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SEPTEMBER 2021

The Saybrook Spirit

THE OFFICIAL ALUMNI NEWSLETTER
OF SAYBROOK UNIVERSITY

alumni-saybrook@saybrook.edu

September is Suicide Awareness Month...



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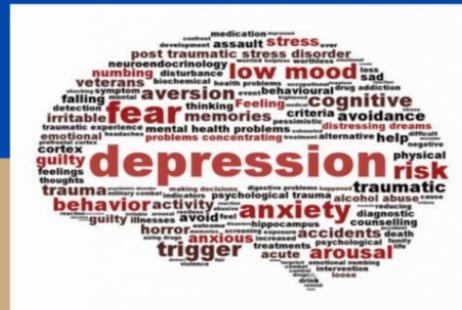
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[Visit our Alumni Website Page](#)



Jiselle Esparza, PhD



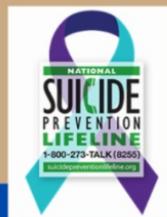
In honor of suicide awareness month, let's talk about depression. Major Depression is the number one cause of suicide attempts. It accounts for sixteen percent of the lifetime prevalence rate in the United States. Twenty-five percent of individuals diagnosed with a chronic disease are also diagnosed with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) (Bentley, S. M., Pagalilauan, G. L., & Simpson, S. A., 2014). Although MDD has a remission rate of thirty percent, there is a high percentage of reoccurrence among individuals who have been diagnosed with depression. Other medical conditions, substance abuse, grief, sleep disorders, and relationship turmoil are leading causes of depression and often comorbid the disease. The highest-risk period for attempted suicide is the first three months after developing chronic depression and the first five years after the onset of the illness (Bentley & Simpson, 2014).

It is important to remember that individuals suffering from depression are at a higher risk of suicide, especially those with inadequate support systems—the most consistent element in predicting suicide occurrence is past accounts of suicide attempts or threats. Consequently, however, most completed suicides are not always preceded by unsuccessful bids.

MDD is treatable. Some lifestyle interventions for depression are exercise, relaxation therapy, doing activities one enjoys, spending time with loved ones, engaging in self-improvement tasks, or personal growth projects have been found to increase joy and self-worth (McEwen, B. S., & Lasley, E. N., 2002). Psychotherapy and psychiatric interventions such as SSRIs and Tricyclic antidepressants have also been found to reduce the clinical symptoms of depression.

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September: SUICIDE AWARENESS MONTH

SUICIDE...The very word can elicit a multitude of feelings that at any given moment can vacillate from intense fear to euphoric highs, with a range of complex feelings in between depending on the person. The face of suicide has no age, color, or gender. It is not a respecter of socio-economic status, physical ability, or religion. It is a silent inward predator that can creep into the hearts and minds of anyone on this life span journey.

COVID-19 has become in many ways an outward predator, stealthily weaving itself within every crevice of our daily lives, leaving in its wake massive disruptions, isolation, and fear; a fear so critical, the suicidal alarm has risen to the highest level of “crisis”.

September marks the beginning of a month-long attempt of highlighting and bringing Suicide awareness into focus, of which I am keenly reminded as I draft this article at 3:00am, after supporting a suicidal texter for two hours as a Crisis Counselor Volunteer with Crisis Text Line.

This experience has given me a front row view into the severity of those suffering with mental health challenges and as I review the data collected by Crisis Text Line, I am faced with the reality that sixty-five million Americans suffer from mental illness each year. This is a sobering reminder of those quietly struggling with and through mental health crisis’, ranging from depression, anxiety, eating disorders, bullying, suicidal thoughts, and more.

The cold hard statistics reveal that 50% of high-risk texters in crisis are under the age 18. Race and sexual orientation are also risk factors with 19% of texters Hispanic, 12% African American, and 44% identifying as LGBTQIA+. These numbers although staggering, are not surprising as these risk factors have held a long-standing association within the intersectionality of the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and the LGBTQIA+ communities; a reality I have personally witnessed in the marginalized black, brown, and sexual minority communities that I grew up in and identify with.

As the President of the BIPOC group the “Black Activism in Action Community Association” (BAIACA), this intersectionality and associated suicidal risk factors facing BIPOC communities become even more pressing for me as I work to bring suicide awareness into our mission of holding students and faculty accountable for dismantling systems of oppression, while fostering multicultural inclusivity within traditional/non-traditional mental health spaces and future professional practices; in the face of this monumental “new normal” all of us are experiencing as a result of COVID-19.

