



Virtual

Grit: A Workshop To Energize, Elevate And Educate Women In Public Defense

**Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts,
Defender Services Office Training Division**

January 31 – February 8, 2022

Final Agenda

We are pleased to present the second virtual *Grit: A Workshop To Energize, Elevate And Educate Women In Public Defense*, open to all members of the legal team, including legal assistants, paralegals, investigators, interpreters, mitigation specialists, administrative officers, and lawyers. Women in indigent criminal defense have many successes to celebrate and also face unique challenges. Participants in this small, women-focused program will find an active, collaborative, supportive community. This training will address a variety of topics as experienced by women including the journey to legal work, developing one's brand, improving communication in the office and in the courtroom, embracing strengths, identifying leadership goals, navigating relationships with colleagues and clients, building teams, understanding vicarious trauma, exploring work-life balance and self-care practices, and more.

Participants will hear about these topics from inspiring women from all roles on the indigent defense team who have made their mark in this profession. They will also have opportunities in small groups to discuss these topics through conversation and structured exercises with the goal of enhancing effectiveness as a legal professional while maintaining balance and authenticity in one's personal life. Participants will learn about scientific research on the impact of stress and tension on performance and will have opportunities to take a strengths assessment and sample wellness practices.

Whether you are at the beginning of your career or further along and hitting your stride, assuming leadership roles and maybe facing a roadblock, this workshop is for you. It is introspective, retrospective and prospective. By the end of this training, participants will appreciate anew how the community of women defense professionals is large and welcoming, fiercely committed to the mission and absolutely essential to the representation of indigent clients. Participants will set goals, learn strategies for handling challenges that arise, and strengthen a network of women colleagues upon whom they can depend.

Although **Grit** is geared towards women/women-identifying topics, colleagues of all genders are welcome to attend the conference. We encourage applicants to understand that the conference is intentionally designed to provide space for voices that are far too often ignored, silenced, or shut out, and to remain mindful of supporting that vision during the conference sessions.

Grit is a live course that engages participants over the course of five days, from Monday, January 31 - Wednesday, February 2 and Monday, February 7 – Tuesday, February 8 (see calendar).

To capture the energy of our speakers and promote community connections, this virtual course will be entirely live (except for our library of wellness practices customized for **Grit** that participants can do on their own). Participants will meet in video rooms for nine live presentations, five small group sessions, and several optional social gatherings including one with live music. Each of the five days of this workshop starts at 2:00 p.m. EST and ends by 5:45 p.m. at the latest (social events may run a bit longer).

We have a limited number of spots in this workshop; therefore, each participant must commit to actively attending all live presentations (8 hours total) and small group sessions @ 6 hours total).

Thank you for joining us on our second virtual iteration of **Grit**.

January / February 2022 GRIT Calendar				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2:00-2:15 Intro 2:15-3:30 Panel: Voices of Us 3:30-3:40 Break 3:40-4:15 Small Group 1 4:15-4:20 Break 4:20-5:15 Leveraging Influence or Overcoming Gendered Communication 2:00-5:15 (3.25 hrs) Jan. 31	11:45-1:45 Peacemaking & Healing Circle (limited to 12) 2:00-3:30 Small Group 2 3:30-3:45 Break 3:45-5:00 Panel: Race, Women 5:00-6:00 Social Hour (optional) 2:00-5/6:00 (3-4 hrs) Feb. 1	2:00-2:45 Strategic Wellness 2:45-4:40 Small Group 3 4:40-4:45 Break 4:45-5:45 How to Live Well 2:00-5:45 (3.6 hrs) Feb. 2	Please take care of yourself, and we'll see you on Monday! Feb. 3	Feb. 4
2:00-3:00 The Practice of Everyday Self-Care 3:00-3:15 Break 3:15-5:00 Small Group 4 5:00-6:00 Social Hour (optional) 2:00-5/6:00 (3-4 hrs) Feb. 7	2:00-2:45 Power of Communication 2:45-2:50 Break 2:50-3:50 Panel: Embracing We 3:50-3:55 Break 3:55-4:45 Small Group 5 4:45-5:00 Grit, Grace & Gratitude 2:00-5:00 (3 hrs) Feb. 8	Feb. 9	Feb. 10	Feb. 11

All times are in Eastern Standard Time.

