

Volume 8 Issue 2
September 2026



MORAL INJURY

Moral Injury Special Interest Group

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ISTSS Moral Injury SIG Group

Thank you for your continued support and work towards a better understanding of Moral Injury,
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International Society
for Traumatic Stress Studies

Mission Statement

The Moral Injury Special Interest Group (SIG) aims to bring together clinicians and researchers from across healing disciplines and related fields including philosophy and ethics, military culture and history, and religious/spiritual studies in order to provide a professional home for moral injury discourse and development. In gathering ISTSS members from across these disciplines and the world, this SIG will facilitate a rich scientific conversation and will advance the state of the science in conceptualization, assessment, and intervention for moral injury.

Though the concept of moral injury has recently regained a great deal of popular interest, the field is in its infancy. At present, essential conceptual distinctions need refinement and the potential paths to moral healing require paving.

Addressing these areas will be the primary objectives of the Moral Injury SIG, and will be approached in the following ways:

Advocacy

Advocate for rigorous clinical and scholarly work that attends to cultural and contextual factors in this field.

Communication

Disseminate high quality scholarship in the moral injury field to ISTSS members and to the broader international community. Establish and maintain an active SIG listserv to facilitate direct and wide-spread sharing of new and upcoming literature, training, etc. of interest to SIG membership

Collaboration

Support collaborative exploration of moral injury between members of the SIG, facilitating submission of proposals on moral injury and related topics to ISTSS Annual Meetings and other appropriate venues and nurturing research on moral injury and healing.

CHAIR ADDRESS

Dear MI SIG Members,

Greetings! We hope that you have all had a restful summer. There is much to share with you all this issue so we will jump right in:

First, we are looking forward to the upcoming ISTSS annual meeting in San Antonio, TX and are excited to see many of you in person once again! We will be having our annual in-person SIG meeting on **Thursday, September, 24th from 12:45 – 1:45 PM in Conference Room 12**. Feel free to bring your lunch and join us! We hope to see you there.

Second, the time has come to put out a call for anyone who might be interested in joining the MI SIG leadership! We are officially taking applications for anyone interested in the Co-Chair and Student Co-Chair positions starting January 2027. If you are interested or for more information, please submit your CV and cover letter to dreikaguzman@gmail.com or ryan.steadman.psyd@gmail.com.

Finally, please remember that you are all welcome to submit suggestions for our Spotlight feature or for our Book Chat series – including your own work! Please email either of the co-chairs with requests for consideration. We would like to remind you that members can also submit original work in any form including, but not limited to, op-eds, summaries of published works, and summaries of not-yet published works. This is a great chance to showcase any recent projects you've been working on. Please keep submissions to 500 words. If you would like to submit work and/or nominate someone or yourself for the upcoming newsletter, please send an email to either Erika or Ryan.

In this issue, we are proud to have sat for a Q&A with Dr. Carolyn Allard, co-creator of Trauma Informed Guilt Reduction Therapy (TrIGR). In addition to discussing her interest and future plans in the study of Moral Injury, Dr. Allard shared with us about her recent publication, *Transform Your Guilt and Shame: Evidenced-Based Strategies to Heal from Trauma and Adversity*, a self-guided/self-help book that helps people understand how to apply strategies from TrIGR to help reduce guilt and shame related to trauma and adversity. As always, we have also included a list of training programs focused on Moral Injury and a bibliography containing the most recent published research on MI.

We hope you enjoy, and we look forward to seeing many of you in San Antonio!

Sincerely,

Erika and Ryan

Spotlight

Carolyn B. Allard, PhD, ABPP, is Distinguished Professor and Director of the Clinical Psychology PhD Program, Alliant University, and Council Representative and journal Editorial Board member of the American Psychological Association Trauma Division (56). Past positions include Program Director of the Military Sexual Trauma & Interpersonal Trauma Clinic and the Advanced Fellowship in Women's Health at the Veterans Affairs and University of California San Diego, and President of Division 56. For over 20 years, Carolyn has conducted evidence-based trauma-focused therapy and research.



TRANSFORM Your Guilt and Shame

Evidence-Based Strategies to Heal
From Trauma and Adversity



She co-wrote and developed Trauma Informed Guilt Reduction (TrIGR) and wrote a self-help version of it, Transform Your Guilt and Shame, as part of her commitment to increasing access to psychological science. Carolyn is deeply passionate about traveling and fostering compassion. Visit CarolynAllardPhD.com for more information.

Q&A With Dr. Carolyn Allard

We sat down with Dr. Allard to get to know her and her research and clinical practice better. Here is what we found out:

Q: You are a co-developer of Trauma Informed Guilt Reduction Therapy and now you've developed a self-guided workbook to accompany it. Can you tell us a bit about the workbook? How/why did you decide to develop it?