Suicide Awareness calls for all of us to look inward and ask ourselves how we can become ambassadors of change as individuals, groups/organizations, corporations, and institutions of higher learning, working to meet the needs of those in suicidal crisis. As we reflect, let us not focus on the solemnity of suicide but on hope...as the face of suicide can be that of our mother’s, father’s, brother’s uncle’s, sisters, but more importantly the face reflected in the mirror.



Monica L. James

MA Student Clinical Mental Health Counselor

-President of the Black Activism in Action Community Association (BAIACA)

-Certificate: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace Certificate – University of South Florida - Muma College of Business

-Crisis Counselor Volunteer – Crisis Text Line

Alumni Spotlight

"Their life was a living form of Earth Reverence, woven into the mythic stories, the cosmology that they sang, spoke, ate and fed daily to each other. Their beliefs about what held them in their deepest moments of loss and betrayal, grief and illness, was fertile, fecund, sexual, hungry, generous, and in turn, their lives were an embodied reflection of this."



Merrill Page, MA , RCST
Merrillpage.com

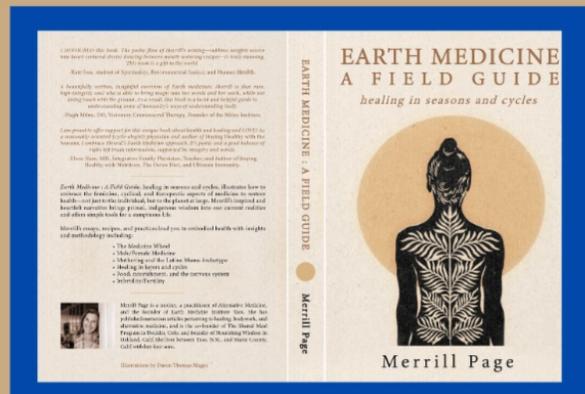
Merrill Page is a mother, mystic, author, RCST & MA, and pioneer of a new category in 'medicine' she calls Earth Medicine. With 33 years of deep exploration into culture, medicine, healing, and alternative forms of somatic, earth/body based forms of therapies she offers new ways into full, vibrant embodiment.

"I have journeyed long and far in search of the Truth in Medicine, only to find the wellspring of health inside myself. But what does that mean? And how do you get there? Welcome, I am here to bring you home."

Her first book, *Earth Medicine: A Field Guide healing in seasons and cycles*, brings the health and wellness industry to life with narratives that are at once grounded and poetic. Her recipes, inspiration, and exercises dip into ancient, indigenous wisdom to illuminate your path both to living right and feeling better.



Find the book here: [Earth Medicine](#)



News You Can Use!



What's Noom?

Have you heard of Noom? It's a mobile nutritional health plan designed to help individuals improve their overall health. By offering a mobile platform that provides psychoeducation, coaching, and an individualized health plan, Noom has helped millions of individuals adhere to a healthier lifestyle that helps with weight loss. According to its website, its products utilize evidence-based approaches and scientifically proven principles, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), to help formulate sustainable habits that can last a lifetime. Based on information from its website, clients are matched with appropriate experts to assist them in their health journeys and provide the support needed to achieve their goals. A statement from its website declared:

"Everything we do at Noom is driven by a singular mission: to help as many people as possible live healthier lives through behavior change. By equipping people with the wisdom and power of behavioral psychology, we believe we can help everyone build long-lasting, positive habits. We have more than 30 peer-reviewed scientific articles that inform users, practitioners, scientists, and the public about how our methods work and how effective they are... We make scientific discoveries about all aspects of behavior change, making the world a healthier place. Our research spans many different areas of health, including, oncology, diabetes prevention, hypertension, diabetes management, and more."

According to one of its clinical studies by Mitchell, E. S., Yang, Q., Ho, A. S., Behr, H., May, C. N., DeLuca, L., & Michaelides, A., 2021, a self-report measure examined the nutritional factors relating to weight loss for clients after 4 and 18 months on a mobile commercial program with a food categorization system based on energy density.

