



# Agenda Thurs & Fri

## Thursday, March 30th

**5:00pm-8:00pm**  
Registration

**5:00pm-7:00pm**  
Meet Authors/  
Podcasters

**6:00pm-7:00pm, 7:00pm-8:30pm, 8:30pm-10:00pm**  
Open Mike, Live Show - Folksong with Cory Goodrich,  
Movie: Reckoning with the Primal Wound

## Friday, March 31st

**7:00am-8:00am**  
Yoga & Registration

**8:00am-9:00am**  
Icebreakers

**8:00am-9:00am**  
Breakfast

**9:00am-10:45am** WELCOME & KEYNOTE PANEL  
with Astrid Castro, Christine Jacobsen, Chrysta Bilton and moderator Leeanne R Hay

### 11:00am-noon SESSION #1 - SPEAKER WORKSHOPS

DNA Search Angels to the Rescue

Weaving Your Unraveled Past Self  
into Your Present & Future

Minefields: Communicating in High  
Conflict Situations

How to Be an Effective Legislative  
Advocate

Self Care While Supporting Your  
Partner's Genetic Journey

**Noon-1:15pm**  
Lunch

Meet Authors, Podcasters, & Exhibitors  
Mindful Moments (last 20 minutes)

### 1:30pm-3:00pm SESSION #2 - SPEAKER PANELS

Fathers' Perspectives: Birth/Genetic/  
First and Raising/Social/Adoptive

Ethnicity Shifts from a DNA Surprise

Authors: Loss & Unknown Roots

LGBTQIA+: Coming Out Twice

Your Origins...It's Big Business

**3:00pm-3:45pm**  
Break, Refreshments, and Snacks

Meet Authors, Podcasters, & Exhibitors  
Mindful Moments (last 20 minutes)

### 3:45pm-5:15pm SESSION #3 CREATIVE & THERAPEUTIC WORKSHOPS

Setting Boundaries for Healthy  
Relationships **T**

Writing Prompts to Explore the Impact of  
Your Adoption, Donor Conception, or NPE **C**

Summit Think Tank –  
a Call to Action **C**

Nurturing Your Inner Child **T**

Tai Chi for Emotional Regulation  
& Self Care **C**

**5:30pm-6:30pm**  
COMEDY & CLOSING

**8:00pm-10:00pm**  
MOVIE & DISCUSSION: @GHOSTKINGDOM

**Saturday, April 1st**

# Agenda Sat

7:00am-8:00am

Yoga

8:00am-9:00am

Icebreakers

8:00am-9:00am

Breakfast

9:00am-10:15am

WELCOME & PLENARY SPEAKER PAUL JOSEPH FRONCZAK

10:30am-noon

SESSION #4 - SPEAKER PANELS

The Impact of Growing Up with  
Secrets & Lies

MPE

Lessons Learned & Implications for  
the Future

Adoptees

Ethics & Human Rights in Our Origins

DCP

Mothers' Perspectives: Birth/Genetic/  
First and Raising/Social/Adoptive

Podcasters: Themes of Genetic  
Identity Discoveries

Noon-1:15pm

Lunch

Meet Authors, Podcasters, & Exhibitors  
Mindful Yoga Moments (last 20 minutes)

1:30pm-3:00pm SESSION #5

CREATIVE & THERAPEUTIC WORKSHOPS

Transformative Journey Storytelling

C

Mind/Body/Energy Training for  
Self-Love & Forgiveness

C

Flash Memoir Writing

C

DNA Surprises and its Impact on  
Identity

T

Self-Care Habits: 3+ Years  
After Discovery

T

3:00pm-3:45pm

Break, Refreshments, and Snacks

Meet Authors, Podcasters, & Exhibitors  
Mindful Yoga Moments (last 20 minutes)

3:45pm-4:45pm

SESSION #6 - SPEAKER WORKSHOPS

Genetic Identity Crises and Careers:  
How to Find Your True Self at Work

Reunion & Pitfalls - Genetic Magnetism,  
Speeding, Boundaries, & Communication

Coming Out of the FOG and Into  
Your True Self

Navigating Your Genetics & Health

Squaring the Hippocratic Oath & MPEs

5:00pm-6:00pm

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Reflect & Rejuvenate with Amber Jimerson, Lesli Johnson, & Ridghaus

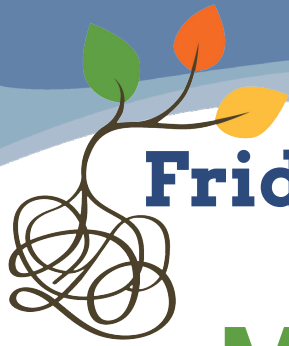
11:00am-5:00pm: Friday & Saturday THERAPY ROOM, Quiet Safe Space to Recoup

Licensed therapists are volunteering to help conference attendees should a topic, discussion, or comment raise uncomfortable or difficult feelings or memories.

