



2021 *Virtual* Spring Continuing Education Conference for Social Workers

Thursday, Friday & Saturday, May 13, 14 & 15, 2021

** Asterisks indicate sessions that include recorded content previously presented in September 2020.
The speakers are anticipated to appear live to provide updated information and/or to respond to questions from participants.*

THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2021

9:00 - 10:00am: Welcome & Opening Presentation

10:30am - 12:00pm One & One-Half Hour 'A' Sessions

A 1* How to Survive & Thrive as a Helper (ETH)

Chatman Neely, MSW, Innkeeper and former Clinical Social Worker and Social Work Educator, Wellsburg, WV.

Being a human service provider will be stressful from time to time, even most of the time. The best way to prevent burnout is to prepare for the possibility and explore ways to cultivate slowness, and nurture vision, solitude, physical activity, and simplicity. The mantra for this workshop is Stress is inevitable, but suffering can be optional!

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A 2 COVID-19 Impact on Mental Health of Students and Others

Charity Farley, BSW Candidate, John Siegal, MSW Candidate, both NASW WV Student Interns from West Virginia University School of Social Work, Morgantown, WV.

This session will discuss how the pandemic has affected our mental health, in both the short- and long-term, with a special focus on higher education students and new practitioners. Research data we have collected from our peers will be utilized to give insights on how people's everyday lives have changed. We will also discuss how the pandemic has affected people with preexisting mental conditions, and how some people have developed new mental health disorders such as anxiety or depression. Along with survey data from our peers, we will reference data from the CDC, Harvard Health, and other trusted organizations.

A 3 Communicating Without Arguing

Rick Wilson, MA, Director, West Virginia Economic Justice Project, American Friends Service Committee, Barboursville, WV.

These days, it seems we are increasingly in discourse with people who have different values and viewpoints from our own and/or each other. Mr. Wilson suggests how to relate with others in ways that recognize and honor the underlying beliefs of all parties. Using historical perspectives, new concepts, and his extensive experience, he offers an opportunity to avoid polarizing conversations and begin the process of healing interpersonal relationships, and our country.

A 4 Keep Going: Suicide Prevention & Intervention During a Pandemic

Barri Faucett, MA, Director, Prevent Suicide West Virginia, Charleston, WV and Michelle Toman, Founder, Brother Up.

Suicide is a complex, multidimensional event warranting comprehensive, integrative, multidiscipline prevention and intervention efforts. Suicidal emergencies have commonalities across a wide array of systems of care. This session will provide for an introduction to best practices in suicide care, as well as how to adjust best practices of prevention and intervention during a pandemic. Specific practices included are: screening; assessing; risk formulation; safety planning; and follow-up services for individuals with suicidal risk.

A 5 Grief in the Time of COVID

Debra K. Beatty, MSW, LICSW (Emeritus), Clinical Social Worker (Retired), Charleston, WV.

The losses suffered during this time of pandemic have been myriad and complex: the loss of usual activities, loss of connection, loss of certainty, loss of faith in leadership, loss of life, and more. Many losses have resulted in a traumatic response, which for some has become a chronic condition. Grief is omnipresent response, experienced in a variety of manners, often without the ability to recognize or to resolve. This workshop will explore the wide variety and depth of the losses most frequently experienced and the effect on individuals and families. Emphasis will be placed on ways to ease the pain that accompanies loss and to develop responses that will help us cope with our continuing uncertainty and the grief we experience.

1:00 - 3:00pm Two-Hour 'B' Sessions

(Note: Sessions B 3 & B 4 Continue 3:30-4:30pm)

B 1 Women, Hull House & WV

Kim White, EdD, MSW, LCSW, Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist, Hershel "Woody" Williams VA Medical Center, Huntington, WV.
This presentation will highlight the women of Hull-House--their personalities, their accomplishments, and their struggle for access to the public arena and the resultant successes of the community-based social reform model. A comparative examination of the women, their leadership, and their wisdom applied within the context of social work practice in West Virginia will reveal the applicability of their work to social reform in WV.

