



Nashville Group Psychotherapy Society (NGPS) and Nashville Psychotherapy Institute (NPI) Present: **Thou Shalt Not: How religion harms and relationships heal** *Alyson Stone, Ph.D., CGP*

Workshop Summary

Religion can be a source of healing and connection, but for many it leads to wounding and disconnection. Studies suggest that about 30% of the general population—and more than 60% of marginalized people—have experienced religious trauma. Various societal and political factors are currently intensifying both developmental and religious trauma, underscoring the growing need for mental health professionals to develop competence in treating these issues.

Using a combination of didactic and experiential learning, this conference will examine the negative effects religion can have on mental health and interpersonal relationships. We will explore how attachment relationships influence treatment and why group therapy is particularly effective in addressing religious and spiritual struggles. We will also consider how current societal factors worsen trauma and affect the treatment of marginalized populations. Finally, participants will delve into how countertransference to religious material impacts the therapeutic process and will learn practical interventions for working with religious trauma in both individual and group psychotherapy.

Learning Objectives

- Describe two ways religious and spiritual messages and beliefs can negatively impact mental health and relationships.
- Explain spiritual bypassing and one way clients may use it.
- Identify how countertransference to religious or spiritual material can enhance or hinder the process of psychotherapy.
- Articulate how secure attachment relationships in individual and group psychotherapy facilitate working with religious trauma and the defensive use of spirituality.
- Identify one benefit and one challenge of using group psychotherapy to treat religious trauma.
- Identify one way in which marginalized individuals may be particularly impacted by religious doctrine.

When: Saturday, November 15th, 2025

Where: Junior League of Nashville

2202 Crestmoor Road

Nashville, TN 37215

Time: 9:00 a.m - 4:30 p.m. (includes breaks and lunch)

Cost: \$190 Professional Members / \$170 NPI Members / \$55 Agency Members / \$55 Students
Scholarships available.

CEUs: 6.00 APA Approved Continuing Education Units will be available for purchase for an additional \$39.99 at the event.



About Dr. Stone

Dr. Alyson Stone is a licensed psychologist and Certified Group Psychotherapist in private practice in Austin, Texas. She is a fellow of AGPA and immediate past president of the Austin affiliate. She presents nationally on religious trauma, spiritual bypassing, aggression, and emotional resilience, and her work on religious trauma has been published in the journal Group and featured on the BBC. She specializes in helping people deepen their emotional capacity and especially enjoys helping people embrace pleasure and healthy aggression. She leads multiple weekly process groups and training groups, both individually and with a co-leader.

Schedule:

Time	Event
9:00 - 10:00	Introductions - Didactic Instruction
	<i>When religions harms: Exploring the impact on mental health and relationships</i>
10:00 - 11:00	Demonstration Group
11:00 - 11:15	Break
11:15 - 12:15	Demonstration Group Q&A
12:15 - 1:15	* Lunch
1:15 - 2:00	Didactic Instruction
	<i>Treating religious trauma: Countertransference; individual and group treatment</i>
2:00 - 3:15	Demonstration Group
3:15 - 3:30	Break
3:30 - 4:30	Demonstration Group Q&A / Evaluations

* Lunch will be provided. Registration fee includes the workshop, handout materials and a meal.

* A certificate for APA approved continuing education credits can be purchased for \$39.99 at the event.

Registration is first come first served.

Workshop limited to 100 participants!

Register by visiting:

<https://www.nashvillegps.org/#/>

Payment can be made by credit card at the link above.

Instructional methodology: Didactic, experiential exercises, case examples.

Registration is open to licensed professionals and students in mental health related fields.

This workshop is appropriate for professionals of all levels of expertise: introductory, intermediate, and advanced.

Refunds will be given for cancellations made by 9:00 am on November 9, 2025.

ADA: If you have accessibility needs please, contact Zach Bryant at (615) 975-0346.