Thursday, Friday, & Saturday

Video interviews with Tota.World  
to record your journey to share your  
experience so no one ever feels alone.





**Friday 3/31**

# SUMMIT MASTER OF CEREMONY



**Pekitta Tynes**

**9:15am-10:45am**

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER PANEL

### **Family Dynamics in Adoption, Assisted Reproduction, & NPEs**

The challenges that are organically a part of family life multiply exponentially when the impacts of adoption, assisted reproduction, and NPEs add multi-faceted layers to the family's dynamics. Our keynote panelists will share their personal experiences navigating the unique yet often overlapping hurdles faced by people from each of these communities.

**Astrid Castro, Christine Jacobsen, and Chrysta Bilton**

**Moderator: Leeanne R. Hay**



**Session #1  
11:00am-noon**

## SPEAKER WORKSHOPS

### **Minefields: Communicating in High Conflict Situations**

We anticipate that most people are reasonable and operate just like we do; however, it's truly a crap shoot. Will the person we're reaching out to be reasonable or have a high conflict personality? Learn methods for calming and teaching emotion self-management.

**Megan Hunter, MBA: High Conflict Institute**



## DNA Search Angels to the Rescue

Learn about the tools DNA search angels use to assist adoptees, donor conceived, NPEs and others searching for their biological families. Understand what you should do to help your Search Angel and how to avoid pitfalls. We'll also share some DNAngels' cases to inspire you.

**Aimee Rose Haynes, Jennifer Schweibinz, Kate Penney Howard, and Kelly Grace Hickey: DNAngels**



## How To Be An Effective Legislative Advocate

Tips on how to find, educate, and equip the right bill sponsor; create strong, concise talking points; coordinate powerful committee testimony; neutralize opposition; and strategize passage of legislation based on bills that passed unanimously and some that went down in flames.

**Rich Uhrlaub: Coalition for Truth & Transparency in Adoption and Indiana Senator Jon Ford**



## Weaving Your Unraveled Past Self into Your Present & Future

How many humans does it take to make a Family? Families today have blossomed to all shapes and sizes. Using narrative therapy and portraiture, we design a container to hold 'the child' and tell the truth about origins and ancestors.

**Joyce Maguire Pavao, Ed.D., LCSW, LMFT**



## Self Care While Supporting Your Partner's Genetic Journey

For significant others of people impacted by DNA discoveries. This can be an emotional time for everyone. Discover tools for self-care and support for you and your partner while they navigate a DNA surprise or the question of reunion.

**Bill Mackinnon**







Cathy Leckie Koley

# YOGA & MINDFUL MOMENTS

## SPEAKER PANELS

Session #2  
1:30pm-3:00pm

### Authors: Loss and Unknown Roots

Join our panel of authors as they discuss their experiences with loss and unknown roots. Each of us experience different types of loss when we lack genetic connectivity. Let's explore these themes with these talented writers.

**Christa Bilton (Normal Family), David B Bohl (Parallel Universes), Gail Lukasik (White Like Her), & Leeanne R. Hay (NPE: A Story Guide). Moderator: Candace Cahill (Goodbye Again)**



### Fathers' Perspectives: Birth/Genetic/First & Raising/Social/Adoptive

Every father has a unique experience in navigating fatherhood. Hearing their perspectives will broaden your understanding of familial relationships for each person impacted by the loss of genetic connection. By listening to these fathers' (adoptive, birth, genetic, and raising) experiences, it helps us to better understand our own journey.

**Christopher Emmanuel, Michael Green, PhD., Ridghaus & Robert "Bob" Chastang. Moderator: Brad Ewell**



## LGBTQIA+: Coming Out Twice Discussion

We often find it difficult to share our true identity publicly. This is compounded for those from the LGBTQIA+ community when connecting with new family. These experiences can benefit anyone navigating coming out about their genetic identity. Let's talk.

**Chris Thomlinson**



## Ethnicity Shifts from a DNA Surprise

DNA surprises are complicated enough on their own. Add a significant ethnicity change and the ramifications can be multiplied exponentially. Loss of connection with your culture can lead to feelings of being an impostor. Discover how our panelists have successfully navigated these challenges.

