

AFTA

American Family Therapy Academy

46th Annual Meeting and Open Conference
Announcement and Call for Proposals



**Supporting Couples, Families, and Communities to Live
Fully and Die Meaningfully – with a Planet in Crisis**

Conference Theme

Supporting Couples, Families, and Communities to Live Fully and Die Meaningfully – with a Planet in Crisis

As systemic therapists, researchers, and educators, how can we best support and empower couples, families, and communities to thrive despite the many challenges that face them – challenges that we often share both as professionals and as fellow travelers along the circle of life in troubled times?

The plenaries for this conference will address the following questions:

- ❖ How can we assist with the emotional and relational difficulties of persons whose gender identities and sexual orientations meet social and political forces that discourage their existence and their freedom to love and create a family?
- ❖ What have we learned from research and clinical experience that predicts better or worse outcomes for marriages and other committed partnerships, and what practices help couples free themselves from pernicious patterns of conflict that capture them and impede their capacity to fully love?
- ❖ What are the beliefs about sexual intimacy that create anxiety rather than supporting mutual pleasure, and how can we expand couples' view of what it means to be a lover?
- ❖ On the end side of the life cycle, how do we best support those who are dying, and the loved ones who will soon lose them?

We confront these questions of life, love, and death during a time when the planet that we and other living beings call home is at risk of perishing. Therefore, another plenary and several other conference events will address the following questions:

- ❖ What is the impact of the climate crisis, rapid reduction in biodiversity, and extraordinary weather events on couples, families, and communities? Do we family therapists and researchers have a responsibility to contribute to efforts to halt this march towards ecological disaster?

This conference will provide a gathering space to learn from one another about our efforts to address these and other pressing questions.

Conference Goals

1. To provide an opportunity for invigorating dialogue, mutual learning, and for strengthening our connections with colleagues
2. To continue to integrate and refine theory, research and practice
3. To welcome and support new colleagues
4. To restore our energy and passion for the challenging work we do each day!

Conference Format

This conference will be fully in-person. It will be held in the Tivoli Turnhalle on the Auraria Campus, which is a dynamic and vibrant higher education community located in the heart of downtown Denver. The 15-acre campus is shared by three separate and distinct institutions of

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 30, 2023

higher learning: which includes the University of Colorado Denver, Metropolitan State University of Denver, and the Community College of Denver.

Our Program Partner is the Couple and Family Therapy Program (CFTP) in the School of Education and Human Development of UC Denver. Dr. Rashmi Gangamma, Director of CFTP, has been a key collaborator this year's program, and we look forward to having her, her colleagues, and students participating!

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Consistent with the broad, existential theme of the conference, this year we invite a wide range of proposals that address any aspect of the challenges faced by couples, families, and communities in living and loving fully, in addition to facing the inevitable end-of-life difficulties. We hope to provide a "Big Tent" that is welcoming to all.

In the spirit of AFTA's focus on **action** at the last two conferences, we encourage you to submit proposals for work that answers the question, "**So what do we DO about it?**" We hope that after each presentation, colleagues will leave with practical suggestions about how to best assist the people who come to us for support and actionable guidance.

In formulating your proposal, we'd encourage you to reflect on the following questions (affirmative answers are not a requirement for a proposal's acceptance):

1. How does your work apply meaningfully to understanding and assisting persons, couples, families, and communities in all their unique, intersectional sociocultural locations?
2. How does your work contribute to addressing relational inequities and experiences that result in marginalization? The intended effects of your work might be to assist individual couples, families, or communities, or may be focused on a broader social action or policy level.
3. Does your work potentially address the relationship between living human systems (couples, families, communities, institutions, or organizations) and our ecological context?

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MAJOR DEADLINES

Deadlines relevant to submissions and presenters are outlined below.

Deadline	Item
November 30, 2023	CALL FOR PROPOSALS DEADLINE. Submission deadline for Brief Presentations, Poster presentations, and Interest Groups* <i>*Interest Group submissions are limited to current AFTA Members</i>
December 22, 2023	Acceptance and rejection notifications sent via email from annualconference@afta.org (Please add this email address to your safe senders list to receive important updates.)
January 30, 2024	Detailed presenter notifications, which will include date(s) and times(s) of presentations

STEPS FOR SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

1. Non-AFTA members may submit a brief presentation and/or a poster presentation.
2. AFTA members may submit a brief presentation, poster presentation, and/or an interest group.
3. Consider how your work and interests contribute to the conference theme as described above. In keeping with the theme, all ways of knowing and experience are welcomed and needed.
4. Go to the on-line portal and submit your proposal(s) by the submission deadline date of **November 30, 2023**.
5. When your proposal is accepted, you (and any applicable co-presenters) must also **register** for the conference.

SUBMISSION PREPARATION CHECKLIST FOR BRIEF PRESENTATIONS

- ❑ Submission type
- ❑ Presentation title (limited to 50 characters)
- ❑ Presentation abstract (limited to 150 characters)
- ❑ Presentation learning objectives (minimum of 3)
- ❑ APA references
- ❑ Posttest questions (minimum of 5 questions relevant to your presentation)
- ❑ CV (PDF format)
- ❑ Hi-Resolution Headshot

Check out this link for measurable action verbs for learning objectives:

<https://tinyurl.com/rubh37a2>

SUBMISSION TYPE DESCRIPTIONS

AFTA Members and Nonmembers:

- **Brief Presentations** Brief presentation sessions are one hour, with two presentations per hour. Therefore, your presentation should be not longer than 25 minutes, to allow for five minutes of discussion.
- **Poster Presentations.** Poster topics may address innovative uses of systemic therapy, research, teaching, training, or social policy. Posters will be displayed on your computer and printed copies. Bring your laptop and printed copies of your poster to engage in a discussion about your work.

AFTA Members Only:

- **Interest Groups.**

The purpose of Interest Groups is to provide an informal forum for AFTA members to discuss clinical, theoretical, or research interests. For many AFTA members, they are a primary vehicle for stimulating conversation and connection with each other, and an opportunity to expand our collective expertise. One of the unique aspects about Interest Groups at AFTA is within this forum there are limited or no formalized presentations. Rather, this is an opportunity to come together with colleagues who share similar passions in the field and engage in stimulating dialogue. The role of the leaders of the interest group is to focus and organize the conversation in a way that allows for a variety of voices, perspectives, and experiences. Interest groups can be, but do not have to be, related to the theme of the conference.

STEPS FOR SUBMITTING AN INTEREST GROUP

Interest Group submissions are only open to **current** AFTA members. If you wish to lead an interest group that you have led in the past, please submit your interest group proposal.

If you are interested in offering a new interest group, send a description to the AFTA listserv (listserv@afta.org). You need interest from 8 AFTA members to start a new interest group.

INTEREST GROUP SUBMISSION PREPARATION CHECKLIST

- ❑ Interest Group Name (limited to 50 characters)
- ❑ Interest Group abstract (limited to 150 characters)
- ❑ Interest Group learning objectives (minimum of 3)
- ❑ APA references
- ❑ Posttest questions (minimum of 5 questions relevant to your Interest Group)
- ❑ CV (PDF format) of all Interest Group Co-Chairs and Facilitators
- ❑ Hi-Resolution Headshot of all Interest Group Co-Chairs and Facilitators

Registration

All accepted presenters and co-presenters are required to register for AFTA's conference.