

APPPAH's 23rd International Congress

Agenda for Main Congress Sessions ~ Denver, Colorado

More information at www.birthpsychology.com/congress

Thursday, October 19, 2023

8:00 am - 5:00 pm MDT

Pre-Congress Workshops (in person only)

More information at www.birthpsychology.com/congress-workshops

6:30 pm - 7:30 pm MDT

Opening Ceremony with Thomas Verny, MD and Raylene Phillips, MD

A warm welcome from APPPAH's current president, Raylene Phillips, MD and APPPAH's founding president, Thomas Verny, MD. Congress orientation by Congress Co-Chairs, Jeane Rhodes, PhD and Barbara Hotelling, MSN.

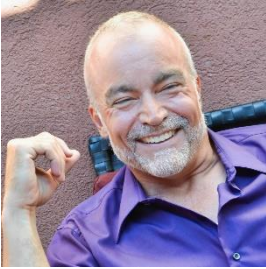
7:30 pm - 8:30 pm MDT

President's Reception and Celebration of APPPAH's 40th Anniversary! (in person only)

Don't miss the party! Enjoy birthday cake, light refreshment, and meeting old friends and new.

Friday, October 20, 2023

8:30 am - 9:45 am MDT Keynote Session



KN1- Oneness: Healing the World, One Life at a Time with Scott Burns

In this inspiring keynote presentation, delve into the transformative power of love and its crucial role in overcoming the challenges faced by helping professionals. Drawing on diverse research, compelling stories, and cultural perspectives, gain new insights into the nature and purpose of love as a unifying and creative force in navigating emotional burnout, high caseloads, ethical dilemmas, and boundary issues. Embark on a journey of self-discovery and renewal as hearts and spirits are united through captivating narratives

and a fresh understanding of love's role in cultivating more compassionate, effective, and fulfilling helping and healing experiences.

10:00 am - 11:15 am MDT Keynote Session



KN2- Mental Health through Nurture for Babies and Parents with Greer Kirshenbaum, PhD

The season of infancy, from conception to three years, is a unique opportunity to build mental health for babies and parents. The infant brain develops circuitry to support lifelong mental wellness through nurturing relationships with parents and caregivers. In the presence of a baby, the parent brain enters a unique state of neuroplasticity where emotional brain circuits can be rewired to boost mental health. A major brain system underlying positive brain changes for infants and parents

is the stress system, and it functions differently in babies and adults. Infants require adults to lend their mature brain to regulate stress and build the system. Parents require tools for self-awareness and self-regulation to nurture their babes and build their stress systems.

11:15 am - 12:45 pm MDT Panel

Panel Discussion with APPPAH's Presidents- Past & Present

Relive APPPAH's history! Each past president will share their memories about the rich history of APPPAH and Birth Psychology.

1983-1990: Thomas Verny, MD

1991-1999: David Chamberlain, PhD (represented by his son, John Chamberlain)

2000-2002: Barbara Findeisen, MFT (in memoriam)

2003-2012: William Emerson, PhD

2013-2017: Sandra Bardsley, CNM

2018-2019: Dennis Hertenstein, DC

2019-2020: Margaret Bledsoe, OTD

2021- present: Raylene Phillips, MD

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm MDT 2-Hour Concurrent Sessions:



F1- Seven Gentle Birth Practices for a Nurturing Welcome into the World - and Why it Matters

with Raylene Phillips, MD

There are several evidence-based medical practices recommended for the care and treatment of newborns that significantly contribute to a safe and healthy birth for well full-term newborns. We will describe these birth practices and discuss how they contribute to a newborn's optimal transition to life outside the womb in gentle, non-stressful, and nurturing ways - and why it matters.



F2- Birth Psychology, Love, and Hope for The Future

with Adela Barcia, MS, MFT

Those of us in Pre and Perinatal Psychology understand our earliest beginnings' profound and lifelong impact. What our organism is learning during this crucial developmental phase may make us generally more fear-based and reactive than love-based and responsive; to surviving rather than thriving. From my perspective as a practicing clinician for over forty years, I will offer both research outcomes and my perceptions of the adverse effects of disrupting natural birth and attachment practices.