**Anita Foeman, PhD, Jodi Girard, & Oliver Leembruggen**

**Moderator: David Berry**



## Your Origins...It's Big Business

Being donor conceived, adopted, or the product of prostitution indicates a possibility of a transactional nature to your origins. Join these panelists as they tease out the implications of the burden this may add for those who are products of these industries.

**Andrew MacLeod, Peter Boni, & Renee Gelin, Moderator: Cassandra Adams**



## ENTERTAINERS



**Brian Stanton**



**Cory Goodrich**



**Laura High**



**Pekitta Tynes**



**Rebecca Autumn Sansom**

### Session #3

# CREATIVE & THERAPEUTIC WORKSHOPS

3:45pm-5:15pm

## Summit Think Tank – a Call to Action

Join us as we brainstorm a call to action for our communities. How can we (1) build bridges between our communities, identify the best means to (2) bear witness to the past, (3) support each other in our healing, and what actions can we take together to (4) enact legislation guaranteeing our right to know our identity and (5) inform societal understanding of the impacts of disrupted genetic continuity.

**Kara Rubinstein Deyerin, JD, LLM**



## Setting Boundaries for Healthy Relationships

When impacted by a DNA surprise or starting the reunion process, it is important to set personal boundaries that are clear and effectively communicated. Boundaries help us create personal space that is comfortable, safe and establishes mutual respect in your relationships. Learn how to identify unhealthy connections and build strong relationships with the people in your life.

**Krista Driver, PhD, Mariposa Center**



## Nurturing Your Inner Child

When the world feels in utter turmoil, there is a child within who desperately needs nurturing and love regardless of how old you are or where you are from, where you go, or what you are doing. Meet and greet your own inner child and develop a plan to nurture and care for the child within.

**Annette Becklund, MSW, LCSW, NBCCH**



## Writing Prompts to Explore The Impact of Your Adoption, Donor Conception, or NPE

Writing can be a powerful tool for introspection, self-discovery, and as an aid in self-healing. You will have an opportunity to explore your emotions, language choices, triggers, relationships, and identity issues through therapeutic writing prompts. This is a safe space to explore how far you have come, where you are today and maybe even where you want to go.

**Joni Mantell, LCSW, IAC Counseling Center**





## Tai Chi for Emotional Regulation & Self Care

Enjoy this shortened Yang Style form choreographed to The Serenity Prayer for stress reduction and self-regulation. Learn about the importance of self-care for addiction and trauma recovery and how movement can regulate emotions naturally. All ability types are welcome.

**Theresa Knorr, CARC RCP**



# Saturday 4/1

9:15am-10:15am

# PLENARY SPEAKER

## True Identity



When a DNA test dispels the myth of who and whose he is, Paul launches a pursuit to discover the details of his life before his abandonment as a toddler on a busy city sidewalk. The impact of being an “unidentified living person” drives his relentless search to know his name, to find his family, to learn about his cultural heritage—to uncover his true identity. We all have a right to know our true identity.

**Paul Joseph Fronczak**

Session #4  
10:30am-noon

# SPEAKER PANELS

## The Impact of Growing Up with Secrets & Lies (MPE Speakers)

Secrets fester and unconsciously negatively impact a person’s sense of self and their relationships. Lies have far-reaching consequences for the secret holder and their family. The panelists will discuss the effects of untruths, withheld information, and the unanticipated baggage they bring.

**Julie Knott, Maria Leonard Olsen, & Paul Joseph Fronczak**  
**Moderator: Michele Dawson Haber**



Moderator



## Lessons Learned & Implications for the Future (Adoptee Speakers)

Let's not repeat the mistakes of the past. The panelists will review historical missteps in the adoption world and explore the ways different groups, organizations, and countries are attempting to right past wrongs and ensure a more ethical future.

**Dee McGee, Jane Sliwka, & Lori Knisely. Moderator: Amber Jimerson**



## Ethics & Human Rights in Our Origins (DCP Speakers)

No one's conception should be facilitated unethically. Alternative family building must take place in a principled environment. The U.S. is the only country that has not signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Children. The panelists will discuss advocacy and reform in this highly unregulated space.

**Cassandra Adams, Jeff Thomas Weatherhead, & Sebastiana Gianci, DrPH; . Moderator: Peter Boni**



## Podcasters: Themes of Genetic Identity Discoveries

Podcasters are in a unique position to identify the overarching themes associated with adoption, assisted conception, and non-paternal events. Join your favorite podcasters as they discuss what they've learned from interviewing us.

