

37th Annual Boston International Trauma Conference. May 27 - 30th 2026

Wed 27th May

8:30AM – 10:30AM

Sexuality and Healing from Trauma: Reclaiming Self-Worth After Abuse by Powerful Perpetrators

CE Accredited

This 4-hour pre-conference workshop brings together five leading practitioners—Kai Cheng Thom, Staci Haines, Ruth Cohn, Mint El Mokadem, V (formerly Eve Ensler), and Johnny Cole—to explore sexuality and healing from trauma with particular attention to survivors of abuse by powerful, well-connected, and wealthy perpetrators. The workshop centers on shame and the recovery of self-worth as foundational to sexual healing. Each presenter brings distinct expertise: transformative justice and pleasure-centered approaches; somatic embodiment and mind-body healing; the developmental trauma of childhood neglect and its impact on adult sexuality; culturally responsive sexuality work; and collective leadership, testimony, and creative healing. Time is allocated to each presenter, with a 30-minute coffee break and a 13-minute closing discussion.

Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

1. Understand shame as a trauma response and distinguish between appropriate guilt (for actions) and destructive shame (a false belief about one's essential worth)
2. Identify how powerful perpetrators weaponize shame to maintain control, prevent disclosure, and evade accountability
3. Recognize somatic and embodied approaches to shame recovery, including practices that help survivors reclaim safety, sensation, and trust in their own bodies
4. Apply transformative justice principles as alternatives to carceral punishment, centering survivor healing and perpetrator accountability
5. Address the specific impacts of childhood neglect on adult sexuality, intimacy, and the recovery of relational capacity
6. Explore culturally responsive approaches to addressing shame and sexuality in diverse communities, including those with religious or familial constraints
7. Integrate collective and creative practices—storytelling, testimony, art, community witness—as pathways out of isolation and shame
8. Support survivors toward self-worth recovery by facilitating agency, voice, pleasure, and the reclamation of their bodies as their own

4 CE

with Mint Elmokadm, Staci K. Haines, Kai Cheng Thom, MSc, V (formerly Eve Ensler), Ruth Cohn, MFT, CST
Grand Ballroom

8:30AM – 10:30AM

Abuse, Neglect, Deprivation, and the Restoration of Dignity: Healing Personal, Cultural, and Collective Wounds and Trauma using Psychomotor Therapy

Dive into the transformative practice of psychomotor psychotherapy, guided by principles from Pesso Boyden System Psychomotor (PBSP) Structures, as highlighted by Bessel van der Kolk in Chapter 18 of *The Body Keeps the Score*. This workshop blends didactic learning with experiential exercises and demonstrations to explore how familial and cultural attachment wounds and our predictive relational templates can be healed through embodied attunement and communally-oriented group practices. Participants will engage with core PBSP concepts like the literal and symbolic needs of attachment (for example, Ideal Parents, Ideal Society, Ideal Culture), shape/countershape, and the creation of fostering deeper understanding and practical tools for clinical application.

with Linda Thai, LMSW, ERYT-200, Mariah Rooney, MSW, LICSW, Gus Kaufman, PhD
Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

8:30AM – 10:30AM

Science to Practice: Diverse Neuromodulation Approaches Across Community Practice Settings

CE Accredited

Dual-Brain Psychology (DBP) is a clinically derived framework developed over 35 years of research and practice at McLean Hospital. The model proposes that traumatic experiences may be differentially encoded across cerebral hemispheres, contributing to distinct emotional and behavioral states that influence trauma-related symptoms and addiction.

In this framework, one hemispheric state may carry an unresolved traumatic perspective and defensive adaptations, while the other may reflect more mature regulatory capacities. Clinically, treatment involves identifying and understanding trauma-related patterns while strengthening the patient's capacity to access more adaptive, adult perspectives. Lateralized interventions—including unilateral transcranial photobiomodulation (tPBM) and lateral visual field stimulation—are used to differentially engage these hemispheric states to enhance therapeutic processing.

We will present findings from an NIH/NIDA-funded, FDA Breakthrough-designated clinical trial evaluating unilateral transcranial photobiomodulation in individuals with severe fentanyl addiction. Preliminary observations suggest meaningful clinical improvement, and we will discuss the rationale, study design, and broader implications of lateralized neuromodulation as a trauma-informed intervention.

The session will explore how DBP integrates psychological theory, neuroscience, and clinical innovation, and how this model may expand treatment options for trauma and substance use disorders.

Learning Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

1. Understand the neuroscience foundations of infralow frequency (ILF) neurofeedback and how it differs from traditional frequency band neurofeedback approaches
2. Describe the mechanisms of brain self-regulation and autonomic nervous system modulation through ILF training, supported by recent Swiss neuroimaging research
3. Explain why infralow frequency training produces superior outcomes compared to frequency band training alone
4. Apply stabilization and calming protocols appropriate for diverse and vulnerable populations, with attention to accessibility barriers and adaptations
5. Implement ILF neurofeedback within clinic, school, and residential treatment settings with culturally responsive, trauma-informed, and accessible approaches
6. Address ethical considerations, accessibility requirements, and best practices for equitable implementation across underserved, marginalized, and vulnerable populations
7. Design neurofeedback programs that center accessibility from inception: transportation, scheduling, cost, language, sensory adaptation, cultural humility

4 CE

with Colette Melancon, LCSW, NAP, Christy Johnson, MA, QMHP, Carrie Scott, LCMHC, Martin Teicher, MD, PhD, Fredric Schiffer, MD, Bernhard Wandernoth, PhD, Brendon Hollingsworth, LICSW, Marlen Gonzalez, PhD

Back Bay A

8:30AM – 10:30AM

From Research to Lived Experience: Psychedelic Integration Through Multiple Lenses

This intensive pre-conference workshop bridges clinical research, therapeutic practice, and lived experience in psychedelic integration. Participants will hear from leading clinicians conducting FDA-regulated MDMA trials alongside individuals who participated in these groundbreaking studies and chose to share their healing journeys publicly. The workshop examines integration through complementary perspectives: shadow work and power dynamics, clinical trial protocols and addiction treatment, functional medicine and harm reduction, rigorous MDMA research from a principal investigator's standpoint, and—most powerfully—the authentic voices of those whose lives were transformed through MDMA-assisted therapy for PTSD.

By centering both clinical expertise and participant testimony, this workshop honors the collaborative nature of psychedelic healing while providing therapists with evidence-based frameworks, ethical guardrails, and inspiration drawn directly from those who have walked the path of trauma recovery through MDMA-assisted therapy.

with Erica Zelfand, ND, Chantelle Thomas, Susan Walker, MD, Licia Sky

Back Bay B

8:30AM – 10:30AM

Dreaming Self Into Being: an Art Therapy Journey Through Art, Poetry and Video

This art exhibit, poetry reading and video presentation invites you to meet the emerging voice of a woman whose development was interrupted during her first year of life and distorted by chronic childhood traumatization.

Art therapist Lilla Ohrstrom and childhood trauma survivor Kathy Marmet share high points and challenges of their 5 year art therapy relationship.

Join our conversation about how to address the distinctive therapy needs of people whose development has been interrupted during infancy—the first year of life, or even before birth. How do we recognize those needs when the adaptive process has been remarkably successful in hiding them?

When are multiple modalities needed?

The challenges of coordinating multiple modalities? For therapist? For client?

Observe the powerful integrative possibilities of art therapy in action.

Original art therapy works, live poetry reading and video documentation of processes of integrating conscious and unconscious. Integrating mind and body across modalities as Ohrstrom supports Marmet in sharing her life work of collecting shattered parts. Be present with her as she shares her struggle to be seen in her hope to heal herself and to help others feel seen.

Marmet self-published *Freeing the Voice of a Less Than Fully Mothered Infant: Poetic Artifacts of a Healing Journey* early in 2025. Ohrstrom and Marmet then collaborated to present and document an exhibit of Marmet's art works and a series of art and poetry events at Ohrstrom's Youngblood Art Studio.

Includes a 30-minute break from 10:30 - 11 am

with Kathleen Joy Armstrong Marmet, JD, MAT, Lilla Ohrstrom ATR-BC

Back Bay C

10:30AM – 11:00AM

Morning Coffee Break

11:00AM – 12:00PM

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Back Bay A

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with Erica Zelfand, ND, Chantelle Thomas, Susan Walker, MD, Licia Sky

Back Bay B

1:00PM – 2:15PM

Lunch Break

1:00PM – 2:15PM

Free Sponsored Lunch and Learn: Wednesday #1

On Wednesday, May 27, join our first of two free sponsored lunch and learn sessions.

Enjoy a free lunch buffet with one of our conference sponsors. Registration is on a first come, first served basis.

Back Bay C

1:00PM – 2:15PM

Lunch and Learn with Pat Ogden

CE Accredited

Join Pat Ogden for a presentation with a provided lunch.

The Body in Relationship

Much of what happens between people occurs beyond words, through the language of the body. Habits of body-to-body communication reflect a legacy of both resources and unresolved trauma or attachment wounds. Subtle signals of safety, danger, or distress are expressed through muscle tension and relaxation, changes in breathing, leaning forward or pulling away, and patterns of eye contact. Others implicitly perceive and respond to these cues, often without conscious awareness.

These wordless exchanges frequently shape relational misunderstandings and impasses. This presentation explores how unconscious patterns of nonverbal interaction organize the way people experience one another in relationships. The body-to-body dialogue between two people will be shown to be a critical factor in both understanding and transforming interpersonal challenges. The somatic dialogue—the wordless story told through the exchange of nonconscious bodily signals—will be highlighted, and the practice of embedded relational mindfulness will be illustrated to help clients notice their own somatic narratives and the nonverbal dialogue unfolding between them.

Interventions from Sensorimotor Psychotherapy that address relational impasses and deepen transformational moments will be demonstrated through videotaped excerpts from consultation sessions. Participants will gain a deeper awareness of the importance of body-to-body communication and learn practical somatic approaches that bring unconscious relational patterns into awareness and foster greater physical and psychological security in relationships.