F3- Why Attachment Matters: Before Birth and Beyond

with Lysa Parker, MS, CFLE, CEIM and Barbara Nicholson, MEd, CEIM

This session will provide an overview of attachment theory and how attachment impacts our ability to trust and love others throughout the lifespan. An unmedicated, peaceful birth can trigger a cascade of biochemical reactions that enhance the attachment and bonding process. This session will also describe the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), including birth trauma and its impact on the birthing mother's consciousness and DNA. The speakers will discuss how a supportive community of doulas, midwives, breastfeeding, and childbirth educators can be the buffers necessary for building resilience and nurturing the attachment relationship. Ongoing attachment-focused parenting support and resources are also instrumental in sustaining attachment security.



F4- Growing Kind Kids: Mindful Parenting from Peaceful Cultures

with Charlotte Peterson, PhD

Observations, stories, and photographs of indigenous birth and parenting practices that promote attachment, healthy brain development, and assist youngsters in reaching their optimal potential. A special emphasis on early parenting in non-violent cultures, which leads to more peaceful, generous, and compassionate people. Ancient wisdom from parents, doctors, and village leaders will be included in conjunction with breakthroughs in neuroscience regarding the role of nurturance on the developing brain.

4:30 pm - 5:30 pm MDT 1 Hour Concurrent Sessions:



**F5 - Dear Baby, I Hear You, I See You, I Understand You
with Barbara Hotelling, RN, BSN, MSN, FACCE, HYB CT, DONA Adv BDT, WSGB
CT**

Misunderstanding a newborn's behavior undermines new parents' confidence, decreases breastfeeding success and interferes with the developing parent-child relationship. This presentation offers prenatal and postpartum doula family-friendly language to help parents understand their baby from day one. Discover a baby's Resting, Ready and Rebooting Zones. Explore when a baby sends out an 'SOS' (Sign of Over-Stimulation) with changes in her body and behavior.



**F6- A Dance/Movement Therapists Conscious Home Birthing Experience
with Brigitta Elsa White, MS, R-DMT, RYT-200**

Using an Auto-Ethnographic qualitative research observation and analysis method, this Dance/Movement Therapist and mom of three children will share her experiences in conscious, natural birthing which included a holistic team such as a Labor and Birth Chiropractor. The psychodynamic understanding of dance/movement therapy as it relates to nurturing the attachment relationship of mother-child, father-child and siblings in a family system will be studied. This Presentation will include light movement experiential exercises.



**F7- Social Facial Development of Infants & Children
with Peg Bledsoe, OTD, OTR/L, FAOTA, BPC**

Occupational Therapy (OT) is art and science interwoven together to create a philosophy and treatment to help people across the lifespan participate in the things they want and need to do through the therapeutic use of everyday activities. One of the major influences for an individual is their birth experiences affecting their physical body. Facial expression development is an important communication skill that the baby and child learn and develops in their movement and environmental experiences.



**F8- Safety & Attunement in Midwifery Continuity of Care
with Laura Latina, Midwife, Compassionate Inquiry Practitioner**

Midwifery is a magical approach to support and guide women reclaiming their instincts and intuitions and ensure gentle birthing. How you can work with clients to build inner safety, presence and attunement using Compassionate Inquiry; Gain practical tools to use in support of clients and reclaim the lost skill of Being vs Doing. Being is an essential component to heal birth and to ensure babies come to this world in a gentle way and mother are held with love and compassion.

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm MDT

Film Viewing TBA (In-Person only)

Saturday, October 21, 2023

8:30 am MDT Keynote Session



KN3- Breaking the Cycle of Transgenerational Trauma with Gerlinde Metz, PhD

Our research has shown that maternal resilience is determined by past lifetime experiences and the stress of previous generations. Finding ways to overcome past trauma and build maternal stress resilience is critical for preventing adverse birth outcomes and promoting healthy child development. To better understand how prenatal maternal stress influences developmental trajectories and how this stress can be effectively mitigated, our research focuses on the experience-dependent biological pathways linked to maternal and child health. The findings from these studies are now leading to discovery of new biomarkers for risk prediction, enabling early diagnosis, therapeutic and social interventions.

