

Post Traumatic Growth & Suicide Prevention Agenda

Conference October 19, 2024

Overview: This conference is designed to empower medical staff, therapists, military, law enforcement, and peer support professionals with the knowledge and tools to foster post traumatic growth (PTG) in clients and within themselves. By exploring the latest research, clinical practices, and personal experiences, attendees will gain a deeper understanding of trauma, resilience, and healing.

Conference Schedule

9:00 - 9:50 AM: Keynote Address

The focus will be the introduction to PTG theory and the domains of growth.

- **Hugh D. Watt, MSW, LCSW**
 - **Summary:** Brigham young University and University of Denver graduate, Hugh Watt will provide a comprehensive overview of PTG theory, exploring its historical development, core principles, and the five primary domains of growth. He will introduce students to the importance of the Trial Action Path (TAP), Relationships, Inspirational, Appreciation, Limitless Possibilities, and Personal Strength. His personal journey will offer powerful insights into the human capacity for resilience.

10:00 - 10:50 AM: Research and Clinical Practice

The focus will be supporting research, case studies personal stories, and the impact on clients.

- **Laura E. Juarez, DPA, PA-C, MPH**
 - **Summary:** University of Touro graduate, Dr. Juarez will present empirical findings on PTG, illustrating their application through case studies. She will discuss evidence-based interventions for fostering PTG in medical settings and share her clinical experiences.

11:00 - 11:50 AM: Trauma, Resilience, and Mental Health

The focus will be on the domain of relationships, companions, and support systems.

- **Martin Andres Berta, BA**
 - **Summary:** Thomas Edison State College graduate, Mr. Berta will share his personal journey as a military veteran and first responder, highlighting the challenges of trauma and the importance of mental health support. He will discuss strategies for integrating PTG into first responder mental health care.

11:50 AM - 1:30 PM: Lunch on your own

1:30 - 2:20 PM: Systemic Perspectives on Trauma and Growth

Focus will be on inspirational influence in growth and the impact of trauma and PTG on different cultures around the world.

- **Ruth Gerritsen-McKane, PhD, LCSW (UT), LICSW (MN)**
 - **Summary:** University of Utah graduate, Dr. Gerritsen-McKane will explore the impact of trauma on individuals, families, and communities. She will discuss strategies for creating trauma-informed organizations and fostering PTG at various systems levels.

2:30 - 3:20 PM: Suicide Prevention / Physical / Mental Health Integration

Focus will be on suicide prevention, screening and the importance of the biopsychosocial model when helping clients.

- **[Pending Speaker University of Utah Physician Assistant Program]**
 - **Summary:** The speaker will delve into the critical issue of suicide prevention, emphasizing the importance of a biopsychosocial approach. They will discuss implementing PTG-informed suicide prevention strategies and the role of integrated care. Using the prospective as a primary care provider discussing the importance of screening tools, genetics, family history, holistic and medication options. Discussion of the importance of primary care as often the initial or only professional involved in patient mental health care.

3:30 - 4:20 PM: Reframing Trauma: From PTSD to PTG

Focus will be on shifting from a victim mentality to a survivor mindset. Application of PTG in practice helping students find hope and a mission or cause going forward.

- **Jason Webb, MSW, LCSW**

Summary: University of Utah graduate, Mr. Webb will challenge the prevailing focus on PTSD and advocate for a PTG-centered approach. He will discuss strategies for reframing trauma narratives and empowering clients through a PTG lens. Mr. Webb will explain the role of the Reticular Activating System and how it plays in perception. He will focus on the following: reframing trauma, the power of perspective personal stories, the role of gratitude, journaling as a tool for growth, cultivating optimism and establishing boundaries.

4:20 - 5:00 PM: Conference Summary Feedback, Surveys, Certificates, and Networking