Learning Objectives:

1. Theorize how the body-to-body non-verbal interactions inform relationships
2. Discuss why exploring proximity seeking actions can be helpful to improve treatment outcomes when clients have relationship problems
3. Identify three skills to help clients become mindful of the implications of their non-verbal habits in relationships

Note: This session requires an additional ticket purchase.

1 CE

with Pat Ogden, PhD

Independence Ballroom

2:15PM – 3:00PM

Keynote: Childhood Sexual Abuse: My Body Belongs to The World

with V (formerly Eve Ensler)

Grand Ballroom

2:15PM – 3:45PM

The Body Remembers — And Heals: Embodied Pathways to Trauma Transformation

In this immersive 90-minute experiential session, Ali Smith and Atman Smith, co-founders of the Holistic Life Foundation, guide participants into the lived experience of embodiment as a powerful pathway for trauma healing.

Grounded in neuroscience, polyvagal theory, and decades of trauma-responsive community work, this session explores how trauma is stored not only in memory, but in the nervous system and body. Participants will move beyond intellectual understanding into direct practice — experiencing how breath, rhythm, mindful movement, interoception, and relational presence help restore safety, regulation, and agency.

Ali and Atman will share lessons from their work in schools, detention centers, and communities impacted by chronic stress and intergenerational trauma. Through guided experiential practices, participants will feel the shift from hyper- or hypo-arousal toward embodied regulation. We will explore how cultivating somatic awareness strengthens resilience, expands capacity for connection, and interrupts survival-based patterns.

This session integrates science and spirit, research and lived experience, offering concrete tools that clinicians, educators, and trauma professionals can immediately apply in their work.

Participants will leave with:

- Embodied practices for nervous system regulation
- A deeper understanding of trauma physiology
- Practical strategies for building resilience through presence
- Renewed connection to their own grounded, integrated self

This is not simply a presentation — it is an invitation to experience healing from the inside out.

with Atman Smith, Ali Smith

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

2:15PM – 3:45PM

Session with Reuben Jonathan Miller, Ronald Simpson Bey, and Robyn Hasan Simpson Bey

with Reuben Jonathan Miller, Ronald Simpson Bey, Robyn Hasan Simpson Bey

Back Bay A

2:15PM – 3:45PM

The Evolution and Ontogeny of Human Affective Neurology: Why the Chronically Lonely Among Us Grow Ill and Die Young

CE Accredited

While our reptilian ancestors protected their young, the parent-offspring relationship lacked an affective element. In contrast, mammalian nursing added affection to protection, especially among early hominins. As later hominins with ever more cortical brain development lived in increasingly more populous settings, successful affective relations became increasingly more important in everyday life. In the eighteenth century, however, the support of familial relations in natural communities waned with the development of the urban life that characterizes industrial society, and from this arose the public health issue of chronic loneliness. Today chronic loneliness is reported by roughly a third of the population, and its effects on morbidity and mortality are equivalent to the effects of heavy smoking and sedentary lifestyle.

Participants will meet the UCLA Loneliness Test- version 3, and the Relational Assessment chart: two remarkably valid and reliable instruments that will allow clinicians to accurately assess the level of connectivity of their clients.

Finally there will be discussion of steps one can take– or advise one's clients to take– to avoid the “epidemic of loneliness” which plagues contemporary Western society.

Learning Objectives:

1. To understand the health implications of chronic loneliness.
2. To understand how our evolutionary development created modern humans to require successful affective connections with others in their lives, with failure to do so leading to suffering the pains of loneliness and the accompanying significant degradation of health and longevity.
3. To understand the neurological processes and sequela of maternal nursing, parental love, and free play with peers on the human infant with respect to the child's development of its brain. To understand how the teenage years serve as the development grounds to learn the interpersonal skills that will be needed to successfully form adult social relationships.

4. To Understand the distinction between the functions of the limbic brain and those of the cortical brain in human interpersonal connectivity.
5. To learn how to utilize the UCLA Loneliness Scale-Version 3- and the C.A.R.E. Relational Chart to accurately assess a client's level of overall connectivity with others, and the quality of the patient's individual relationships.
6. To learn specific techniques of coaching lonely patients who present with minimal connectivity (disconnection) and / or unrewarding relationships (misconnection) as to how they might strategically plan and undertake actions to make improvements in their connectivity, and how you as their clinician can serve as their connectivity coach..

2.75 CE

with J. W. Freiberg, PhD, JD, Marlen Gonzalez, PhD

Back Bay B

3:00PM – 3:45PM

Keynote with Wendy D'Andrea and Judith Herman

with Dr. Wendy D'Andrea, Judith Herman

Grand Ballroom

3:45PM – 4:15PM

Afternoon Break

4:15PM – 5:00PM

Keynote with Denise Hien: Charting a Course for the Next Decade of Treatment and Research on Traumatic Stress and Addictions

The presentation examines evidence-based behavioral and pharmacological interventions for co-occurring PTSD and substance use disorders (SUDs). It critically reviews current literature, including randomized clinical trials, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses, to determine the clinical significance of treatment outcomes. The talk further discusses dissemination challenges for trauma-focused interventions in community-based substance use treatment settings. This content aligns with the chosen criterion by evaluating empirically supported psychological interventions and identifying future directions for research and clinical practice.

with Denise Hien, PhD, ABPP

Grand Ballroom

4:15PM – 5:30PM

From Trauma to Transmission: Embodied Practices for Sustained Social Change

Many trauma survivors and helping professionals struggle to remain engaged in social and political realities without becoming overwhelmed or chronically overactivated. Some withdraw in collapse. Others push forward with urgency that leads to burnout, fragmentation, or retraumatization. What allows engagement to become sustainable rather than depleting?

In this experiential session, Prentis Hemphill and Linda Thai, LMSW, introduce a framework that bridges trauma healing and collective transformation. Moving beyond a purely discharge based model of trauma, they explore how trauma shapes our internal patterns, relational habits, and collective cultures. Participants will examine the "shapes" that individuals and groups inherit under conditions of threat and power, and how these shapes influence political and social engagement.

Through guided somatic practices, relational inquiry, and facilitated reflection, attendees will learn how to build inner capacity while also reshaping collective practices. The session emphasizes transmission rather than performance, exploring how embodied presence, regulation, and relational attunement create the conditions for durable change.

Designed for clinicians, educators, organizers, and leaders, this workshop offers practical tools for increasing discernment, strengthening agency, and participating in social change without reenacting trauma patterns. Participants will leave with embodied practices that support sustainable engagement grounded in nervous system awareness, collective responsibility, and relational intelligence.

with Linda Thai, LMSW, ERYT-200, Prentis Hemphill
Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

4:15PM – 5:30PM

Session with Reuben Jonathan Miller, Ronald Simpson Bey, and Robyn Hasan Simpson Bey

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Back Bay A

4:15PM – 5:30PM

Incarcerated Peacemakers: Coming Home to Ourselves and Each Other

“Be a lamp to those who walk in darkness...a haven for the distressed...an upholder and defender of the victims of oppression...” –Baha’u’llah

In this sacred space, we will begin by witnessing the lived experience of **Leo Hylton**, a Galaxy Leader Fellow and doctoral student at the Carter School, who will join us via Zoom from prison.

Next, **Dr. Dawn Ravella**, founder of Communities for Healing and Justice, and **Sequan Prude**, Program Director of CHJ, will share the *Coming Home Model*, a powerful, scalable alternative to individualistic mental health models, which provides supportive and restorative community; education, advocacy, mobilization, narrative reframing, and healing opportunities for people who have experienced incarceration. This is healing as public infrastructure — and what justice can look like when communities are allowed to transform together.

Then we will hear from **Little Raven (Sasha Poafpybitty-Apesanahkwat)**, a sound healer and enrolled member of the Comanche Nation of Oklahoma, who will bring stories and insights from our Indigenous brothers and sisters, who are incarcerated at over double the national rate.

Andréana Elise Lefton, poet and founder of Almanac House: Creative Refuge, will follow, lifting up the spiritual courage and creative genius that governments and carceral systems attempt to silence behind bars, as well as the mental and emotional toll of inner incarceration – and practices for somatic healing and embodied peacemaking.

In closing, **Antti Pentikainen**, Executive Director of Think Peace Hub and The Mary Hoch Foundation, will share a framework for how nations can heal spiritual injury – especially the deep wounds in America’s psyche that lead to hyper-incarceration.

We will end with a peaceful moment to come home to ourselves and each other, carrying this connection with us into our lives and healing work going forward.

with Antti Pentikäinen, Andréana Elise Lefton, Sasha Little Raven Poafpybitty-Apesanahkwat, Dawn Ravella, DMin., LMSW, Leo Hylton, Sequan Prude

Back Bay A

4:15PM – 5:30PM

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2.75 CE

with J. W. Freiberg, PhD, JD, Marlen Gonzalez, PhD

Back Bay B

4:15PM – 5:30PM

Professional Practice Guidelines for Working with Adults with Histories of Complex Trauma

This guideline has been published jointly by the American Psychological Association (APA, Division 56, Trauma Psychology) and the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD) (APA, 2024). The guideline involved input from an international panel of identified experts in complex trauma. The presenters chaired this effort and will describe the guideline's development and content.