"Nutritional factors were derived from validated survey measures, and food choice from a novel validated computerized task in which participants chose a food they would want to eat right now. ANOVAs compared participants with 5% or more body weight loss and participants with stable weight ($0 \pm 1\%$) at 4 months on energy density proportions. Analyses at 18 months compared nutritional factors across participants with $>10\%$ (high weight loss), $5\text{--}10\%$ (moderate weight loss), and less than 5% body weight loss (low weight loss), and then assessed associations between nutritional factors and weight loss. Individuals with greater weight loss reported consuming higher proportions of low-energy-dense foods and lower proportions of high-energy-dense foods than individuals with less weight loss at 4 months and 18 months (all $ps < 0.02$). Individuals with greater weight loss had higher fruit and vegetable intake ($p = 0.03$), dietary quality ($p = 0.02$), nutrition knowledge ($p < 0.001$), and healthier food choice ($p = 0.003$) at 18 months. Only nutrition knowledge and food choice were associated with weight loss at 18 months ($B = -19.44$, 95% CI: -33.19 to -5.69 , $p = 0.006$; $B = -5.49$, 95% CI: -8.87 to -2.11 , $p = 0.002$, respectively)."

What is Noom? Continued...

The study results underscored the potential influence of nutrition knowledge and food choice in weight loss on a self-managed commercial program. In addition, the results also indicated that the in-the-moment inclination towards food, even when just depicted, is associated with long-term weight loss.

While this article is not meant to advertise products for Noom, the author's intent is merely to provide information on one of the newest hype in weight loss and health, as well as highlight the association between the mind and body in achieving optimal health. Numerous studies have asserted the influence of cognition and behavioral factors in chronic disease development such as obesity, hypertension, diabetes, and cancer. Therefore, it is not a surprise that a comprehensive nutritional health program, like Noom, includes CBT. The most effective standard obesity treatment is weight-loss lifestyle modification based on a combination of behavioral and cognitive approaches and nutrition and physical education (Kim, M. Y., Go, Y., S., Lee, S., Na, M., Lee, Y., Choi, S., Choi, H., 2020). CBT for obesity not only assists with losing weight but by preventing weight regain as well. It assuages the dissatisfactory long-term results of past behavioral treatments and offers more effective strategies for food and lifestyle choices.

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Jiselle Esparza, PhD



Meet Saybrook's Dean of the College of Social Sciences

Charlotte Redden Hamilton, Ph.D.

Dr. Charlotte Redden Hamilton is a native of Columbia, South Carolina and is the Dean of the College of Social Sciences at Saybrook University Online in Pasadena. She has been at Saybrook University since March 2021. Since that time, she has been involved in the following:

- Assisted in securing contract with TEVERA to host clinical logs for clinical mental health counseling and clinical psychology students.
- Assisted in co-creating a document for a professional consultation with the Justice for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Council (JEDI).
- Serve on the JEDI committee for university climate assessment.
- Active faculty advisor for Black Activist in Action Community Association (BAIACA), student organization.
- Diversity luncheon committee member.
- Assisted in reconstruction of the university scholarships and the outcome was many more students applied and awarded this year than any other year.
- Serve on the Saybrook Standout Committee.
- Attended mid-term residential conference in Seattle, Washington for Clinical Psychology in July 2021 and November 2021.

Before her current role, she served as the interim Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations at South University, Columbia campus. At South University, she was the department chairperson of all clinical mental health counseling programs at 9 South University campuses, and she was an associate professor and Program Director for the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at South University in Columbia, South Carolina where she oversaw full time faculty, adjunct faculty, and over 175 clinical mental health counseling and professional counseling students for over 8 years. In these roles, she was critical in achieving CACREP accreditation, an international honor society, hosting counseling conferences on campus, maintaining a high level of counseling graduates, employment, and pass rate of state licensure examination. She also revamped the counseling handbook, all counseling course syllabi as well as the implementation of new program of study and new courses. Additionally, she served as the inaugural chairperson for the council of diversity and inclusion. For under a year in that role, she implemented diversity and inclusion trainings, curriculum development, a diversity and inclusion newsletter, webpage on the university website and a quick reference guide on the school's library.

Continued on the next Page

Continued... Saybrook's Dean of the College of Social Sciences

Charlotte Redden Hamilton, Ph.D.

