

# Supporting Clients Navigating Health Conditions

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## 9:30 - 10:35 a.m. CT | Welcome and Keynote:

### *Multi-Disciplinary Panel Discussion*

Our keynote session will feature an interdisciplinary panel of professionals representing psychology, health and wellness coaching, nursing, and social work. Together, these experts will explore how their distinct roles, training, and perspectives intersect to create comprehensive, client-centered care.

### *Meet Our Panelists*

[Shiri Ben-Arzi, PHMC, MCC](#)

[Chris Hanten, MSW, LCSW](#)

[Jody Hereford, MS, BSN, RN, NBC-HWC](#)

[Brian Krolczyk, Ph.D., NBC-HWC](#)

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## 10:35 - 10:40 a.m. CT | Break: 5 Minutes

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## 10:40 - 11:50 a.m. CT | Breakout Session Block A

### *A2: Beyond Strategies: Why ADHD Clients Struggle to Implement What They Know — and How Professionals Can Help*

Knowing what to do doesn't always translate into doing it, especially for clients with ADHD. Many know that habits and routines support their health and daily functioning, yet struggle with consistent follow-through. This engaging session explores how executive function affects behavior change and reveals the hidden barriers that often hinder implementation. Attendees will gain practical, research-informed, brain-aligned strategies they can use immediately to reduce overwhelm, increase engagement, and support sustainable outcomes. Walk away better equipped to help neurodivergent clients bridge the gap between knowing and doing and unlock greater success in their everyday lives.



Christine Kotik, PCC, NBC-HWC, is an executive function and health behavior expert specializing in ADHD. She helps professionals understand why capable clients struggle with consistency and teaches practical, strengths-based approaches that support sustainable behavior change.

A former educator and nationally recognized ADHD coach, Christine is known for translating brain science into immediately usable strategies that improve client outcomes. She partners with organizations, healthcare providers, and educational institutions to foster more effective, neurodiversity-informed approaches to care.

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### ***A3: Becoming a Wise Self-Healer***

In this workshop, we will view the Self as Patient, Self as Healer, becoming a detective for our own health challenges, the role and limitations of lifestyle change, and the need for a curious and open-hearted approach. We have so much inner wisdom and lived experience that can help us heal from chronic, ineffable conditions.

Professionals and lay people will learn about how to become wise self healer, working with doctors, health coaches, therapists, and our own sweet selves. I have studied for so long, experimented so much, and been a curious detective about the interface of so many internal systems with my own health. I have tangible successes that I am proud of.

As a health coach and lifelong student of functional medicine and holistic health, I often can meet doctors at their level of knowledge, and can extract key takeaways to help myself heal. I delight in sharing my accumulated knowledge.

Come join me on the journey! I will share hacks, resources, approaches and challenges! Our health journeys are our lives! Become a wise self healer! Help your patients become self healers!



Rhyena Halpern is a holistic health and wellness coach, a third act retirement coach, an end of life doula, and conscious dying educator, who works with people in the last act of their lives, optimizing health, crafting a design for their third act, developing end of life plans, and facilitating groups of people who are interested in normalizing conversations about death and approaching the mystery of death with delight and wonder.

She lives in Berkeley, worked as a documentary filmmaker and arts manager, and has an MFA from California Institute of the Arts. She is a JewBu (Jewish Buddhist), progressive activist, lifelong student in the healing arts, and a long time arts lover.

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***11:50 a.m. - 12:10 p.m. CT | Break: 20 Minutes***

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***12:10 - 1:20 p.m. CT | Breakout Session Block B***

***B1: Rhythm & Soothe for Pain: Nervous System Regulation as a Pathway to Chronic Pain Management***

Chronic pain is increasingly understood as a nervous system experience, not just a structural one. Rhythm & Soothe introduces a regulation-based approach to pain management that integrates gentle movement, breath, lifestyle rhythms, and meditation to support nervous system safety and reduce pain amplification. This session offers healthcare providers, coaches, and allied professionals practical, accessible tools to help clients manage chronic pain with greater ease, agency, and resilience while complementing medical and rehabilitative care.