Thank you for your interest in my work! I have long been committed to expanding access to effective psychological interventions. I became a clinical supervisor early in my career and further disseminated empirically supported PTSD treatments as a CPT and PE trainer and consultant as part of national VA training initiatives. Publishing the TrIGR treatment manual and training clinicians to administer the intervention has further contributed to the dissemination of effective therapy. However, as is well recognized within our field, many individuals face substantial obstacles in obtaining quality treatment. Publishing a self-help guide, Transform Your Guilt and Shame, was therefore the logical next step for me. In writing the self-help book, I wanted to stay as faithful as possible to the empirically supported intervention. The book provides detailed instruction, examples and worksheets to help guide the reader through each step of the TrIGR strategies. I also added information based on scientific findings published after we wrote the TrIGR manual, which serves as helpful psychoeducation that can be helpful when challenging inaccurate and non-adaptive guilt and shame cognitions. For example, I describe ways that NAGS may present in individuals from marginalized groups who experience discrimination related traumatic distress.

Q: Did you have a specific target group in mind that you hope will benefit from it?

My hope is that it will reach and help the same type of folks we would want to treat using TrIGR; that is, those afflicted with non-adaptive guilt and shame (NAGS) from potentially traumatic or morally injurious experiences, but who may lack access to, or choose not to engage in therapy. Therapist colleagues have told me that they recommend the book to individuals on their waitlists and some also find it helpful to work through the book with their therapy clients.

Q&A With Dr. Carolyn Allard

Q: What inspired your work on the topic of moral injury in general and what led you to serve those suffering after morally injurious experiences?

Sonya Norman (TrIGR co-developer) and I were trained in the PTSD treatment developed by Kubany and colleagues (2003, 2004, 2008) specifically for survivors of intimate partner violence, which has a module on challenging guilt cognitions. We observed firsthand in our clinical practice and through empirical research we conducted (Allard et al., 2018) how effective it was. Being attuned to trauma-related guilt and shame, we noticed that many of our clients who experienced combat trauma also seemed to have problematic beliefs of guilt and shame, and that often this seemed to stall them in therapy. We started applying some of the strategies from Kubany's guilt module with these clients, and found that this helped them more effectively challenge their beliefs than just following the protocols of the empirically supported PTSD treatments we were using. We also noticed that our trainees and consultees were asking for guidance in addressing guilt and shame in their clients. We therefore drafted up a therapy manual and workbook, together with some of these colleagues, and began empirically testing TrIGR.

Q: What do you find most challenging about this work at this time? What do you find most rewarding?

I am very fortunate to be engaged in highly meaningful work. Hands down the most rewarding aspect has been the positive impact that TrIGR has had on so many people (which is especially gratifying to witness first-hand in my clients). The training I do also brings me joy and hope for humankind. I am introduced to people and organizations around the globe who help make the world a better place. And I always learn a great deal from each one, which enriches my clinical and research endeavors. For example, the most recent training I gave was for the Journalist Trauma Support Network – a wonderful organization that, among other things, trains and connects therapists with journalists, and helps defray therapy costs for those in need. During the interactive session, I heard about ways NAGS can present in this specific group that will inform my clinical work and research (and trainings) moving forward. One of the most challenging aspects is dissemination of psychological science and effective interventions. Psychologists do many things well, but marketing and writing for the public are generally not areas in which we receive training. This is definitely an area of growth for me.

Q&A With Dr. Carolyn Allard

Q: Describe your goals for your career and your work in the field of moral injury going forward.

My goal of broadening the reach of psychological science and effective interventions continues through my clinical work, research, teaching, supervision, consulting, public education, advocacy, administration and leadership.

Q: What other MI projects are you excited about (either your own or work from others that you are looking forward to)?

The scientific and public attention to trauma related guilt and shame and moral injury has increased exponentially over the past 20 years, which is very exciting to me. We have learned so much as a field, and we have been applying this knowledge to improve outcomes for trauma survivors by providing more evidence-based options that fit their needs and preferences. My students and I have several ongoing and planned studies, including one I am especially excited about. We are developing a pilot study of the effectiveness of the self-help version of TrIGR, Transform Your Guilt and Shame.

TRAINEE OPPORTUNITIES

The following is an up-to-date list of training sites that offer opportunities in moral injury (clinical, research, or otherwise) within the U.S. If you would like your site listed here, please contact Erika or Ryan. We also like to spotlight a trainee. If you'd like to nominate a trainee, let us know!

