

Speaker Bios

Key Note- Larry Ruhl

Larry Ruhl is a visual artist and author of *Breaking the Ruhl*, a memoir about recovering from childhood sexual abuse and complex trauma. He has spoken at colleges and retreats to increase awareness of sexual abuse. He is a member of the RAINN Speakers Bureau. Today he shares his story publicly to help others shed the shame and stigma associated with sexual abuse and addiction. He graduated from the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), with a degree in Display & Exhibit Design.

AA. and T.A

AA is a Trauma-Informed Psychologist and Certified EMDR therapist as well as a dissociative survivor of trauma. She is the creator of Alterchology™ a consultation service for individuals with complex trauma and dissociation as well as for the therapists who treat these concerns. She is the owner of a private practice offering individual, couple and family therapy as well as a facilitator of healing trauma workshops for women. On her own path to healing she engaged in an integrative and multimodal approach to treatment which consisted of both traditional psychotherapy methods (e.g. CBT, EMDR, & EFT,) and alternative healing methods such as attending four different healing from trauma week long experiential intensives, Yoga Therapy, Breath Work, Energy Healing, Art, Music, and Dance Movement therapies, these methods allowed her parts to develop an internal system of cooperation and communication and allowed her to process her story and gave her parts the opportunity to work through the trauma. She spoke last year at the Healing Together conference and presented on Learning to Love Yourself on the creative and artistic path to parts integration. This year she is here with her husband T.A. to speak about how they together have learned how to Manage Life and Boundaries in Partnership. She attributes much of her healing to the scared relationship she has with her husband. They have a unique story as he is considered to be a man with high functioning Aspergers and his innate ability to gather data helped her learn more about her parts. They are here for both survivors and supporters to offer hope and a unique perspective on working together to heal.

Vivian Abraham

Vivian Abraham is an attorney and community organizer from Boston, Massachusetts. Having spent most of their life concealing DID following childhood abuse, they have now come to a better understanding of their own mind and body. They are trans gender fluid and use all pronouns.

Alix Amar, LCSW

Alix Amar, LCSW has been a psychotherapist in private practice for over 30 years. She specializes in working with people who have a history of early childhood trauma and DID. In addition to talk therapy, she also incorporates numerous other modalities into her work including expressive arts, Gestalt, relaxation training, EMDR, and somatic therapy. She is a trained SoulCollage® Facilitator and co-leads weekly Creative Art Journaling classes for people with Dissociative Disorders. She is a member of the AIM board and attended all the conferences except the first one. At the conference she may be better known as the "Labyrinth Lady" since she brings one to our conference each year for the grounding room.

Bonnie Reed Armstrong

Bonnie Armstrong is an active life coach, author, speaker, mental health advocate, mom, grandmother, and aspiring cultural anthropologist. She discovered her dissociative disorder, her strong internal community, and the secrets of her childhood after a health crisis in her 50s. In 2012 she left her long career in child welfare, family strengthening and youth development to focus on healing, learning, and advocacy, a journey that has included the study of several ancient wisdom traditions as well as new science about the neurobiology of trauma. Bonnie holds a master's degree in Human Development from Pacific Oaks College. She and her internal community love walking along the beach, mountain sunsets and long train rides.

Rev. Lyn Barrett

Rev. Lyn Barrett was diagnosed with multiple personality disorder in 1992 and integrated ten years later. She currently facilitates two bi-weekly writers workshops for Dissociative Writers, hosts two websites (www.lynbarrett.com and www.dissociativewriters.com), and writes a weekly blog and newsletter. Her memoir, *Crazy: Reclaiming Life from the Shadow of Traumatic Memory* is published by Koehler Books. She is a retired teacher, school principal, and pastor.

Dr. Tarra Bates-Duford

Dr. Bates-Duford has engaged in extensive work and research on familial relationships, family trauma, and dysfunctions. Her work includes investigating allegations of abuse, competency concerns, developing profiles, etc. As a survivor of long-term sexual abuse she understand from both a clinical as well as personal standpoint the implications of abuse. She is known for her work with traumatic experience, dissociative d/o's, and symptom re-emergence. With nearly 20 years in the field of behavioral sciences, she has been instrumental in her work with stabilizing families, helping individuals and families navigate the challenges of mental illness, as well as victims of abuse/ trauma, reprocess the memory of the trauma in a manners that no longer paralyzes nor interferes with daily functioning. She is an accomplished author of children's books covering topics such as, conduct disorder, ADHD, parenting a child with special needs, and trauma

Amy Beckler, LCSW

Amy Beckler is a Florida native, currently residing in Palm Beach County. She is an LCSW who owns her own private practice and merges Eastern and Western philosophies to aid in holistic wellness. Amy teaches yoga, meditation, mindfulness and ecstatic dance in treatment centers and in her community, along with seeing clients individually. She is passionate about helping women and adolescents heal from trauma, end cycles of self-sabotage, establish and maintain boundaries, learn coping strategies to manage anxiety and depression, and ultimately support her clients to feel at ease in mind, body and soul.

