

**Mental Health America in Montgomery
Winter Symposium**

Friday, February 11, 2022

***A Special Symposium on Therapeutic Approaches to
Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis / Lou Gehrig Disease***

Intended Audience: Counselors, Nurses, Social Workers (Any Mental Health or Social Service Professional) although intended for professionals anyone interested in learning more about ALS is welcome

ALS Therapist Network Membership: Opportunity to join and accept referrals to work with people with ALS and their families.

Symposium Outcome: Participants will feel confident in supporting individuals and their families/significant others throughout the continuum of ALS.

Continuing Education: Counselors, Nurses, & Social Workers

Free for general admission

\$30 for all Continuing Education Credit

Counselors 4.5 (NBCC)

Social Workers 4.5 (ABSWE)

Nurses 5.4 (ABNP002, exp. Mar. '23)

AGENDA

8:00 am ZOOM Log In

8:20 am – 9:40 am Understanding the Continuum of ALS

Presenter: Melissa C. Enfinger, MS has over twenty years of experience in human services, disability support, and non-profit organizations. She currently serves as the Director of Care Services and Public Policy for the ALS Association Alabama Chapter. Melissa has been with the Chapter since 2014 where she has had the honor to get to know many people and families affected by ALS and learn about their unique challenges and support

needs. Melissa has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Master of Science in Human Services with a specialization in management of non-profit organizations.

Objectives: At the conclusion of this presentation, participants should be able to:

1. Provide base knowledge of ALS, including symptoms, management, and the role of multidisciplinary care.
2. Describe some of the common themes such as coping, loss, and grief often experienced by people living with ALS and their loved ones as they experience life after diagnosis.
3. Discuss approaches and scenarios of supporting people affected by ALS from a proactive, problem-solving perspective.

Overview:

This content will introduce Mental Health Providers to the basic physiology of ALS, as well as explain some of the common themes and challenges for people living with ALS and their family caregivers experience throughout the ALS journey.

9:45 am – 10:45 am Anticipatory Grief Throughout the Lifespan

Presenter: Dr. Kavanaugh is Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Associate Professor in Social Work and Director, PhD program in Social Welfare at the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare, Center Scientist, Center on Aging and Transitional Research at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Dr. Kavanaugh is a leading expert in young care givers in ALS. She has presented both nationally and internationally on her work, and has published 5 books for children youth, families, and schools on how to help youth understand ALS, caregiving, death and dying.

Objectives: At the conclusion of this presentation, participants should be able to:

1. Identify anticipatory grief in children and youth
2. Build clinical skills in work with grieving children and families
3. Apply evidence-based suggestion to current clinical practice

Overview:

This presentation will help clinicians understand better the grief and loss experience by families living with ALS, specifically anticipatory grief in children and youth. It will provide evidence-based examples from Dr. Kavanaugh's research, and suggestions for supportive clinical interventions and support programming, including those targeting children and youth.

10:50 am – 11:50 am What Does End of Life Mean to Me, and My Clients

Presenter: Stephen McWhorter is an Episcopal Priest who has served for over 50 years. He was educated at the West Virginia University, The Episcopal Theological School, Harvard University, and completing a doctorate from the University of Southampton in clinical psychology. He has served as a college chaplain, parish priest, and is now a supply priest in the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama. He is an Adjunct faculty member of a team-teaching Medical Ethics to 3rd year medical students. He is active in hospice care and end of life care.

Objectives: At the conclusion of this presentation the participant should be able to:

1. Examine yourself for your end-of-life expectations.
2. Identify issues both personal and otherwise which could prevent supporting end of life care for both clients and their significant others throughout the lifespan.
3. Explore pragmatic ways to support all ages through the dying process.

Overview:

This presentation is aimed to enable the mental health professional to explore own views of end of life to support those going through the dying process. It will examine the dynamics for all age groups. It will help identify barriers for both patients and their significant others that could preclude a peaceful death process.

11:55 am – 12:15 pm Accessing Resources – Where to Locate and How To Connect

Presenters:

Melissa C. Enfinger, ALS Association Alabama Chapter
Tasha Cooper, Exec. Director Hands on River Region

12:15 pm – 12:45 pm My ALS Journey

Presenter: Jeanne Sellers, a caregiver will share her journey as she cared for her husband who had ALS.

12:45 pm – Evaluation/Final Comments