Monday, January 31, 2022**2:00 – 2:15 p.m.****Introduction and Welcoming Remarks**Cait Clarke, *Chief, Office of Defender Services, Washington, DC*Lisa Lunt, *Attorney Advisor, Training Division, Defender Services Office, Washington, DC***2:15 – 3:30 p.m.****Voices of Us: Insights and Inspiration from Impactful Women**Ubong Akpan, *Assistant Federal Public Defender, Office of the Federal Public Defender for the District of Columbia, Washington, DC (moderator)*Joan Baez, *Legal Assistant, Program Operations Division, Defender Services Office, Washington, DC (TDY)*Jen Uyeda, *Chief of Training, Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Central District of California, Los Angeles, CA*Mary Veral, *Mitigation Specialist, Los Angeles, CA*Kim Whaley, *Investigator, Office of the Federal Public Defender, Office of the Federal Public Defender for the District of Maryland, Greenbelt, MD*


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Standard Time.

How much energy is generated when you gather five determined, dynamic and daring women in one room? Join us and find out. We are kicking off this program with a conversation among five intrepid women who have made substantial contributions to our field and to the profile of women in the process. Share in their wide-ranging, personal discussion about their accomplishments, their experiences as women in the legal field, and their thoughts on advancing our collective interests.

3:30 – 3:40 p.m.**Break****3:40 – 4:15 p.m.****Small Group Session 1: Introductions**

“What! You, too? I thought I was the only one.”

Meeting in small groups for the first time, participants will introduce themselves and share hopes and expectations for the program with new friends.

4:15 – 4:20 p.m.**Break****4:20 – 5:15 p.m.****Option 1: Leveraging Influence: Leading When You Don't Have The Corner Office**Joan Baez, *Legal Assistant, Program Operations Division, Defender Services Office, Washington, DC (TDY)*Isabel Sanchez-Cummings, *Investigator, Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of Ohio, Cleveland, OH*

A common misconception/myth of leadership is that one must have a formal leadership position to lead. While authority is important, we tend to underestimate the power of influence. To get the job done, most roles today involve having to influence without the benefit of positional authority. Increased demands of working from home, increased self-direction, the growing demand for greater cross-function collaboration, and the need to do more with less, your ability to influence your manager, staff, peers, colleagues, clients, suppliers and other stakeholders will determine how effective you can be and how much you can

enjoy what you do. This presentation will identify common interoffice issues, offer empathy and share some strategies on how to feel empowered and lead.

Option 2: Confronting and Overcoming “Gendered” Communication in the Courtroom

Elizabeth Lippy, *Executive Director, Trial Advocacy Consulting & Training, Philadelphia, PA*

Sara Jacobson, *Executive Director of Training, Public Defender Association of Pennsylvania (PDAP), Philadelphia, PA*

Marian Braccia, *Director of Trial Advocacy, Practice Professor of Law, Temple University Beasley School of Law, Philadelphia, PA*

Women are treated differently both outside (e.g., lack of promotions, lesser pay) and inside the courtroom (e.g., women are interrupted more often). After discussing the research and statistics that back this up, the panel provides concrete actions female attorneys can take to change the narrative and gain confidence & courage to become better trial attorneys.

5:15 p.m.

Adjourn for the Day

Grit was planned this year by Joan Baez, Lisa Lunt, Joan Politeo and Isabel Sanchez-Cummings. Shannon Adarway and Rolan McClarry are the logistics whizzes for the program. We are grateful to Jennifer Kaplan and Tamara Mulembo who were part of the original Grit creation team in 2019.

