

2026 Wellness Conference Schedule of Events, cont.

profiles for better clinical insight. The session teaches three practical, body-based stabilization techniques to use alongside standard safety planning. By the end, attendees can integrate these interventions to improve client safety, engagement, and real-time decision-making.

1:30-2:50 p.m. — 1.5 CE — Healing the Ripple Effect: Trauma-Informed, Sex-Positive Approaches to Sexual Violence Recovery and Reclaiming Sexual Wellness

Adrian James Seiloff, second-year master's graduate student
Rachel Goff, first-year master's graduate student

Sexual violence affects survivors across emotional, physical, interpersonal, educational, occupational, and sexual domains. This session introduces the Ripple Effect framework to map trauma's broad impact and presents a public health model of sexual well-being that goes beyond basic sexual health. Participants will explore research-backed healing strategies tailored to survivors' needs. The workshop also covers evaluation methods using quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches to measure progress. By the end, attendees will describe trauma's multidimensional effects, identify survivor-informed strategies for healthy sexual relationships, and apply trauma-informed, sex-positive principles in clinical practice.

3-4 p.m. — 1 CE — Moving Parts: Embodying the Flow of the IFS Model

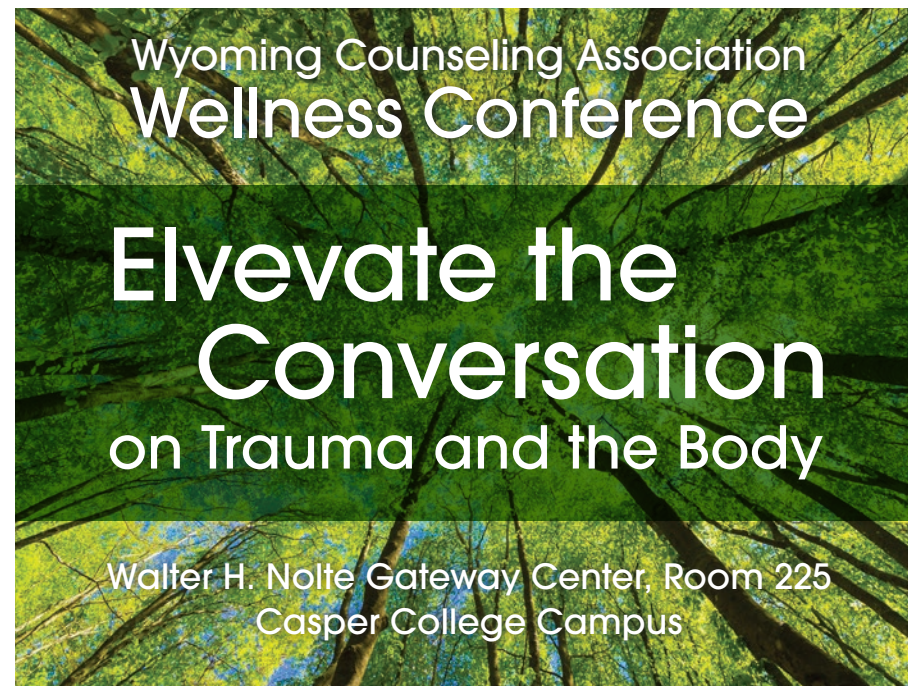
Stephanie Hanson, MS, LPC, E-RYT

Internal Family Systems therapy helps clients unblend and speak for their parts, but what happens when we invite those parts to move? This experiential workshop shows how embodiment — through guided yoga, sculpting, and ecstatic dance — makes parts tangible and deepens self-to-part connections by letting them take up physical space. Participants will practice body-based techniques to unblend from polarized manager and firefighter parts within their own systems. The session teaches at least two movement strategies, such as yoga asana and ecstatic dance, to guide clients toward greater unblending and relational depth. By the end, attendees will understand how embodiment enhances IFS unburdening, especially for kinetic learners who thrive through motion.

4-5 p.m. — 1 CE — Rethinking Correction: How Parent Communication Shapes Stress Responses and Self-Concept in ADHD Youth

Rebecca Kuhbacher, M.Ed., ADHD Coach

Children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder face far more correction than neurotypical peers, which over time shapes their stress responses and self-concept. This session explores how the ADHD brain processes overwhelm, emotional reactivity, and rejection sensitivity, and how parental communication, environments, and routines either amplify or soothe nervous system activation. Rather than just refining correction delivery, participants will learn proactive strategies — like intentional routines and connection-based communication — that reduce the need for correction by fostering emotional safety up front. These approaches interrupt chronic stress cycles, lower reactivity, and help kids build resilience and confidence. By the end, attendees will understand these dynamics and gain practical tools for routine-building and communication shifts that support accountability without eroding self-worth.