Marilyn Bennett, LMHC

Marilyn Bennett, LMHC is a licensed mental health counselor in private practice in Cocoa, FL. She has extensive, specialized training for working with complex trauma and dissociative disorders through the International Society for Trauma and Dissociation, the EMDR International Association, and the Florida Society for Clinical Hypnosis.

Andrea Betting LCSW

Andrea Betting is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in private practice. A native of Great Britain, she has lived and worked in Brevard County for the last 20 years. Andrea who describes herself as a lifelong learner, is a Certified Clinical Trauma Treatment Professional, and Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist with 500 hours of hypnotherapy training. She is always striving to add additional tools to her tool box, to better serve her clients. She incorporates the latest 21st Century brain-based, mind body research in her treatment plans. In her practice, she is passionate about her work, providing a safe space and atmosphere of acceptance for her clients.

Layla Brack

It was very clear to me that when I started my training as a psychologist, I wanted to specialize in trauma. It's a topic that's hardly been taught in University's or other trainings. That's why I started my practice in supervision of Doris D'Hooghe, to learn different forms of therapy and new perspectives of existing disorders. I work with people with severe trauma and dissociative disorders and I'm always trying to learn more about them, their experiences, the impact of experiences and the treatment. I believe these disorders are very complex and need a 'multiperspective' approach, including e.g. developmental theories, neurobiology and attachment theories. I hope to connect with other therapist in this field to broaden our knowledge and improve the quality of our healthcare. That's why I wish to share my observations and experience.

Jim Bunkelman

Jim Bunkelman has broadly used his Physics and Mathematics degrees (UCSB and Berkeley): to teach junior high school, to produce commercials, and to create multi-image shows and videos for various companies in a variety of international settings. He was retired by the Covid pandemic, but his love of learning keeps him actively working on creative projects at his home in Hollywood. Jim's wife of 15 years was plural. After her passing nine years ago, he made it his goal to educate the public about DID, and to support individuals in the community. He has presented several years at Healing Together, as well as at the Plural Positivity World Conference.

Lizabeth Casada

Lizabeth Casada is a Mental Health Advocate, Inspirational speaker, writer and web developer. She is also Certified Professional Coach and Master Prosperity teacher. She was diagnosed with DID in 2009 and finished her trauma therapy in 2011. Because she could find few groups that were focusing on healing, she created A Life After Trauma, an online trauma group helping those on their own healing journey to find help, discover hope and move forward in creating a new life after trauma. She also hosts a weekly Warrior Wisdom Work call and Book Club.

Chenille Cavazos

Chenille Cavazos is currently an at-home mother and does home improvement repairs with her husband Ezequiel. In 2013, she and her children discovered that her husband had DID and that they were about to go on an amazing new journey. They have been married for 20 years with four amazing kids who are very supportive of their dad. Seeing the need for a supportive network, in 2016 Chenille created and continues to manage a growing Facebook group for significant others of those with DID.

Madison Clell

The inner child movement seemed like a load of hokey to Madison Clell, so her ultimate irony was being diagnosed with dissociative identity disorder in 1992, and now even more ironically standing here in public talking about it. However, her friends and loved ones laughed in her face when she insisted she didn't have D.I.D, so after 8 years of incessant therapy she is integrated and wants to tell you all about it. She created autobiographical Cuckoo comics in 1996, followed by a CUCKOO graphic novel, and in 2009 CUCKOO the play was premiered in San Francisco to sold out audiences. More information on Madison's false bravado and the Cuckoo empire can be found at www.madisonclell.com

The Phoenix Collective

The Phoenix Collective (They/them) recently graduated with their Masters of Social Work from the University of Denver's Graduate School of Social Work. During their graduate career, they interned as a research assistant for the Institute for Human-Animal Connection, IHAC, where they conducted research for the Pets for Life as One Health study which is measuring the impact of an intensive animal welfare intervention on environmental and public health within the One Health framework. Their internship this year was with the liver transplant team at Porter Adventist Hospital where they utilized therapeutic modalities such as Motivational Interviewing and solution focused brief therapy to help patients engage in substance use treatment. They also conducted psychosocial transplant evaluations for patients on the pathway towards liver transplant. Currently, they work as a program therapist for Eating Recovery Center's mood and anxiety program and are therapists in training. They have an affinity for working with survivors of complex trauma and dissociative disorders, such as DID and OSDD, and in the future, plan to, incorporate canine assisted interventions into their practice as a licensed clinical social worker in order to enhance their therapeutic techniques for their clients within the therapy space.

