



Maryland Counseling Association, LLC  
A BRANCH OF ACA

COMPASS POINTS

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Mission

“SERVING THE COUNSELING,  
GUIDANCE, AND HUMAN  
DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONS”

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Executive Director:

Open



Announcements

The Executive Committee is pleased to announce that the Maryland Counseling Association is now a designated 501C3.

Please join us in congratulating and welcoming our newly elected Executive Committee members for 2020-2021:

President-Elect — Dr. Sara Pula  
Treasurer — Dr. Keyona Hall  
Treasurer-Elect — Irene Burks  
Secretary-Elect — Dr. Danielle LaSure-Bryant

# Articles

## **Navigating Grief and Loss in the Coronavirus Landscape — Five Things Therapists Can Do** *Written by Melissa Cole, LCSW-C*

I took a walk today to get some perspective in the fresh air about the developments taking place around the world in reaction to the coronavirus. Along my travels it was clear how I was not alone in my efforts. At every turn people were processing their observations, questions, emotions, hypotheses, advice, and general thoughts with anyone who would listen. One universal thread among all the conversations was loss as a result of unexpected change and feelings of anxiety about uncertain outcomes.

As mental health providers, this COVID-19 outbreak is an opportunity for us to talk with our clients about grief and loss from a unique perspective. Here are five things we can do to strengthen our work with our clients:

1. Ask clients how they're attributing meaning to recent events
  - Understanding the filters and frames clients are using to process current events will be instrumental in assisting them with making healthy adjustments.
  - Ask clients how they're getting information about coronavirus and provide them with reliable and accurate resource information.
2. Consider triggers for unresolved impact issues related to grief or loss
  - Locus of control: assess clients for feelings of helplessness, hopelessness & isolation.
  - Roles: talk with clients about role confusion and role loss.
  - Life events: coronavirus precautions are disrupting many valuable activities such as -
    - Family celebrations (births, weddings, anniversaries, children's birthday parties, etc.)
    - Education (learning, socialization, field trips, graduations, etc.)
    - Criminal justice (court proceedings, family jail visits, community reentry, etc.)
    - Family events (foster care, family reunification, family court, adoption, funerals, etc.)
    - Employment, religious, social and physical connections
  - Listen for themes in client narratives related to those themes of coronavirus discussions (e.g. vulnerability, confusion, miscommunication, alienation, fear, anxiety).
3. Check in with clients about protective factors versus risk factors
  - Adaptive coping skills may be challenged in new ways with limited access to known support systems (e.g. yoga classes, gyms, support groups, religious meetings, daycare respite, etc.).
  - IPV safety plans may no longer be viable given coronavirus community restrictions.
  - Unhealthy family dynamics may be exacerbated by unemployment, absence of childcare, children being home from school, insufficient supplies, etc.
4. Clarify client values
  - Unexpected change often creates feelings of vulnerability. Check in with clients about what they believe/feel is most important on any given day – providing a baseline for intervention.
5. Provide anticipatory guidance
  - Help clients identify new routines and talk about the value of flexibility.
  - Review telemental health expectations and processes with clients.
  - Provide psycho-education as appropriate to empower clients.
  - Review protective factors and practice revisions to adaptive coping skills.
  - Assist clients with identifying new risk taking behaviors & communicating these to you.
  - Celebrate successes.

# Why Should You Join MCA?

Membership is important to your professional growth and career development. It provides:

- Continuing education units at discount prices
- Early notification of MCA and all division events
- Current public policy issues and new laws of interest to professional counselors
- Grant opportunities
- Four newsletters with opportunities to publish and advertise
- Leadership training and greatly reduced registration costs to annual, regional or national conferences for board members
- Support and advocacy for professional counseling in the state of Maryland
- Electronic reminders to renew your membership
- A list of events that you have participated in



**[Click here](#) to join MCA today!**

Not ready to join? Choose the non-Member Contact option for a no-cost way to add your name to our email list.



To register for MCA or any of our events, please go to [www.md-counseling.org](http://www.md-counseling.org)

Find us on Facebook ([@mdcounseling](https://www.facebook.com/mdcounseling)) and Twitter ([@md\\_counseling](https://twitter.com/md_counseling))

Contact the MCA President for more information about committees and open board positions.

