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# 20 CONFERENCE 26 & EXPO APRIL 9-11 COLUMBUS, OH

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## Learn, Share and Connect at the Annual Conference & Expo

Get ready to be energized and inspired while connecting with leading experts and peers from around the country at the 2026 Conference & Expo.

Join us April 9-11, 2026, in Columbus, Ohio, at the Greater Columbus Convention Center for the premier professional development and networking event for professional counselors. With thought-provoking presentations, enlightening discussions and meaningful opportunities to advocate on behalf of counselors and clients, you will walk away feeling refreshed, renewed and ready to tackle the challenges facing you, your clients and the counseling community.



**Opening General Session**

## **The Warrior Within**

Thursday, April 9 | 3:30-5:00 PM ET

**D.J. Vanas**

*President, Native Discovery Inc.*

*Former U.S. Air Force Officer, Best-Selling Author*

We all want to be brave. We all want to deliver when it matters—and in this session, you'll be inspired to do both. Enduring uncertain times and turbulent change can bring fearful doubt, which can affect our focus, wellness and the way we serve others. Based on his new book, "The Warrior Within," D.J. will share a unique, powerful perspective from Native American culture on what the

warrior role is (and isn't) about and how we can emulate the principles of that role to stay strong to contribute to our community—and understand that the role of warriors can make us warriors in our roles!

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**Friday General Session**

# **Build Your Bridge and Start Walking: Finding Moral Courage in Challenging Times**

Friday, April 10 | 10:00-11:30 AM ET

**Françoise Mathieu, MEd, RP**

*TEND Academy Ltd.*

In times of crisis, many professionals find themselves caught between competing demands, shifting directives, and the profound knowledge that something important is at stake. Moral courage, as Kidder (2005) defines it, is "standing up for values and principles when there is something to lose."

In this keynote, Françoise Mathieu explores how moral courage often lives in the space between doing nothing and taking high-cost actions. With a focus on steadiness, clarity, and grounded action, this session offers practical ways to protect the heart of the work while responding to real-world constraints.

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# Pre-Conference Learning Institutes

Held before the conference's official start on Thursday, April 9, Pre-conference Learning Institutes offer attendees in-depth exploration and meaningful discussion of some of the most pressing topics and issues in the counseling profession. Additional cost applies.

[View the Agenda](#)

## Countdown to the Event



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## Agenda at a Glance

Most sessions and activities take place at the **Greater Columbus Convention Center**.  
Some business meetings will be held at the **Hilton Columbus Downtown**.

A wheelchair-accessible skywalk connects the Greater Columbus Convention Center with the Hilton Columbus Downtown.

| Wednesday, April 8 |                       |                           |                          |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM  | Registration Open     | Exhibit Hall Foyer        | Convention Center        |
| Thursday, April 9  |                       |                           |                          |
| 7:00 AM - 7:00 PM  | Registration Open     | Exhibit Hall Foyer        | Convention Center        |
| 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM | Learning Institutes   | Locations to be announced | Convention Center        |
| 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  | ACA Business Meetings | Locations to be announced | Hilton Columbus Downtown |
| 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  | Division Meetings     | Locations to be           | Hilton Columbus          |

|                    |                         |                           |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
|                    |                         | announced                 | Downtown          |
| 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM | Learning Institutes     | Locations to be announced | Convention Center |
| 3:30 PM - 5:30 PM  | Opening Keynote Session | Exhibit Hall A            | Convention Center |
| 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM  | Opening Reception       | Union Station Ballroom    | Convention Center |
| 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM  | Expo Hall Open          | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM  | Bookstore Open          | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM  | Connection Hub Open     | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |

### Friday, April 10

|                     |                     |                           |                   |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 7:00 AM - 6:00 PM   | Registration Open   | Exhibit Hall Foyer        | Convention Center |
| 7:30 AM - 8:30 AM   | Education Sessions  | Locations to be announced | Convention Center |
| 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM   | Expo Hall Open      | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM   | Bookstore Open      | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM   | Connection Hub Open | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM   | Career Center Open  | Location to be announced  | Convention Center |
| 8:45 AM - 9:45 AM   | Education Sessions  | Location to be announced  | Convention Center |
| 9:00 AM - 9:30 AM   | Poster Sessions     | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM | General Session     | Exhibit Hall A            | Convention Center |
| 12:00 PM - 12:30 PM | Poster Sessions     | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |

|                    |                     |                           |                          |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM | Education Sessions  | Locations to be announced | Convention Center        |
| 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM | Lunch               | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center        |
| 1:00 PM - 1:30 PM  | Poster Sessions     | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center        |
| 1:15 PM - 2:45 PM  | Education Sessions  | Locations to be announced | Convention Center        |
| 2:00 PM - 2:30 PM  | Poster Sessions     | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center        |
| 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM  | Poster Sessions     | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center        |
| 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM  | Education Sessions  | Locations to be announced | Convention Center        |
| 4:00 PM - 4:30 PM  | Poster Sessions     | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center        |
| 4:15 PM - 5:15 PM  | Education Sessions  | Locations to be announced | Convention Center        |
| 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM  | Division Receptions | Locations to be announced | Hilton Columbus Downtown |

## Saturday, April 11

|                   |                     |                          |                   |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 7:00 AM - 4:00 PM | Registration Open   | Exhibit Hall Foyer       | Convention Center |
| 7:30 AM - 8:30 AM | Education Sessions  | Location to be announced | Convention Center |
| 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM | Expo Hall Open      | Exhibit Hall B           | Convention Center |
| 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM | Bookstore Open      | Exhibit Hall B           | Convention Center |
| 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM | Connection Hub Open | Exhibit Hall B           | Convention Center |
| 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM | Career Center Open  | Location to be announced | Convention Center |
| 8:45 AM - 9:45 AM | Education Sessions  | Locations to be          | Convention Center |

|                     |                    | announced                 |                   |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 9:00 AM - 9:30 AM   | Poster Sessions    | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM | Poster Sessions    | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM | Education Sessions | Locations to be announced | Convention Center |
| 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM | Poster Sessions    | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 11:45 AM - 12:45 PM | Education Sessions | Locations to be announced | Convention Center |
| 12:00 PM - 12:30 PM | Poster Sessions    | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM  | Lunch              | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 1:00 PM - 1:30 PM   | Poster Sessions    | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM   | Education Sessions | Locations to be announced | Convention Center |
| 2:00 PM - 2:30 PM   | Poster Sessions    | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 2:45 PM - 3:45 PM   | Education Sessions | Locations to be announced | Convention Center |
| 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM   | Poster Sessions    | Exhibit Hall B            | Convention Center |
| 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM   | Education Sessions | Locations to be announced | Convention Center |

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