Cathy Collyer, OTR, LMT, CAPS

Cathy Collyer, OTR, LMT, is an occupational therapist in private practice in the NY metro area. She is the author of "Staying In The Room: Managing Medical and Dental Care When You Have DID". She has treated adults and children in a variety of settings, including hospitals and outpatient clinics. Cathy is also a licensed massage therapist. She has written and lectured on DID, sensory processing treatment, massage, and pediatric behavioral issues.

Vivian Conan

Vivian Conan is a writer and librarian who lives in Manhattan. Her work has appeared in The New York Times, New York magazine, Lilith, Narratively, and Ducts.org. She brings a nontraditional perspective to the discussion of DID in that her dissociation was caused by attachment trauma, not sexual abuse. Vivian was sent to her first therapist in 1958, when she was 16, because she talked to faces in her bedroom mirror. During several hospitalizations in her twenties, she was labeled schizophrenic. In 1988, at 46, she discovered she had what was then called multiple personality disorder. It would be another ten years before she found a therapist who understood that her dissociative identity disorder, as it was now called, was complicated by an attachment disorder. She has written a book documenting her journey from birth to healing at age 65—Losing the Atmosphere, A Memoir: A Baffling Disorder, a Search for Help, and the Therapist Who Understood—and has spoken about her experiences to NAMI and other groups. Vivian sings with the Peace of Heart Choir, which performs free for communities in need, and has mentored teenage writers as a volunteer with Girls Write Now. Her website is VivianConan.com

Peyton Cram M.S.Ed., LPCC, LCDC III, REAT

Peyton enjoys the exploration of stories and how it is we tell our own stories. Whether it be through verbal expression, written word, paint, collage, music, etc, stories are deeply ingrained in our identities. The way in which we tell our stories can have a profound impact on our growth and healing. Peyton is trained in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), Expressive Art Therapy, Dancing Mindfulness, Reiki level 2, and is engaged in a 300-hour Mindbody Therapy certification course. Peyton specializes in dual diagnosis (substance abuse and mental health) and trauma.

Doris D'Hooghe

As a psychotherapist, I am trained in Gestalt therapy, Group Therapy, Transpersonal Psychology, and my training in child therapy was based on the integrative psychology. Later, I became intrigued by trauma and its effects and took trainings in psychotraumatology. I became specialized in early childhood trauma in an attachment relationship. Up till today, I have been working in my own private practice since 1990, where I work with children, adolescents, adults, parents, and elderly. My work is based on attachment and trauma theories, therapy and a blend of integrative psychotherapy and neuroscience. In my work, I carry a strong belief in the uniqueness and healing capabilities of my client, and focus on the therapeutic relationship, as I find it an important tool within the work I do. I am also the founder of Traumacenter Belgium, a unique project in Belgium that mainly focuses on working with traumatized clients, on short term or in the long run, to help them recover and reestablish their daily lives. ([www.traumacentrum .be](http://www.traumacentrum.be))

Gala

Gala is a survivor, wife, mother, and certified peer support specialist.

Ashleigh Grooms LMHC

Ashleigh is the owner of Healing Experiences, LLC a psychotherapy practice in Melbourne, FL. Ashleigh is a licensed mental health counselor specializing in trauma and anxiety disorders, and uses modalities such as mindfulness to create a holistic therapy experience. Ashleigh is a graduate of the Yoga Garden's 200 hour Yoga Teacher Training and integrates yoga practice and philosophy into therapy to decrease the effects of prolonged stress and exposure to traumatic events. Ashleigh offers local workshops focusing on reducing stress and creating a more empowered life.

Theresa Haney

Theresa Haney is a writer and Licensed Creative Arts Therapist in private practice in Hudson Valley, New York. She began her career working in psychiatric inpatient and day treatment programs in the South Bronx NY, serving children, adolescents and adults. In 2004 she developed Damsel Center for Autism Spectrum disorders where she created the social skills program, Amazing Kids Amazing Families, integrating the creative arts therapies. She became certified in RDI (Relationship Development Intervention), a parent coaching program for families with autism. In 2016 she shifted her focus to work with women one on one and in groups when a client's story triggered her buried dissociative system. She realized more personal work was needed and closed her practice to seek help. She spent the next several years in therapy using CRM (Comprehensive Resource Model) to treat and map her dissociative system. She became trained in CRM with founder, Lisa Schwarz and worked to reopen her practice in the Spring of 2021 to serve others with CPTSD and DID.