**Alexis Hourseult (DNA Surprises), Damon Davis (Who Am I Really), Lily Wood (NPE Stories), & Louise Jo McLoughlin (You Look Like Me).**

**Moderator: Eve Sturges, MA, LMFT (Everything's Relative)**



## Mothers' Perspectives: Birth/Genetic/First & Raising/Social/Adoptive

Society puts a higher burden on moms. But what if we each took a moment to walk in our mother's shoes? Gain understanding and empathy for these moms (adoptive, birth, genetic, raising) and their diverse experiences.

**Beth Syverson, Mimi Janes, & Tanya Arnold. Moderator: Jennifer Fahlsing**



Moderator

### Session #5

## CREATIVE & THERAPEUTIC WORKSHOPS

1:30pm-3:00pm

### Transformative Journey Storytelling

Participants are guided through a creative arts technique that allows for the development of metaphors, imagery, and symbols that become a source of strength and meaning. Storytelling is an ancient part of our shared humanity and a powerful way we organize and make sense of our experiences, develop self-understanding, and strengthen a sense of belonging.

**Carla Barnes, MS, LPC**



### Mind/Body/Energy Training for Self-Love & Forgiveness

An essential component to healing is learning how to re-connect with yourself, love yourself, and recognize your own value. This can be achieved through training your mind and body with simple energy exercises and meditation to bring yourself back into balance. Understand and experience how simple energy exercises can help with your inner healing.

**Danielle Gaudette**



### Flash Memoir Writing

Let's write "Flash memoirs." Gain confidence in #own voices. Jump start getting your story down, whether you're writing for friends & family only, for short published pieces, or to pen a memoir. Quickly master the options for "point of view" and "unreliable narrator" and understand the five parts of a "narrative arc" in #found family stories.

**Michele Kriegman**



## **DNA Surprises and its Impact on Identity**

Using a framework to understand the journey of integrating DNA surprises may help to ease the overwhelming emotions, sense of loss, and identity disruption that accompanies this process. Guided by research, we will explore the four phases - initial discovery, identity exploration, identity reconstruction, and synthesis of and shift in worldview - which individuals commonly traverse.

**Michele Grethel, PhD, LCSW**



## **Self-Care Habits: 3+ Years After Discovery**

Because the processing never ends, self-care must play an integral role in the journey of everyone who makes a genetic discovery. Explore tools to continue the healing process and help you be prepared if and when triggered. Empower your mental and physical well-being to hold on to how far you've come and to continue growing.

**Ereka Howard**



# **SPEAKER WORKSHOPS**

**Session #6  
3:45pm-4:45pm**

## **Reunion & Pitfalls - Genetic Magnetism, Speeding, Boundaries, and Communication**

There is often an intense magnetism when we meet genetic family for the first time. Learn how to deal with these emotions as well as identifying the pitfalls and strategies to give your reunion the best chance of success. Understanding the hazards lurking in reunion might offer a second chance at family connection.

**Leslie Mackinnon, LCSW**



## **Genetic Identity Crises and Careers: How to Find Your True Self at Work**

Research shows "family of origin" is a critical factor in shaping career identity. What happens when "family of origin" is complicated? Learn how untangling your roots can help you better understand career choices and find greater work satisfaction.

**Michelle Tullier, PhD**





## Coming out of the FOG and Into Your True Self

Coming out of the FOG (Fear, Obligation, Guilt) occurs in phases as awareness emerges and one confronts, processes, and resolves the impact of genetic bewilderment, withheld identity information, and betrayal by secrecy on one's identity development. Together we will explore the FOG Fazes one must move through to leave the FOG behind, develop an integrated sense of self, and embark on continued healing and empowerment.



**Amy Barker D'Alessandro, LMHC and Jennifer Joy Phoenix, LSWAIC**

## Navigating Your Genetics & Health

Discover what a genetic counselor does and doesn't do. What are the options when family history is limited or unavailable? Learn the difference between the DNA testing platforms: direct-to-consumer, medical-grade proactive testing, whole genome or exome sequencing. See how to navigate family history information and integration genetic information into your life.



**Gina Davis, MS, CGC**

## Squaring the Hippocratic Oath & MPEs

Many medical organizations and articles endorse non-disclosure of an MPE. Let's discuss the moral hazard of this approach and how to improve medical professionals' management of an MPE to ensure genetic transparency as well as a child's and family's long-term well-being.



**Richard Wenzel, Pharm.D. CPPS**

**5:00pm-6:00pm**

# SUMMIT WRAP-UP

## Reflect & Rejuvenate

Let's spend our last hour together in reflection and rejuvenation. While we walk in the shadow of our ancestors, parents, and loved ones, we do so in our own light. We have a right to know who we are. We have a right to heal. We will turn our past into purpose and power. We will stand together.



**Amber Jimerson & Ridghaus**