
- Debra will then send the review to the *Newsletter* Editor for publication in the next issue of the *Newsletter*.

** Should you find that you are unable to complete the review, please notify Debra Kuppersmith directly. You will be asked to return the book to the AAPCSW Administrator, Barbara Matos (PO Box 67, Boonsboro, MD 21713).*



Debra Kuppersmith, LCSW, MS • Book & Film Review Editor •
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on a central idea, expressed so passionately and clearly in this book—that the traditional “rules” of analysis, such as the “rules” of abstinence and anonymity, as traditionally understood, hamper creativity, constrain relatedness, and limit the great therapeutic potential of psychoanalytic work—to help our patients attain a fuller and more authentic self. This potential is clearly demonstrated in Hall’s convincing and moving case histories. “Psychoanalysis,” she writes “is the only treatment that I know of that upholds the patient’s right to develop autonomy in a unique and individual way” (p. 204).

The readers of this book are presented with a point of view that is at odds with the model of treatment that many of us, including Hall, learned and internalized during analytic training—ideas about love, a level playing field, conversation instead of interpretation—may cause discomfort among traditionally trained analysts, as if Hall were calling for an abandonment of psychoanalysis as we know it. This is not the case, however. Hall is advocating for an expansion of our analytic vision. The traditional repertoire of techniques, such as use of the couch, silence, anonymity, can be helpful, but not at all times and not for all patients. Professional education must be broadened to encompass a wider scope of opinions and encourage creativity among both students and faculty. “I think ‘psychoanalysis’ has lost its way,” Hall writes, “if it cannot be flexible” (p. xii).

Hall is clear in her view that orthodoxy is a problem. This raises an important question: How did psychoanalysis come to be constrained by rules of practice that are more than a hundred years old? Hall attributes the origins of this orthodoxy to the fact that when psychoanalysis was first established as a profession in the United States, it was dominated by psychiatrists, whose approach to treatment was shaped by their professional identities as authoritative experts. American psychoanalysis conformed to this medical mode, as if it *were* the only acceptable model. In her interview with Martin Bergmann, memorable for many reasons, Bergmann frames the question in a larger historical perspective:

Freud was interested in creating a science. A science is based on repetitive phenomena. Science does not prepare us for the unique and special, at least not in an obvious way. So that, to some extent, Freud’s eagerness to have psychoanalysis

recognized as a science tended to work against the recognition of the uniqueness of the analyst and the uniqueness of the patient.

This passage reminds me of another comment Bergmann made. Some years after this interview, in the mid-1900s, Bergmann addressed the issue of psychoanalytic orthodoxy with his “Thursday Seminar” (of which I was a member). At that time, he traced the authoritarian character of psychoanalysis to Freud’s premature decision in 1910 to establish psychoanalysis as an independent profession. Professionalization inevitably entails the institutionalization of standardized procedures to regulate both practice and professional education. But psychoanalysis at that time was in its infancy. What drove Freud to conclude that psychoanalysis must be professionalized? In 1910, Freud writes of “Wild Analysis,” noting that

in [the] face of the dangers to patients and to the cause of psycho-analysis which are inherent in the practice that is to be foreseen of a “wild” psycho-analysis, we have had no other choice. In the spring of 1910 we founded an International Psycho-Analytical Association, to which its members declare their adherence by the publication of their names, in order to be able to repudiate responsibility for what is done by those who do not belong to us and yet call their medical procedure “psycho-analysis.” (226–227)

I would add that, in my view, professionalization was a response not only to “wild analysis” but also to the growing array of competing psychotherapies taking shape in those early years. Shamdasani (2012) argues that psychoanalysis, neither clearly defined nor differentiated from other therapies in 1910, was in danger of being absorbed by the heterogeneous universe of psychotherapies. In 1909, in fact, August Forel founded the International Society for Medical Psychology and Psychotherapy. It seems clear that Freud founded the International Psychoanalytical Association in 1910 in order to establish psychoanalysis as a discrete and defined profession, and accordingly, began writing his papers on technique the following year.

