

Bridging Counseling and Wellness: Integrative Mental Health Solutions

A 3-Day Continuing Education Workshop Hosted by The Kid's Therapy Center: Kids
Therapy Training Institute
October 16th – 18th, 2025
Bismarck, ND

DAY 1:

8:00AM – 8:30AM:

Doors Open

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM:

Welcome & Opening Remarks

An overview of the workshop and core concepts in integrative mental health.
Exploring course goals and the importance of a whole-body approach to mental well-being.
Valerie Meyers-Bitz – Our story; from a clinic that specialized in trauma to a clinic that integrates wellness and hope.

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM:

Foundational Concepts in Integrative Mental Health

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz and Dwight Franklin

Introduction to the core principles of integrative mental health, the brain-body connection and foundational physiological markers such as digestion, blood sugar regulation, and immune function.
Key functional terms—detoxification, methylation, homocysteine, and histamine—will be introduced alongside an overview of how gut health, liver function, and genetics influence mental and cognitive health.

9:30 AM – 10:00 AM:

Rethinking Symptoms – The Body's Clues – Beyond Behaviors

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz and Dwight Franklin

Explore the deeper meaning behind symptoms through the “overflow concept” of health, considering how trauma, environment, genetics, toxins, and lifestyle factors interact.
Utilize tools like the Stress Meter and symptom red flags to recognize early signs of imbalance in areas such as blood sugar, sleep, hormones, and thought patterns. Practice asking lifestyle-based questions to uncover the interconnected roots of physical and emotional symptoms.

10:00 – 10:15 AM: Break

10:15 AM – 10:30 AM:

Case Study in Integrative Mental Health

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz

Follow a real-world example illustrating how physical, emotional, and environmental factors can shape mental health symptoms.

10:30 - 11:15 AM:

The Gut–Brain Connection

With Dr. Deedra Wells

The gut microbiome and gastrointestinal health influence neurotransmitter production, emotional regulation, and cognitive function.

Recognize signs of dysbiosis that may contribute to mental health symptoms, and utilize strategies such as nutrition, probiotics, and lifestyle interventions to support mood and behavior. Connect digestive health to anxiety, depression, and psychoeducational insights for clinical practice.

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM:

Genetics & Epigenetics – From 'It Runs in the Family' to Hope Through Change

With Dwight Franklin

Explore how specific gene variations—such as MTHFR, COMT, MTRR, and DAO—impact detoxification, neurotransmitter processing, and mood regulation.

Utilize insights from epigenetics to understand how nutrition, environment, detoxification and lifestyle choices can positively influence gene expression and support mental wellness.

12:00 - 1:00 PM: LUNCH

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM:

Movement & Mood

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz

The role of physical activity in regulating the nervous system, improving focus, and supporting neurotransmitter balance.

Utilize somatic practices, trauma-informed yoga, and movement-based interventions to enhance emotional resilience and mental well-being.

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM:

Hormones & Mental Health

With Dr. Deedra Wells

Explore how hormonal changes across the lifespan—ranging from precocious puberty to andropause and menopause—affect mood, cognition, and emotional resilience in both men and women.

Examine the role of adrenal function in stress regulation and hormone balance, and utilize Dutch testing, nutrigenomics, and targeted lifestyle and nutritional strategies to support hormone metabolism and mental wellness.

3:00 - 3:15 PM: Break

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM:

Interdisciplinary Panel

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz, Dr. Deedra Wells, and Dwight Franklin

Gain insight from multiple provider perspectives on collaboration, scope of practice, and real-world application of integrative mental health care.

**Thursday Evening SPECIAL ENGAGEMENT – NON -CME
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6:30 PM – 8:30 PM: Optional Evening Session – Genetics: A Deeper Look

With Dwight Franklin

Explore the practical side of clinical genetics through real case studies and guided interpretation of genetic profiles.

Identify patterns across key SNPs, understand how gene variations influence symptoms, and develop personalized strategies using lifestyle, nutrition, and supplementation.

Learn how to simplify complex genetic information so clients can understand and act on it without feeling overwhelmed.

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DAY 2: Integrative Nutrition and Wellness for Mental Health

8:00AM – 8:30AM:

Doors Open

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM:

Registration & Welcome Back

Real World Discussion. Story by Valerie Meyers-Bitz

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM:

Nutrition Basics

With Dr. Deedra Wells

Establish a biochemical foundation for how nutrition supports brain health, emotional regulation, and cognitive function. Learn how macronutrients and micronutrients serve as building blocks for neurotransmitter production, hormone balance, and gut integrity.

Explore key principles like blood sugar regulation, nutrient density, and label reading, using tools like “Good, Better, Best” to help clients make informed, brain-supportive food choices.

9:30 AM – 10:30 AM:

Nutrition for Emotional Balance

With Hannah Woll

Explore how diet influences mood by examining the impact of food on inflammation, brain function, and emotional regulation.

Differentiate between foods that fuel versus those that inflame the brain and consider how therapeutic diets can be used to support treatment goals.