10:00 am MDT Keynote Session



KN4 - Neurobiology of Nurture and Science of the Heart with Dorothy Mandel, PhD

Our hearts are where we most strongly feel emotions of love, mutuality, and connectedness...and so much changes in our bodies, our psyches, our heart rhythms, hormones, and behaviors as a result. We will learn about five distinct pathways through which our hearts operate to connect, nurture, and heal the traumas of separation. Heart rhythms and their relative order, complexity and meaning. The restorative hormones and peptides they emit. The epigenetic influences that affect our current genetic expression as well as future generations. Imagine setting free our full capacity to LOVE.

11:15 am - 12:45 pm MDT Panel

Panel Discussion for Cultural Considerations

Panelists will describe the work they do in the perinatal field, their perspectives of birth in their cultures, and the relationship to APPPAH's Four Foundations of Birth Psychology.



Rosa Cortizo, PsyD, MFT



Joy Skinner, PPNE, HBCE



Catherine Leaf, RN, Midwife



Hakima Tafunzi Payne, MSN, RN

2:00- 4:00 pm MDT 2-hour Concurrent Sessions:



**S1- Memories: How They are Formed and Where They are Stored
with Thomas R. Verny MD, DHL (Hon), DPsych, FRCPC, FAPA**

Learning and memory are two of the most remarkable faculties of our mind. Learning is the biological process of acquiring new knowledge about the world, and memory is the process of retaining, reconstructing and accessing that knowledge over time. The time has arrived for responsible neuroscientists to seriously consider modifying or abandoning the cortico-central hypothesis of memory and adopt instead the existence in our bodies of an interconnected, unified, multilevel, homeostatic, cellular memory system that allows us to be fully functional human beings with an Embodied Mind.



S2: Creating Connections: HypnoBirthing® and Goulding Method® Sleep Talk to Support Families During and After Birth

with Phyllis S. Fisher CH, HBCE, CD, CMT, CLD and Barbara Decker HBCE, HBFC, CCH, CLD



Support parents and their children with two time and content tested programs that work amazingly well and reflect APPPAH principles. So many children are at risk, because of extreme stress, social isolation, fear mongering, lack of healthy physical and emotional contact, and the inability to trust others. Without professional help, these children can be damaged for life, unable to live a happy, emotionally balanced life. The possibility of Relaxing, Releasing and Transforming years of pain and suffering and the potential of trauma is available. Two programs so important to professionals in helping are- The Goulding Method, Sleep Talk® and HypnoBirthing® The Mongan Method



**S3- Be the Voice of Childbirth: Your Words Matter
with Susan Highsmith, PhD**

If we desire to change the paradigm in childbirth, we must stop using the language of the paradigm we intend to change! Expressions like *delivery*, *failure to progress*, and *Mothers-to-be* have connotations which imply that women do not even give birth; that women fail early in labor, and then need drugs and/or surgery; that pregnant women are not mothers, but are moms only after babies are born. We can create positive changes and our words can foster a new model that empowers women to give birth confidently, supported by meaning-full words.



**S4 -Enhancing Attachment & Bonding to Support New Families
with Stephanie Dueger, PhD**

What is current in the field of attachment and bonding, and how can we use the most recent discoveries to help support expectant, new, and established families to thrive? Take a fascinating journey into the depths of attachment and bonding as we explore their physical, psychological, and developmental impacts, and learn specific psychosomatic tools to help expectant, new, and established families develop strong bonds with each other and increase resilience.



S9- Birth & Behaviors: Accessing Neural Imprints of Precognitive Experience with Annie Brook, PhD, LPC

Birth and Behaviors: Accessing the Neural Imprints of Precognitive Experience

The cellular impressions from birth influence behavior mentally, emotionally, and physically. Hear treatment stories, learn about the nervous system and why imprints from birth can still drive adult or child behaviors. Find out what to do to gain release and integration of a difficult birth.