Hall raises a curious point about Freud and his technique in this book, citing the fact that Freud’s behavior with many patients, including Gustav Mahler and Max Eitingon, did not conform to his

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Your Voice Matters—Lead With Us

As a valued member of our psychoanalytic social work community, your experience, insight, and dedication are vital to the strength and evolution of our organization. We are accepting nominations for the upcoming Board of Directors term, which begins January 1, 2026, and I encourage you to consider stepping into a leadership role. We are currently looking for someone to serve in the role of **President-Elect**.

Serving on the board is a unique opportunity to:

- Help shape the direction of our organization and field.
- Collaborate with peers committed to psychoanalytic social work practice.
- Strengthen our professional community through programming, advocacy, and mentorship.
- Deepen your engagement with colleagues and enrich your own professional development.

Whether you're a seasoned clinician or an emerging leader, your voice and perspective are needed. We welcome members from all backgrounds and levels of experience who are committed to our mission.

To nominate yourself or a colleague, or to learn more about what board service entails, please contact:

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American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work

AAPCSW



November 6–9, 2025

Omni Austin Hotel Downtown, 700 San Jacinto St., Austin, Texas

Conference and Registration Details at www.aapcsw.org

Newsletter Editor Position

The AAPCSW *Newsletter* is the official publication of the AAPCSW membership and provides current information about membership news, activities, publications, and projects that are endorsed and recommended by members. The *Newsletter* Editor works in tandem with a consulting graphic designer, the AAPCSW administrator, and the webmaster for each publication issue. Involvement with the Treasurer also may occur anytime invoicing and receipt of payment is necessary in response to a request for publication of ads or marketing content.

The *Newsletter* Editor is a voluntary position that is given consideration by the Executive Board and serves a two-year term that is renewable. This position is responsible for outreach, management, editing and publishing of the organization's newsletter multiple times per year. The *Newsletter* Editor serves under the general direction of the

AAPCSW Executive Board and maintains close communication with member committees, Area Chairs and Representatives, and the greater membership group. This role may also engage with individuals or groups outside of AAPCSW as part of advertising or marketing requests.

The *Newsletter* Editor is a member of the Communication/Outreach Committee and is asked to attend scheduled committee meetings, including the Area Chair Representatives group meeting that occurs once per year and is hosted by the Executive Board, and any other requested Board meetings. The Editor is also encouraged to attend the AAPCSW Conferences when possible.

If interested, please submit a brief letter of interest and resume to AAPCSWNewsletter@gmail.com. All members who indicate interest will be presented to the Board for review.

Responsibilities:

- Represent the mission, goals and values of AAPCSW in presenting published material
- Submit an Editor's Column for each issue
- Solicit articles and content for the newsletter from the Board, Member Committees, Area Chairs, Group Members, and other sources identified as either new or established contributors
- Work with the graphic designer to review and edit all text submitted for publication where necessary (online and hardcopy)
- Write content for the newsletter as appropriate
- Manage advertising pricing and invoicing with support of the AAPCSW Administrator
- Work directly with and support the Book/Film Review Editor role in collaboration with the AAPCSW administrator

Recommended Qualifications:

- Must hold and maintain membership to AAPCSW
- Some history or experience in writing or publishing content
- Strong oral and written communication skills
- Strong editing skills and demonstrable attentiveness to detail and consistency
- Experience with software and/or other tools and techniques currently used in the practice of writing, publishing, and/or editing content

AAPCSW Committees:

Communications/Outreach • Diversity & Social Action • Education • Membership

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membernews

Carl Bagnini, LCSW, BCD, contributed three chapters to *An Introduction to Child and Adolescent Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy* (Karnac Books, 2025), edited by Jill Savege Scharff, and co-wrote, with Michael D. Reiter, the chapter “Object Relations Couple Therapy” in *Case Conceptualization in Couple Therapy: Comparing and Contrasting Theories* (Routledge, 2025), edited by Michael D. Reiter. Carl continues as teaching and supervising faculty at the Adelphi Post-graduate Programs in Psychoanalysis, Psychotherapy, and Couple Therapy, where he is teaching his new course, “Planned and Unplanned Endings in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy.” His seminar “The Seasons of a Couple Therapy” will be offered in Spring 2026.