Training Site	Training Level Offered	Contact Information
VISN 17 Center of Excellence for Research on Returning War Veterans Waco, TX	Psychology Postdoctoral Fellow	Dr. Sheila Frankfurt O'Brien sheila.frankfurt@va.gov
Central Texas Veterans Healthcare System Temple, TX	Psychology Intern	Dr. Sheila Frankfurt O'Brien sheila.frankfurt@va.gov
Road Home Program: Center for Veterans and Their Families Rush University Medical Center Chicago, IL	Psychology Postdoctoral Fellow	Dr. Brianna Werner brianna_werner@rush.edu
Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center Denver, CO	Psychology Intern & Postdoctoral Fellow	Dr. Jacob Farnsworth jacob.farnsworth@va.gov

TRAINEE OPPORTUNITIES

(Continued)

Training Site	Training Level Offered	Contact Information
Loma Linda VA Medical Center Loma Linda, CA	Psychology Postdoctoral Fellows via Holistic Mental Health	Dr. Bryan Goudelock bryan.goudelock@va.gov
San Francisco VA Healthcare System San Francisco, CA	Psychology Intern & Postdoctoral Fellow	Dr. Shira Maguen shira.maguen@va.gov
VA North Texas Health Care System Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	Postdoctoral Fellow	Dr. Wyatt Evans wyatt.evans@va.gov
VA Rocky Mountain MIRECC for Suicide Prevention Aurora, CO	Psychology Postdoctoral Fellow: 2-year VA Advanced Fellowship in Mental Illness Research & Treatment	Dr. Lauren Borges lauren.borges2@va.gov

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Bravo, A. J., Drusano, M. F., Williamson, M., Dunaief, R. J., Williamson, R., & Heermans, G. (2026). Moral injury among humanitarian aid personnel: a preliminary examination of associations with rumination and mental health. *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*, 11(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-025-00183-y>

Croak, B., Lamb, D., Bhundia, R., Rafferty, A. M., Greenberg, N., & Stevelink, S. A. (2026). Moral injury in healthcare workers: causes & interventions. *British medical bulletin*, 157(1), ldag011. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bmb/ldag011>

Friedler, Y., Cohen, R., Zabag, R., Bergman, M., & Haim-Nachum, S. (2026). Childhood maltreatment and psychopathology during collective trauma: the longitudinal role of betrayal-related moral injury. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 17(1), 2665508. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20008066.2026.2665508>

Griffin, B. J., Warner, E. A., McCue, M. L., Pietrzak, R. H., McLean, C. P., Norman, S. B., & Maguen, S. (2026). The role of measurement in moral injury care: latent profiles on the moral injury and distress scale. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 16, 1691018. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2025.1691018>

Irfan, B., Alamrain, A. A., Alinaby, K., Hussein, H., Shammala, A. A., Halimy, M., ... & Irfan, M. (2026). Moral Injury in Gaza: The Impact on Healthcare Professionals. *Health Science Reports*, 9(4), e72252. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hsr.72252>

Kanter, R. L., & Hassija, C. M. (2026). The role of moral injury in the relationship between intimate partner violence and psychological distress. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 41(3-4), 561-581. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605251315769>

Koenig, H. G., Carey, L. B., & Wortham, J. S. (2026). Moral Injury in the DSM-5-TR: Syndrome spectrum vs. categorical disorder. *Journal of religion and health*, 65(2), 1205-1220. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-026-02632-3>

Maguen, S., Griffin, B. J., Pietrzak, R. H., McLean, C. P., Hamblen, J. L., & Norman, S. B. (2026). Prevalence of Moral Injury in Nationally Representative Samples of Combat Veterans, Healthcare Workers, and First Responders: Maguen et al. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 41(2), 424-430. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-024-09337-x>

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Martín, M., Ambriz, L., Gonzalez Ramirez, M., Borchers, R., Schulson, L. B., Cervantes, L., & Fernández, A. (2026). Moral Injury Among Physicians Caring for Immigrant Patients Amid Anti-Immigrant Policies. *JAMA Internal Medicine*. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2026.2899

Oberg, G. (2026). Moral injury in teaching: the systemic roots of ethical conflict and emotional burnout in education. *Educational Review*, 78(3), 346-369.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2025.2504523>

O'Brien, S., Boulanger, G., Yahalom, J., Bhatt-Mackin, S., & Goodman, M. (2026). Depth-oriented group psychotherapy for moral injury with military veterans: relational psychoanalytic and psychodynamic theory, mechanisms of action, and clinical implications. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 17, 1763407. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2026.1763407>

Sowden, W. J., Hart, R., & Bonanno, G. A. (2026). Potentially morally injurious events and posttraumatic stress symptom change across the military-to-civilian transition: A prospective study. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 39(3), 401-412. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.70049>

von Ungern-Sternberg, B. S., Sommerfield, A., & Becke-Jakob, K. (2026). Moral injury in clinical and academic medicine—it is time to act. *BJA open*, 17, 100525.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bjao.2025.100525>

ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

We invite SIG members to submit relevant articles of no more than 500 words

Submissions may be data-driven, descriptive, theoretical, clinically oriented, etc. provided that they are relevant to the field of moral injury. Consistent with our mission to bring together clinicians and researchers from across healing disciplines and related fields, we hope to consider a range of submissions.

Articles should be no more than 500 words (including references, tables, and figures). At least one SIG member should be an author on all submissions, though non-members may contribute in any role. As always, collaborations among members are highly encouraged.

Submissions should be addressed to the SIG Chairs: Erika Guzman, PsyD

drerikaguzman@gmail.com

Ryan Steadman, PsyD

ryan.steadman.psyd@gmail.com