Professional practice guidelines are developed based on a review of available research evidence, clinical consensus, and population descriptions to establish recommendations for clinicians and others regarding treatment approaches, but do not make specific treatment recommendations. This guideline recommended the following 7 principles of treatment using the acronym HISTORY as a mnemonic: 1) **H**umanistic, attending to and respecting the uniqueness of each individual and their history and context; 2) **I**ntegrative, applying a variety of treatment strategies according to the unique goals and needs of the individual; 3) **S**equential, attending to issues of personal safety, stabilization, and skill building prior to direct exposure to trauma processing; 4) **T**imeline, giving attention to the lifespan chronology of the individual's traumatic exposure; 5) **O**utcomes, establishing and working towards mutually established and defined goals that are strength-based and individualized; 6) **R**elational, providing a trustworthy and responsive relationship, a "safe haven" and "learning laboratory"; and, 7) **WhY**, addressing spiritual and existential questions about the trauma and its impact and role in the individual's life. Several additional professional issues are also included and will be discussed.

with Christine A. Courtois, PhD, ABPP, Paul Frewen, PhD, CPsych

Back Bay C

5:00PM – 5:30PM

Daily Closer with V Ensler, Wendy D'Andrea, Denise Hien, and Judith Herman

Join keynote speakers V Ensler, Wendy D'Andrea, Denise Hien, and Judith Herman for a discussion and reflection on the day's topics.

with V (formerly Eve Ensler), Dr. Wendy D'Andrea, Denise Hien, PhD, ABPP, Judith Herman

Grand Ballroom

5:30PM – 6:15PM

Book Signing

with Bessel van der Kolk, MD, Denise Hien, PhD, ABPP, Judith Herman, Paul Frewen, PhD, CPsych, Prentis Hemphill, Staci K. Haines, V (formerly Eve Ensler)

Foyer

6:00PM – 8:00PM

Evening Networking: Poster Session & Cocktail hour

Grand Ballroom

6:00PM – 8:00PM

The First Dyad: Advanced Cinema Therapy in Actual Clinical Practice

For the past half-century, “Cinema Therapy” consisted of the occasional therapist who asked a client to watch a carefully selected commercial film that then could be discussed in clinical sessions. More recently the term has been applied to the work of trauma survivors who made films of their own trauma histories, often reporting that they had experienced a significant degree of agency and de-stressing by externalizing their trauma story into the script of their film. “Advanced Cinema Therapy” (“ACT”) is merely a formalization of this filmmaking so that such efforts can be initiated by ACT trained mental health professionals rather than by the occasional survivor who reinvents the concept. Importantly, the omnipresence of cell phone cameras today means that video made by a clinician-client “dyad” can suffice to undertake ACT. We will discuss that what is required by the ACT protocol is, first, the giving of an expanded sense of consent to participate by opening up and exploring past trauma; second, undertaking a detective-like inquiry to discover and produce to the therapist not only remembered facts, but also meaningful objects that have meaning for the client’s reconstruction of their trauma history, and, subsequently, the step-by-step work of the dyad to – step by step– create an accurate and insightful narrative of what had occurred, the effects it had had on the victim, and how the victim now can become a survivor by regaining agency over their narrative, and then subsequently externalizing it into a film. At the discretion of the client, the film is either only made for the survivors use in combating post-therapy dysregulation, or for some clients the film may be intended to be public facing.

with J. W. Freiberg, PhD, JD

Back Bay A

Thu 28th May

8:30AM – 9:45AM

Keynote with Wendy D'Andrea (Opening Remarks from Bessel van der Kolk)

with Bessel van der Kolk, MD, Dr. Wendy D'Andrea

Grand Ballroom

8:30AM – 9:45AM

Regulation Without Erasure: Somatic Trauma Work in the Context of Chronic Illness and Persistent Symptoms

Much of somatic trauma work assumes that increased regulation leads to symptom reduction. But for people living with chronic illness, autonomic instability, pain, or disability, symptoms may persist even as capacity grows. When regulation is unconsciously equated with relief, practitioners can inadvertently reinforce shame, over-pathologize the body, or frame healing as synonymous with cure.

This session invites a reexamination of somatic trauma practice through the lens of chronic and persistent conditions. Participants will explore distinctions between regulation, relief, stabilization, and cure, and consider how to support nervous system flexibility without demanding symptom disappearance. Through guided experiential practice and clinical application, we will examine how to facilitate “regulation without erasure,” increasing agency, coherence, and participation even when the body does not fully settle.

This workshop offers a trauma-informed, dignity-centered framework for working skillfully with chronically ill and disabled clients in somatic healing contexts.

with Nkem Ndefo, MSN, CNM

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

8:30AM – 9:45AM

Listening for Safety: A Dialog on Music, Autonomic Rhythms, and Recovery After Trauma with Sonocea

This session is an informal dialogue between Anthony Gorry and Stephen W. Porges that juxtaposes Gorry's personal rehabilitation and recovery journey following a stroke with Porges's early work identifying dampened endogenous cardiac rhythms—low heart rate variability—as a biomarker of stress and illness, and his decades-long pursuit of signaling-based approaches to rehabilitate autonomic nervous system function. These parallel paths converge in the development of Sonic Augmentation Technology™ (SAT™), a non-invasive acoustic approach to supporting recovery after trauma and injury.

Gorry describes how music supported regulation and recovery during his own rehabilitation, catalyzing his interest in the relationship between sound and physiological state. Porges situates this experience within a neurophysiological framework, emphasizing modulation and predictability as neural signals that stabilize endogenous autonomic rhythms governing heart rate, respiration, and visceral regulation. When these rhythms are disrupted by trauma or illness, autonomic flexibility and social engagement are compromised.

The dialogue explores how safety-compatible acoustic signaling may support autonomic stabilization and oxytocin-mediated processes of calm and connection, complementing psychotherapy and body-based trauma interventions.

with Stephen W. Porges, PhD, Anthony Gorry

Back Bay A/B

9:45AM – 10:15AM

Early Morning Break

10:15AM – 11:30AM

Keynote: An effective treatment for situational domestic violence

CE Accredited

This talk presents the results of a randomized clinical trial treating situational domestic violence. First we describe a questionnaire that effectively discriminates characterological from situational domestic violence. Second, compared to a no-treatment control group, the experimental group ended their mutual violence, reduced the use of criticism, defensiveness, contempt, and stonewalling, and reduced physiological arousal during conflict. Results held on 1-year follow up.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will learn the distinction between characterological and situational domestic violence.
2. Participants will be able to describe the two components of our intervention.
3. Participants will learn the effects of physiological arousal on couples interaction.

1 CE

with Bessel van der Kolk, MD, Dr. Julie Schwartz Gottman, Dr. John Gottman

Grand Ballroom

10:15AM – 11:30AM

Before Words: How the Body Organizes Experience

Many therapeutic conversations focus on talking about problems. Yet much of what shapes our lives occurs outside conscious awareness and before words ever form—in the body's moment-to-moment organization of experience. Subtle internal bodily signals—changes in breath, muscle tone, posture, impulses to move, or sensations of expansion and contraction—continuously organize experience, silently influencing how we perceive ourselves, others, and the world.

Over time, we develop habitual ways of organizing experience—translating events and the often nonconscious physical responses to them into meaning, feeling, and action in predictable ways. In this experiential session, participants will explore their own interoceptive cues that emerge in and out of relationships, and discover how these subtle cues influence perception, emotion, meaning, and action in real time.

Through structured experiments, participants will discover how their bodies organize in relationship—perhaps by moving toward, pulling back, softening, bracing, or through more subtle interoceptive cues. We will explore

how meaning emerges from the body: how sensations, tension, impulses, and movements give rise to emotions, memories, and beliefs about the self, others, and the world.

This session offers a hands-on exploration of interoception as a pathway to discovering “embodied pre-understanding”—the prereflective way the body organizes experience before thought or language arise. Trauma often becomes embedded in these organizing patterns, shaping how the body anticipates danger or safety, connection or withdrawal. Through mindful attention to the body’s signals, participants may uncover the nonconscious organization of experience that influences how they engage with others—and glimpse new possibilities for change.

with Pat Ogden, PhD

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

10:15AM – 11:30AM

Infant and Young Children’s Neurosomatic Meaning-Making and Traumatization in the In-Between

CE Accredited

Infant and Young Children’s Neurosomatic Meaning-Making and Traumatization in the In-Between

Infants and young children, unlike older children and adults have an immature brain. They lack language and mature cognitive functioning. Nonetheless, they face the universal problem of how to make meaning of themselves in the world. Following van der Kolk’s conceptualization on how the body keeps score the hypothesis is advanced that infants and young children make meaning using bodily systems – neurosomatic systems - whose operations are modified by micro-temporal relational experience. The conceptualization raises questions of resilience, trauma informed therapy, and traumatization.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify the neurosomatic systems used by infants and young children to make meaning of their place in the world.
2. To present research on the modification of the by experience of the operating characteristics of neurosomatic systems.
3. To discuss issues of resilience, trauma informed therapy and the the effects of micro-temporal experience in the in-between times of traumatizing events.

1 CE

with Ed Tronick, PhD

Back Bay A/B

11:30AM – 12:00PM

Morning Break

12:00PM – 1:15PM

Keynote with Reuben Jonathan Miller, featuring Andréana Elise Lefton

with Reuben Jonathan Miller, Andréana Elise Lefton

Grand Ballroom

12:00PM – 1:15PM

The Outer Work Project: Mobilizing Personal Healing for Social Change

Mass violence. Authoritarian and polarizing governments. Environmental collapse. Everywhere we look, the world we live in is spiraling into crisis – for healing practitioners, the paradox of doing healing work in a traumatizing world grows bigger every day. We need to alchemize the medicine of trauma healing with the transformative power of social change – but how?

How can embodied practitioners, counselors, and therapists rise to meet the moment of growing repression, polarization, and injustice in our world? How can we reach beyond the limits of traditional therapy and support

the healing and transformation of not only the people we serve, but also the social systems that hurt them in the first place? Join somatics experts and social change workers Nkem Ndefo, Staci K. Haines, and Kai Cheng Thom for an inspiring introduction to [The Outer Work Project](#), a program that bridges trauma healing with life affirming social movement work.

Together, we will explore the innate connection between the body and social systems, and how somatic practices can create changes that extend beyond the individual and touch the collective. You'll leave with a felt experience of collective embodiment, new insights about interweaving therapeutics and social change, and best of all, a connection to The Outer Work Project, a community of learning and practice that organizes trauma healers for social transformation.

with Nkem Ndefo, MSN, CNM, Kai Cheng Thom, MSc, Licia Sky, Staci K. Haines

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

12:00PM – 1:15PM

Synergies of Transformation: AEDP and Ketamine in the Treatment of Major Depression — Rationale and Design from a Groundbreaking RCT

Synergies of Transformation: AEDP and Ketamine in the Treatment of Major Depression — Rationale and Design from a Groundbreaking RCT

Diana Fosha, Ph.D. & Rachel Fremont, MD, Ph.D.