Jonathan Lebolt, PhD, LCSW, CGP, became Membership Chair of the New Jersey Society for Clinical Social Work and the Eastern Group Psychotherapy Society, and Credentialing Chair of the Center for Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis of New Jersey last year. He was recently licensed in Massachusetts, bringing the number of jurisdictions in which he is approved to practice to fifteen.



What's your news? We would like to acknowledge your professional accomplishments; feel free to provide a photo. **New to AAPCSW?** We invite you to introduce yourself. Contact the Newsletter Editor at AAPCSWNewsletter@gmail.com.

Book & Film Reviews, continued from page 5

technical procedures. In fact, many of his cases reflect conduct that appears to me to be very sociable and relaxed—a bit like the kind of relatedness that Hall promotes in this book. Was Freud hypocritical? Or is it possible that later followers interpreted his recommendations to be far more restrictive than he ever intended? Samuel Lipton (1977), writing about “the advantages of Freud’s technique with the Rat Man,” suggested that Freud meant his recommendations to apply only to the specific technical procedures employed in analysis, not to the non-technical aspects of his doctor-patient relationship. In Lipton’s view, it was the later analysts, not Freud, who promulgated the orthodoxy that Hall challenges. If Lipton is right, Hall’s unorthodox approach might put her in good company with Freud himself.

Fredric T. Perlman, PhD, FABP, is a psychoanalyst on the faculties of the Psychoanalytic Association of New York (affiliated with NYU Medical School), the American Institute for Psychoanalysis, and the Westchester Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and

Psychotherapy. He is a member of the American Psychoanalytic Association, a Fellow of the International Psychoanalytical Association, and a Distinguished Life Member of the Confederation of Independent Psychoanalytic Societies.

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Membership News and Reminders

As we head for final quarter of 2025, it will be a busy time for AAPCSW members. Our biennial conference, “Dreaming the Future,” will take place in Austin, Texas, November 6–9. The Omni Austin Hotel downtown offers great space for the meetings as well as for casual get-togethers. While the conference continues to be developed, information on activities available and hotel registration can be found on the AAPCSW website (aapcsw.org).

We will also have an election of officers and directors that will occur immediately following the meeting, so please, when you receive the slate of nominees, remember that you have the opportunity to place additional names of candidates for any elected office by submitting a petition signed by no fewer than five members in good standing. This must be received no later than November 1. A ballot will be emailed by November 15.

We are also coming up on PEP-Web renewals and the opportunity for new subscriptions. Reminders for this will begin in October/November. If you have a current subscription, it will expire on January 31, 2026. The deadline for renewing or for subscribing is January 1, 2026. This allows the completion of the required paperwork to PEP-Web and for the PEP-Web folks to process this to ensure you have uninterrupted access on February 1.

Remember, if you have changes to your email address or any other information in your member profile, please let me know—or you can make any edits by accessing your profile. Our database uses email addresses, so it is important to keep this information current.

The AAPCSW Listserv is a Google Group. If your email address is not an existing Gmail address or one that is registered with an existing Gmail account, you will receive an invitation to join. The Listserv is not connected to our database, so should you want to participate in either the General Listserv or the Child and Adolescent Listserv, please make certain to complete the form or just send me an email letting me know what email address is to be used. Any questions or concerns, send me an email.

Thank you, and should you have any questions regarding AAPCSW, please do not hesitate to be in touch.

