

**WHY ARE YOU SO EMOTIONAL?
HOW TO RESPOND TO GENDER
BIAS AND HIGH CONFLICT
SITUATIONS**

Moderator: Vahishta Falahati

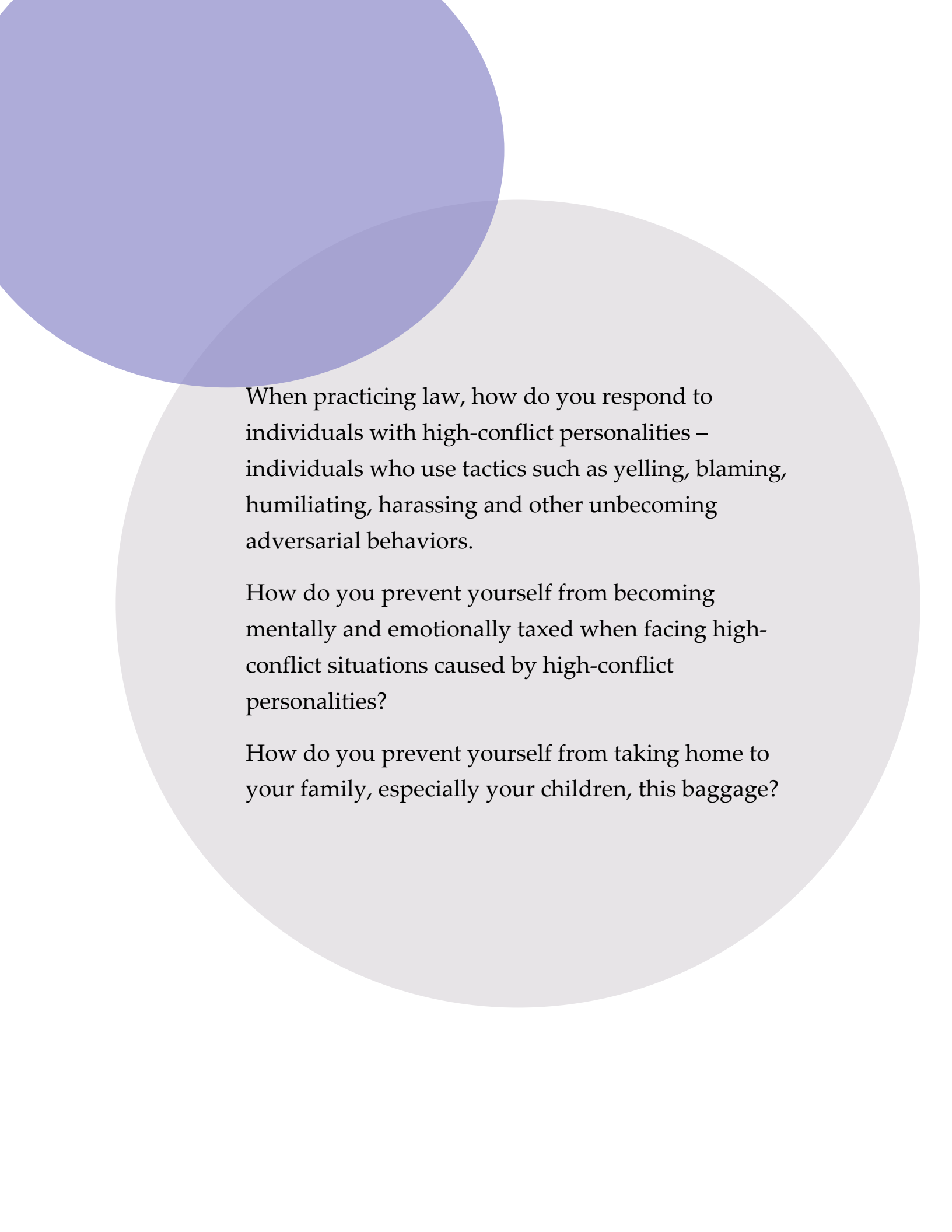
Panelist: Rebecca Gray

Deb Graceffa

Dory Willer

Presented by: CCCBA Women's Section

MCLE Spectacular
Contra Costa County Bar Association
Sponsored by: Judicate West



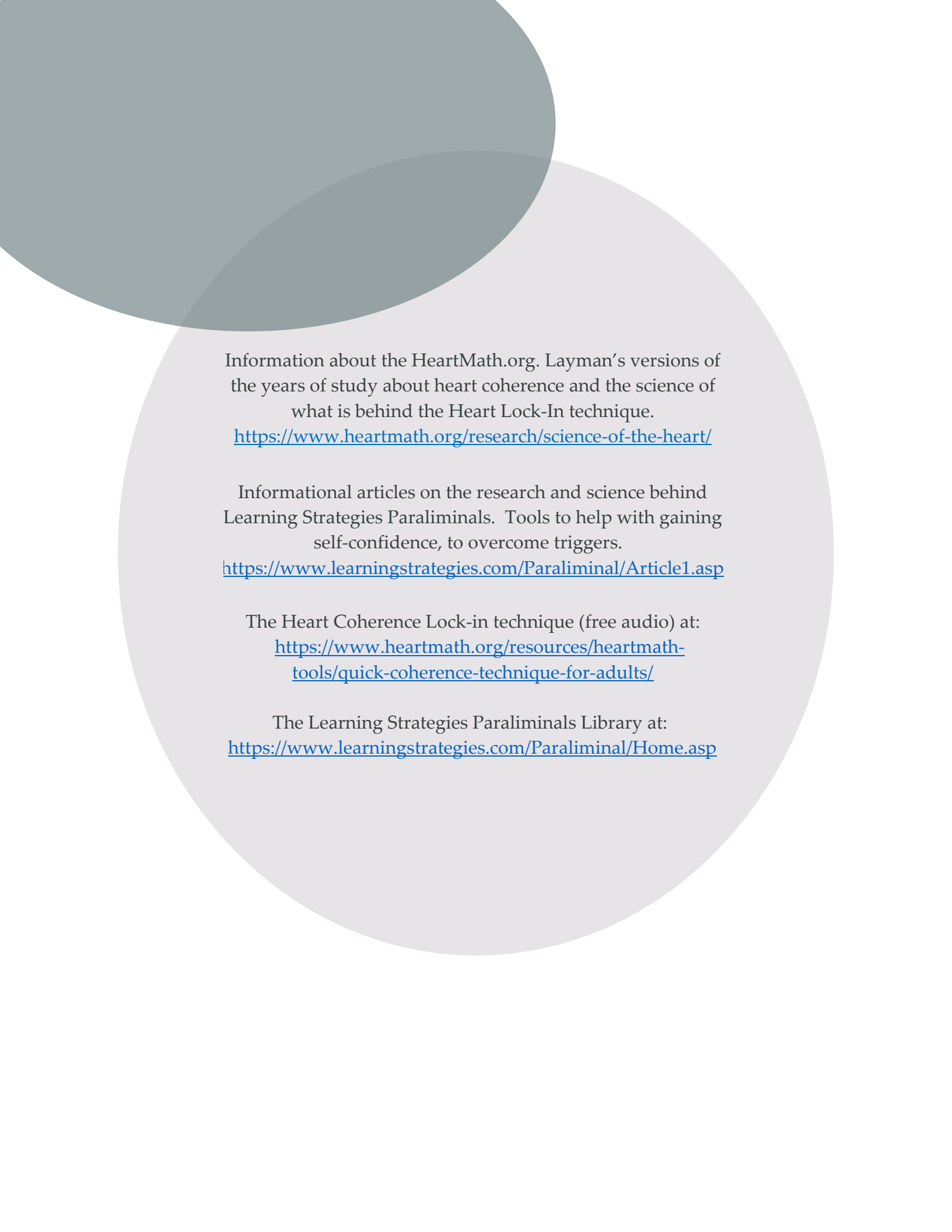
When practicing law, how do you respond to individuals with high-conflict personalities – individuals who use tactics such as yelling, blaming, humiliating, harassing and other unbecoming adversarial behaviors.

How do you prevent yourself from becoming mentally and emotionally taxed when facing high-conflict situations caused by high-conflict personalities?

How do you prevent yourself from taking home to your family, especially your children, this baggage?

Tools Used to Respond to High-Conflict Personalities:

- Take a deep breath. Slow down your breathing so your tone of voice is calm and neutral when speaking with a hostile opposing counsel.
- Pause before you respond. This will help to calm you down, gather your thoughts and set a neutral tone. A precursory statement such as “that is an interesting position”, will also help set a neutral tone.
- Distance yourself from the hostility radiating from opposing counsel and ask yourself, what is he or she trying to say ultimately. Weed out the yelling to “see” the point opposing counsel is trying to make. Once you figure that out, you can condense opposing counsel’s point and repeat it back to him or her in a calm, neutral tone. That way opposing counsel feels heard.
- Do not interrupt. Allow opposing counsel to make his or her point no matter how it comes across. Once her or she is done, ask them if they are done so you could respond.
- Started off by thanking opposing counsel for explaining his or her view point (even if the view point is expressed in a hostile manner), and then provide reasons by either pointing to the facts of your case or the law as to why you disagree with counsel.
- Call opposing counsel out on his or her bad behavior. Inform opposing counsel that his or her behavior is unproductive and does not benefit either of your clients. Sometimes this technique works because it makes the other person stop and think as they have not realized how they sound.
- Use humor to defuse the hostile situation. This can be a very effective tool.



Information about the HeartMath.org. Layman's versions of the years of study about heart coherence and the science of what is behind the Heart Lock-In technique.

<https://www.heartmath.org/research/science-of-the-heart/>

Informational articles on the research and science behind Learning Strategies Paraliminals. Tools to help with gaining self-confidence, to overcome triggers.

<https://www.learningstrategies.com/Paraliminal/Article1.asp>

The Heart Coherence Lock-in technique (free audio) at:

<https://www.heartmath.org/resources/heartmath-tools/quick-coherence-technique-for-adults/>

The Learning Strategies Paraliminals Library at:

<https://www.learningstrategies.com/Paraliminal/Home.asp>