Ketamine has shown rapid antidepressant effects, yet for many relief is incomplete or short-lived; the role of psychotherapy in optimizing ketamine's effects remains underexplored. AEDP offers a relational and experiential framework that synergizes naturally with ketamine's neuroplasticity-enhancing properties. While ketamine serves as a nonspecific amplifier—reducing anxiety, softening defenses, and heightening receptivity—AEDP provides highly specific methodologies for channeling this amplification toward deep emotional change and the reshaping of attachment patterns. We hypothesize that this synergy will deepen and extend ketamine's therapeutic reach beyond what medicalized ketamine alone can achieve.

This presentation introduces what we believe is the first randomized controlled trial (RCT) comparing medicalized ketamine to ketamine-assisted psychotherapy (KAP) for major depressive disorder, where the therapy is AEDP-informed (AEDPi-KAP). The study aims to define the mechanisms of action for AEDPi-KAP in depression, incorporating both biological markers and psychological variables, including a flourishing measure.

Key tenets of AEDPi-KAP will be described and illustrated: the preparation session reconceived as a "sacred" first session for deep relational/experiential work; the technique of portrayal for medicine and immediate post-medicine processing; and metatherapeutic processing for integration—a methodology unique to AEDP that consolidates and expands the transformation brought about by the medicine and sets flourishing into motion.

The presentation will review the design and preliminary research outcomes of the KAP-RCT and present AEDPi-KAP cases from the trial. It is our hope that AEDPi-KAP and the KAP-RCT will make meaningful contributions to the field of psychedelic-assisted therapy at a time when standards and protocols remain underdefined

with Diana Fosha, PhD, Rachel Fremont, MD, PhD

Back Bay A/B

1:15PM – 2:45PM

Lunch

1:15PM – 2:45PM

Free Sponsored Lunch and Learn: Thursday #1

On Thursday, May 28, join our first of two free sponsored lunch and learn sessions.

Enjoy a free lunch buffet with one of our conference sponsors. Registration is on a first come, first served basis.

Back Bay C

1:15PM – 2:45PM

Lunch and Learn with Dr. Richard Schwartz

CE Accredited

Working with Protectors in Exile

In Internal Family Systems therapy, protectors are typically understood as parts that function to manage or prevent contact with exiled vulnerability. However, under certain developmental or traumatic conditions, protector parts themselves may become marginalized, burdened, or pushed into exile within the internal system. When these protectors in exile are not recognized, they may operate indirectly, intensify symptoms, or contribute to therapeutic impasses.

This one-hour Lunch and Learn introduces a focused clinical framework for identifying and working with protectors that are in exile, grounded in the Internal Family Systems model developed by Dr. Richard Schwartz. Participants will learn practical tools for recognizing exiled protectors, understanding their burdened roles, and facilitating safe, Self-led engagement. Emphasis is placed on pacing, consent, and system-wide safety to support integration and restore internal balance. The session prioritizes brief, clinically applicable interventions suitable for immediate use across diverse therapeutic settings.

Lunch will be provided.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe how protector parts can become exiled and identify clinical indicators of protectors in exile within a client's internal system.
2. Apply Internal Family Systems-based interventions to engage protectors in exile while maintaining Self-leadership and internal system safety.
3. Differentiate clinical approaches for working with protectors in exile versus working with traditionally exiled vulnerable parts.

Note: This session requires an additional ticket purchase.

1 CE

with Richard Schwartz, PhD

Independence Ballroom

2:45PM – 4:15PM

Keynote with Frank Anderson

CE Accredited

1.5 CE

with Frank G. Anderson, MD

Grand Ballroom

2:45PM – 4:15PM

Afro Flow Yoga®: Embodied Storytelling, Cultural Memory & Collective Healing

This workshop invites trauma professionals and participants into an embodied exploration of how cultural disruption, colonization, and the systematic suppression of ritual, rhythm, and communal movement have impacted the body, mind, and spirit across generations—and how embodied practices support restoration, resilience, and healing.

Drawing from Afro Flow Yoga, an integrative, trauma-informed practice rooted in Afro-Indigenous wisdom, participants engage in gentle yoga, movement, live music, breath, and storytelling. These modalities activate innate pathways for nervous system regulation, emotional expression, vitality, and connection, supporting a return to self, community, and the natural world.

The session examines how the loss of cultural expression, ceremony, community rituals and initiation has contributed to dysregulation, unresolved grief, and internalized oppression, while simultaneously demonstrating how rhythm, movement, and breath function as reparative technologies—restoring flow, agency, and coherence within individuals and groups.

Through guided movement, rhythmic engagement, reflection, and facilitated dialogue, participants explore the somatic impact of cultural erasure and assimilation; the historical suppression of drumming, dance, and ritual;

how disrupted rites of passage are held in the nervous system; and how embodied practices reopen pathways for emotional expression, release, and relational connection.

This interactive, collective experience intentionally cultivates a non-judgmental environment that supports safety, agency, and choice, fostering connection, liberation, and care. Participants experience how Afro Flow Yoga® supports self-regulation, emotional integration, relational repair, and embodied joy—expanding the clinical toolkit beyond talk-based modalities into heart-centered, culturally responsive practice.

No prior experience is necessary. All levels and abilities are welcome.

with Leslie Salmon Jones, Jeff Jones

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

2:45PM – 4:15PM

Researcher Flash Talks #1 - more details to follow

CE Accredited

1 CE

with Lucy Miller-Suchet, MPH

Back Bay A/B

4:15PM – 4:45PM

Afternoon Break

4:45PM – 6:00PM

Daily Closer: Beyond Symptom Scores: What Lived Experience Reveals in MDMA-Assisted Therapy for Trauma

Lived experience is often referenced in psychedelic research, but rarely centered in how evidence is interpreted, risks are managed, or protocols and care pathways are designed. This participant-led panel presents a trauma-focused, firsthand perspective on MDMA-assisted therapy for PTSD, including experiences of meaningful benefit, mixed outcomes, and periods of distress. Led by four trial participants with diverse backgrounds, the session examines why public and professional narratives tend to polarize into “miracle cure” or “catastrophic harm,” and how that framing can obscure the full spectrum of outcomes that matter to trauma survivors. Panelists will discuss themes that are frequently under-measured or under-addressed in research and clinical translation: functional recovery and quality of life versus symptom change; expectancy, therapeutic alliance, and drug versus placebo effects; difficult or destabilizing trajectories and how they unfold over months; gaps in preparation, integration, and continuity of care; and ethical implications for informed consent and post-protocol responsibility. The discussion will also address how adverse events are defined, recognized, and reported from a participant perspective, and how media narratives often amplify extremes while overlooking nuanced experiences that carry significant clinical meaning. To deepen field understanding, the panel will identify concrete blind spots in current outcome models and implementation practices, and propose participant-informed priorities for study design, training, and safeguards that better match trauma complexity. The aim is a more accountable path forward that balances hope with humility, and clinical science with lived experience. Attendees will leave with actionable next steps and the right questions to improve decisions under real-world complexity.

with Pedram Dara, Ari Polivy, Becca Kacanda, Ayesha Nazeer, MD, FACC

Grand Ballroom

4:45PM – 6:00PM

Your Sound, Your Song: a Pathway to Deep Healing

Trauma often silences us. It pushes our voices deep inside, disconnecting us from our bodies, our emotions, and from each other. Yet the voice—the simplest vibration inside the body—is one of the most direct pathways back to connection and inner power. In this 75-minute experiential session, we will explore how sound, breath, and playful vocal practices regulate our nervous system, and reconnect with our bodies and emotions.

Drawing from forty years of singing around the world, and years of trauma-informed voicework, I will give you simple and efficient tools that support both your own grounding and your clients’.

We will experiment with playful vocal exploration, resonant sounding and easy melodies, that help fear, anger, and grief move through the body and transform to joyful aliveness. We will sing together and feel the power of collective sounding—how the presence of other voices can provide co-regulation, belonging, and relief in times when so many of us feel isolated.

This session does not require singing experience. It only asks for curiosity, breath, and a willingness to listen—to yourself and to others. You will have a toolkit you can use in your clinical or community work, helping people feel more connected, more present, and more alive in their own voices.

My sessions always end by singing a self-lullaby, and soothing ourselves with our own voices. Open yourself for more resonance, more softness, and a deeply human exploration of healing through sound.

with Bea Palya

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

4:45PM – 6:00PM

Researcher Flash Talks #2 - more details to follow

CE Accredited

1 CE

with Lucy Miller-Suchet, MPH

Back Bay A/B

6:00PM – 6:45PM

Book Signing

with Richard Schwartz, PhD, Frank G. Anderson, MD, Dr. John Gottman, Dr. Julie Schwartz Gottman, Kai Cheng Thom, MSc, Pat Ogden, PhD, Reuben Jonathan Miller

Foyer

7:00PM – 9:00PM

True Story by Finn Mott - Comedy Performance

True Story is a live stand-up comedy and storytelling performance exploring trauma, survivorship, identity, family systems, illness, and resilience through humor.

Performed by Finn Mott, an acclaimed comedian who has toured internationally. Finn is currently finishing a 2-year residency at multiple prominent New York City comedy clubs.

This show demonstrates how comedy can function as nervous system regulation, narrative reclamation, and post-traumatic meaning-making. Through personal storytelling and culturally relevant satire, the performance models how humor allows audiences to metabolize difficult material safely while fostering connection and collective release.

Rather than avoiding pain, this show engages it directly, transforming clinical themes such as medical trauma, shame, family dysfunction, sexuality, and survival into moments of insight, reflection, and shared laughter.

True Story creates space for conference attendees to exhale, connect, and engage emotionally before moving into more traditional didactic sessions. It is designed to support clinicians, educators, and trauma-informed professionals who carry secondary trauma by offering restoration, perspective, and embodied authenticity.

This performance contains mature themes and candid discussions of illness, sexuality, and family dynamics, delivered with intentionality and care.