B 2 Racism & Social Justice: How to Find Truth & Support Positive Change By Bridging Differences (VET)(ETH)

Chuck Weinberg, MSW, LICSW, Local Recovery Coordinator, Hershel "Woody" Williams VA Medical Center, Huntington & Gregory Clarke Townsend, MD, Associate Dean for Diversity, University of Virginia School of Medicine, Charlottesville, VA. (VET)(ETH)
Social workers' ethical commitment to social justice, and to reduce and eliminate racism, must remain strong. In this session we will explore how people form attitudes, decide what is true, and consider the types of interventions that are more -or less- likely to facilitate positive change. Information about ongoing VA efforts towards suicide prevention and virtual access to care will be presented. Explores issues of truth, change, and attitudes, and biases we are all susceptible to. Understand the differences between prejudice, discrimination, and racism. Hear expert opinion and testimony about experiences of racism, including microaggressions, implicit and explicit racism, and health disparities. Discuss ways to communicate that are more likely to bridge differences and lead to meaningful exchanges with people with whom we may disagree.

B 3 (C) LPC Ethics (LPC Ethics)

(Continues as Session C 3, 3:30-4:30pm)

Ravi Isaiah, DMin, Director of Chaplaincy, Charleston Area Medical Center, Charleston, WV.

Using the 2014 Code of Ethics standards by American Counseling Association guidelines, cases will be discussed. This will include how to identify which standard was in question or violated. Using the chart provided by ACA, the presenter will walk through the steps found on the website in resolving ethical dilemma.

B 4 (C) Solution Focused Therapy: Re-Solving Problems Through Exceptions Note: Continues as C 4, 3:30-4:30pm

Neal Newfield, PhD, MSW, Associate Professor (Retired), West Virginia University School of Social Work, Morgantown, WV.
Solution Focused Therapy has been described as the model that heralds "the death of resistance" among clients. SFT will be unpacked in this introductory workshop. Participants will learn how nothing always happens, nothing always works and how this can work as a tool for change. Assessing clients as visitors, complaints, or customers, along with goal setting, and how to properly address goals that dampens resistance will be addressed along with what is the role of the social worker, if not that of a problem solver? Power Points, demonstration interviews, videos, and brief practice periods will be utilized.

3:30 - 4:30pm One-Hour 'C' Sessions

C 1 Federal/State Health Policy Update

Jessie Ice, PhD, MSW, Executive Director and Kat Stoll, JD, Health Policy Consultant, West Virginians for Affordable Health Care, Charleston, WV.

Provides highlights of 2021 federal and state health policy initiatives that impact you and your clients. At the federal level, we have shout a big "Hurrah" for the American Rescue Plan's extended health provisions. To score more health policy victories we need a game plan that will move the ball on a highly partisan playing field. At the state level, we will share some cheers (and a few boos and hisses). Although our statehouse is refereed by a super-majority of one party, there are bipartisan champions for some great bills that point to an exciting 2022 state legislative session!

C 2 Foster Care MCO Update

Tony Richards, MPH, Child Welfare Program Manager, Bureau for Medical Services, WV Department of Health and Human Resources and Kathy F. Szafran, MA, LPC, Executive Director, Mountain Health Promise, Aetna Better Health of West Virginia, Charleston, WV.
"West Virginia is in the midst of a child welfare crisis, and DHHR believes the utilization of an MCO to help provide coordinated care to this vulnerable population will assist us in addressing this issue," said Jeremiah Samples, Deputy Secretary for DHHR.

The implementation of managed care services for the state's child welfare population aims to streamline the administration of health services; tailor services to meet the needs of enrolled populations; coordinate care for members; and work to transition members from out-of-state care to community-based treatment in West Virginia.

C 3 (B) LPC Ethics – Continuation of Session B 3

C 4 (B) Solution Focused Therapy – Continuation of Session B 4

C 5 Social Work Ethics: The Ethics of Fostering Workplace Compassion (ETH)

Pattie Nishimoto, PhD, MSW, BSW, LCSW, Associate Professor of Social Work, Concord University, Athens, WV.

The NASW values and ethics cultivate a culture of compassion extended to clients but are not always applied to co-workers. This presentation explains how fostering a culture of compassion in the workplace can support social workers' self-care efforts. It will connect the values and ethics—examples of how agencies, supervisors, and workers can demonstrate compassion to each other. Participants will also be given a safe place to share their experiences.