Tuesday, February 1, 2022**11:45 – 1:45 p.m. Restorative Practices in Action: Peacemaking and Healing Circles**

Vivianne Guevara, *Director of Client & Mitigation Services, Federal Defenders of New York, Inc., Brooklyn, NY*

Restorative and Transformative Justice, through the use of peacemaking and healing circles, are processes rooted in global indigenous practices. Restorative circles are used to team-build, plan, and solve conflict within systems, businesses, schools, families, and communities. Peacemaking circles can address conflict and harm approach communication in a non-binary way; the entire circle is responsible for each other and committed to holding space for each other's harm and healing. In this experiential session, we will learn one process for circlekeeping while sharing and reflecting in our own restorative circle.

This session is limited to 12 people. Pre-registration required.

Special
Session

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2:00 – 3:30 p.m. Small Group Session 2: Learning, Growing, Giving

This session is dedicated to discussing each group member's professional identity and goals and formulating a path to achieve a future that promises challenge, fulfillment and happiness. The group will also discuss the value of mentorship in making goals a reality.

3:30 – 3:45 p.m. Break**3:45 – 5:00 p.m. Race, Women and Powerful Voices**

Liliana Coronado, *Vice President and Counsel, The Brimley Group, Pasadena, CA*
Dawn Scott, *Program Analyst & Program Manager for the Diversity Fellowship Program, Program Operations Division, Defender Services Office, Washington, DC*
Callie Steele, *Senior Litigator, Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Central District of California, Los Angeles, CA (moderator)*
Lisa Wayne, *Executive Director, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, Denver, CO*

Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor famously attributed her wisdom to her richness of experience as a Latina or Latinx woman. Indeed, diversity in leadership is a rising tide that lifts all boats. This panel discussion will be a celebration and acknowledgment of the contributions of five diverse female legal professionals who have pioneered, led, and invigorated. They will discuss achieving equity in leadership at the intersection of race and gender, surviving the spotlight, and mentorship.

5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Social Hour (optional)



Join faculty and colleagues in **The Nitty Gritty**, our virtual coffee shop/pub/café for a totally optional gathering. Bring your favorite beverage and snack, and we'll take a break together.

Wednesday, February 2, 2022

2:00 – 2:45 p.m.

Strategic Wellness & Self Care To Help Maximizing Your Strengths

Anana Harris Parris, *Founder and CEO, [The Self Care Agency](#)*

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This workshop led by Anana Johari Harris Parris, founder of the Wellness and Justice Group & The Self Care Agency focuses on teaching a strategic applicable framework for day to day maximization of your strengths. All too often we hear the word strengths but we can't get the idea of our 'weaknesses' out of minds long enough to develop a sound practical wellness and self care strategy. Participants will leave the workshop with strategies to shift a pessimistic mindset to an proactive mindset using their strengths. Participants will also leave with a clearer understanding of how to optimize on their strengths within a strategic wellness and self-care oriented framework.

2:45 – 4:40 p.m.

Small Group Session #3: Doing it My Way

Participants will explore their own journey toward authenticity by completing a strengths assessment. Participants should complete the assessment before the small group session (ideally a day before). In session, we will discuss our strengths, how to lean in to those strengths, embracing vulnerability, and overcoming any fears we might have in realizing our strengths. Finally, participants will identify three ways they can manifest those strengths in their professional identity.

4:40 – 4:45 p.m.

Break

4:45 – 5:45 p.m.

How to Live Well in an Uncertain World

Kimberly Morrow, *LCSW, [Anxiety Training](#)*

Join Kimberly Morrow as she engages us in the important and timely topic of living well with uncertainty and distress. Kimberly will cover several ways to pivot with anxiety so we are living a full life, discuss ways to manage our overwhelm, and show us how to choose uncertainty rather than feel like a victim to it. Her talk will include specific strategies that we will practice and use immediately in our lives.

5:45 p.m.

Adjourn for the Day

Monday, February 7, 2022

2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

The Practice of Everyday Self-Care

Isabel Sanchez-Cummings, *Investigator, Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of Ohio, Cleveland, OH*

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Having spent several decades as a clinical social worker, Ms. Sanchez-Cummings has a wealth of experience advising on how to move through each day minimizing stress and maximizing calm and clarity. Learn very practical strategies that don't take much time but that noticeably improve one's well-being.

3:00 – 3:15 p.m.