The Wellness Conference is sponsored by:

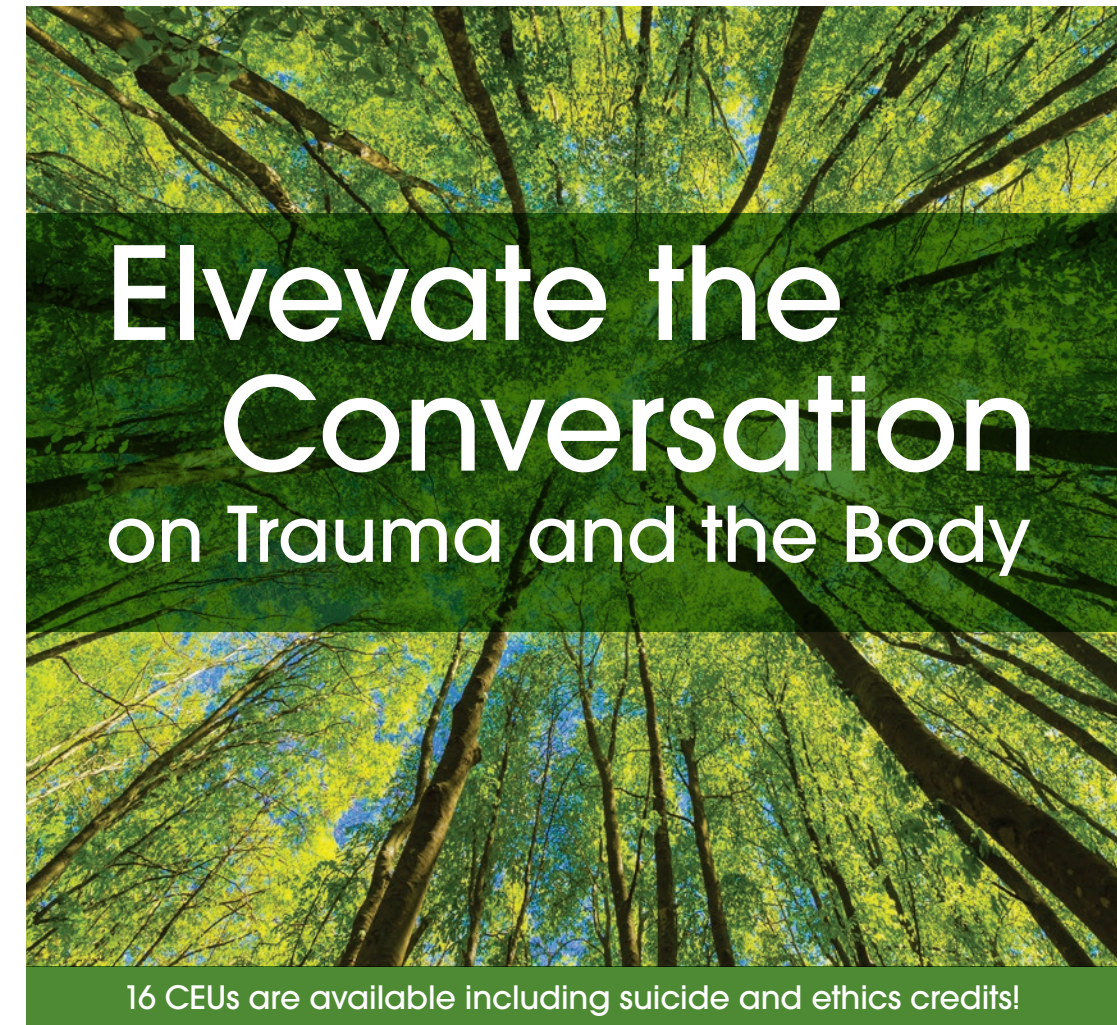


For more information, please contact
Alex Patrino, president@wyomingcounselingassociation.com.



