

MELINDA S. MALHER, MA, BC-DMT, LPCC, C-SPT

San Francisco, CA (she/her, they/them)

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PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Clinical director, educator, and organizational leader with extensive experience in higher education, nonprofit governance, and clinical program administration. Demonstrated expertise in educational leadership, supervision, curriculum development, and systems-level change across academic, clinical, and community-based settings. Deeply committed to equity-centered leadership, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the advancement of inclusive, innovative educational and therapeutic practices.

LEADERSHIP & CORE COMPETENCIES

- Educational & Organizational Leadership
 - Higher Education Teaching & Graduate Instruction
 - Clinical Supervision
 - Program Design, Implementation & Evaluation
 - Curriculum Development & Training Facilitation
 - Governance, Board Leadership & Strategic Communications Policy
 - Equity, Inclusion & Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
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ACADEMIC & TEACHING APPOINTMENTS

Adjunct Faculty | January 2026–Present

University of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA

- Teach graduate-level master's courses in counseling and mental health disciplines.
- Support student development through applied learning, reflective practice, and supervision-informed pedagogy.

Adjunct Faculty | January 2023–Present

California Institute for Integral Studies, San Francisco, CA

- Instruct graduate counseling students using trauma-informed, expressive arts-based, and culturally responsive approaches.
 - Integrate theory, ethics, and applied leadership competencies into curriculum and assessment.
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GOVERNANCE & PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors – Communications Chair | October 2024–Present

American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA)

- Serve on the national Board of Directors, providing strategic leadership for public-facing communications, member engagement, and organizational visibility.
 - Lead public relations strategy, media engagement, and cross-functional collaboration with conference planning, membership, and education committees.
 - Advance organizational mission through systems-level communication, advocacy, and stakeholder partnerships.
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ADMINISTRATIVE & CLINICAL LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Start-Up Clinical Director | November 2024–June 2025

Gateway Mountain Center, San Francisco, CA

- Launched and led a county-based, nature-informed therapeutic mentoring program serving youth with moderate to severe mental health needs.
- Oversaw clinical operations, staff supervision, training development, and program implementation.
- Collaborated with multidisciplinary stakeholders to ensure ethical, responsive, and outcomes-informed service delivery.

Senior Clinical Director | November 2020–November 2024

The Lotus Collaborative, San Francisco, CA

- Directed clinical programming for partial hospitalization and intensive outpatient services specializing in eating disorder treatment.
 - Managed and supervised interdisciplinary teams including therapists, dietitians, psychiatrists, and counselors.
 - Led program development initiatives, staff training, and quality assurance processes to support sustainable clinical excellence.
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CLINICAL PRACTICE, SUPERVISION & CONSULTATION

Director, Therapist & Consultant | January 2018–Present

Creative Counseling

- Provide psychotherapy to youth, adults, and families across a range of clinical presentations.
 - Offer clinical supervision, consultation, and professional mentorship to therapists, trainees, and allied professionals.
 - Support organizational and practitioner development through training, reflective supervision, and leadership consultation.
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EARLIER CLINICAL & EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Group Therapy Facilitator | August 2016–August 2017

Self-Employed, Orange County, CA

- Facilitated inpatient and outpatient group therapy within hospital-based behavioral health programs.
- Participated in multidisciplinary treatment planning and clinical assessment.

Group Therapist | June 2015–June 2016

Fremont Hospital, Fremont, CA

- Delivered expressive arts–based group therapy across inpatient psychiatric units for adolescents and adults.

Clinician | July 2014–August 2016

Camp Altitude at Via West, Cupertino, CA

- Supported adolescents with neurodivergent and social-cognitive profiles within residential therapeutic programming.

Clinician | August 2014–February 2016

Almaden Valley Counseling Services, San Jose, CA

- Provided outpatient therapy and facilitated parent education groups.

School-Based Clinician | August 2013–July 2015

Beacon School, San Jose, CA

- Delivered individual and group counseling services to high school students with emotional and developmental disabilities.

EDUCATION

Master of Arts (MA) – Expressive Therapies

Emphasis: Dance/Movement Therapy & Mental Health Counseling

Lesley University, Cambridge, MA

GPA: 3.97

Bachelor of Arts (BA) – Dance & Psychology, *cum laude*

San José State University, San José, CA

HONORS & RECOGNITION

- Outstanding Achievement Award, American Dance Therapy Association (2019)
- Leader of Tomorrow Award, American Dance Therapy Association (2015)