5:30 - 7:30pm Two-Hour 'D' Evening Sessions

D 1 Problem Gambling in WV: Treating the Hidden Addiction

Sheila Moran, MSW, LSW, ICGC, Director, Communications & Marketing, Jennifer Davis-Walton, MS, Program Director, First Choice Services, Charleston, WV.

One in fifty West Virginians may be struggling with a gambling addiction, but few will get the treatment they need. Understand the symptoms and risk factors for problem gambling, and why it is so often overlooked by clinicians. Learn to effectively screen for problem gambling among your clients and what resources are available to help them. Lastly, find out about becoming part of the 1-800-GAMBLER network of therapists receiving referrals in West Virginia.

D 2 Understanding Military Culture (VET)

No One Gets Me: Helping Human Service Providers Understand Professional Identity in the Military

George Brawn, Transition Patient Advocate (Retired), Hershel "Woody" Williams VA Medical Center, Huntington, WV.

Transitioning from military life to the civilian world after leaving the service involves many challenges for veterans. Adapting to environments which may be lacking in resources and services is often a culture shock. Many veterans find this change stressful, with the potential to contribute to any mental health or psycho-social needs faced by those who seek services. Mr. Brawn will explain common issues associated with this transition faced by our veteran population, with the purpose of helping civilian providers understand the context and complexities of these issues. (VET)

FRIDAY, MAY 14, 2021

9:00 - 10:00am One-Hour 'E' Sessions

E 1* Understanding Stress & Self-Care: Getting Back Some Control

Jim Harris, EdD, MSW, LICSW, Associate Director of Training, WV Autism Training Center, Marshall University, Huntington, WV.

What is the impact of stress in our lives? How does it impact our ability to be effective in our professional and personal lives? Learn to recognize stress and your reactions to it and get serious about managing it! Become more intentional about building resilience in your life.

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E 2 What (on Earth) Happened at the WV Legislature?

Sean O'Leary, MPA, Senior Policy Analyst, WV Center on Budget & Policy, Charleston, WV.

The historic 2021 session of the WV legislature isn't quite over at this writing, but it will or potentially drastically change state income and budget projections and the ability to fund essential health and social support programs. Many other health, social and economic programs and policies may also be substantially changed. This expert budget analyst will review the changes made and the implications for the health and social services sectors.

E 3 Seeding the Future: Collegiate Addiction Recovery in Southern West Virginia

Susie Mullins, MS, Licensed Psychologist, Project Coordinator, Southern West Virginia Collegiate Recovery Network, Marshall University Research Corporation, Huntington, WV.

Learn about a new regional collaborative to support students in Southern West Virginia who are in, or are seeking, recovery from substance use disorder. The Alliance for the Economic Development of Southern WV facilitates a collaboration among 10 public higher education institutions to ease the transition to higher education, and address addiction/supporting recovery. The Southern WV Collegiate Recovery Network, funded by DHHR/BHFF through SAMHSA's State Opioid Response (SOR) grant, facilitates and supports a recovery environment on seven of the college campuses. The program creates a supportive environment within the campus culture that reinforces the decision to disengage from addictive behaviors and provides educational opportunities alongside recovery support. A support-based model utilizing certified peer recovery specialists provides individual and group support on each campus.

E 4 Environmental Injustice & Health Disparities: A Perspective for Social Workers

Georgiana Logan, PhD, MS, Assistant Professor/Research Associate, Marshall University Division of Public Health, College of Health Professions, Huntington, WV.

The environment plays a major role in our health and well-being. Disparities in health exist when communities are exposed to a combination of poor environmental quality and social inequities that increase risk for illness and disease. Environmental justice raises awareness of the disproportionate exposure to pollution between affluent populations and those with less resources, and the resulting effect on health and environment, as well as unequal environmental protection and environmental quality provided through laws, regulations, governmental programs, enforcement, and policies. Social work offers key opportunities to help develop strategies to eliminate environmental inequities while offering solutions to reduce health disparities.

10:30am - 12:00pm One & One-Half Hour 'F' Sessions

F 1 Harm Reduction 101

Robbin A. Pollini, PhD, MPH, Associate Professor, Department of Behavioral Medicine and Psychiatry, also Associate Professor, Department of Epidemiology, School of Public Health, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV.