*The performance is based on Finn Mott's true story of survivorship. It includes candid discussions of cancer, multiple forms of trauma, sexuality, grief, and mental health. Some material may be emotionally activating. This show uses humor to explore experiences that are often difficult to name, hold, or process. The intention is not to minimize trauma, but to examine how laughter can coexist and liberate.

with Finn Mott

7:00PM – 9:00PM

Creativity and Community: Trauma themed first-person narratives in documentary films

Two filmmakers will present work about their own personal experience of trauma and the healing that has come from creative collaboration. Confronting issues that often get suppressed in shame, such as sexual abuse and miscarriage, their films break taboos and offer a roadmap to healing that hinges on community. Filmmaking offers a unique opportunity to break free from the often isolating impacts of trauma as artists come together telling stories through images, sound, music, animation and text, and connecting to viewers with emotion and humor.

with Sarah K. Hanssen, Cheryl Furjanic

Back Bay A/B

Fri 29th May

8:30AM – 9:45AM

Keynote: Sentinel Trauma: Autonomic Imprinting and the Loss of Safety

CE Accredited

Sentinel Trauma: One-Trial Autonomic Imprinting of Life Threat

Co-Regulatory and Oxytocin-Mediated Pathways to Recovery

This talk introduces sentinel trauma as an autonomic analogue of behavioral imprinting: just as a brief, high-salience experience can rapidly “stamp in” a lasting behavioral template, a single overwhelming event can imprint the autonomic nervous system, recalibrating neuroception so that safety is misread as threat. Within a Polyvagal framework, sentinel trauma is framed as state-dependent autonomic imprinting—a one-trial survival learning process that shifts thresholds for sympathetic mobilization and dorsal vagal shutdown and may persist despite insight or reassurance.

A central focus is the time course from an acute autonomic signature of distress to a hardened autonomic imprint. The process begins with a recognizable pattern of mobilization, shutdown, or unstable oscillation during an inescapable event. When that state is repeatedly re-evoked (by reminders, interoceptive sensations, or relational signals) and does not reliably resolve into safety, it consolidates into a trait-like bias in baseline regulation, reactivity, and recovery—expressed clinically as autonomic rigidity, dissociation, and rapid, body-led state shifts.

The model is extended by proposing oxytocin and vasopressin as mediators of consolidation. Oxytocin supports social buffering and down-regulation of threat when connection is available, whereas vasopressin is often recruited under vigilance and defensive mobilization, strengthening attention to social threat—especially when danger is experienced without escape.

Finally, the framework specifies intervention strategies: repeated, credible signals of safety, accessibility, and trust delivered through co-regulation (prosody, warm facial cues, contingent responsiveness, appropriate proximity). These cues recruit the Social Engagement System, support endogenous oxytocin release, update neuroception, and restore autonomic flexibility, resilience, and health.

Learning Objectives:

1. Define sentinel trauma and distinguish it from complex/developmental trauma, emphasizing single-trial autonomic imprinting versus cumulative relational threat exposure.
2. Describe the proposed time course from an acute autonomic signature of distress (mobilization/shutdown/oscillation) to a hardened autonomic imprint characterized by altered baseline, reactivity, and recovery.
3. Explain the role of neuroception and social neuropeptides (especially oxytocin and vasopressin) as mediators that may stabilize threat/safety learning and shape relational expectations after sentinel events.
4. Apply a Polyvagal-informed intervention logic to design strategies that signal safety, accessibility, and trust via co-regulation and state-shifting approaches that support autonomic flexibility and recovery.

1 CE

with Stephen W. Porges, PhD

Grand Ballroom

8:30AM – 9:45AM

What We Lost in the Flood, We Reforge in the Fire: Word Medicine and Indigenous Ceremony for Somatic and Spiritual Integration

In this healing session, we will offer carers and those who hold space for others a chance to be held and heard for what they have gone through – and reclaim what may have been lost or abandoned in order to survive.

This is an experiential, intergenerational, and intersectional space, blending research-based Mind-Body Medicine with Indigenous knowledge, sound healing, and ceremonial practice, offered by medicine holders deeply rooted in their lineages and grounded in cultural protocol.

First, we will drop deeper into our bodies through poetry and guided meditation, accompanied by singing bowls. Then, a trauma-informed writing practice will lead us through nervous system clearing, reclamation, and collective witnessing. Finally, Indigenous plant medicine will be offered to release our burdens, reset our emotions, and amplify our collective prayers and energies for the common good.

The container is intentionally woven with both masculine and feminine perspectives and medicines, to provide a balanced, equitable, and inclusive space. We view this as a co-creation and collective weaving, where each voice is unique and honored, as well as part of a greater whole.

Please bring a pen and notebook or journal to this session.

with Antti Pentikäinen, Sasha Little Raven Poafpybitty-Apesanahkwat, Andréana Elise Lefton

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

8:30AM – 9:45AM

Systems and Public Health Approaches to Interpersonal Violence

CE Accredited

Research has demonstrated that the traumatic effects of intimate partner violence (IPV) lead to the development or exacerbation of mental health- and substance use-related challenges among survivors. However, significantly less attention has focused on ways that abusive partners actively leverage survivors' behavioral health to maintain power and control. For decades, survivors and domestic violence advocates have raised concerns about patterns of coercive and violent behavior that abusive partners use that target survivors' mental health and substance use. The terms mental health and substance use coercion describe ways that abusive partners deliberately worsen survivors' mental health or substance use-related challenges or use them against survivors to maintain power and control within the relationship. Common examples include preventing survivors from accessing behavioral health services, forcing them to use substances, gaslighting them to make them feel that they are going "crazy," and weaponizing stigma by reporting (and often exaggerating) survivors' behavioral health challenges to personnel within law enforcement, civil and criminal legal systems, child welfare, immigration, and housing systems. This increases survivors' risks of criminal legal system involvement, child removal, deportation, and housing instability, as well as adverse behavioral and physical health consequences. When abusive partners leverage powerful systems, it can create Catch-22s that limit survivors' wellbeing, autonomy, and safety.

This presentation will utilize trauma-informed approaches to provide an overview of current research on systems-related mental health and substance use coercion, including new findings from the largest study on this topic (n = 14,925). It will offer attendees practical, evidence-informed approaches on assessing for mental health and substance use coercion along with ways to provide brief counseling and support. Finally, it will offer space for visioning ways that systems and providers can help to ensure that survivors with stigmatized behavioral health concerns are seen, believed, and treated with dignity, care, and respect.

Learning Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

1. Define mental health coercion and describe 3-5 common tactics.
2. Define substance use coercion and describe 3-5 common tactics.
3. Describe one new way to better support people experiencing mental health and substance use coercion.

1 CE

with Heather Phillips, MA, Gabriela Zapata-Alma, LCSW, CADC

Back Bay A/B

9:45AM – 10:15AM

Early Morning Break

10:15AM – 11:30AM

Keynote: Embracing Our Fragmented Selves: A Mindful Approach to Working with Trauma-Related Parts

CE Accredited

Why does trauma result in fragmentation? Because traumatic experiences are too overwhelming to be tolerated or processed, especially by a child's still developing brains. The mental ability of dissociation provides a way for children to get a psychological buffer from what is happening. The child can watch from a distance and observe what is happening to that other child. Fragmenting helps us to survive the moment and becomes a chronic response to the dangers facing children in unsafe environments.

Understanding the effects of trauma rather than focusing on the events that caused them opens up a new pathway to healing even for survivors who have had many years of therapy. Rather than pathologizing trauma-related symptoms and the parts that carry them, the Trauma-Informed Stabilization Treatment approach emphasizes accepting the effects of trauma as the implicit memories of parts still afraid and braced for threat.

By helping clients befriend their wounded, vulnerable parts and their darkest, most destructive parts, we can help them find wholeness, self-compassion, and healing.

Learning objectives:

- Describe the structural dissociation theory (Van der Hart, O., 2021)
- Identify triggered trauma responses as implicit memories (Alexandra-Kredlow et al, 2022; Perl et al, 2023)
- Implement mindfulness-based techniques to treat implicit memories held by parts (Goldberg et al, 2022, Joss & Teicher, 2021)
- Employ interventions for increasing self-empathy and self-compassion (Neff, 2022)

1 CE

with Janina Fisher, PhD

Grand Ballroom

10:15AM – 11:30AM

From Trauma to Punchlines: Using Humor and Creative Writing in Therapeutic Practice

Trauma-informed storytelling is a powerful tool for processing difficult experiences, fostering resilience, and strengthening the therapeutic alliance. In this interactive workshop, participants will learn how to integrate **creative writing** and **humor-based techniques** into clinical or group settings to support emotional processing, self-reflection, and patient engagement.

Through guided exercises, and collaborative discussion, attendees will explore methods to:

- Transform personal or client experiences into narrative material in a safe and structured way
- Use humor strategically to reduce tension, build rapport, and facilitate insight
- Apply trauma-informed frameworks for ethical and empathetic storytelling
- Support patients or workshop participants in developing self-expression, perspective-taking, and emotional regulation
- Showcase the true power of creative writing and humor as underutilized forces in today's health / wellness, educational, and corporate sectors.

This session is ideal for **psychologists, therapists, counselors, social workers, art therapists, creative writing therapists, and educators** working in trauma-informed care. This session is also for **individuals who have experience with trauma, illness, and grief.**

Attendees will leave with practical tools for integrating creative writing and humor into their personal life / professional practice, including exercises suitable for individual therapy, group work, or educational programming.