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Wyoming Counseling Association Wellness Conference



A WCA in-person and virtual conference with support from the Casper College Counseling Center

April 17-18, 2026
8 a.m.-5 p.m.



Walter H. Nolte Gateway Center, Room 225
Casper College Campus

2026 Wellness Conference - Schedule of Events

Friday, April 17

Saturday, April 18

8-8:50 a.m. — 1 CE — We Need Each Other: Building Community in the Counseling Profession

Noelle Rizzio, MEd, PEL, LCPC, Illinois

Creating a professional community is an act of collective care and prevention that we can no longer treat as optional. It offers validation, collaboration, and encouragement that directly counter burnout and compassion fatigue. As counselors who tell clients that connection heals, we must apply that same principle to ourselves, especially as needs rise and demands intensify. This presentation will explore how systemic and situational factors create professional isolation and why building community is an ethical imperative for counselor sustainability and effectiveness. Participants will leave with a practical “Connection Plan” that includes at least three concrete strategies to cultivate peer support throughout the year, beyond annual conferences.

9-9:50 a.m. — 1 CE — Connection, Safety, and Scrolling

Bethany Cutts, MSW, LCSW and Jorja Warembourg, BSW and MSW candidate, May 2026

Polyvagal Theory offers a way to understand how our nervous system constantly scans for safety, danger, and connection, and how social media can disrupt that process. Fast-paced, highly stimulating digital platforms often act as both emotional regulation tools and dysregulation triggers, fueling hyperarousal, comparison, and disconnection from embodied cues of safety. This presentation will explore how social media affects neuroception, social engagement, and co-regulation, including the impact of witnessing and sharing trauma, desensitization, and co-rumination. We will also focus on how group spaces can support awareness, choice, and collective regulation around technology habits. By the end, participants will be able to understand how social media shapes regulation, identify ways it can distort neuroception, and apply practical nervous system regulation strategies for themselves and those they support, both individually and in groups.

10-11:20 a.m. — 1.5 CE — From Compassion Fatigue to Capacity: TRE® for Counselors

Jess Ryan, MS, LPC, NCC, CCTP-II, E-RYT 500

Counselors are facing unprecedented levels of secondary traumatic stress and burnout, which directly impact the autonomic nervous system and clinical presence. This experiential workshop introduces TRE®, Tension and Trauma Release Exercises, as a research-informed, somatic method for completing the stress response cycle and discharging accumulated nervous system activation. Grounded in trauma research and polyvagal theory, the session will explain how TRE® fits within our understanding of stress physiology and regulation. Participants will learn about the physiological impact of vicarious trauma, the theoretical foundations of neurogenic tremors, and how these relate to stress cycle completion. By the end, attendees will be able to demonstrate at least one TRE®-informed self-regulation strategy to support their own wellness and reduce the risk of impairment.

12:30-1:30 p.m. — Incorporating Concepts of Post-Traumatic Growth Into Clinical Practice

John Stinebaugh, MA, LMFT and Alex Kane, MS, LCSW

This session will introduce and clarify the concept of post-traumatic growth and how it differs from traditional PTSD treatment approaches. Participants will discuss the distinctions between post-traumatic stress disorder, resiliency, and post-traumatic growth. They will learn to identify and describe the five domains of PTG. The session will also cover how to integrate PTG principles into existing treatment modalities. Finally, participants will be introduced to practical resources, materials, and instruments that support PTG-focused clinical work.

1:30-2:50 p.m. — 1.5 CE — Under Pressure: Understanding the Embodied Impact of Trauma, Hostile Environments, and Administrative Violence on Transgender and Gender Nonconforming People — and How We Can Help

Elliott Orrin Hinkle

Transgender and gender nonconforming people are facing an unprecedented surge of legislative attacks, health care restrictions, and everyday hostility. For those in rural states like Wyoming, these stressors are intensified by geographic isolation, limited affirming resources, and a shortage of knowledgeable providers. Together, these factors create a chronic, cumulative trauma load that appears in the body, in clinical presentations, and in the obstacles TGNC people encounter when seeking or maintaining care. This 90-minute workshop, “Under Pressure,” equips mental health professionals to understand this landscape and respond effectively through three arcs: the landscape of harm, stress in the body, and pathways to healing. By the end, participants will be able to analyze current research on policy and minority stress, recognize dysregulation within affirming, trauma-informed frameworks, and apply somatic and movement-based strategies in both individual and group settings.