4:30-5:30 pm MDT 1-hour Concurrent Sessions:



S5- The Energetic Field that Holds Us with Moriah Melin RM, CPM

We are skilled in the art of *holding space*- what is holding space for us? We are also skilled in the art of listening to our intuition- where does our intuition come from, how is it influenced by our early pre- and perinatal time, and how can we access the information housed within it? Building upon the foundation received studying with Ray Castellino, discover the elements of the energetic field that holds us. Plant somatic seeds, so that you know the field and how to lean deeper into it.



S6 - 20 Years of Prenatal Bonding (BA): Insights, Outcomes, and Prospects with Gerhard Schroth, MD & Raylene Phillips, MD, MA, FAAP, FABM, IBCLC

This session will review the early roots of Prenatal Bonding (BA) and the essential components that support mothers to bond with their babies and become familiar with their baby's personality long before birth. Valid data on the remarkable effects of Prenatal Bonding (BA) have been observed and researched in two cohorts of nearly 500 pregnancies over about a decade. The outcomes will present and verify the measurable effects in comparison to unfacilitated pregnancies. This research has recently been published in JOPPPAH. In addition, we can discuss future prospects of using Prenatal Bonding (BA) and its curative potential in different settings.



S7- Lullaby Wisdom: The Science of Soothing with Licia Claire Seaman, MST

This presentation covers the evidence-based research, insights and practices discovered while writing *Lullaby Wisdom: The Stories, the Songs and the Science of Soothing*. Two-way communication supports infants' need to be safe-secure-soothed-seen- to (make) sense. Neurogenesis, neuroplasticity, epigenetics, mirror neurons, and the social vagus nerve are pathways to a healthy baby. The heart's coherent electro-magnetic field creates affective limbic resonance, beneficial emotional contagion and positive growth.

6:30-8:00 pm MDT:

Celebration Dinner & Awards (in person only)

Sunday, October 22, 2023

7:30 am- 8:30 am **Member Breakfast** (in person only)

8:30 am- 9:30 am **Membership Meeting**

9:30 am- 10:30 am **Poster Presentations** (in person only):

Re-writing Mom's Birthing Story: A CST perspective

With Kim Painter, PT, LMT, CST-D

Some mothers experience regret after giving birth to their babies, whether they were not given informed consent or if there were unplanned complications or if it is related to the whole process of bringing in a child that was unexpected at that time. Regret can have a profound impact on bonding with their infant, how they recover from that birth and it can have a significant impact on future pregnancies and births. Craniosacral Therapy and SomatoEmotional Release are powerful modalities that can facilitate shifting how the mother is holding her experience of birth in her tissues from what she perceives as negative to a more positive experience.



Shamanism, Wisdom for Birthworkers

With Andrea Kalff, Doula

The feminine energy that takes place through menstruation, pregnancy, labor, birth and raising a child is the most powerful and creative transforming power in the natural world. This energy allows us to reconnect to our ancestors. We remember unconsciously many generations and continue the path of our ancestors. I wish for every woman and pregnant mother to reconnect to the power of their ancestors, the divine feminine and the wisdom of generations; learn to listen to your inner voice and intuition; build the connection between conscious and unconscious.



The Best Childbirth Words and Why

With Susan Highsmith, PhD

The words we use have an impact. If we want to change the paradigm in childbirth, we must stop using the same language doctors use and start using language that empowers women. A grass roots effort can change the world. The words you use can awaken the consciousness of pregnant women, of the medical professionals, and the whole birthing culture. A few small easy-to-make changes can change the world of childbirth. You can make a difference--because your words matter.



