

# ***Transforming Conversations in Divisive Times: Meeting the Challenge in Communities of Faith***

**Wednesday, October 24, 2018 (9 am – 4:30 pm)**

**Hebrew College, 160 Herrick Road, Newton Centre**

Please join us for a one-day workshop on strategies for faith leaders to facilitate constructive dialogue in our polarized communities. *Breakfast snacks and registration will take place between 8:30 - 9:00 am.*

## **Agenda**

**MORNING (9:00 am – 12:00 pm)**

**Welcome, Introductions & Overview of the Workshop**

**Opening Dialogue:**

**Peacemaking – Inside and Out: Using the Internal Family Systems Model and Reflective Structured Dialog for Healing in Religious and Faith Communities**

IFS Founding Developer Dick Schwartz  
Essential Partners Executive Director Parisa Parsa

**Small Group Dialogue & Discussions**

**LUNCH (12:00 pm - 1:00 pm) (provided)**

**AFTERNOON (1:00 - 4:30 pm)**

**Plenary Address, “Walking By Faith - Living Courageously within Faith Communities and the Larger Community” (1:00 – 2:15 p.m.)**

Rev. Mariama White-Hammond, Pastor, New Work, AME

**Choice of Breakout Sessions (2:30 – 4:00 p.m.):**

“Restorative Justice/Healing Justice” (Thomas Porter)

“Conversational Resilience: Listening and Speaking across Divides” (Robert Stains)

“Negotiating Across World Views” (Jeff Seul, Esq.)

“Managing the Tension Between Being a Peacemaker and Fighting for Social Justice” (David Hoffman, Esq. and Rabbi David Jaffe)

Final Plenary Session: Discussions, Q&A

**Registration Fee:** \$30 (includes lunch)

To register, click here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7cmec8x>

Or email Jenna Goodman ([JGoodman@blc.law](mailto:JGoodman@blc.law))

# **Plenary Sessions**

## **MORNING PLENARY**

### **Peacemaking – Inside and Out:**

#### **Using the Internal Family Systems Model and Reflective Structured Dialog for Healing in Religious and Faith Communities**

IFS Founding Developer, Dr. Richard Schwartz

Essential Partners Executive Director, Parisa Parsa

Many religious and faith communities are stuck in a pattern of not talking about conflicts and challenging issues.

The Internal Family Systems (IFS) model, developed by Richard Schwartz, opens the door to difficult conversations by helping us understand and disclose the different parts of us that are in conflict around an issue. Once we recognize and name both the protective and vulnerable inner parts – e.g., "parts of me are angry and other parts are scared"— dialogue becomes safer and richer. Another integral aspect of the IFS model is the internal mediator known as the "Self" which is strikingly similar to concepts of spirit, soul, and the divinity within. IFS helps people speak about difficult issues from Self (with an open heart) which transforms stuck conversations and reveals new opportunities for healing our communities and deepening our spiritual lives.

Essential Partners offers clergy and faith communities tools to engage effectively in speaking what has been previously unspoken and listen to what they have been afraid to surface. By engaging in group processes that include the components of EP's Reflective Structured Dialogue, congregations can share deep passions and stay connected as they engage in faithful discernment of their past, present and future to unlock new possibilities and set new patterns.

## **AFTERNOON PLENARY**

### **Walking By Faith:**

#### **Living Courageously within Faith Communities and the Larger Community**

Rev. Mariama White-Hammond, Pastor, New Work, AME

We are in a time where turning on the news can be a shock to the system and the dividing walls on so many issues have become seemingly insurmountable. Rev. Mariama is a voice for change within faith communities around issues of inclusion as well as in the larger society where she has worked on hot-button issues ranging from immigration policy to climate change to criminal justice reform. Telling stories from her own experience she will talk about how communities of faith can be deeply engaged in moral issues while maintaining a commitment to spiritual practice that can transform the ethos of our time.

## Meet the Faculty



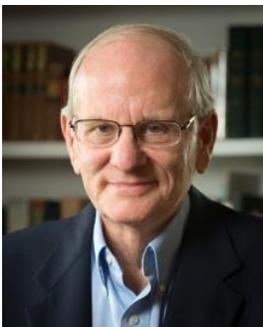
**Parisa Parsa** is Executive Director of Essential Partners (formerly Public Conversations Project). She is also a Unitarian Universalist minister, and prior to joining Essential Partners in 2015 served in community-based and congregational settings of ministry for 17 years. Parisa's commitment to engaging across differences of all kinds has taken her professional life from an abortion clinic in Albuquerque, through a domestic violence shelter in Roxbury, to the streets of San Francisco's Tenderloin and back to suburban New England. Her interfaith background (the child of a Muslim-Christian marriage) and her life spent between Iran and the US led her to deep study of intercultural approaches to community building and have informed her work and her life in ways she continues to uncover.