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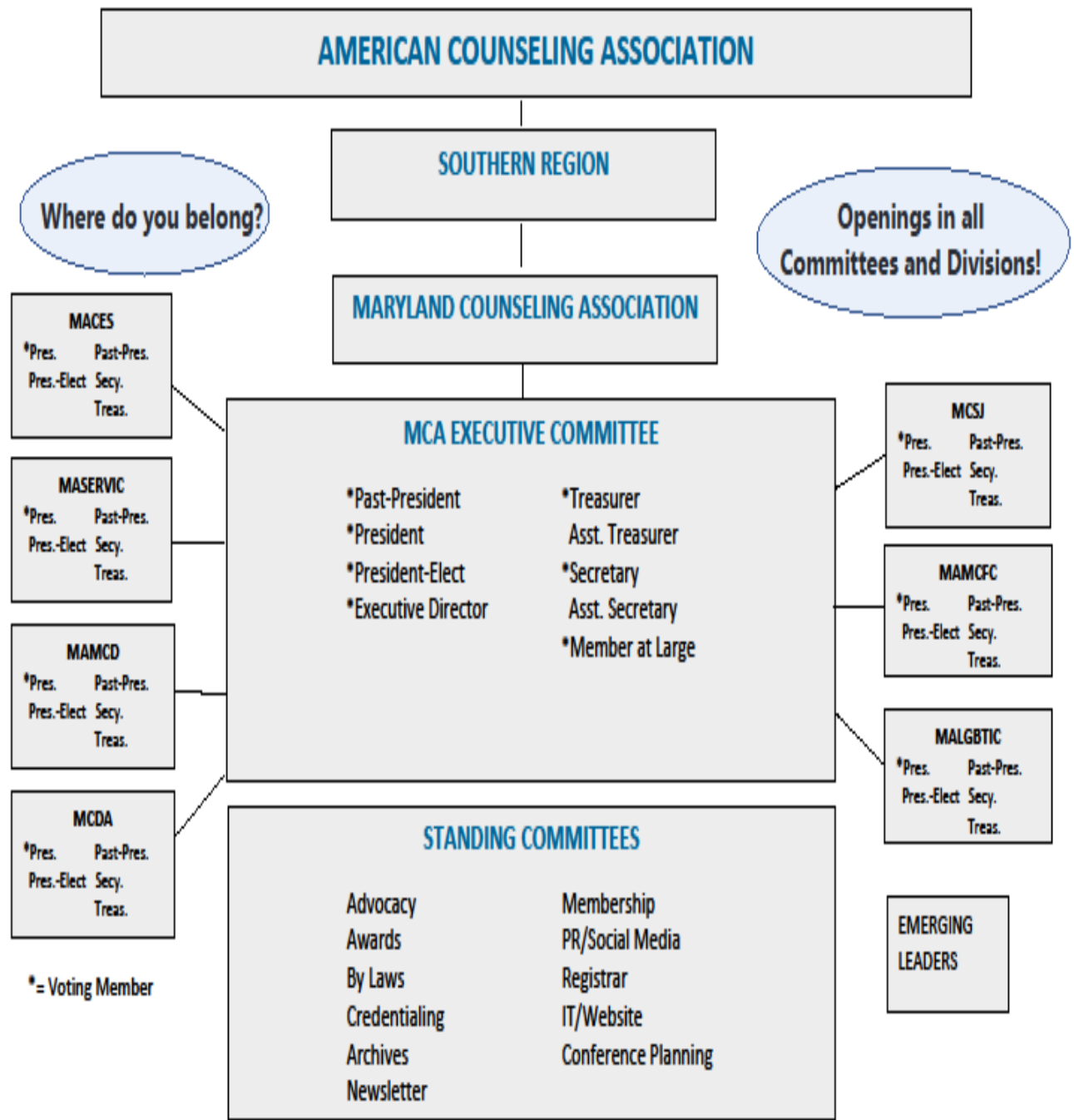
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**MACES**-Maryland Association of Counselor Education and Supervision  
**MASERVIC**-Maryland Association for the Spiritual, Ethical and Religious Values in Counseling  
**MAMCD**-Maryland Association for Multicultural Counselor and Development  
**MCDA**-Maryland Career Development Association  
**MCSJ**-Maryland Counselors for Social Justice  
**MAMCFC**-Maryland Association for Marriage, Couples and Family Counseling  
**MALGBTIC**-Maryland Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling

MSCA Liaison	LCPC-M Liaison	MAMHC Liaison
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\*\***MSCA**-Maryland School Counselor Association  
 \*\***LCPC-M**-Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland  
 \*\***MAMHC**-Maryland Association of Mental Health Counselors  
 \*\*These organizations are not active divisions, but we have liaisons with each.