A Psychotherapist Case Study

with Valerie Montgomery, MA, NCC, LPC

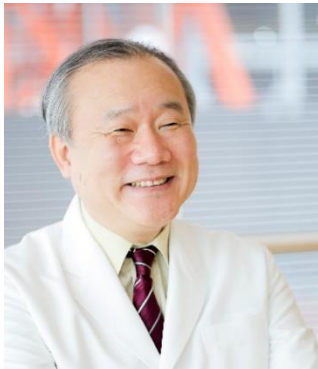
As a counselor and survivor of prenatal and perinatal trauma, I have a unique ability to make connections. Not only with my experience of my journey but also via my clients' experiences. After graduate school I took a Developmental Immaturity certification program. This set the stage for going even deeper and two years later while having my own body-based healing I discovered the presence of my lost triplets.

10:30 am- 11:30 am **Closing Ceremony**

A warm embrace at the end of our time together! Opportunity to share your vision for the future of Birth Psychology in the world. Together, we are moving mountains!

Virtual Recorded Sessions

These 13 bonus sessions will be available to view in our Event Platform, along with all the other main Congress sessions, through March 2024.



V1- Co-Education: Prenatal Memory Nurtures Family Bonds with Akira Ikegawa MD, PhD and Prenatal Memory group

The experience of conception, pregnancy, childbirth, parenting, as well as raising children is a cumulative process whereby parents and children both learn and grow together. According to a 2014 survey conducted in Japan, approximately 20% of people had been aware of Prenatal Memory, and this concept is now widely applied in various fields. This presentation will consist of three parts that explain the application of Prenatal Memory in Japan: the cultural background of pregnancy, childbirth, parenting, and the current status & improvement strategies; a new regressive hypnosis method and "Co-education" that nurtures child from the womb; and a new initiative to reform social norms by challenging to create the ideal system of education.



V2- Bonding Before Birth: Science of What Blocks Us with Allyssa Shepherd, DC, MSc

Scientific study has proven that we are all relational beings. And new science is continuing to discover the incredible sentience and capability of the unborn child. Yet despite this, many parents miss the opportunity to bond with their children before birth. This workshop will examine the most common blocks to bonding before birth – such as trauma and neurological hijacking, epigenetics and learned patterns, as well as attachment and conditioning. Specifically, techniques, tools and insights regarding ways to surpass and transcend these common blocks will be shared.



V3- What's My Child Telling me that I'm not Getting ...Yet with Anne Matthews, DC, BSc

Our body remembers how life in the womb and birth was for us in the form of early imprints which are recorded in the tissues and nervous system. These early imprints can leave physical compression patterns in a baby's face, head and body which impact on the newborn's ability to feed, digest, settle and sleep. A child's Baby Body Language (BBL) is an expression of these imprints which often translates into an interruption to their optimal sequence of development by negatively impacting on their abilities such as balance and coordination, focus, speech & language, self-worth, self-confidence and emotional development.



V4- Lessons from the Embryo with Cherionna Menzam-Sills, PhD, ISMETA RSMT/E, RCST

Even before conception, cells that become sperm and egg interact with parental cells, influenced by parental lives and relationships. We develop within fields within fields within fields. These include energetic fields, known in Craniosacral Biodynamics as biodynamic or universal forces, relating to an original blueprint, and conditional forces, potentially leaving imprints when we lack resource to meet challenges. Influential fields include relationships, even between cells. The little one relates with mother, who relates to partner, family, community, birth team, practitioners, ancestors, and more. Review these fields as potential layers of support or challenge. Listening to the sentient embryo can contribute to support and resilience, teaching us to return to original embryological potential and nurture our mother earth.



**V5- Nurturing Our Global Community
with Francois Gerland, PhD(hon)**

A global village is emerging as like-minded people join for a common goal: a thriving human family and planet. As pioneers in very early development, (PPN), we hold the missing keys to this quest. Being nurtured and nourished is the essential component for thriving. Yet there has never been so much fear, stress, anxiety, and burnout in our world. This panel explores how we can develop a culture of nurture for our global community. We will be looking at the following communities giving practical ways to nurture oneself and the community. We will introduce the Birthing the New Humanity Global Community App which are serving this goal.



**V6- Navigating Co-Regulation and Vicarious Trauma
with Jennifer Kalsbeek, LMFT**

Understanding our own stress rhythms while holding the intense stress and trauma of our clients/patients can become impossible and thus we find ourselves burnt out and even chronically ill. This presentation will cover the basic information of Polyvagal Theory, human system stress function, Co-Regulation, Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue with discussion and process of these topics within serving the perinatal community through various discipline lenses.