Lynne H. Harris, LMHC-OS

Lynne Harris is a licensed mental health therapist, qualified supervisor, and visual artist currently living and working in Southeast Georgia/Northeast Florida. Lynne is the owner of a private psychotherapy practice in which she provides direct clinical treatment, clinical supervision and consultation services. She periodically serves as a subject matter expert in the treatment of trauma, and has been an invited trainer and presenter on this topic. Lynne loves to share her knowledge as a healing professional honed from 20+ years in the mental health field, and enjoys presenting, speaking and writing in order to build awareness and promote growth in others.

Cynthia Herzog LCSW, CAP, ICADC, 500 RYT

Ms. Herzog, has been in private practice for twenty five years specializing in addictions, trauma and chronic pain treatment. She has practiced Yoga for fourteen years and is a 500 hour yoga educator. For the last seven years she has blended her love of yoga with her trauma practice. She offers seminars to both yoga studios and corporations on a variety of subjects including yoga as therapy.

Venn Khadyr

Venn Khadyr is a mental health advocate, artist, and writer living with DID. Venn discovered their system in 2014, and instinctively turned to art and storytelling as a way to make sense of things. Through a blend of art, spirituality, and therapy, their system has found a path towards self-empowerment and healthy multiplicity.

Lindsay Kincaide LMHC

Lindsay Kincaide (she/her) is a licensed mental health therapist practicing in Winter Park, FL. She is a proud member of the LGBTQ+ community and herself lives with a dissociative disorder. Lindsay is an advocate for trauma survivors and enhanced clinical understanding of the impacts of developmental trauma.

Robin Lickel

Robin is a psychotherapist in America's Dairyland, who has had the privilege to serve clients with DID for almost 10 years, including facilitating a support group.

Jamie Marich, Ph.D., LPCC-S, LICDC-CS, REAT, RYT-200, RMT

Jamie+ Marich (she/they) travels internationally speaking on topics related to EMDR therapy, trauma, addiction, expressive arts and mindfulness while maintaining a private practice and online education operations, the Institute for Creative Mindfulness, in her home base of Warren, OH. She is the developer of the Dancing Mindfulness approach to expressive arts therapy, and the developer of Yoga for Clinicians. Jamie is the author of numerous books, including the popular EMDR Made Simple, Trauma Made Simple, and EMDR Therapy and Mindfulness for Trauma Focused Care (written in collaboration with Dr. Stephen Dansiger). She is also the author of the increasingly popular guide for expressive arts, Process Not Perfection: Expressive Arts Solutions for Trauma Recovery (2019). North Atlantic Books published a revised and expanded edition of Trauma and the 12 Steps in the Summer of 2020, and they are also publishing The Healing Power of Jiu-Jitsu: A Guide to Transforming Trauma and Facilitating Recovery and Dissociation Made Simple (both due out in 2022). Jamie is a woman living unapologetically with a Dissociative Disorder, and this forms the basis of her award-winning passion for advocacy in the mental health field. For more information on how to connect with her work, go to: www.jamiemarich.com

Melissa Parker

Melissa Parker (She/They) is a survivor of complex trauma and psychiatric abuse who lives with DID. She is a psychotherapist at Center Psychotherapy, a group mental health practice in Arlington Massachusetts, where she specializes in working with survivors of trauma. Melissa's work and perspectives are rooted in Transpersonal Theory, Neuroscience, Developmental Psychology, and the Antipsychiatry Movement. Melissa seeks to work from a place of cultural humility and strives to improve upon her ability to be a worthy ally to BIPOC and fellow members of the LGBTQ+ community. Melissa's professional interests include working with individuals who live with dissociation, providing therapy and consultation to mental health professionals who have lived experience, and working towards eradicating ableism and dissociation phobia among therapists. Melissa is also a founding member and board president of Healing Options for Posttraumatic Experiences, an emergent non profit that will provide MDMA assisted psychotherapy to survivors, regardless of the individual's ability to pay.