Dr. Hamilton is a licensed professional counselor (LPC) and licensed professional counselor supervisor (LPC/S), a licensed addiction counselor (LAC), a national certified counselor (NCC), and an Approved Counselor Supervisor (ACS). She holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and minor in African American Studies from Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina. She received her Master of Arts degree in Higher Education and Developmental Studies from the above-mentioned institution. She holds a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia where she was a research assistant and teacher's assistant.

Currently, Dr. Hamilton is the Immediate Past President of South Carolina Counseling Association (SCCA) where she has been an active member, presenter, and board member for over 20 years. She is also an active member of American Counseling Association (ACA) and American Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES).

As a counselor educator, Dr. Hamilton has taught counseling courses at several universities and practiced counseling at several agencies. She has had a host of mental health experiences ranging as a mental health counselor for severely mentally ill persons, counseling children and adolescents, and counseling drug and alcohol adolescents and adults. Her fondness for teaching and working with students in the counseling field goes hand in hand as teacher and practitioner.

She and her husband are owners of a private practice, God's Caring Grace Counseling Center in Columbia, South Carolina for over several years.

Co-Chair's Corner

In psychology, one of the tools we use to help better understand ourselves is to look to at our brain. The brain has been studied on many levels for decades, yet we are always learning more. One approach has been to take a step back and look at other organisms that operate in a similar manner.



In my free time I am a beekeeper. I enjoy watching and learning from bees, but I am not the only one. Several research labs look to bees to not only better understand them, but our own brains, as well. Hive mind. We have all heard this term, but let's think a little more about it. Within our brain we have neurons, each one alone is important, but cannot get too much done. In fact, a bee will only create 1/12th of a teaspoon of honey in its life!

The hive as a whole works together, no one bee, not even the queen, determines what will happen next. When the hive knows it needs to leave its home, splitting into two hives so each one has more room to grow, the hive will start to starve the queen to drop her weight so she can fly. Then, when the time comes, they push her out and half the hive will fly with her. They will find a place to land, and from here, scout bees will leave the swarm body and look for their new home.

Thomas Seeley has contributed greatly to this field. I've had the pleasure to have some conversations with him at our local bee club. One study included setting up two potential homes. As the scout bees left the hive body, they would fly out and find these new homes. It was set up so that one would be better than the other.

Continued on the next page...

Co-Chair's Corner

Each scout bee was hand caught and painted a different color depending on the hive it visited. The painted scout bees flew back to the hive body and would dance to say they found a place. But here is where it gets interesting: when one scout bee feels their location is better, it will make a buzzing sound and bump her head against another bee's head to do a "stop signal" and essentially grab the attention of that bee. This is done until all bees are on the same page.

This is done to be an inhibitory signal, which to those studying the human brain, might be a familiar term. In the brain, we produce either excitatory or inhibitory signals. Glutamate is one of the main neurotransmitters released during excitation and GABA is the neurotransmitter released during inhibition. Bees, are sending their own signal to inhibit the other signal, which in this case is coming from another scout bee that found another hive location that is not as good. This is similar to a go/no go task as is common in our psychology field. Eventually, all of the bees are on board and go together, flying to the home that won.

This is only the beginning of studies that relate the hives of bees to brains. Your own brain can likely easily imagine many ways that this works with pheromones, life cycles, dances, circadian rhythms, and more! So, we can add one more tool to our belt-- bees!



Taylor Williams-Cappozziello, PhD
Alumni Co-Chair



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2. Popov and Szyszka. (2020) Alpha oscillations govern interhemispheric spike timing coordination in the honey bee brain. *Proceeding of the Royal Society B*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2020.0115>



Upcoming Events!

Events & Stuff



SAVE THE DATE

50th
ANNIVERSARY

Awards and Spotlight Gala

NOVEMBER 10, 2021

4:00 PM PDT

HYBRID EVENT

VIRTUALLY ON REMO

LIMITED IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE

(DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED)

We will comply with CDC guidance, and notification of any changes will be at least 7-10 days in advance.

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EDUCATION BEYOND BORDERS

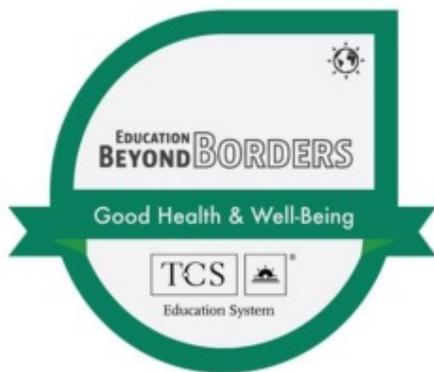
Good Health & Well-being in Context

Promoting cross-affiliate collaboration and furthering international education, TCS Community & Global Engagement invites you to join us for

Education Beyond Borders 2021: Good Health & Well-being in Context.