Break

3:15 – 5:00 p.m.

Small Group Session #4: Filling Our Cups

This small group session provides an opportunity for participants to delve more deeply into insights gained from self-assessments on mindset, perfectionism, and stress. In this supportive setting, participants will have an opportunity to discuss experiences on self-care which serve women in the highly stressful work of public defense maintain balance, well-being and cognitive health.

5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Social Hour with live music (optional)



The Nitty Gritty will be open again! Join our virtual coffee shop/pub/café for a totally optional gathering. Bring your favorite beverage and snack, and hear some live music.

Tuesday, February 8, 2022**2:00 – 2:45 p.m.****The Power of Communication in Leadership**Cheryl Procter-Rogers, *Executive and Associate Director, Ernst & Young, Chicago, IL*

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Standard Time.

Communication is central to all aspects of life. It's a critical skill for maintaining your personal as well as professional relationships. Effective communication builds trust, establishes credibility, and lays the foundation for great leadership and high functioning teams. Cheryl draws on her more than 40 years of experience as an award-winning communications and business strategist and executive coach for this interactive workshop. She will explore a variety of communications strategies, including feedback, avoiding toxic language and more. Attendees will leave the session with their own action plan for success.

2:45 – 2:50 p.m.**Break****2:50 – 3:50 p.m.****Panel: Embracing “We” instead of “Me”: Celebrating the Joys and Navigating the Complexities of Working in Teams**Donetta Bray, *Chief Paralegal, Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of Ohio, Cleveland, OH*Dana Harrison, *Mitigation Specialist, Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Eastern District of Arkansas, Little Rock, AR*Zainab Khan, *Attorney, Federal Defenders of San Diego, Inc. for the Southern District of California, San Diego, CA*Desiree Lassiter, *Assistant Federal Defender, Office of the Federal Public Defender for the District of Maryland, Baltimore, MD*Anu Vishwamitra, *Director of Mitigation, George Capital Defenders, Atlanta, GA (moderator)*

Teams are complicated systems. They are, after all, made up of a group of people bringing unique personalities, preferences and predicaments. A cohesive team is beautiful to behold; it inspires each team member, and it is easy to see how much more the team achieves as a whole rather than a collection of individual accomplishments. Hear from our colleagues how they have learned to form and maintain strong, successful, satisfying teams.

But what if your team doesn't gel or team members can't work out conflicts? Have you been part of a team that leaves you feeling frustrated and even angry? These common scenarios do not necessarily spell the end of the team but, rather, they may be resolved with creativity and commitment. Our colleagues will share strategies that have worked for them.

“I do my best because I'm counting on you counting on me.” — *Maya Angelou*

3:50 – 3:55 p.m.**Break****3:55 – 4:45 p.m.****Small Group Session #5: Let's Talk Teamwork**

Take this opportunity to discuss your own experiences with teamwork and communication in your office. Participants will have an opportunity to complete

a team effectiveness assessment and reflect on the results with each other. Finally, each person will set goals for strengthening team relationships.

4:45 – 5:00 p.m.

Grit, Grace and Gratitude: Wisdom from Lori James-Townes

Lori James-Townes, *Executive Director, National Association of Public Defense* & *President, Expand-Now*

5:00 p.m.

Closing Remarks / Adjournment

Grit Wellness Practices

We are honored that three wise, strong, kind women are sharing their practices with us. Colette, Monica and Anita stay healthy, whole and connected through their chosen daily practices. If you have already found the joy and vast benefits of yoga, mindfulness, tai chi or qi gong, welcome home. If you have not, come on in and discover these ancient disciplines.

Lisa provides some ideas if you are interested in starting a gratitude practice as soon as right now.

Please visit our learning management system to experience these recorded practices, designed specifically for Grit, on your own schedule and pace.