This session discusses the goals and efficacy of harm reduction programs. It will provide an overview of various programs and models and how they contribute to reductions in drug-related morbidity and mortality (e.g., HIV, HCV, overdose, endocarditis) and linkage to healthcare, social services, and recovery programs.

F 2 Best Practices for Suicide Risk Screening in Community Health

Mary LeCloux, PhD, LICSW, MSW Program Director, Assistant Professor, West Virginia University School of Social Work, Morgantown, WV.

Screening of suicide risk can be provided in community health care settings as a first step in preventive intervention. In this session, participants will learn about the scope of suicide in the rural communities of West Virginia and elsewhere in the United States and how universal suicide risk screening can address this public health problem. The session will describe the Clinical Pathways Model (Brahmbhatt et al., 2019) as an approach that can be utilized in primary healthcare settings, including general guidelines and best practices for administration. Strategies for effective implementation of screening programs will be described.

F 3 Building Relationships Between Birth & Foster/Kinship Families: Why, How, Who?

Marissa Sanders, BA, Executive Director, West Virginia Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Parents Network, St. Albans, WV.

As the child welfare system moves toward a model where "resource" families (foster/kinship) partner with birth families to help support reunification efforts, questions are beginning to arise: i.e. How do these relationships work? Where do we start? What challenges might be faced in the process? What could help these relationships be more successful? Hear from West Virginia foster and birth parents who have built and maintained relationships and learn what you can do to help make this shift in culture and practice go more smoothly.

F 4 WV ABLE Program of WV Treasurer

Roxanne Clay, MA, Director, WV ABLE: A Program of the West Virginia State Treasurer, Charleston, WV.

The rules have changed! WVABLE is a new savings and investment account program available through the WV State Treasurer's Office that allows qualifying individuals with disabilities to save and invest without losing government benefits such as Medicaid or SSI (within limits). You will be able to identify eligible individuals and educate them about the program's availability and operation.

1:00 - 3:00pm Two-Hour 'G' Sessions

(Note: Session G 4 [Continues](#) 3:30-4:30pm)

G 1 Moral Injury: Exploring Indicators, Care Practices, & Opportunities for Interconnection (VET)(ETH)

Jason Nieuwsma, PhD, Clinical Psychologist and Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Duke University, and Associate Director for VA Mental Health and Chaplaincy, Durham, NC.

Moral injury has been described as a psychospiritual experience that involves a violation of one's deeply held moral beliefs and values. Contemporary interest in moral injury originated from work with military combat veterans, and recent attention is being devoted to possibly expanding moral injury for application among other populations (e.g., healthcare workers during the pandemic). This presentation will describe the evolution of moral injury as a construct, cover issues related to identifying and measuring moral injury, and identify potentially useful therapeutic and collaborative care approaches to addressing moral injury. Further, attendees will be invited to participate in brief experiential exercises designed to enhance intrapersonal awareness along with enhancing interpersonal compassion and interconnectedness, with potential implications for moral injury care provision.

G 2 Connections Matter: Building Resiliency in Children & Families

Michele Baranaskas, LCSW, Coordinator, Partners in Community Outreach, and Jessica L. Dianellos, MS, Community Partnerships Coordinator, Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia, which are Programs of TEAM for West Virginia Children, Huntington, WV.

Every day connections are more important than we ever believed. Our brain, our relationships and our community are all interconnected. Science tells us that relationships have the power to shape our brains. Relationships help us learn better, work better, parent better. When we experience tough times, they help us heal. With each positive connection, we develop a healthier, stronger community. This session uses video, discussion, and experiential activities. The curriculum was developed by Linda Chamberlain, PhD for the Iowa Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America and brought to West Virginia by the West Virginia ACEs Coalition. Limit 30

G 3 From Chaos to Connection in Clients Struggling with the Effects of Complex Trauma with Dissociative Identity Disorder

Rachel Dash, MSW, LICSW, Assistant Professor Emeritus, Department of Behavioral Medicine & Psychiatry, West Virginia University School of Medicine, Charleston Division.