For the first time ever, Education Beyond Borders will be offered as a virtual 4-week micro-credential program. This self-paced experience includes online modules addressing the topic of good health & well-being from a cross-disciplinary and global perspective and live expert lectures.

Upon completion, participants of the program will be awarded an *Education Beyond Borders* digital badge.



- **Online Asynchronous Program**
- **Start Date:** November 5, 2021
- **Close Date:** December 3, 2021
- **Format:** 4 weeks of self-paced modules and optional live expert lectures
- **Fee:** This is a FREE opportunity for our TCS Community!
- **Eligibility:** TCS Affiliate Alumni and Students

Application Deadline: October 25, 2021

LEARN MORE AND APPLY!

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FILM, BOOK & POETRY
FESTIVAL

Thank You for Supporting the Inaugural
Film, Book & Poetry Festival 2021

The festival was a success, and we are proud of the students, faculty, staff, and alumni who shared their talent. If you missed the event or want to see it again, we **recorded it for you.**

Day 1

July 19, 2021

Day 2

July 20, 2021



Email Questions:

SayFBPfest@saybrook.edu

I will be a transformational leader of U.S. psychology at a time when transformational leadership is both urgent and necessary. My overarching goal is to shift psychology from a secondary to a national and international priority.



*Emotionally-impooverished relationships are America's major psychosocial crisis, and psychology must take the lead in addressing that crisis. Every one of my platforms—*healing dialogues, relational equity, APA's holistic application of its specialties, and a federal office of psychological consultants*—is aimed at remedying emotionally-impooverished relationships. The extent to which we remedy these relationships, we revitalize life.*
-KJS

Running for
2021 APA
President-Elect
voting open
September 15-
October 29

Kirk's Campaign and Promise

1. **Addressing “emotionally impoverished relationships” across political, racial, and class divides.** Due to COVID restrictions, racial and economic disenfranchisement, technology, and other factors, this is our country's number one psychosocial crisis in my view, and every one of my platforms pertains to it. In all frankness, I believe we need the equivalent of a Works Progress Administration-style approach to this problem, and I would call for that.
2. **Mobilizing psychologists to facilitate healing dialogues** to address the alarming political and racial divides in our country and within our profession.
3. **Developing a Relational Equity Task Force** to further the work of APA's current Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework, but with an emphasis on optimizing in-depth, emotionally-reparative mental healthcare and organizational functioning—particularly in underserved areas.
4. **Calling for a summit of leaders** in all our specialties to investigate how we can holistically address the many psychosocial crises of our time.
5. **Calling for a Presidential Task Force** to investigate the merit of urging the U.S. Congress to create an Office of Psychological Consultant(s) to the U.S.
 - o *promoting innovative national programs, such as the healing dialogues movement and in-depth therapy in underserved communities;*
 - o *being available 24/7 from within government to advise leaders from the executive branch to Congress to the U.S. public on the present crises we face; and*
 - o *utilizing the large presence of a government office to boost our media presence and public voice.*

Kirk J. Schneider, PhD

WWW.KIRKJSCHNEIDER.COM

[See Kirk's Promise Message Here](#)



Saybrook University and the Institute for Spirituality and Health Virtual Open House

Join Saybrook University in partnership
with the Institute for Spirituality and Health
at the Texas Medical Center for a virtual open house.

 **Thursday, September 16, 2021**

 **11:30 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. CDT**

Learn more about:

Saybrook's M.S., Ph.D., and graduate certificate programs in Mind-Body Medicine
The partnership between Saybrook University and the Institute for Spirituality and Health
Saybrook's history, social justice mission, and its progressive approach to education

You'll also have the chance to virtually meet and have a Q&A session with Saybrook faculty, alumni, and students in the Mind-Body Medicine program.

RSVP at www.saybrook.edu/events/

Saybrook University is a regionally accredited, nonprofit graduate university offering programs in Mind-Body Medicine, Integrative and Functional Nutrition, Integrative Wellness Coaching, and more. Committed to helping students achieve their full potential, the Saybrook community is deeply rooted in humanistic tradition. As scholars and leaders, our alumni, students, and faculty are working to make a difference around the world. Saybrook empowers every member of its community to follow their passion, dedicating themselves to a life of service and success.