Yoga for Legal Warriors and Goddesses

Colette Tvedt, *Criminal Defense Attorney, Tvedt Law, Denver, CO*

ZEN I have been a criminal defense lawyer for over 25 years. Like many of you, I pour myself into my work as a defender. In 2006, I moved from Massachusetts to Seattle, WA to begin a new job with the Seattle public defenders. It was a challenging transition and I was feeling a bit burnt out. I met an inspiring spiritual leader who introduced me to yoga and meditation. My yoga practice has become an integral part of my daily self-care because if I am taking care of myself, I can take better care of my clients! In 2017 I got my 300-hour yoga teaching certificate and I have been teaching classes for public defenders in CO now via Zoom! Yoga has made me a better – more effective- lawyer/mother/partner/friend.

I will start the session with breathing exercises and some gentle stretching. I will then go through Sun A and Sun B postures (with some nice Warrior and Goddess poses) and will end with a relaxing savasana and sound bowl closing. I integrate an intention throughout the class to help center and inspire the class participants. It will be a fun, gentle flow.



MINDFULNESS

Why Mindfulness Matters for Federal Defenders / Lawyers

Monica Jordan M.Ed, MCMBT, *Founder, Embrace Mindfulness: Resources for Conscious Living, Annapolis, MD*

The legal profession is in a mental health crisis. The latest data paints a bleak and alarming picture, with stress & anxiety, depression, burnout and substance abuse demonstrating how the pressures felt by many lawyers manifest in health risks. The stakes are too high for inaction. And mindfulness can help.

An amazing amount of scientific research suggests that mindfulness may be crucial to deal with one of the biggest health issues facing the world today: Stress. Mindfulness tools will show you how to calm your mind when you are overwhelmed by intrusive thoughts, how to improve your focus, how to work with your emotions when you experience bouts of anxiety about your work, your relationships, your children, or your lack of time or purpose in life, and much more.

If you would like to be more present for yourself and others, if you would like more joy in your life, then this meditation is for you. Monica has been practicing mindfulness for 23 years and teaching it for 15.



FOCUS

Tai Chi Practice for Grit

Master Anita Seto, *Senior Instructor, Dennis Brown Shaolin Wu-Shu Training Center, Silver Spring, MD*

Tai Chi means supreme ultimate, and practicing it uses little or no muscular power. Instead, easy-to-learn tai chi seeks to develop and train chi, the human body's life-force. An old Asian saying goes, If you study Tai Chi, you will have the flexibility of a child, the strength of a lumberjack and the wisdom of a sage. This ancient, fascinating art is the most relaxing and meditative physical exercise in the world. Yet, when used by experts, tai chi overcomes opponents by fighting without fighting.

Tai Chi also produces health benefits. It makes an excellent choice for promoting strength, health, fitness and good posture. It also increases mental focus.



SOUL

Qi Gong Practice for Grit

Master Anita Seto, *Senior Instructor, Dennis Brown Shaolin Wu-Shu Training Center, Silver Spring, MD*

Qi gong is a mind and body practice that can improve one's health and well-being. Qi refers to the life force or vital energy, which is the energy that gives power to the mind, body and spirit. Gong refers to work or gathering of Qi.

Qi gong practices can include movement, breathing exercises, meditation, sound, self-massage and focused intent. There are likely thousands of forms of Qi gong that have been developed over the years.

Qi gong enhances the flow of energy in the energetic pathways called meridians that are used in acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine. There are thousands of studies that show the effectiveness of Qi gong in improving myriad health conditions. Qi gong is an Institution in China. For its wellness and anti-aging features, Qi gong is considered an element of daily living.



The Silver Lining: Creating and Sustaining a Gratitude Practice

Lisa Lunt, *Attorney Advisor, Training Division, Defender Services Office, Washington, DC*

SIMPLE

For me—and perhaps many of you—never has a time been so fraught with anxiety, pain and loss. It is understandable that we feel tired and discouraged. A gratitude practice can combat this weariness and be life changing. You can start one today. Studies reflect an array of remarkable benefits from such a practice: increase in happiness, reduction in depressive symptoms, a boost to romantic relationships, fewer physical ailments, increased optimism and the list goes on. I will share with you details of some of these studies and suggest several ways to generate your own lifelong gratitude practice.

I am grateful to each of you for joining Grit and creating an experience that lifts us all up. Thank you.