By the end of the session, participants will gain actionable strategies to harness **humor and narrative as therapeutic interventions**, enhance patient engagement, and foster a resilient, reflective, and connected environment.

with Finn Mott

10:15AM – 11:30AM

Chronic and Acute Trauma and Neurodivergence

CE Accredited

The first half of the workshop will cover theoretical and practical issues at the intersection of neurodivergence and trauma. We will begin with discussion of how trauma may interact with underlying biological / psychological aspects of neurodivergence to yield different phenomenological presentations, unique vulnerabilities, and potentially preferable treatment avenues. We will consider how these interactions play out in clinical environments serving acute trauma (we will focus on our experiences in a rape crisis center) and chronic trauma (we will focus on our experiences in a recovery support center). We will have interactive discussions on understanding and intervening with specific exemplar case studies for neurodivergent individuals with acute and chronic trauma.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe ways in which the psychology of trauma and neurodivergence may interact
2. Describe ways in which the neurobiology of trauma and neurodivergence may interact
3. Describe pathways by which neurodivergent individuals may respond uniquely to common treatments and features of clinical environments
4. Describe ways in which neurodivergence may qualify the presentation of acute trauma
5. Describe ways in which neurodivergence may qualify clinical approaches for acute trauma
6. Describe ways in which neurodivergence may yield structural and environmental considerations for how acute trauma is addressed
7. Describe ways in which neurodivergence may qualify the presentation of chronic trauma
8. Describe ways in which neurodivergence may qualify clinical approaches for chronic trauma
9. Describe ways in which neurodivergence may yield structural and environmental considerations for how chronic trauma is addressed
10. Describe ways in which neurodivergence may inform case formulation for acute trauma
11. Describe ways in which neurodivergence may inform case formulation for chronic trauma
12. Describe ways in which trauma may inform case formulation for neurodivergence

1 CE

with Greg Siegle, PhD, Jenny Hempen, LPC, JoEllen Marsh, MPA

Back Bay A/B

11:30AM – 12:00PM

Morning Break

12:00PM – 1:15PM

Keynote: Lessons From The Clinical Application of Mindfulness Meditation to Trauma Care

CE Accredited

Mindfulness meditation, as incorporated in structured, clinical evidence-based interventions has shown the ability to disengage neural networks supporting rumination and worry, along with enhancing clinical outcomes through increased tolerance of negative affective states. Mindfulness holds out the possibility that clients can learn these skills through direct, embodied experience, rather than solely relying on concepts and ideas. This keynote address will combine didactics with experiential learning to teach the key aspects of mindfulness meditation and its use in psychotherapy and trauma care. Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy will be used as an example to illustrate how features of mindfulness training can be incorporated into routine clinical settings. We will also examine misconceptions about mindfulness meditation that can create barriers to practice and the modifications that are required with a trauma population to enhance engagement and reduce harm.

Learning Objectives:

1. Review the evidence base for mindfulness meditation in the treatment of depressive, anxiety disorders and trauma.
2. Understand how to integrate and appropriately sequence formal/informal mindfulness practices into the psychotherapeutic treatment of patients with trauma.
3. Engage in experiential practice of the 3 Minute Breathing Space and understand how brief changes in attentional focus can be used to address negative automatic processing cycles.
4. Learn why mindfulness is about more than just relaxation.

1 CE

with Zindel Segal, PhD

Grand Ballroom

12:00PM – 1:15PM

The Dance We Fight For: Reclaiming Joy and Pleasure As Embodied Birthright and Essential Healing Factors

In this experiential session, three highly experienced embodiment facilitators and trauma-healing experts explore the often-neglected themes of embodied joy, pleasure, and fun in the realm of trauma healing. While nervous system stabilization and emotion regulation have rightfully become central topics in somatic trauma healing methods today, the ability to connect with positive sensation and affective states has been relatively neglected. Yet joy, creativity, pleasure, and beauty are essential to the meaningfulness of life and therefore to trauma recovery. Dr. Lyons, Licia Sky, and Kai Cheng Thom will guide participants through simple yet powerful embodied explorations that support the cultivation of choice, creativity, joy, freedom and fun.

with Licia Sky, Dr. Scott Lyons, Kai Cheng Thom, MSc

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

12:00PM – 1:15PM

Workshop TBD

Back Bay A/B

1:15PM – 2:45PM

Lunch

1:15PM – 2:45PM

Free Sponsored Lunch and Learn: Friday #1

On Friday, May 29, join our first of two free sponsored lunch and learn sessions.

Enjoy a free lunch buffet with one of our conference sponsors. Registration is on a first come, first served basis.

Back Bay C

1:15PM – 2:45PM

Lunch and Learn with Dr. Bessel van der Kolk

CE Accredited

Trauma and the Soul of the Nation: Finding Our Way Toward Social Wellness

For many trauma survivors, traditional talk therapy only goes so far. To facilitate lasting healing, clinicians must understand how trauma reshapes the brain and nervous system—and how to work directly with these changes. In this transformative workshop, we'll draw on cutting-edge research to explore three emerging approaches that target the physiological roots of trauma: sensory integration, neurofeedback, and psychedelic-assisted therapy. Using real-world clinical examples, video case illustrations, and interactive discussion, you'll gain practical tools to help clients access regulation, rewire trauma patterns, and reclaim a sense of agency. Plus, you'll learn how to assess which clients are best suited for these interventions and how to integrate them into your existing clinical framework.

Discover:

- The neurobiological and sensory effects of trauma that underlie symptoms of PTSD
- How neurofeedback supports self-regulation and emotional integration
- The mechanisms by which psychedelic-assisted therapy disrupts trauma loops and enhances neural flexibility
- How to apply body-first interventions that can augment and accelerate traditional therapy

Bessel van der Kolk, MD, is a pioneer clinician, researcher, and teacher in the area of posttraumatic stress. He's the author of the ongoing New York Times bestseller, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Treatment of Trauma*.

Join Bessel van der Kolk for a presentation with a provided lunch.

Note: This session requires an additional ticket purchase.

1 CE

with Bessel van der Kolk, MD

Independence Ballroom

2:45PM – 4:15PM

Keynote Integration

with Reuben Jonathan Miller, Stephen W. Porges, PhD, Zindel Segal, PhD, Janina Fisher, PhD

Grand Ballroom

2:45PM – 4:15PM

Embodiment in Practice: Restoring Connection Through Movement, Rhythm and Regulation with Ajoia

Ajoia's workshop explores embodiment as a lived, felt experience rather than an idea. Through guided movement, rhythm, and immersive sonic environments, participants are invited to reconnect with sensation, breath, and presence in a way that supports nervous system regulation and psychological safety. Grounded in trauma-informed principles and contemporary neuroscience, the session focuses on restoring connection to the body as a pathway toward resilience, expression, and the gradual restoration of self.

with Anthony Gorry, Andrew Lovell

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

2:45PM – 4:15PM

Shekufeh Zonji and Elizabeth Lule - more details to follow

CE Accredited

1.5 CE

with Shekufeh Zonji, Elizabeth Lule

Back Bay A/B

4:15PM – 4:45PM

Afternoon Break

4:45PM – 6:00PM

Daily Closer: Breaking the Cycle: Clinical Interventions and the Path to Healing Intergenerational Trauma

While the formal cessation of conflict marks a transition, the "real" trauma work is only beginning. The process of healing from systemic terror and acute PTSD is a massive undertaking – one that requires restoring a sense of internal regulation and "quotidian equilibrium" even as the echoes of violence persist, and one that relies heavily on healthy attachment between parent and child in order to break cycles of intergenerational trauma.

In this session, Dr. Alexandra Chen and Ruth Cohn address the immense challenges of bringing stabilization to the "battered brains," bodies, and hearts of a population navigating boundless grief. Moving between the macro

(social justice and peace-building) and the micro (the biological impact on the individual), they will explore how to break the chain of intergenerational trauma and neglect.

Ruth will present a clinical model for "Gentle Parent-to-Be Education." This approach integrates the simple neuroscience of attachment with trauma-informed parenting strategies, designed to minimize the impact of unhealed trauma on the developing character of the next generation. This model is built on a foundation of compassion, aiming to empower expectant and new parents without the weight of guilt or despair.

Participants will explore:

- The Transition of Trauma: Shifting from crisis management to the long-term work of restoring nervous system regulation in adults and children.
- Neuroscience & Attachment: Utilizing foundational brain science to shield the next generation from the transmission of neglect and historical trauma.
- A Holistic Framework: Balancing clinical intervention with the global necessity for social justice and community-led healing.

with Ruth Cohn, MFT, CST, Dr. Alexandra Chen

Grand Ballroom

4:45PM – 6:00PM

Somatic Movement Lab

Step into a living laboratory of embodied exploration where somatic practice, Body Mind Centering®, ecstatic dance, and conscious movement weave together into a single, fluid journey. Grounded in trauma recovery theory and the understanding that the body holds the key to healing, each session offers a safe and spacious container to gently resource, regulate, and restore. Guided by somatic scores, breath, and curated soundscapes, you are invited to drop beneath the thinking mind and follow the intelligence of sensation, impulse, and rhythm as they arise from within. No dance experience is needed — only a willingness to listen inward, move freely, and discover what your body already knows. This is movement as inquiry, as healing, and as homecoming.

with Dr. Scott Lyons

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

4:45PM – 6:00PM

Facilitating Body-to-Mind Sensations in Trauma Healing

Somatic approaches to healing trauma are becoming more mainstream. More nuanced is how we facilitate the mind-body connection. Too often, by default, this facilitation occurs from mind-to-body and leans heavily on mindfulness techniques, body scans, and breathing exercises. There are other ways and other skills to acquire.

Join award-winning author, adaptive yoga pioneer, and mind-body expert Matthew Sanford to explore facilitating sensations from body-to-mind. The body teaches the mind at both conscious and subconscious levels, and its healing potential is being underutilized. Attendees leave with new ways of thinking about the two-way street between mind and body, as well as some practical techniques to employ with their clients. This workshop includes some lecture, experiential exercises, and optional partner work.

with Matthew Sanford MA

Back Bay A/B

6:00PM – 6:45PM

Book Signing

with Finn Mott, Professor Manos Tsakiris, Ruth Cohn, MFT, CST, Stephen W. Porges, PhD, Zindel Segal, PhD

Foyer

7:30PM – 11:00PM

Gala Dinner

Join us for a special evening of connection, celebration, and music at the conference Gala Dinner. Guests will enjoy a seated dinner with drinks while gathering with colleagues, friends, and members of the Trauma Research Foundation community.

The evening features two musical performances. First, internationally acclaimed Hungarian singer-songwriter **Bea Palya** blends Hungarian, Balkan, and Romani folk music with jazz and world influences. Her powerful, expressive songs explore humanity, identity, and transformation, creating a memorable experience.

Next, we'll dance the night away with **The Jeff Jones Zone**, led by multi-instrumentalist Jeff W. Jones, which brings dynamic, improvisational music inspired by African rhythms and global traditions. Their lively performance creates a vibrant, energetic atmosphere for all.