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COLLABORATION

Continuing the Conversation Surrounding Racial Injustice

MONTHLY SPEAKER SERIES

PRESENTS



Psychology Today: What Woke You Up? Two-Part Series

Part 2: Now that You're Woke, Where Do We Go from Here?

September 21, 2021

3:00 pm to 5:00 pm PDT/6:00 pm to 8:00 pm EDT

FEATURING GUEST SPEAKERS

Dr. Theopia Jackson

Register Here:

<https://app.groupize.com/e/psychology-today-what-woke-you-up-two-part-series-part-2>

Part 2: This sequel will build-upon the previous conversation (Part 1) on structural racism and the historical assessment of 'the problem', including opportunities to critically review possible omissions, commissions, and/or misinterpretations in psychological science. Such a record may have inadvertently contributed to the current civil unrest; missed opportunities for interruption. This interactive presentation will contribute to operationalizing genuine transformative change in executing the mission of the American Psychological Association; to "promote the advancement, communication, and application of psychological science and knowledge to benefit society and improve lives" (<https://www.apa.org/about>). We will strategically consider how the Saybrook University community, actualizing humanistic principles, is poised to be a significant mover and shaker in this space. Attendees are encouraged to participate in both workshops for continuity; not required.

Theopia Jackson, Ph.D., is a licensed clinical psychologist and is the 2019 - 2021 President for The Association of Black Psychologists, Inc. (ABPsi) and past president for the Bay Area chapter. Currently, she serves as the Co-Chair of the Department of Humanistic & Clinical Psychology and Chair of the Clinical Psychology degree program at Saybrook University in Pasadena, California. Dr. Jackson has a long history of providing child, adolescent, and family therapy services, specializing in serving populations coping with chronic illness and complex trauma. She is an accomplished scholar-practitioner and educator who provides multicultural/cultural equity workshops, seminars, and consultation.

Photo Credit: Dan Stover

Join us for
Mindfulness Meditation Moments



Sep 10th - Dec 10th, 2021
Mondays
Fridays



Facilitated by the
Mind-Body Medicine
Faculty and guest Alumni
of Saybrook University



9:15 am Pacific
11:15 am Central
12:15 pm Eastern

Zoom Link:

<https://tcsedsystem.zoom.us/j/96555778825?pwd=ZUI2Ykd2eE9pbm9XZDU1OTRjSDMrQT09>
Meeting ID: 965 5577 8825
Password: 182085

To Join by Audio Only: Find your local number:

<https://tcsedsystem.zoom.us/u/ac2sGhpBw2>

**Facilitated by the Mind-Body Medicine Faculty
and guest Alumni of Saybrook University**

If you miss the live meditation, we invite you to refer to recorded
podcasts as often as you like to practice on your own at :
<https://saybrookinsights.buzzsprout.com/>

*** There will be no audience interaction with the
facilitator. How-ever, please reach out to us following
the event if you have questions by emailing
presidentsoffice@saybrook.edu*

*** We will be audio recording these sessions to provide
these free of charge to the general public at a later
date. By joining these sessions, you acknowledge you
under-stand that these sessions will be recorded.*



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**UNBOUND: Saybrook
Insights with President
Nathan Long & Carmen
Bowen**

Nathan Long, President of Saybrook University & Carmen Bowen

Saybrook University has a podcast co-hosted by President, **Dr. Nathan Long**, and Director of University Relations, **Carmen Bowen, MBA** called "Saybrook Insights."

**Fascinating
Guests**

**Relevant
Topics**

**Thought
Provoking**

To access the podcast, go to:

<https://saybrookinsights.buzzsprout.com/>

or

Spotify:

<https://open.spotify.com/show/5q6SRiWAxY95YyvcKJ15GN?si=mLzys-WaTD2zE3q-KCNjPg>



Thank you, from the Saybrook University
Alumni Council Team!



Jeremiah Pearcey, PhD



Shelli Jackson, PhD



Tori Bowers, PhD



Taylor Williams Capozziello, PhD



Jiselle Esparza, PhD



Carmen Bowen, MBA
Director of University Relations

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Look for the September 2021
edition coming soon!



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