Dr. Anna Rosenhauer

Dr. Anna Rosenhauer received her PhD in neuroscience from Georgia State University studying the effects of social stress experienced during development. Currently she is a post-doctoral fellow in the Affective Neuroscience Laboratory at Kennesaw State University under the direction of Dr. Ebony Glover. She broadly seeks to understand the biological basis of fear and anxiety and their implications for mental health and is investigating the interplay of stress responses, hormones, and PTSD. Anna is particularly interested in how chronic stress shapes the brain during development and is passionate about explaining scientific research in an easy to understand and applicable format for both survivors and clinicians. In her free time, you can find her practicing yoga, drinking coffee, writing in her journal, or playing with her dog.

Colin A. Ross, M.D

Colin A. Ross, M.D. is a Past President of the ISSTD and has Trauma Programs at UBH Hospital in Denton, TX (adult and teen programs) and a PHP in Cedar Park, TX. He is the author of 250 papers and 35 books, many of them dealing with trauma and dissociation.

Gabriell Sacks PhD

Gabriell has a background in Special Education and has worked as a music teacher, an elementary school teacher, and a behavior specialist consultant. It took 22 years in the mental health system, multiple therapists, and close to 2 dozen hospitalizations before she received an accurate diagnosis of DID. Now, with her current therapist of 5 years, she is finally making progress in her healing, moving forward, and reclaiming her life.

Miriam Showalter

Miriam currently provides remote tutoring services, after 19 years of classroom instruction specializing in autism and mathematics. In 2010, she and her husband discovered they had DID -- and a lot more to learn about each other! They have been married 42 delightful years and they have three grown sons and one very talkative cat.

Kimberley Snow, MA, LMHC, LMFT

Kim Snow, M.A., LMFT, LMHC, is a Marriage and Family Therapist and Art Therapist living in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida who worked with trauma victims for 40 years. A graduate of Georgetown University (B.S. and B.A.) and George Washington University (M.A.), she trained in Washington D.C. during the early development of DID treatment and incorporated art therapy and hypnotherapy into her treatment with children and adults. She is currently retired from her private practice but continues to assist in National Disasters with the Red Cross Disaster Team. This coming year she will begin to offer art retreats in the beautiful Santa Rosa Beach area of Florida.

Erin Vaughn

Erin Vaughn is a Therapeutic arts facilitator/SoulCollage® Facilitator. Erin teaches Zoom Creative Art journaling classes to people with Dissociative disorders and also runs Zoom SoulCollage classes. Erin and Alix Amar have a website called SoulCreations where they offer online and in person classes in Soulcollage, Art Journaling, mixed media, and other Art forms. She is married to a wonderful man and a mother to 3 grown children. Erin is also a special needs preschool teacher. When Erin has free time you can find her reading, hiking, bike riding or taking care of the many animals that find her way to Erin's heart. She also likes to spend time with her family in the many outings they do together.

Colleen Walsh, M.Ed., LPC, CPRP

Colleen Walsh (she/her) is a licensed professional counselor who works with adolescents and adults in her private practice in Marietta, GA. Colleen is also a member of a poly-fragmented system. This combination of her lived experience and her professional training and work as a therapist allows her to offer a unique perspective to both clients and other mental health professionals. Colleen specializes in working with LGBT+ clients, college students and people in trauma recovery. Colleen is a trauma-informed clinician who incorporates EMDR, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), psychodynamic principles and person-centered therapy into her work with clients. Regardless of the theory or approach utilized, Colleen believes that the relationship between herself and the people she works with is the most important part of therapy

Wendy Whittington, LMHC

Wendy Whittington, LMHC works in private practice in Titusville, Florida seeing adults with a variety of mental health diagnoses with a focus on trauma and Dissociative Disorders. Ms Whittington utilizes EMDR, Internal Family Systems, and Cognitive Behavior Therapy primarily with her clients. She has had training in trauma and dissociative disorders through EMDRIA and ISSTD

Dr Darlene Williams PhD

Dr Darlene Williams is a licensed clinical psychologist, with 35 years of experience counseling others. She specializes in trauma, grief, & loss, & couples' issues. Utilizing a transpersonal approach, Dr Williams incorporates holistic methods including ecotherapy & equine-assisted psychotherapy in her treatment planning. She is program director & cofounder of Equusolutions, inc, a florida 501 (c) (3) that utilizes rescue horses to treat mental health conditions, esp trauma related symptomology. Sunsong Retreats, supplementary to equusolutions, offers sustainability workshops and retreats for renewal & resilience of trauma therapists, agencies, & family members of survivors. Dr Williams has been featured in various media formats, and is published in journal articles, as well as textbooks, and was "Woman of Action entrepreneur" by Good Living magazine in 2015.