



# Quarterly BHA Newsletter

## Nature as Self-Care By Donna Henry, LPCS, RPTS, NCC

We hear so many different ideas for self-care, yet most of us do not make time for a bubble bath or journaling our feelings. But have you ever noticed how much better you feel after being outside? Maybe not surprising to many is that the sights and sounds of nature are good for us, calming our nervous system and giving us some much-needed relief from the stress of daily life.

Why does being in nature make us feel better? Well, one explanation may seem a little scientific but it's actually very simple: fractals. Fractals are similar and repeating patterns that soothe the brain and nervous system and are found throughout nature<sup>1</sup>. Fractals soothe and calm us because they are easy for the brain to process<sup>2</sup>. For instance:

- A dandelion with its repetitive petals branching out from the center
- Water with continuous waves and ripples
- Trees with their branches and countless number of leaves

When something is repetitive, the brain knows what to expect, and it calms the nervous system, leaving you feeling relaxed and settled<sup>1</sup>. nervous system, leaving you feeling relaxed and settled (1).

You can also use a more structured activity like coloring mandalas. This has a two-fold benefit of mindfulness (focusing on the present moment) and emotional regulation<sup>3</sup>. For free printables, go to:

- [Monday mandala](#)
- [Free mandalas](#)
- [Freepik mandala vectors](#)

Another example is listening to the soothing sounds of nature. With just 6 minutes of listening to birdsong, anxiety is significantly reduced, and this effect lasts for hours. That's because, from an evolutionary perspective, birds singing signals a safe environment, allowing us to instinctively relax. You may even find the birds around you joining in the chorus.

If you can't get out into nature, listening to 10 minutes of birdsong does the same thing. You can find birdsong at: [American Robin](#), Birdsong Radio, or Bird Sounds Listen & Relax app

Self-care does not have to be another job on your to-do list. Finding simple ways to enjoy the nature around you in your everyday life can offer you a moment of relaxation, serenity, and contentment. So, what do you think about intentionally adding nature into your self-care?

References: 1) [Your Brain on Nature: Fractals](#) 2) [Human Brain Prefers Nature Over City Streets](#) 3) [The Science Behind Coloring & Mental Health](#)

### Alt Training Track: Grandfathering Ends Soon!

Are you planning to use your completed college degree or industry certificate to become certified as a BHA? The final opportunity to apply through this route will be at the June 2026 CHAP Certification Board meeting. There are additional course requirements, so be sure to review the [Alternative Track](#) matrix for the certification level you're pursuing. If your college degree isn't on the approved list and you'd like it reviewed, the Behavioral Health Academic Review Committee (BHARC) will be available to review requests December 11-12, 2025. Submit your degree review request [here](#). If you have questions, email BHARC at [bharc@anthc.org](mailto:bharc@anthc.org). After this date, degree review requests will no longer be accepted.




### Health Aide Forum Update!

The 2025 Health Aide Forum, originally planned for November 3–5, 2025, was postponed after the Egan Center was used as a temporary shelter for Typhoon Halong evacuees. The Forum is now rescheduled for April 27–29, 2026, in Downtown Anchorage. Venue details will be shared soon. Attendees who registered for November can choose a full refund or apply their registration to the new dates. Stay tuned for updates and registration info!

### Upcoming Free CE Courses!

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Harm Reduction Model</li><li>• Trauma Informed Care for Organizations</li><li>• Ethical Management of Dual Relationships in Rural Practice: Caring for Your Community &amp; Yourself</li><li>• De-escalation Skills &amp; Conflict Navigation for Providers</li><li>• Closing the Stress Cycle</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understanding and Managing Complex Grief</li><li>• ASAM 4th Edition – Level of Care (LOC) Assessment &amp; Determination</li><li>• Physical &amp; Emotional Regulation for Providers &amp; Clients</li><li>• Confidentiality- 42 CFR Part 2</li></ul> |
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### Q4: Training Center Updates

-  Courses began: 10/15/25
-  Drop deadline 10/22/25
-  Quarter ends 12/31/2025

### Register for CEs

[anthcbha.geniussis.com](http://anthcbha.geniussis.com) or scan





# Milestones & Celebrations

We're proud to recognize Behavioral Health Aides across Alaska who have reached certification milestones at Levels I, II, III, and Practitioner (P). Each active BHA will receive a certification pin that reflects their current level. BHAs can submit three types of applications: initial, upgrade, or renewal. To keep things simple, we're using one symbol to highlight newly certified or upgraded BHAs:

★ Signifies initial or upgraded certification

## Active Certified BHAs - Statewide Recognition

### **Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium**

- Ercanbrack, Brandon J., BHP
- Hodgins, Yannick, BHP
- Jackson, Jayly J., BHA I
- Kristiansen, Marianne K., BHP
- Lewis, Zoe, BHA I ★
- Offord, Luke B., BHP
- Pacis, Nina, BHA I
- Rivera, Rebecca M., BHA II
- Thayer, Samantha, BHA I
- Yanagawa, Stacy L., BHP

### **Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association**

- Dirks-Nevzoroff, Trinity, BHA I
- Prokopiof, Melanie N., BHA II ★

### **Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation**

- Anderson, Alana K., BHP
- Andrews, Lucy, BHA II
- Fox, Arlene C., BHA II
- Kalmakoff, Eugene, BHA I ★
- Larson, Letia S., BHA II
- Mohan, Bonita R., BHP
- Moore, Barbara H., BHA III
- Wonhola, Adrian M., BHA II

### **Chugachmiut**

- Evanoff, Gail K., BHP
- Thompson, Shelby B., BHA II

### **Copper River Native Association**

- Craig, Angel Y., BHA II
- Sawyer, Jodicee, BHA I

### **Council of Athabaskan Tribal Governments**

- Winer, Nellie S., BHA I

### **Eastern Aleutian Tribes**

- Wilson, Brenda L., BHP

### **Fairbanks Native Association**

- Evans, Judith, BHA I

### **Kenaitze Indian Tribe**

- Lienes, Jordan A., BHA I
- Mickenham, Shana M., BHP
- Sanders, Kelli, BHA III ★

### **Ketchikan Indian Community**

- Rivera, Kristian A., BHA I

### **Knik Tribal Council**

- Roloff, Hunter BHA II

### **Kodiak Area Native Association**

- Phillips, Doreen K., BHP
- Pretorius, Patricia J., BHP

### **Manilaq Association**

- Gregg, Belynda, BHA I
- Johnson, Ulyius, BHP
- Jones, Brian, BHA I
- Sampson, Claudia L., BHA II
- Visocky, Brian, BHA I ★

### **Metlakatla Indian Community**

- Booth, Erica D., BHA II

### **Ninilchik Traditional Council**

- Ullmann, Laura, BHA II
- Walkoff, Stormy, BHA III

### **Norton Sound Health Corporation**

- Brown, Renee, BHA I
- Garnie, Josie L., BHP
- Henry, Harriett, BHA I ★
- Johnson, Jacki, BHA I ★
- Kingeekuk, Joseph T., BHA II
- Klescewski, Shannon M., BHA III
- Kulowiya, Audrey, BHA I
- Lockwood, Morgon, BHA I
- Murray, Janelle M., BHA II
- Paniptchuk, Kristin, BHA I ★
- Prentice, Beda R., BHA II
- Razzo, Samantha BHA II ★
- Schnaidt, Hannah M., BHA II
- Ta, Kara, BHA I
- Ungwiluk, Yuka, BHA III
- Weyiouanna, Annie, BHA I

### **Seldovia Village Tribe**

- Nadel, Evan, BHA III

### **Southcentral Foundation**

- Caldwell, Sarah A., BHA II
- Markoff, Lindsey, BHA I ★
- Oxereok, Teresa, BHA II
- Stepney, Trachelle, BHA II

### **SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium**

- Alston, Danielle M., BHA II
- Dow, Maren E., BHA III
- Harris, Rachel J., BHA II
- Hoyt, Kenneth, BHA I
- Karpstein, Heather L., BHP
- Kliemann, Soma N., BHA II
- Lombardo, Carla R., BHA II
- McMurren, Alexandra L., BHA III
- Millam, Tressa, BHA II
- Parfitt, Bradford G., BHA III
- Pattison, Scott B., BHA I
- Pearson, Breanne J., BHA II
- Reynolds, Brooke, BHA III
- Rolf-McMurren, Allison, BHA III
- Thor, Claudette M., BHP
- Wojtak, Kimberly A., BHA III

### **Tanana Chiefs Conference**

- Agnes, Cesa M., BHA II ★
- Bergman, Valerie S., BHA II
- Curry, Tamika N., BHP
- Madros, Judy, BHA II ★
- Ponziano, Gabriella Y., BHA I
- Sam, Susie, BHA I
- Shaw, Jessica L., BHA II

### **Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation**

- Heckman, Lavonne B., BHA I
- Heckman, Stanley E., BHA II

## Ready to apply for certification?

CHAPCB has launched a new electronic application—faster, easier, and fully online!

Key dates:

- Jan 5, 2026 – Application deadline for the next board review
- Jan 13–14, 2026 – CHAPCB meeting for final decisions
- Dec 19, 2025–Jan 30, 2026 – No temporary certifications issued

The application processing fee is \$750.

Learn more and start your application online at:  
[akchap.org/chapcb](http://akchap.org/chapcb)