Giselle Bodden is a National Board Certified Health & Wellness Coach and nutrition professional with a master's degree in Clinical Nutrition & Integrative Health. She has nearly a decade of experience working within digital mental health, employee assistance, and women's health programs, collaborating alongside therapists and clinical teams to support clients navigating anxiety, chronic stress, hormonal transitions, and complex health conditions. Drawing from both professional training and lived experience with chronic pain, anxiety, and inflammatory health conditions, she brings a grounded, empathetic perspective to her work. Her approach integrates lifestyle medicine, nutrition, and nervous system-informed coaching to support sustainable behavior change while complementing medical and mental health care.

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## ***B2: What are GLP-1s?***

GLP-1s are the newest trend in weight loss and wellness management. By the end of this session, you will be able to successfully reiterate what GLP-1s are, what is currently on and soon to be on the market, and considerations for providers with clients on GLP-1s.

Sara Krueger is a Nationally Board Certified Health and Wellness Coach with a Master of Public Health, bringing a distinctive blend of clinical expertise and behavioral health coaching to her work. She currently serves in a clinical role at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, where she is dedicated to advancing the health and well-being of the nation's veteran population.



A recognized subject matter expert, Sara has contributed to coaching panels across the VA, helping to shape best practices and elevate the standard of health coaching within one of the country's largest integrated healthcare systems. She currently serves as a Board Member of the Institute of Behavior Change Foundation, further demonstrating her commitment to advancing the science and practice of behavior change at a national level.

Sara places a particular emphasis on diabetic health education, empowering individuals with the knowledge and tools needed to manage and improve their metabolic health. Her work sits at the intersection of public health, clinical care, and evidence-based coaching — making her a compelling voice on topics ranging from health behavior change to wellness program design and veteran health equity.

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## ***B3: Lessons Through Laundry: How a Mom Found the Truth Behind the Fold and What Every Physician Needs to Know***

When patients appear “non-compliant,” the root cause may not be medical, it may be systemic. In *Lessons Through Laundry*, Community Health Worker and advocate Michelle Castile shares how housing failures, environmental hazards, Medicaid denials, and administrative errors shaped her family's health outcomes. Through powerful storytelling and interactive reflection, this session challenges healthcare professionals to reconsider assumptions about patient behavior and recognize the hidden systems impacting care. Participants will leave with practical strategies to strengthen advocacy, documentation, and trauma-informed practice.



Michelle Castile is a Community Health Worker, Certified Peer Specialist, and statewide disability advocate whose work bridges lived experience and systemic reform. After a cascade of failures across housing, environmental health, Medicaid, education, and disability services impacted her family, Michelle transformed personal crisis into public leadership.

She now serves in multiple statewide advisory and policy roles, presenting on the intersection of healthcare, social determinants, and system burnout. Through her signature presentation, Lessons Through Laundry, Michelle challenges physicians and helping professionals to recognize how systemic denials, administrative errors, and workforce burnout directly shape patient health outcomes. Her work centers on trauma-informed systems change, cross-sector accountability, and restoring trust between families and providers.

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**1:20 - 1:30 p.m. CT | Break: 10 Minutes**

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**1:30 - 2:40 p.m. CT | Breakout Session Block C**

***C1: Supporting Cancer Patients Through Treatment and Survivorship: Tools and Tips to Integrate Health and Wellbeing Coaching Through Integrative Oncology and Lifestyle Medicine***

Over the last decade, integrative oncology (IO) and lifestyle medicine (LM) have seen exponential growth combining evidence-based integrative therapies with conventional treatments to improve the well-being, quality of life, and life-span cancer patients across the care continuum. Integrating Health and Wellness Coaching into oncology is proving essential for patient empowerment and survivorship. This session offers a look into the specialized field of HWC in Oncology, exploring how it bridges the gap between clinical treatment and daily lifestyle management. Frameworks, tools, and resources supported by clinical outcomes will be shared.



Tracy Yates is one of four founders and Director of Global Health Coaching, an organization designed to integrate health and wellbeing coaching into oncology and primary care practices to improve provider impact and patient outcomes.

She is also a HWC for the NIH "Tools to be Fit" cancer survivorship study at UCSF Department of Epidemiology and Dana Farber Cancer Institute. She recently co-authored the paper "Clinical Practice Integration of Meaning, Purpose, and Spirituality in Lifestyle Medicine" recently published in the American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine. Her dedication to oncology and survivorship is deeply personal, rooted in the profound experience of losing both her husband and her father to cancer.