**V7- Out of Trauma Back into Happiness
with Jutta Wohlrab, Midwife**

Birth is an extremely powerful experience and transformation in life. Even with all our modern knowledge, it seems the number of women feeling traumatized after birth is rising. Why? What can we do? How can we help once it has happened? There is not a single definition about what is considered a birth trauma. Birth trauma can happen at any kind of birth and can lead to many problems in the days, weeks, months even years after the birth. As a professional midwife, NLP Trainer, and hypnotherapist with 40 years of experience I wanted to be able to find answers how to avoid trauma. I will share methods that are effective to release trauma and bring recovery and healing.



**V8- Identity Oriented Psycho Trauma Theory
with May Sunita, IoPT and Midwife**

Using Identity Oriented Psycho Trauma Theory (IoPT) to strengthen mother-child attachment in the prenatal and perinatal period. This is a form of therapy developed by Professor Dr. Franz Ruppert over the past 30 years, based on established trauma-connection theories, and includes both self-experienced and generationally transmitted trauma.



**V9- The Mother's Womb: Wisdom for Prenatal Bonding
with Nina Ketscher, MA, PPNE**

Science and wisdom cultures have shown that the bond between Mother and Child have long lasting impacts on human health and wellbeing throughout the lifespan. This is greatly influenced by the environment from which a child is conceived, gestated, and developed in; the womb. Therefore, the mother's womb is a Universal key for establishing life-long positive connections with oneself, the world, and all future relationships. Nurturing the primary environment of the womb was a prenatal and perinatal practice from over 7,000 years ago. In this session, Nina Ketscher shares more about these wisdom practices, as an opportunity, for the whole family, to heal from past traumas, at any age, create meaningful soul to soul connections in the family, and to support, especially the babies, to remain divinely connected to themselves throughout their incarnation process.



V10- Prepare & Empower Individuals in the Parenthood Transition with Nour Zaki, PhD

A presentation of an innovative and comprehensive self-developed perinatal program designed to prepare and empower individuals throughout the transition to parenthood. It is father-inclusive and promotes co-parenting early on (i.e., starting from pregnancy). The program encourages expectant parent to dig deeper into their attachment background, reflect on deep questions and identify potential triggers that might come up during this transition. The program also includes elements of prenatal preparation for couples, prenatal bonding with the unborn baby, as well as parental awareness regarding perinatal mental health issues.



V11- The Mother's Somatic Journey of the Self with Rebecca Morgan, PhD

During this informational and experiential presentation, Dr. Morgan will share noteworthy highlights from her dissertation: *The Mother's Journey of the Self: A Somatic Exploration of How Mothers Make Meaning of Loss*. In her study, Dr. Morgan worked with a group of women to examine how the experience of loss for mothers expresses through the psyche and body and how the individual mother makes meaning of this embodied loss. Using imagery, myth, and movement, what emerged was a fascinating journey of the mother's loss and reclamation of self. Using somatic and depth psychological techniques, she will give presentation participants the opportunity to explore this theme.



V12- Soul Connection with Your Unborn Baby with Robyn Sheldon, RM, BA

Babies in the womb resonate at a soul level of consciousness and finally merge with their limited human bodies at birth. Clients tap into the wisdom of their womb-babies during a session. The incoming souls request that their immense love and wisdom be appreciated as it assists them to land fully in their bodies at birth. Robyn has over thirty years of in-depth experience in assisting clients to communicate with their babies through a process of 'active imagination.' This presentation covers the process followed during a two-to-three-hour session and includes a few exercises that participants can employ with their clients to assist them to recognize the immense wisdom of their babies pre-birth.

V13- Mindful Breastfeeding - Calm, Conscious Connection with Tracy Donegan, RM



A mindful approach to breastfeeding preparation is emerging as a way to reduce emotional turmoil and increase self-compassion for parents during the intense early weeks of postpartum.