This session is for the benefit of mental health clinicians who are already familiar with the diagnosis of DID. The workshop will offer tools for supporting our clients' internal systems of parts to build a safe, collaborative community of respect and healing within themselves, as well as within their external community. Participants will learn tools and techniques for managing challenging clinical presentations with collaboration with the client during the therapy hour.

G 4 (H) Clinical Supervision Basics for Social Workers & Counselors (LPC ALPS)

(Continues as Session H 4, 3:30-4:30pm)

Janie Howsare, MSW, MPA, LICSW, Director, and Sandra Corbett, MSW, LICSW, Behavioral Therapist, both of WVU Faculty Staff Assistance Program, WVU Department of Behavioral Medicine and Psychiatry, and Jamie Jacobs, PhD, MA, LPC, ALPS, Therapist, Owner, Mountain Laurel Wellness, all of Morgantown, WV.

This workshop will detail the process of facilitating the professional and clinical development of a junior social worker/counselor through a culturally informed and mindful relationship. Discreet administrative, educational, and supportive functions of supervision will be examined. Participants will gain familiarity with important core elements of supervision, ranging from educational assessment to issues of race, gender, culture, spirituality, authority, and power. (ALPS) (Limited)

3:30 - 4:30pm One-Hour 'H' Sessions

H 1* Social Work Ethics & Technology (ETH)

Robbin Durham, MSW, LICSW, Assistant Professor of Social Work, Concord University, Athens, WV.

Like many professions, Social Work is attempting to keep up with the ever-changing world of technology - especially in these difficult times! We will discuss recent updates to the NASW Code of Ethics and the NASW/ASWB/CSWE/CSWA Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice. Identifies potential ethical dilemmas associated with the use and misuse of technology. Become more aware of the costs and benefits of utilizing technology in serving clients. Robbin Durham, MSW, LICSW, Assistant Professor, Concord University Master of Social Work Program, Athens, WV.

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H 2 Updates from the West Virginia Board of Social Work

Vickie James, MSW, LCSW, Executive Director, West Virginia Board of Social Work, Charleston, WV.

Your opportunity to receive an update on initiatives and changes and dialogue with the Board about application and qualifications for license, new clinical supervision training, continuing education requirements, and other matters.

H 3 Affirming Healthcare for Transgender and Gender Diverse West Virginians (ETH)

Megan E. Gandy, PhD, MSW, Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, genderqueer, asexual, pansexual, etc., (LGBTQ+) youth are disproportionately represented in behavioral health treatment settings and face disparities in outcomes when compared to their non-LGBTQ+ peers. These youth need service providers who are culturally competent in addressing their LGBTQ+-specific needs. This workshop focuses on improving behavioral health services for children and youth who identify as LGBTQ+. Attendees will learn about best practices for LGBTQ+ youth in behavioral health settings. Special focus will be on preparing and assessing direct-care and paraprofessional staff, but information will be relevant to practitioners of all levels and settings within behavioral health.

H 4 (G) Clinical Supervision Basics – Continuation of Session G 4

H 5 Navigating Resources in WV (Helplines)

Sheila Moran, MSW, LSW, ICGC, Director, Communications & Marketing, First Choice Services, Charleston, WV.

First Choice Health Services operates telephone and web-based helplines offering crisis intervention, support, treatment and referrals. These include suicide prevention, problem gambling, mental health and addiction support and referral, ACA health insurance navigation, and the WV 211 information and referral system. Participants will become familiar with these important resources, who they benefit, how they are accessed, and their intended outcomes and results.

5:30 - 7:30pm Two-Hour 'J' Evening Sessions

J 1 I Promise I Wasn't Ignoring You! Insights into Hearing Loss (ETH)

Sarah Shapero, MSW, LCSW, Social Worker, FamilyCare, Charleston, WV.

We will review information from last September's presentation, add some clinical perspectives and other helpful information, and allow more time for discussion. Offers an overview of hearing loss and how it impacts the individual and those around them. You will come to recognize the prevalence of hearing loss, why it is important, learn communication techniques, and become more sensitive to the needs of someone with hearing loss. Includes a simulation and examples of the degrees of hearing loss. Become better prepared to understand and anticipate the needs of people with hearing loss.