Julie Bach is the Founder and Executive Director of Wellness for Cancer, a global charity supporting individuals across the cancer continuum. She serves as the founding Chair of the Society for Integrative Oncology Health Coaching Special Interest Group (SIG), advancing the field of health coaching in oncology.

Through the SIG, Julie is a co-author of the first landmark paper defining the role of health coaches in oncology, as well as a published commentary in the *Journal of Integrative and Complementary Medicine*.

Bach developed the Cancer Health & Wellness Coaching continuing education training through more than a decade of work alongside physicians and supportive care practitioners and has delivered the program in five countries. She served as Program Architect for the Prescribing Wellness health coaching program with Hope & Beauty MD / Apricity Oncology.

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## ***C2: Supporting Veterans and First Responders Navigating the VA Healthcare System: Identity, Moral Injury, and System Load***

Veterans and first responders often engage with the VA healthcare system while carrying identities shaped by duty, endurance, and responsibility for others. Approximately 25% of police officers, 19% of firefighters, and 10% of EMTs are military veterans, placing a significant portion of the first responder workforce at the intersection of veteran and civilian service. These dual identities influence not only how individuals experience symptoms, but also where and how they choose to seek care.

For many veteran first responders, the VA healthcare system represents a setting where service history is understood, occupational exposure is normalized, and identity does not require explanation. In contrast, seeking care within civilian medical systems can carry concerns about visibility, misunderstanding, or being recognized as an active first responder by community members, colleagues, or patients—factors that may heighten stigma, threaten perceived credibility, or complicate professional boundaries. As a result, some veteran first responders preferentially utilize VA services even when civilian options are available.

This session is designed for therapists, social workers, and health coaches who support veterans and first responders navigating the VA healthcare system or similarly complex care environments. The focus is practical and systems-aware: understanding how dual service identities and moral injury shape responses to VA care processes, why standard engagement approaches often fall short, and how system complexity undermines continuity of care.

Participants will examine common clinical patterns—missed appointments, emotional withdrawal, resistance, and early dropout—not as noncompliance, but as predictable responses to identity conflict, system strain, and cumulative service exposure. The session provides field-tested strategies to improve communication, support autonomy, and reduce friction when assisting clients with VA services, referrals, and care coordination, while maintaining clear clinical boundaries and expectations. The goal is to strengthen trust, sustain engagement, and improve care continuity within the VA healthcare system.

Joshua Deisinger is a U.S. Army veteran, licensed mental health professional, and doctoral candidate in Organizational Leadership whose work focuses on supporting veterans, first responders, and high-stress professionals navigating complex health and psychological challenges.



Drawing on over a decade of military service, clinical practice, and leadership consulting, his approach integrates trauma-informed care, moral injury frameworks, and identity-aware engagement strategies to improve trust, retention, and outcomes across systems of care.

Joshua is the founder of High Ground Leadership and Consulting Services LLC, where he partners with organizations to strengthen psychological resilience, enhance care coordination, and develop leaders capable of sustaining wellness in demanding environments.

His work bridges lived experience, evidence-based practice, and applied leadership to equip helping professionals with practical tools they can immediately use in clinical and coaching settings.

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### ***C3: Coaching Families as Health Systems: A Relational Approach to Shared Behavior Change***

Discover how coaching families as interconnected systems can transform health outcomes. In this interactive session, you'll explore practical strategies to engage families in shared goal-setting, strengthen communication, and turn everyday routines into opportunities for lasting health change. Learn to apply relational, systems-oriented approaches across a wide range of health challenges—from mental health and sleep to chronic conditions and aging—so that meaningful change happens not in isolation, but together.

Jennifer Lundman, MSW, LCSW, DSW Candidate, NBC-HWC, is the Founder and CEO of the Institute for Behavior Change (IBC). Her scholarship and leadership focus on advancing human-centered approaches to behavior change, health equity, and systems innovation.



Jennifer's work bridges the fields of clinical practice, health coaching, and organizational development to strengthen the integration of evidence-based behavior change within healthcare and community settings.

Guided by principles of collaboration and social justice, she works to dismantle systemic barriers, promote inclusion, and cultivate compassionate care environments where individuals and professionals alike can thrive.