Learn to apply nutrition strategies as treatment goals in a mental health setting.

10:30 AM – 10:45 AM: Break

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM:

Advanced Strategies & Testing

With Dwight Franklin and Dr. Deedra Wells

Explore advanced testing options—from Organic Acids Tests (OATs) and food sensitivity panels to microbiome analysis and genetic markers—that uncover hidden contributors to mental health symptoms.

Learn how to view standard labs like homocysteine, thyroid, cholesterol, and vitamin D through a functional lens, making test interpretation more accessible and actionable for every practitioner.

12:00 - 1:00 PM – LUNCH

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM:

Vitamins, Minerals, and Herbs for Mental Wellness

With Dwight Franklin and Dr. Deedra Wells

Examine the role of essential nutrients and researched botanicals in supporting brain chemistry, mood regulation, and emotional well-being. Learn how compounds such as B-vitamins, magnesium, omega-3s, probiotics, curcumin, and digestive enzymes influence neurotransmitter pathways and the gut-brain axis.

Gain evidence-based strategies for integrating supplements and natural ingredients into mental health care safely and effectively.

2:45 PM – 3:45 PM:

Legal & Ethical Considerations

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz

Clarify the legal and ethical boundaries of integrative mental health practice, including how to responsibly discuss nutrition and supplements within your professional scope.

Learn how to use disclaimers, navigate informed consent, and document integrative recommendations while maintaining compliance with licensure and ethical standards.

3:45 PM- 4:15 PM:

Restructuring the Process

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz

Learn practical ways to integrate lifestyle-based questions into the intake process, create supportive handouts, and develop effective referral systems. Explore strategies that help reframe care through an integrative lens—offering structure, clarity, and renewed hope for every client.

4:15 PM – 4:30 PM:

Final Reflections

Solidify key insights from both days and set clear intentions for integrating nutrition, lifestyle, and functional strategies into your ongoing mental health practice.

Open Q&A, and the next practical steps for applying what you've learned.

6:30 PM – 8:30 PM:

Friday Evening Special Engagement - *Business Development for Integrative Practices.* (NON-CME)

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz and Dr. Deedra Wells

This extended evening session offers an in-depth look at building and sustaining a successful integrative mental health practice. Learn how to create a trusted referral network, market holistic services authentically, and navigate the use of informed consent, FDA disclaimers, and professional boundaries when discussing wellness and supplements.

Gain hands-on skills in supplement literacy, including how to read labels, evaluate quality and bioavailability, and distinguish between helpful, hyped, and harmful ingredients.

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DAY 3: Integrative Nutrition and Wellness for Mental Health; *Integrative, Action-Oriented Workshop*

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz, Dr. Deedra Wells, and Dwight Franklin

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM:

Doors Open

11:00 AM – 11:45 PM:

Beyond the Symptoms

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz, Dr. Deedra Wells, and Dwight Franklin

Learn how to spot patterns, connect the dots, and create next steps for lasting mental wellness. Each faculty member will review how they begin to evaluate the symptoms present.

11:45 PM – 12:30 PM:

Bridges and Barriers: Drug Interactions in Mental Health Practice

With Dr. Deedra Wells

This evidence-based lecture explores the biochemical intersections between psychiatric medications nutrients, and botanicals. Drawing from pharmacology and functional medicine, this lecture examines how psychotropics alter nutrient status, how botanicals influence enzymatic and receptor pathways, and how to integrate both safely in clinical practice. Learn to recognize depletion patterns, and design synergistic, patient-centered protocols that support mental and metabolic health.

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM: Lunch

1:30 – 1:45 PM

Mini Movement Lab

With Valerie Meyer-Bitz and guest

Experience how intentional movement resets energy and mood.

1:45 PM - 3:35 PM:

Symptom Detective for Depression and Anxiety

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz and Dwight Franklin

Mental health symptoms often tell a bigger story Explore the functional biology behind low mood, worry loops, and stuck thoughts. Build personalized, lab-free protocols using targeted nutrition, micro-movement, and cognitive strategies to regulate the low moods or suicidal thinking.

Symptom Detective for Anxiety and Panic

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz and Dwight Franklin

Explore the functional biology behind racing thoughts, anxiety, worry loops, and perfectionism—symptoms often driven by stress, food sensitivities, or genetic tendencies. Build personalized, lab-free protocols using breathwork, micro-movement, and cognitive strategies to regulate an overstimulated brain and restore mental clarity.

Symptom Detective for Attention and Defiance

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz and Dwight Franklin

Learn how imbalances in blood sugar, sleep, and neurotransmitter pathways like dopamine and glutamate can contribute to attention and focus challenges.

3:45 PM – 4:15 PM:

Implementation & Action Steps

With Valerie Meyers-Bitz and Dwight Franklin

Wrap up with a collaborative review of the day. Take home Monday-ready tools: symptom maps, supplement literacy guides, and integrative protocols—designed to empower immediate, sustainable implementation.

4:15 PM – 4:30 PM

Final Reflections and Closure