This festive evening offers a chance to relax, celebrate our shared work, and experience the power of music to bring people together.

NOTE separate purchase required

with Jeff Jones, Bea Palya

Grand Ballroom

Sat 30th May

8:30AM – 9:45AM

Keynote: Being, with a Deep Body in Mind

CE Accredited

While embodied accounts in modern psychology have long focused on the importance of the body as the basis of the self, this focus concerned the exteroceptive body, that is, the body as perceived from the outside (e.g. think about our body image or when we recognize ourselves in the mirror). This influential approach has neglected another important dimension of the body, namely the interoceptive, felt, body, that is, the body as perceived from within. Interoception describes the processing and awareness of body-to-brain axis of signals that are essential for ensuring the organism's homeostatic needs. Beyond homeostasis, a renewed interest in interoception across psychological sciences and neurosciences has highlighted its importance for self-awareness and social cognition. The awareness of these interoceptive signals that originate deep within our bodies influence a range of cognitive and affective processes, from emotional awareness and regulation to decision-making, that are important for the awareness of ourselves, our relations to others and possibly for our political emotions and political behavior.

Learning Objectives:

1. To understand how our sense of self is conceptualized and research in psychology and neuroscience
2. To understand how different facets of our body awareness contribute to our sense of self
3. To understand how interoceptive signals come to be consciously perceived and 'mentalized'
4. To understand how our interoceptive awareness can influence our emotional and cognitive states

1 CE

with Professor Manos Tsakiris

Grand Ballroom

8:30AM – 9:45AM

Ancestral Healing Music for the Soul: Past, Present, and Future

In this interactive workshop, Jeff W. Jones shares music as medicine through the lens of his own ancestral and musical lineage, weaving songs, rhythms, and stories across historical timelines. Drawing from African diaspora traditions, intergenerational memory, and decades of facilitating healing circles worldwide, Jeff offers music as a living, relational practice that supports regulation, connection, and collective care.

Participants are guided through a musical journey spanning past, present, and future—tracing how rhythm and song have carried cultural memory, resilience, and healing from ancestral traditions, through histories of displacement and resistance, into contemporary multicultural healing spaces.

Music is explored as a somatic and relational modality that supports trauma healing beyond talk therapy, engaging the nervous system through rhythm, vibration, and resonance. In a time of global uncertainty, this workshop offers clinicians and communities accessible pathways for emotional expression, co-regulation, and meaning-making across difference.

Through guided listening, live musical demonstration, experiential participation, and reflective dialogue, participants experience how music creates safe and brave spaces for emotional release, intergenerational connection, and collective healing. The session emphasizes music's role in fostering belonging, bridging cultures, and sustaining healing circles across diverse communities.

with Jeff Jones

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

8:30AM – 9:45AM

Session with Alexandra Chen - more details to follow

CE Accredited

1 CE

with Dr. Alexandra Chen

Back Bay A/B

9:45AM – 10:15AM

Early Morning Break

10:15AM – 11:30AM

Keynote: Deep Healing of the Exiles

CE Accredited

This session explores Dr. Richard Schwartz's Internal Family Systems (IFS) approach to deep healing of exiled parts, the wounded aspects of the personality that carry the burdens of trauma and emotional pain. Participants will learn how to respectfully engage protective parts of the psyche to gain permission to work with exiles, apply techniques to access and transform trauma-held exiles, and consolidate this healing into lasting integration within the internal system. The course highlights the essential steps of befriending protectors, witnessing and unburdening exiles, and fostering systemic harmony for enduring emotional health.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the roles of protective parts (Managers and Firefighters) in the IFS model and their relationship to exiled parts.
2. Demonstrate techniques to negotiate with protective parts for access to wounded exiles.
3. Apply IFS interventions to safely access, witness, and transform trauma within exile parts.
4. Explain the process of unburdening exiles and the impact on the internal system.

1 CE

with Richard Schwartz, PhD

Grand Ballroom

10:15AM – 11:30AM

It's an Inside Job: Trauma-Adapted Yoga in Clinical and Correctional Settings

This experiential workshop introduces Trauma-Adapted Yoga (TAY), a specialized, trauma-informed yoga developed for high-complexity clinical and institutional environments. Rooted in yoga-therapeutic methodology and informed by research on program outcomes and implementation, TAY has been systematically adapted for child and adolescent psychiatry, correctional settings, and forensic psychiatry.

TAY integrates principles of nervous system regulation, interoceptive awareness, choice-making, and relational safety. A key focus is the relational field: how trauma shapes attachment strategies, expectations of others, and capacity for trust. Through predictable structure, clear boundaries, and attuned facilitation, TAY supports agency while creating conditions that may enable reparative relational experiences. Across clinical and institutional implementations, participants have described an increased capacity to tolerate proximity, boundaries, and shared space—suggesting potential shifts in relational patterns over time.

The workshop examines differences between trauma work in open versus closed environments, including how restricted autonomy, surveillance, and institutional stressors influence regulation and relational dynamics. Participants will engage in guided embodied practice and review research findings on these programs, alongside implementation insights and unique visual documentation from correctional and forensic settings.

Drawing on program experience from Prison Yoga Project—widely recognized as the world's leading organization delivering trauma-informed yoga in correctional settings—this session presents a hopeful, scalable model for trauma-informed intervention. It illustrates how body-based, relationally attuned methods can be implemented even in highly restrictive environments, with meaningful implications for both individuals and systems.

with Josefin Wikström, C-IAYT, E-RYT 500, YACEP, TCTSY-F, James Fox, MA, CYT

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

10:15AM – 11:30AM

Neuroscience of Dissociation, Embodiment, and Sensation

CE Accredited

Neuroscience of Dissociation, Embodiment, and Sensation

This session will have three talks which highlight using psychophysiology and neuroimaging data to understand and develop/validate interventions for trauma reactivity. Jared Fel and Ellen Yates will discuss unique neural profiles of reactivity to auditory critical statements by attachment figures in participants who stated they could not hear the stimuli. These data could suggest that subjectively decreased perception could represent a neural shutting out or not processing of emotional, potentially traumatic cues. Nate Harnett will discuss neural vulnerability to PTSD after trauma including multimodal signatures following trauma exposure. Greg Siegle will discuss a multi-site clinical trial novel technology-augmented mindfulness based intervention for dissociation following trauma which works to skirt neural vulnerabilities to compromised interoception by providing exteroceptive vibroacoustic cues for respiration. These data suggest that such exteroceptive prosthetics activate otherwise hard to recruit (e.g., interoceptive) brain networks in service of mindful awareness, yielding strong decreases in dissociation and PTSD symptomatology. Learning Objectives:

- Understand how understanding the neuroscience of trauma can help in evaluating vulnerability, case formulation, and optimizing interventions for trauma.
- Evaluate whether reported lapses in hearing criticism reflect dissociative processes rather than generalized disengagement by examining condition-specific neural activation patterns.
- Understand potential ways to help dissociative individuals to engage with mindfulness meditation

1 CE

with Greg Siegle, PhD, Nate Harnett, PhD, Ellen Yates, MA, Jared Fel, MA

Back Bay A/B

11:30AM – 12:00PM

Morning Break

12:00PM – 1:15PM

Keynote: Narrative to Nervous System

CE Accredited

This keynote explores how unresolved subcortical orienting and defensive responses—those instinctive survival strategies triggered in the face of threat—can be completed through Sensorimotor Psychotherapy's (SP) intervention of Sensorimotor Sequencing

When we are exposed to trauma, the body registers an immediate shock response to the threat. If this impact is not processed bottom-up to resolution, it can wreak havoc with the brain and body, leading to involuntary sensations, movements, and other baffling and often frightening physical symptoms that appear to have no organic cause, as well as fueling negative beliefs and intense dysregulated emotions.

One of SP's core techniques for the treatment of trauma, sensorimotor sequencing, teaches clients to trust the innate wisdom of their bodies to process and resolve these effects of shock. They learn to allow and follow the involuntary sensations, vibrations, impulses, and movements to completion, rather than resisting or suppressing them.

Sensorimotor sequencing will be illustrated through video-tape excerpts of consultation sessions to illustrate:

- Completing instinctive orienting and defensive responses
- Resolving shock states and hyperarousal
- Rebuilding trust in the body's innate capacity to heal from shock trauma

Sensorimotor sequencing provides a pathway to address unfinished spontaneous responses at the level of the nervous system, supporting clients with PTSD and C-PTSD to discharge hyperarousal, restore regulation, and reconnect with the intelligence inherent within the body, enhancing an embodied sense of self.

Learning Objectives:

1. Explain why Sensorimotor Sequencing is a bottom up intervention
2. Identify present moment indicators of instinctive orienting and defenses
3. Apply SP bottom up strategies in your clinical practice
4. Assess when to apply Sensorimotor Sequencing for Hyperarousal, Orienting and Defensive Responses

1 CE

with Pat Ogden, PhD

Grand Ballroom

12:00PM – 1:15PM

The Drama of Defense: Youth Adaptations in Action

Join Diana Feldman, author and veteran drama therapist, whose evidence-based ENACT method has served more than 250,000 students in NYC public schools for over 30 years. This immersive workshop is based on her new book, *Stuck in a Role: Releasing Trauma in Youth through the ENACT Drama Therapy Method*. Through live demonstrations with professional actors, embodied theater games, and role-play, participants will experience the transformative power of the ENACT Method. Clinicians, educators, and therapists will walk away with practical tools to apply in their own practice.

with Diana Jeanne Feldman, LCAT/BCT

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

12:00PM – 1:15PM

The Healing Multiplier: A Global Framework for Community Healing in Times of Crisis

CE Accredited

Across the world, communities are confronting unprecedented levels of collective stress driven by conflict, displacement, climate instability, gender-based violence, and social fragmentation. While trauma research and clinical interventions have expanded, much of the population still lacks access to scalable approaches that support healing beyond individual treatment settings.

