

# Sarah Bergenfield M.A.

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## **Professional Summary**

Author of the upcoming book *Embodying Autism*. Neurodevelopmental Integration Specialist and consultant with expertise in the Neurobiology of Autism, and Internal Family Systems (IFS). I help organizations, clinicians, and educators understand autism and human development through cutting-edge neuroscience and embodied psychology. Drawing on academic research, clinical insight, and lived experience as an autistic professional, I design transformative workshops, consulting engagements, and training programs that bridge science and practice. Background includes trial experience as a paralegal and pro bono advocacy for asylum-seeking minors, bridging clinical expertise with legal systems.

## **Core Expertise**

- Autism reframed through neuroscience
- Internal Family Systems (IFS) in neurodiverse and trauma-informed contexts
- Predictive Processing Framework (PPF)
- Integrative therapy and psychoeducational coaching
- Workshop design and facilitation (3–6 hour sessions, conference presentations)
- Constructed Emotion Theory and embodied cognition
- Applied research in the psychology of autism, sensory experience, and 'place'

## **Consulting & Speaking Engagements**

- Annual IFS Conference – Workshop: Predictive Minds: Neuroscience, Autism, and IFS (2025, 2023, 2022)
- Professional Development Workshops – Minimizing Uncertainty (3-hour training for clinicians and educators)
- Guest Lectures – Predictive minds, psychology of autism, and constructed emotion

- Organizational Consulting – Designed integrative frameworks for mental health practices applying IFS to neurodiverse populations

### **Selected Experience**

- Independent Consultant & Workshop Facilitator (2020–Present)
  - Deliver talks, continuing-education workshops, and training programs for clinicians, educators, and organizations.
  - Develop handouts, experiential exercises, and visual frameworks blending neuroscience and therapeutic practice.
  - Provide coaching/consulting for professionals and families navigating autism, trauma, and embodied self-understanding.
- Author & Researcher
  - Co-Author of *Embodying Autism* – published January 2026
  - Manuscript in progress: *Place: How Environments Shape Our Brains, Bodies, and Selves* (integrating neuroscience, anthropology, and memoir).
  - Research focus: psychology of autism, predictive processing, sensory environments, and cultural narratives of self.

### **Education**

- M.A. Embodiment Studies, Goddard College

### **Publications & Media**

- Podcast guest appearances (NPR, *The Connection* with Marty Moss-Coane, *IFS Talks*, *Neurodiverse Love*), blog essays (*Parts & Self*), and online writing on predictive processing, IFS, and autism.

### **Certifications & Training**

- Internal Family Systems (IFS) Level 1, 2 & 3
- Certified IFS Practitioner
- Trauma-informed training

### **Selected Clients & Collaborations**

- Internal Family Systems Institute USA
- Internal Family Systems Canada
- Australian Psychological Association
- PESI USA and UK

- Cambridge Health Alliance
- Global Health Exchange

## **Legal & Advocacy Experience**

Trial Paralegal

*Glenn Bergenfield PC / Lambertville, NJ*

- Assisted trial attorney in trial preparation, including evidence review, legal research, and courtroom strategy.
- Observed and supported trial proceedings, gaining familiarity with courtroom procedures, evidentiary standards, and the role of expert testimony.
- Developed strong understanding of how expertise is weighed in legal decision-making.

Pro Bono Paralegal / Advocate – Asylum-Seeking Minors

*Kids in Need of Defence / NY, NY*

- Supported minors navigating asylum proceedings, including extensive interviewing to gather evidential history, researched case law, wrote asylum briefs and assisted pro bono attorney during hearings.
- Documented trauma histories and other challenges for legal contexts, ensuring accurate representation in hearings.
- Strengthened commitment to bridging clinical insight with legal advocacy for vulnerable populations.