**Rev. Mariama White-Hammond** is an advocate for ecological and social justice, youth engagement, and Spirit-filled organizing. As former director of Project HIP-HOP (Highways Into the Past - History, Organizing and Power), she used the arts as a tool to raise awareness for social issues from juvenile incarceration to funding for public transportation. Rev. Mariama has received numerous awards including the Barr Fellowship, the Celtics Heroes Among Us, The Roxbury Founders Day Award and the Boston NAACP Image award. Rev. Mariama is very committed to engaging the faith community, and particularly Black church, on climate change and ecological justice issues. Rev. Mariama serves on both local and national boards and committees, including the New England Grassroots Environmental Fund, Union Capital Boston, and Clean Water Action.



**Richard Schwartz** began his career as a family therapist and an academic at the University of Illinois at Chicago. There he discovered that family therapy alone did not achieve full symptom relief and in asking patients why, he learned that they were plagued by what they called “parts.” These patients became his teachers as they described how their parts formed networks of inner relationship that resembled the families he had been working with. He also found that as they focused on and, thereby, separated from their parts, they would shift into a state characterized by qualities like curiosity, calm, confidence and compassion. He called that inner essence the Self and was amazed to find it even in severely diagnosed and traumatized patients. From these explorations the Internal Family Systems (IFS) model was born in the early 1980s. In 2013 Schwartz left the Chicago area and now lives in Brookline, MA where he is on the faculty of the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School.



**Tom Porter** is a trial lawyer, mediator, teacher and minister. He is a lecturer at Boston University School of Theology where he directs a program in Religion and Conflict Transformation. He was the Executive Director of JUSTPEACE Center for Mediation and Conflict Transformation in The United Methodist Church from 2000-2012. He is the editor of the book, *Conflict and Communion: Reconciliation and Restorative Justice at Christ's Table*, the author of *The Spirit and Art of Conflict Transformation: Creating a Culture of JustPeace* and co-author of *The Journey: Forgiveness, Restorative Justice and Reconciliation*.



**Rabbi David Jaffe** David is the Founder and Principal of Kirva, an institute dedicated to helping individuals and communities access Jewish wisdom for peacemaking and sustainable social change. David teaches, trains and consults with clergy, NGO's and schools nationally to develop the skills and habits of heart and mind needed to create healthy, vibrant communities. He is Senior Research Fellow with the Pardes Center on Judaism and Conflict Resolution. His book, *Changing the World from the Inside Out*, won the 2016 National Jewish Book Award.



**Audrey J. Lee** is a Senior Mediator at Boston Law Collaborative, LLP and Executive Director of the BLC Institute, a non-profit dedicated to providing education and training in all areas of dispute resolution. She is also faculty for the Harvard Law School's Advanced Mediation Workshop offered by the Program on Negotiation. Previously, Audrey served as a mediator and trainer for the MA Commission Against Discrimination where she mediated race, gender, harassment, disability, and religious discrimination cases.



**Jeff Seul, Esq.** is co-chair of the Peace Appeal Foundation, a lawyer, and a conflict resolution scholar-practitioner. Jeff is Lecturer on the Practice of Peace at Harvard Divinity School and previously taught in the negotiation and conflict resolution fields at Harvard Law School. He has served as a facilitator, mediator, arbitrator or adviser in a broad variety of disputes. Jeff is also a partner in the law firm Holland & Knight, where he is chair of the Technology & Telecommunications Industry Group.



**Bob Stains** is founder and principal of Bob Stains and Associates, Conflict Transformation where he provides consultation, coaching, training, and facilitation to organizations struggling with divisive issues. He is also a Senior Associate at Essential Partners. A former CPE administrative supervisor and pastoral counseling clinical consultant, he also consults to the Interpersonal Skills Component of the Harvard Negotiation Project, teaches a facilitation workshop at Harvard Divinity School and is a Visiting Researcher at the Boston University School of Theology.



**David Hoffman, Esq.** is the founding member of Boston Law Collaborative, LLC, and teaches Mediation, Collaborative Law and Diversity & Dispute Resolution courses at Harvard Law School, where he is the John H. Watson, Jr. Lecturer on Law. David was named Boston's "Lawyer of the Year" for Mediation for 2016 by the book "Best Lawyers in America" and *U.S. News & World Report* and selected for the 2015 D'Alemberte-Raven Award, the ABA Section of Dispute Resolution's highest honor recognizing outstanding service in dispute resolution.

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