



# Love and Conflict in Families and Groups; How Relationship Forces Shape Human Behavior

Presentation Schedule | *Friday, October 17, 2025*

9:00 AM - 9:15 AM	<i>Welcome</i>	<i>Members of WPFC Board &amp; Faculty</i>
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	<i>The Family Emotional System, Part 1</i>	<i>Phil Klever, LCSW, LMFT</i>
10:30 AM - 11:00 AM	<i>Discussion</i>	<i>Led by Moderator</i>
11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	<i>Break</i>	
11:15 AM - 12:00 PM	<i>What's Love Got to Do With It?</i>	<i>Ann Depner, LCSW</i>
12:00 PM - 12:30 PM	<i>On Marital Conflict as Misdirection</i>	<i>Arthur Zipris, PhD</i>
12:30 PM - 1:00 PM	<i>Panel Discussion</i>	<i>Led by Moderator</i>
1:00 PM - 1:45 PM	<i>Lunch</i>	
1:45 PM - 2:30 PM	<i>Family Systems Physics: Energy, Anxiety, and the Structures of Human Relationship Systems</i>	<i>Dr. Christopher Burnett, PsyD</i>
2:30 PM - 2:45 PM	<i>Love, Conflict, and the Forces Shaping Families: Murray Bowen's Natural Systems Theory in the Context of Domestic Violence</i>	<i>Nailin Morera, MS, RMFT-I</i>
2:45 PM - 3:00 PM	<i>Break</i>	
3:00 PM - 3:30 PM	<i>When Love Goes Bad: The Black Church Role in Addressing Intimate Partner Violence</i>	<i>Dr. Tammara Lewis, LMHC, LPC, DMFT</i>
3:30 PM - 4:00 PM	<i>Panel Discussion</i>	<i>Led by Moderator</i>





# Love and Conflict in Families and Groups; How Relationship Forces Shape Human Behavior

Presentation Schedule | *Saturday, October 18, 2025*

9:00 AM - 9:15 AM	<i>Welcome</i>	<i>Members of WPFC Board &amp; Faculty</i>
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	<i>The Family Emotional System, Part 2</i>	<i>Phil Klever, LCSW, LMFT</i>
10:30 AM - 11:00 AM	<i>Discussion</i>	<i>Led by Moderator</i>
11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	<i>Break</i>	
11:15 AM - 11:45 AM	<i>The Romance of the Research Question: How People Stay Curious About Relationship Challenges</i>	<i>Kathleen Smith, PhD, LPC</i>
11:45 AM - 12:15 PM	<i>Differentiation in Dystopia: Applying Bowen's Theory to George Orwell's 1984</i>	<i>Cassie Cacace PhD, LMFT/S</i>
12:15 PM - 12:45 PM	<i>Panel Discussion</i>	<i>Led by Moderator</i>
12:45 PM - 1:30 PM	<i>Lunch</i>	
1:30 PM - 2:30PM	<i>A Return to Basics: The Monster at the End of This Presentation</i>	<i>Allison Whitney</i>
2:30 PM - 2:45 PM	<i>Reflections of a Therapist's Journey Towards Connection in Couple's Therapy</i>	<i>Suheiry Saladin, M.S., RMFTI</i>
2:45 PM - 3:00 PM	<i>Break</i>	
3:00 PM - 3:15 PM	<i>Bowen in Vogue: Fashion as a Manifestation of Differentiation of Self</i>	<i>Erin Egozi, LMFT</i>
3:15 PM - 3:30 PM	<i>The Energy Between Us: Emotional Cutoff, Love and Conflict</i>	<i>Ana Chauvin, RMFT-I</i>
3:30 PM - 4:00 PM	<i>Panel Discussion</i>	<i>Led by Moderator</i>





# Speaker Bios

Phillip Klever, LCSW, LMFT

*Keynote Speaker*

Phillip Klever, LCSW, LMFT, has applied Bowen theory in his clinical practice and personal life since 1974. He has also tested some of the hypotheses in Bowen theory by conducting a longitudinal study with fifty-one multigenerational families from 1995-2018. He has written numerous chapters and research articles on Bowen theory and his research. He has been involved on-going professional development through the Bowen Center in Washington, D.C. since 1991.

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## *Friday Presenters (Listed in presentation order)*

**Ann Depner, LCSW**


A licensed clinical social worker, Ann Depner maintains a private practice of family therapy and spiritual direction in Pittsburgh, PA, where she also serves on the faculty of the Western PA Family Center. Ann received her training in Bowen theory at WPFC and completed the 2-year postgraduate course in 1989. She formerly worked as a clinician and the Director of Family Services for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Ann has applied Bowen theory to her work as a clinician, administrator, and spiritual director throughout her career. Speaking from a family systems perspective, she has presented locally and nationally on topics such as the process of development for clinicians, ethics in the mental health profession, differentiation of self as a developmental process, and the relationship of Bowen theory and spirituality.

**Arthur Zipris, PhD**

Arthur Zipris is a licensed psychologist. He has studied Bowen Family Systems Theory for over 30 years, and has done many presentations on different applications of the theory, both in Pittsburgh and elsewhere. He is also on the faculty of the Western Pa. Family Center, and has taught Family Systems theory for many years as an adjunct lecturer with the MFT program at Seton Hill. He is the primary author of the BFST workbook, and developed, along with other faculty members, the on-line program of the theory at the Family Center, as well as being a facilitator of the Basic Seminar at the Family Center.