This interactive workshop explores Trauma-Informed Change-Making (TICM), a framework that supports community leaders, organizations, and practitioners in designing locally relevant healing initiatives capable of reaching large populations. The approach centers on a co-design process with community leaders, where reflection, dialogue, and collaborative design themselves become a first step toward collective healing.

Participants will discover how trauma-informed principles can be translated into community-level initiatives that are culturally grounded, scalable, and sustainable in low-resource environments. These initiatives integrate embodied and culturally rooted healing practices and address challenges related to conflict and displacement, climate change, sexual violence, and child abuse. Drawing from experience in Kenya, Mozambique, South Sudan, and the United States, the session shares practical strategies for identifying local needs, engaging leadership, and developing initiatives that strengthen relational trust and social cohesion while addressing barriers to scaling and sustainability.

Emerging research from GTP initiatives will also be discussed, including psychophysiological indicators of regulation such as heart rate variability (HRV). Findings highlight how social connection and community environments influence nervous system regulation, offering insight into how community-based initiatives may support trauma recovery and wellbeing at scale.

Through discussion and real-world examples, participants will explore how Trauma-Informed Change-Making helps communities move from fragmentation and crisis toward connection, stability, and collective wellbeing.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the core principles of Trauma-Informed Change-Making (TICM) as a framework for community-based healing.
2. Identify key components of a co-design process used to develop locally relevant healing initiatives.
3. Explore strategies for adapting trauma-informed approaches across diverse geographical, cultural and social contexts.
4. Evaluate factors that support the sustainability and scalability of community healing initiatives.
5. Conceive initial ideas for implementing trauma-informed change-making within participants' own communities or organizations.

1 CE

with Ilya Yacevich, Ann Wahinya, Anita Shankar, MPH, Michael Niconchuk

Back Bay A/B

1:15PM – 2:45PM

Lunch

1:15PM – 2:45PM

Free Sponsored Lunch and Learn: Saturday #1

On Saturday, May 30, join our first of two free sponsored lunch and learn sessions.

Enjoy a free lunch buffet with one of our conference sponsors. Registration is on a first come, first served basis.

Back Bay C

1:15PM – 2:45PM

Lunch and Learn with Frank Anderson, MD, and Janina Fisher, PhD

CE Accredited

Healing the Legacy of Traumatic Attachment

Abusive and neglectful family environments entail traumatic attachment experiences, not just traumatic events. The legacy of unsafe attachment affects all subsequent relationships including the therapeutic one. In this presentation, we will examine how attachment wounds appear in adult life and offer tools that can help clients transform their traumatic attachment responses.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the effects of traumatic attachment on relationships
2. Articulate the attachment-related inner conflicts stimulated by closeness
3. Describe 2 parts work interventions for traumatic attachment
4. Describe 2 somatic interventions for traumatic attachment

Lunch will be provided.

Note: This session requires an additional ticket purchase.

1 CE

with Frank G. Anderson, MD, Janina Fisher, PhD

Independence Ballroom

2:45PM – 4:15PM

Keynote Integration

with Professor Manos Tsakiris, Richard Schwartz, PhD, Pat Ogden, PhD

Grand Ballroom

2:45PM – 4:15PM

Embodiment as Capacity: Building the Nervous System Conditions for Healing and Collective Care

Trauma work often focuses on insight, narrative, and symptom reduction. Yet healing also requires something deeper: the capacity to stay present in our bodies while experiencing activation, emotion, and relationship. Without this capacity, both clinicians and clients can become overwhelmed, shut down, or disconnected from the relational conditions that make healing possible.

This experiential session explores embodiment as a foundational capacity for trauma healing. Through guided somatic practices and reflection, participants will explore how the body supports regulation, emotional resilience, and relational presence in the midst of real-world stress and systemic pressure.

Participants will be invited to notice the difference between acute threat and nervous system activation, develop strategies for resourcing the body, and practice staying present with emotional energy such as anger, grief, or fear without becoming overwhelmed. The session will also include a relational exercise designed to help participants track their own nervous system while in connection with another person.

Rather than focusing on trauma excavation, this session emphasizes capacity building: supporting practitioners in strengthening their ability to remain grounded, responsive, and relational in challenging moments.

Participants will leave with simple embodied practices that can support both their own regulation and their work with clients, as well as a deeper understanding of how embodiment contributes to individual and collective healing.

with Prentis Hemphill

Constitution A/B - The Integrate Space for Embodiment

2:45PM – 4:15PM

The Somatics of Liberation: Embodying Resistance, Imagination, and Collective Trauma Care

CE Accredited

In a time marked by rising authoritarianism, collective grief, and escalating assaults on our bodies and communities, trauma practitioners are being asked to hold more than our work in the therapy office. We are being called into a deeper embodiment - one that reconnects us to imagination, to love, to one another, and to the movements that make liberation possible.

Together we will explore the somatics of liberation and the liberation of embodiment as both clinical practices and political commitments. Through an integration of somatics, emergent strategy practices, and poetry-fueled imagination, we will explore what becomes possible when practitioners engage the body as a site of resistance, repair, and re-imagining.

Mariah Rooney will be joined by Junauda Petrus as they together weave experiential exercises, poetry readings, and collective reflection to illuminate how trauma healing is inseparable from our collective struggle against systems of harm. Participants will explore:

- How somatic practices and embodiment amplifies capacity, courage, and clarity in times of polycrises
- How imagination and art can disrupt the status quo and usher us into a different future
- Ways trauma practitioners can build community-based, movement-informed practices
- Embodied tools for sustaining connection, agency, and political presence/engagement
- A love-centered, body-centered approach to resisting fascism and caring for those most targeted and impacted

The vibe will be experiential, provocative, evocative, and deeply grounded in liberatory practice. Participants/co-conspirators will leave with renewed connection to their own bodies as sites of wisdom and resistance - and with actionable steps for integrating liberatory somatics into their clinical, community, and organizational work.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Articulate how embodiment functions as both a clinical intervention and a political commitment in the context of rising authoritarianism, collective grief, and polycrisis.
2. Explain how somatic practices increase practitioner capacity, courage, and clarity during periods of systemic stress and social threat.
3. Describe how imagination, poetry, and artistic practice can disrupt dominant narratives and expand possibilities for collective healing and liberation.
4. Identify at least three ways trauma practitioners can integrate liberatory, movement-informed somatic practices into clinical, organizational, or community settings.

5. Apply at least two embodied tools to sustain connection, agency, and political presence in their professional roles.

1.5 CE

with Mariah Rooney, MSW, LICSW, Junauda Petrus

Back Bay A/B

4:15PM – 4:45PM

Afternoon Break

4:45PM – 6:00PM

Daily Closer: Authentically Safe—A Conversational Exploration on Authenticity, Safety, and Paths Forward

CE Accredited

Join Ashanti Branch and Michael Niconchuk for a dynamic and reflective closing session that weaves together their complementary expertise in authenticity and internal safety. As the culmination of our trauma conference, this dialogue invites participants to explore how these two pillars—authenticity as the courage and to be fully oneself, and internal safety as the foundation for healing—intersect and inform trauma-responsive practice.

Ashanti's work on authenticity challenges us to show up as our whole selves, even in spaces where vulnerability feels risky. Mike's focus on internal safety offers tools to cultivate the self-knowledge and tools needed to manage adversity with agency and directedness. Together, they will model a conversation that bridges theory and lived experience, inviting attendees to reflect on their own journeys and the systems that shape them. The session will begin with brief, provocative insights from each speaker, grounding the discussion in their unique perspectives. From there, the dialogue will unfold organically, with space for audience engagement and questions. A special emphasis will be placed on the often-overlooked experiences of men and boys, examining how cultural norms and societal expectations impact their mental health and access to healing. Expect a blend of storytelling, practical wisdom, and interactive reflection. Whether you're a clinician, educator, or advocate, this session will leave you with actionable ideas for fostering authenticity and safety—in your work, your communities, and your own life. This is not just a closing; it's an invitation to carry the conference's themes forward. Come ready to listen, question, and connect as we co-create a vision for trauma-informed care that centers both individual and collective transformation.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will analyze how authenticity and internal safety intersect to create conditions for healing, especially for men and boys, by examining Ashanti Branch's work on vulnerability and Mike Niconchuk's framework for trauma recovery.
2. Participants will be able to identify various elements that factor into the construction of felt safety across cultures and context, and be able to assess how these factors manifest in practice with clients
3. Participants will compare ancient concepts of safety and wholeness (e.g., salāma) with modern neuroscience and psychophysiology, and explore the universality and cultural and linguistic distinctions in trauma-informed practices.
4. Participants will expand their understanding of vulnerability and authenticity as concepts that interact with and affect the emergence and resolution of trauma in adversity-affected populations, especially men and boys

1 CE

with Michael Niconchuk

Grand Ballroom

4:45PM – 6:00PM

Neuroscience of Development and Context

CE Accredited

Human existence in a harsh environment required the evolution of a social solution for dealing with stress and trauma in a complex world. This emerged based on the evolution of mammalian social communication, selective social engagement and social bonds. The endocrine and autonomic pathways that allowed sociality and sociostasis were the same processes necessary for human reproduction, maternal behavior and attachment. At the center of this story are the mammalian hormones oxytocin and vasopressin and the parasympathetic nervous system. The physiological mechanisms, and especially oxytocin, which are necessary for sociality also

help to explain the process called “stress-response hormesis.” Knowledge of oxytocin and its role in hormesis provides a novel therapeutic perspective on the role of social support, psychotherapy and even psychedelics.

Learning Objectives:

1. To describe endocrine mechanisms for the healing power of safety and nurture.
2. To explore the role of oxytocin and vasopressin in human sociality and human evolution.
3. To explain the specific role of oxytocin in “sociostasis” and “stress-response hormesis.”
4. To discuss how these may help to explain the value of social support, psychotherapy and even psychedelics.

1 CE

with C. Sue Carter, PhD, Marlen Gonzalez, PhD, Hannah Swerbenski, PhD

Back Bay A/B

6:00PM – 6:30PM

Closing Ceremony with Ajoia

Join Ajoia for a celebratory closing ceremony at the end of the conference!

with Anthony Gorry, Andrew Lovell

Grand Ballroom