J 2 Black Social Workers Forum

Jennifer Wells, MSW, Regional Organizer, Community Change, Inc., Huntington, WV, with Jamecia James and Danielle Woods, MSW Candidates, Marshall University, Huntington, WV.

A safe space for self-identifying black social workers to talk about all things social work. We will also be able to discuss self-healing and discover ways to transform the way we practice.

J 3* Still Taking Casualties: West Virginia Veterans and Suicide (VET)

(Documentary followed by moderated group discussion)

Moderator: Peter Callahan, MSW, LICSW, Executive Director, Callahan Counseling Services, Martinsburg, WV.

Suicide is a major problem for veterans across the country. But the problem is even worse in rural areas, according to the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). In this West Virginia Public Broadcasting documentary, WV veterans share their stories about what it is like to return home from war, and what veterans are doing to help and support each other.

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SATURDAY, MAY 15, 2021

9:00 - 10:00am Plenary Session

Bil Lepp Storyteller & "West Virginia's Biggest Liar"

Stories of the Appalachian Experience

Bil's humorous, family friendly tall-tales and stories are rooted deeply in everyday life in Appalachia and have earned the appreciation of listeners of all ages and walks of life. Though a five-time champion of the WV Liars' Contest, Lepp's stories often contain morsels of truth which present universal themes in clever and witty ways. Audiences across the country, from grade schools to corporate execs to Comedy Central's Hudson stage, have been delighted by Bil's mirthful tales and penetrating insights. Bil's books and audio awards include the PEN Steven Kroll Award for Children's Book Writing, Parents' Choice Gold awards, and the National Parenting Publications and Public Library Associations. Bil and his family live in Charleston, WV.

10:30am - 12:30pm Two Hour 'K' Sessions

K 1* End of Life Issues for Veterans (VET)

Christina G. Davis, MSW, BSW, LCSW, Hospice and Palliative Care Coordinator, Hershel "Woody" Williams VAMC, Huntington, WV.

One out of every four dying Americans is a veteran. The majority of veterans do not receive healthcare within the VA. Community partners need to understand the importance of integrating military service into end-of-life care. Learn about special considerations, such as military culture, unique individual experiences, service-connected illness, PTSD, spiritual distress, and other factors that can impact veterans and their families during this most difficult time. Also discover how VA is moving forward with comprehensive end of life care.

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K 2 Seeing the Forest for the Trees: Ourselves, Our Clients, & COVID

Stephanne Thornton, MSW, LICSW, MDiv, Criminal Justice Specialist, West Virginia Public Defender Service, Charleston, WV.

The coronavirus pandemic has been characterized by unprecedented loss, grief, depression, and anxiety. Mental health, suicide, and overdose rates are up. Parents have faced (and still are facing) incredible challenges, as are caregivers for the elderly. Helping professionals have experienced one of the most challenging years of their career. There must be some meaning we make from the pandemic. Together, in this presentation, we will discuss the trends, impact, and toll the pandemic has had on us and our clients. Skills and tools to take care of ourselves, our clients, and post-pandemic meaning-making will also be explored.

K 3 Generational Differences

Becky Mathis-Stump, JD, Chief Operating Officer, Ethos Leadership Group, LLC, Parkersburg, WV.

What we value and how we think, communicate, work within teams, and lead are shaped by the pivotal moments we experience. Introduces the global life events that have shaped Traditionalists, Boomers, Xers, Millennials, and Gen Z; engages group participants to explore how those life events shaped generational values as they are expressed at work, at home, and in the community; and provides participants with a lens through which they can explore value differences among generations.

K 4* Adult Children of Emotionally Immature Parents

Lindsay Gibson, PsyD, Bestselling Author of Adult Children of Emotionally Immature Parents, Virginia Beach, VA.

Relationships with distant, rejecting, or self-involved people have caused an epidemic of lives spent in guilt, confusion, self-doubt and false responsibility for others' desires and happiness. Discover how adults who have been gradually shamed out of trusting their inner world can learn to become entitled to self-care and support. It is essential to correct their internal belief that they are less important than others, and therefore bad if they do not unquestioningly serve the needs of others.