Through IBC, Jennifer is leading initiatives that elevate professional standards, foster interprofessional partnerships, and drive transformative change toward equitable and human-centered models of care.

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***2:40 - 2:50 p.m. CT | Break: 10 Minutes***

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## **1:30 - 2:40 p.m. CT | Breakout Session Block C**

### ***D1: Supporting Neurodivergence Through a Biopsychosocial Lens: The Impact of Polypharmacy on Sleep, Mental Health and Chronic Illness***

Join us for an insightful session that explores the intersections of neurodivergence, polypharmacy, and health outcomes through a biopsychosocial framework. Discover the unique challenges faced by neurodivergent individuals, particularly regarding the complexities of medication management. We will delve into how polypharmacy affects sleep quality, mental health, and the management of chronic conditions. Participants will learn about best practices for safe prescribing, the importance of non-pharmacological interventions, and strategies for providing holistic, patient-centered care. This session is perfect for healthcare professionals, caregivers, educators, and advocates aimed at enhancing well-being and support for neurodivergent populations. Join us to empower and improve health outcomes in this vital area!

Sharon Cyrus-Savary is a licensed mental health professional with years of experience in developing and managing mental health programs. Preference for biopsychosocial approach that includes health equity and ensuring that people with neurodiversity receive the highest quality trauma-informed, evidence-based mental health, medical care, care coordination to improve the quality of their lives.

Sharon is a past trustee and the scholarship chair of The American Mental Health Counselors Association Foundation working to improve the mental health of Americans through training, public education about mental health, mental health research, access to mental health services, and promoting high standards for mental health practitioners.

She has a B.S. from Empire State College and MSED from Fordham University. She is completing her PhD in Clinical Psychology at Walden University.

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### ***D2: Breaking Down Shame and Stigma: Building Bridges for Better Care Across Health Professions***

Shame and stigma aren't just "addiction issues"—they're everywhere in healthcare. For people with substance use disorders, these barriers don't stop at the clinic door; they ripple out into every provider encounter, from primary care to mental health, pain management, and beyond. The result? Clients disengage, clinicians burn out, and opportunities for healing get lost in translation.

In this practical, honest session, Belle Morey shares what it's like to navigate the healthcare system as both a substance use counselor and a person in long-term recovery. Drawing on lived experience and clinical expertise, she explores how shame and stigma quietly shape the stories clients tell (and don't tell), the way professionals communicate, and the systems we all work within.

Participants will leave with a better understanding of how stigma operates across disciplines—and with concrete tools for challenging it, both one-on-one and at the systems level. Whether you work in addiction, primary care, mental health, chronic illness, or anywhere people show up with complicated stories, this session will help you become a better, braver ally.



Belinda "Belle" Morey is a Clinical Substance Abuse Counselor with 10 years sober from methamphetamine. She holds a Bachelor's in Addiction Counseling and is pursuing a Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Belle works as an outpatient counselor, Recovery Coach, and serves on advisory boards including cleancircle.io and Vital Voyage.

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### ***D3: Evidence-Based Information Strategies for Supporting Clients with Health Conditions***

In an era of digital misinformation and viral wellness trends, health and wellness coaches must navigate an overwhelming and often conflicting landscape of health information. To responsibly support clients within the scope of practice, coaches should rely heavily on the most up-to-date and authoritative sources of health information available.

This session teaches participants how to access high-quality, peer-reviewed information from trusted databases and websites, and highlights the role of health literacy in how clients find, evaluate, and use health information. Coaches will learn how to assess clients' health literacy levels and adapt communication strategies accordingly.

The toolkit shared in this session includes ethical guidelines for sharing information within the scope of coaching practice, a detailed overview of authoritative databases and trusted information sources such as PubMed, MedlinePlus, and Google Scholar, practical tools for assessing clients' health literacy, and strategies for adjusting coaching approaches to better meet clients' comprehension and informational needs.



Amber Burtis is a Professor and Health Sciences Librarian at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, where she specializes in connecting library users with high-quality, evidence-based medical information.

With a passion for health literacy, her goal is to empower coaches with the tools to find, evaluate and share credible health information in an era of digital misinformation, ensuring clients receive the support they need for complex health challenges.