3-3:50 p.m. — 1 CE — Staying Ethical Under Pressure: Working with Law Enforcement and Immigration Requests

Amanda DeDiego, PhD, LPC, ART, NCC, BC-TMH, ACS

Mental health professionals may encounter situations requiring interaction with law enforcement or immigration and customs officials while providing services to clients. These encounters can raise complex ethical and legal questions related to confidentiality, client rights, documentation, and professional boundaries. Counselors may feel uncertain about what information they are required to disclose and how to respond to requests from authorities while protecting client welfare. This workshop examines ethical standards and legal considerations that guide counselor decision-making in these situations. Through discussion of common scenarios and practical guidance, participants will develop strategies for navigating interactions with law enforcement and immigration officials while upholding ethical responsibilities and client advocacy.

4-4:50 p.m. — 1 CE — The Trauma Informed Approach to Supporting Youth Mental Health

Mitch Schoenwolf, RN

This presentation explores the connection between trauma, adverse childhood experiences, and suicidality. It highlights how toxic stress can affect brain development, relationships, and long-term mental health. Participants will learn how trauma-informed care helps staff recognize trauma-rooted behavior and respond with compassion and empathy. The presentation also offers practical examples of how to create safe, supportive environments for people in distress. By the end, attendees will be better prepared to apply trauma-informed principles in ways that may help reduce suicide risk.

8-8:50 a.m. — 1 CE — Dis-Ease and The Three T’s: Trauma, Thoughts, and Toxins

Isaac Castellanos, DC, CACCP, PAK

This presentation explains how the body is designed to function and what it needs to support long-term healing. It explores the “3 T’s” — trauma, thoughts, and toxins — as key contributors to inflammation and chronic “disease,” highlighting the roles of physical, mental, and environmental stressors. Castellanos will describe inflammation as a primary driver of disease and share proactive, evidence-based strategies to reduce or prevent it. His core message is that the body can heal when interference is removed, and health is created through consistent, aligned choices. By the end, participants will understand these foundations and be able to apply practical strategies that support the body’s natural capacity to heal.

9-9:50 a.m. — 1 CE — Eight Phases, Three Prongs, Four Legs: Integrating Horses Into EMDR Therapy

Tammy Anderson, LPC

Equine-Assisted EMDR — EA-EMDR, also known as EquiLateral™, integrates standard eye movement desensitization reprocessing trauma treatment with equine-assisted activities in a structured, phased model. In this approach, horses serve as therapeutic partners, offering immediate, nonjudgmental biofeedback that supports regulation, safety, and trauma processing. This can help clients access and work through traumatic material in ways that traditional office-based therapy may not. The presentation will introduce core concepts, including trauma and the brain, the basics of EMDR therapy, and how equine-assisted EMDR is implemented in practice.

10-11:20 a.m. — 1.5 CE — AcuRecovery as a Practice-Wide Individual and Group Intervention: A Case Example

Sara Bursać, MSW, LCSW, Licensed Auricular Acupuncturist

This presentation introduces 7220 Counseling Coalition, a Laramie-based group practice, and how its clinicians have integrated AcuRecovery into daily clinical work and a weekly, community-wide clinic. AcuRecovery is a nonverbal ear acupuncture intervention that helps calm the nervous system by stimulating the vagus nerve at the ear, supporting balance and regulation. It has been used for decades to support people recovering from substance use, coping with trauma, and living with chronic stress. The session will be presented virtually by 7220 clinicians, with Casper-based licensed auricular acupuncturists offering in-person demo treatments for interested attendees. 7220 Counseling Coalition is committed to LGBTQIA+ affirming, anti-racist, socially equitable care, and participants will learn the benefits of AcuRecovery, common research approaches, and the steps to becoming a Wyoming-licensed auricular acupuncturist.

12:30-1:30 p.m. — 1 CE — Suicide Risk Through a Nervous System Lens: Recognizing Physiological Warning Signs and Stabilizing in Real Time

Jennifer Vazqueztehl, LCSW

Traditional suicide risk assessment focuses on verbal reports and cognitive signs, often missing physiological dysregulation common in high-risk clients. This workshop presents a nervous-system-informed approach to identify suicide risk through autonomic patterns like hyperarousal and hypoarousal. Participants will learn to spot body-based warning signs and distinguish these risk