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K 5 Essential Tools to Address the Opioid Epidemic in West Virginia:

Opioid Use Disorder Treatment and Resources

Opioid Use Disorder and the Criminal Justice System

Opioid Use Disorder and Medication-Assisted Treatment Stigma: The Double Whammy

Garrett Moran, PhD, MPA, Associate Director of Services and Policy Innovation, Rockefeller Neurosciences Institute at West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV, The Hon. William Thompson, Judge, Twenty-Fifth Judicial Circuit, Boone and Lincoln Counties, and Laura Lander, MSW, LICSW, Associate Professor, Clinical Social Worker, Supervisor, and Section Chief, Department of Behavioral Medicine & Psychiatry, School of Medicine, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV.

This distinguished panel of experts provides an overview of the opioid epidemic in WV. The initial focus is on brain chemistry and the scientific basis of opioid use disorder, as well as treatment methods including currently available resources. Following this, the effects of the substance abuse epidemic on the criminal justice system in WV is described; specifically, how the needs of people suffering from SUD are addressed by the judicial system, including community-based drug courts and treatment in correctional institutions. Lastly, an overview is presented on how stigmatization of opioid use disorders and of medication-assisted treatment has evolved. Strategies are offered for helping social workers to reduce stigma.

1:30 - 3:00pm One & One-Half Hour 'L' Sessions

L 1 Understanding Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity: The Basics

Selina Vickers, MA, LSW, Adolescent Health Initiative Coordinator, SESC (formerly RESA 1), Beckley, WV.

Social workers engage with people that have different sexual orientations and gender identities. It is important to treat all clients with dignity and respect. Appropriate, respectful terminology, and awareness of biology, as these relate to an LGBTQ+ individual are important to understanding and communicating effectively with the client. Also discusses the importance of advocating for organizational policies that do not discriminate against an LGBTQ+ individual or client.

L 2 Anxiety Treatment in Light of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Laura Wilhelm, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Behavioral Medicine and Psychiatry, Charleston Division, School of Medicine, West Virginia University, Charleston, WV.

The health, relationship, emotional, and practical tolls of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as burn-out regarding multiple aspects of the past year, cannot be overstated. This presentation outlines fundamental ingredients of evidence-based cognitive-behavioral treatment for anxiety disorders--with special considerations for tailoring personalized treatment in a "post-COVID-19 world." Strategies for helping people who struggle with problematic anxiety as society continues to "open up" will be highlighted.

L 3* My Mother Wasn't Trash: A Manifesto from Appalachia

Joshua Wilkey, PhD, Author, and Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Brevard College, Brevard, NC.

Based on his nonfiction work, this presentation from an Appalachian writer, historian and educator focuses on the ways his impoverished upbringing in Western North Carolina guided him as a researcher and historian. He offers a unique perspective on Appalachian poverty, from both lived experience and scholarly research, including ideas about how those in the helping professions and in public policy might better serve impoverished Appalachian individuals, families and communities.

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L 4 Ingredients for Successful Youth: DHHR & Juvenile Defense Attorneys

Ashley M. Batten, JD, Attorney, Berkeley County Office, WV Public Defender Corporation, 23rd Judicial Circuit, Joshua L. Edwards, Esq., Chief Public Defender, Public Defenders Office, 11th Judicial Circuit, Lewisburg, WV & Teresa McCune, JD, Senior Counsel Public Defender for the 30th Judicial Circuit, Williamson, WV.

In the world of juvenile justice cases the difference between a youth being successful in the community, or being removed, can be heavily impacted by the joint work of the DHHR Youth Services Worker and the Defense Attorney. This presentation will highlight that when these individuals not only understand each other's roles, but also the opportunities each make available, they can combine to form the support and advocacy needed to meet the youth's rehabilitative and therapeutic needs. Social Workers and attorneys encounter each other through juvenile case proceedings where the well-being and dignity of the juvenile client is primary. It is important that they engage in an interdisciplinary manner to meet the needs of their shared client. To collaboratively advocate for the best treatment outcomes for the client, social workers' knowledge and expertise about adolescent development and bio-psycho-social needs can be shared with defense attorneys, who in turn have the required legal expertise.

3:15 - 3:45pm: Closing Remarks & Farewell

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