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Join the AAPCSW Member Listserv

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aapcsw aims & purposes

- To represent and protect the standing and advancement of psychoanalytic social work practitioners and educators.
- To provide an organizational identity for social work professionals engaged in psychoanalytically informed practice.
- To promote and disseminate the understanding of psychoanalytic theory and knowledge within the social work profession and the public.
- To affect liaisons with other organizations and professions who share common objectives for social work and the advancement of psychoanalytic theory and practice.
- To advocate for the highest standards of practice and for quality mental health care for the public.
- To bridge social work and psychoanalytic discourses by integrating concerns for social justice with clinical practice, and to conceptualize psychoanalytic theory and practice within its broader social-political context.

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Pennsylvania

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Texas

(TBD)

American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work

AAPCSW promotes psychoanalytic education, advances clinical social work, facilitates the production and dissemination of knowledge, and advocates for high standards of practice. The AAPCSW website (www.aapcsw.org) offers an array of information about AAPCSW. Information on benefits, listservs, programs (both local and national), activities, our history, resources, newsletters, video series, and other items of interest can be found there.

Want to Join AAPCSW?

You have two options

Online: At www.aapcsw.org, go to **Membership / Join**, where you can complete the membership form and pay with a credit card or PayPal; you may also send a check (see address below).

By Mail: At www.aapcsw.org, go to **Membership / Join by Mail** and download and print the membership form. Return the completed form with your payment check payable to AAPCSW or credit card information to AAPCSW; Attn: Barbara Matos, MS, AAPCSW Administrator; PO Box 67; Boonsboro, MD 21713.

Already a Member?

Here are some helpful things to know about our current membership system and your AAPCSW membership

Username: Your email address is your username, unless you change it in your **Member Profile**.

Password: When you joined, you were assigned a password by our membership system. Please make certain that you save your password where you will be able to locate it. Nobody has access to your password but you!

Resetting Username/Password: If you forget either your username or password (or both), go to www.aapcsw.org and click on the **Get Help with Username and Password** link. You will receive an email that will allow you to reset one or the other (or both). Again, please make certain that you save this information where you will be able to locate it.

Membership Renewal Notices: The current database will send you a reminder regarding renewal 30

days prior to the expiration date of your membership. If you do not renew, you will receive another reminder at 14 days prior to the expiration date and again at 7 days. If you do not renew by the end of your current membership, a notice of expiration of membership will be sent. At that time, you are moved to inactive membership and removed from any listservs you may have joined, since those are a member benefit. *Please note: If you renew after an inactive membership, you will need to request to be added back to listservs.*

Member Profile: You can edit your **Member Profile** at any time by going to www.aapcsw.org. After logging in, click on **Member Center**, then **My Profile**, then **Edit Profile**. If you make any changes, please remember to click **Save** when you are done.

Email: AAPCSW is an email-driven membership organization. If your email has changed, please log in and update your **Member Profile**. Otherwise, you will miss important AAPCSW notifications.

Need to Renew Your Membership?

You have three options, none of which takes long!

Online: Log in at www.aapcsw.org and go to **Membership / Renew Online**, where you can renew quickly with a credit card or PayPal; you may also send a check (see address below).

By Mail: Send a check payable to AAPCSW to AAPCSW; Attn: Barbara Matos, MS, AAPCSW Administrator; PO Box 67; Boonsboro, MD 21713.

By Phone: Contact Barbara Matos, Administrator, at 301.799.5120.

membership questions?

Barbara Matos, MS • AAPCSW Administrator • barbara.matos@aapcsw.org, 301.799.5120

aapcsw

American Association for
Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work

PO Box 67, Boonsboro, MD 21713

American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work **AAPCSW**



November 6–9, 2025

Omni Austin Hotel Downtown, 700 San Jacinto Street, Austin, Texas

As we move through unprecedented individual and collective pressures, our human capacity also allows us to experience joy amidst the turmoil. We can dream the future and feel, think, imagine, and even behave in different ways. Join us at this conference to examine how to go forward, applying multiple psychodynamic perspectives to what we are facing in the consulting room, in the broader world, and in ourselves—in the darkness and in the light.

Conference and Registration Details at www.aapcsw.org

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