**Dr. Christopher Burnett, PsyD**

Dr. Christopher F. Burnett is an Associate Professor of Human Relationship Systems at Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. He joined the University in 1993, shortly after completing his doctorate in psychology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. His area of professional specialization is human relationship systems and their dynamics, an interest which he has maintained for over 40 years. He has taught and lectured internationally on his work in systems theory and its application to family, social and organizational systems. In his work at NSU, he has served as the chair on over 100 doctoral dissertation research projects, and more than 60 of these have utilized Bowen Family Systems theory as a basis for inquiry. He applies his clinical skills as an active supervisor of doctoral trainees at NSU's Individual, Couples, and Family Therapy Clinic.





### **Nailin Morera, MS, RMFT-I**

Nailin Morera is a PhD candidate in Couple and Family Therapy at Nova Southeastern University (NSU) and a RMFTI. She serves as an outreach therapist at a domestic violence center in Broward County, Florida, where she has held various roles over the past five years. Nailin earned her master's degree from NSU in August 2023 and is a recipient of the 2025 Schara-Dwyer Archival Research Scholarship. Her research centers on applying BFST to deepen understanding of domestic violence. Guided by Dr. Christopher Burnett, Nailin has further enriched her expertise through consultations with Dr. Walter Smith and Amie Post. Immersed in BFST concepts, she has experienced a profound transformation in her therapeutic approach, finding that this theory fosters empathy and insight into the complexities of life and relationships, particularly in the context of domestic violence.

### **Dr. Tammara Lewis, LMHC, LPC, DMFT**

Dr. Tammara Lewis is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (FL) and Licensed Professional Counselor (TX). She is the CEO of Mariposa Awakening Therapy Services and Clinical Director at Marriage and Family Services, Inc. She holds a Doctor of Marriage and Family Therapy (DMFT) from Nova Southeastern University, plus certifications in Solution-Focused Coaching and trauma-informed care. A U.S. Marine Corps veteran, Dr. Lewis also brings over 20 years of public service experience in Miami-Dade County. She works with adults, couples, and families navigating trauma and relational issues, using a systemic, culturally responsive, and faith-integrated approach. She is a member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and the American Counseling Association. Passionate about community wellness and mentorship, Dr. Lewis serves as a ministry director in her church and provides supervision to interns.

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### ***Saturday Presenters (Listed in presentation order)***

### **Kathleen Smith, PhD, LPC**

Kathleen Smith is a licensed therapist and writer who lives in Washington, DC. Her books include *Everything Isn't Terrible* and *True to You: A Therapist's Guide to Stop Pleasing Others and Start Being Yourself*. She is a faculty member at the Bowen Center for the Study of the Family and author of the popular newsletter, *The Anxious Overachiever*.

### **Cassie Cacace PhD, LMFT/S**

Cassandra "Cassie" Cacace, PhD, LMFT/S, AAMFT Approved Supervisor, serves as an Assistant Professor and Community Engagement Director in the Master of Marriage and Family Therapy (MMFT) program at Converse University. She teaches a variety of courses, including Clinical Practicum, DSM-5 and Systems Theory, Individual Psychopathology, Basic Techniques of the Psychotherapy Interview, Ethical, Legal, and Professional Issues in MFT, and Advanced Models II (which includes Bowen Systems theory). Dr. Cacace utilizes a Bowen systems approach to clinical work and research. Her interests include religious trauma and spirituality, LGBTQ+ advocacy, the intersection of systems theory and creative arts, and supporting helpers — including therapists, nurses, doctors, and educators — who often experience increased stigma in the organizations of which they are a part.





### **Allison Whitney**

Allison Whitney has studied Bowen Family Systems Theory for over 16 years, developing her foundation at the Western Pennsylvania Family Center in Pittsburgh, where she now serves as Board Chair. Her thinking has been shaped by years of independent study and ongoing engagement with Bowen Theory across national and international settings. With a 17-year background in the financial planning industry, Allison brings a systems lens to both language and structure. Her current focus is on examining how language reflects and regulates emotional process, and on exploring the real-time application of Bowen Theory in daily functioning. Through original videos and animations, she offers a distinct voice for understanding how the theory lives, moment to moment, in the structure of conversation and systems under pressure.

### **Suheiry Saladin, M.S., RMFTI**

Suheiry Saladin, M.S., RMFTI, is a Registered Marriage and Family Therapist Intern in Florida and a doctoral candidate in the Ph.D. program in Marriage and Family Therapy at Nova Southeastern University. She provides adult and family therapy at Women in Distress of Broward County, offering trauma-informed, systemic therapy to survivors of domestic violence. Her clinical interests include trauma, couples therapy, and the application of Bowen Family Systems Theory in therapeutic settings. Her academic interests explore the application of Bowen Theory to leadership and emotional functioning within faith-based organizations. In addition to her clinical and academic work, Ms. Saladin is an active leader in her church community and has developed a ministry for young girls centered on relationship education, emotional wellness, and personal development.

### **Erin Egozi, LMFT**

I'm Erin Egozi, LMFT, and a PhD candidate at Nova Southeastern University. In my private practice, Amica Therapy, I work with individuals, couples, families, and children, using a Bowen Family Systems approach to explore how patterns of anxiety and multigenerational dynamics shape who we are and how we relate to others. I have a deep love for all things fashion, which has inspired my dissertation on how personal style can serve as a metaphor for differentiation of self, highlighting the balance between individuality and connection. I'm passionate about bringing theory into everyday life and helping people better understand themselves within the context of their relationships.

### **Ana Chauvin, RMFT-I**

I'm an Afro-Latina, Cuban-born therapist based in Miami, Florida. When I'm not solo traveling internationally, I'm providing in-home psychotherapy services to families across Broward County, Florida, and pursuing my doctoral degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. My worldview has been significantly shaped by concepts of natural family systems, which help me better understand myself, those I work with, and those I love. This framework has fueled my passion for studying relational dynamics, especially how people navigate co-parenting after infidelity and divorce. I'm particularly interested in this topic because betrayal often impacts more than just the couple, it ripples across the entire family system.

