



THE CONNECTION
TRAINING COLLECTION

Providing quality
training and **professional**
development designed
to promote excellence.



The Connection

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Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid is a SAMHSA-endorsed, nationally recognized skill set designed to assist someone who is displaying signs of an emergent mental health problem or is experiencing an acute mental health crisis. This virtual course, designed for non-clinical audiences, will teach participants how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illness or substance use disorders. Mental Health First Aid takes the fear and hesitation out of starting conversations about these complex issues through providing a simple, effective action plan that ensures a safe and empathic response to individuals in crisis. Participants receive certification from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing valid for 3 years. Attendees will be required to complete a 2-hour, self-paced online course, before participating in the instructor-led session.

Youth Mental Health First Aid

Youth Mental Health First Aid teaches participants how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorders in youth. This virtual training gives adults who work with youth the skills they need to reach out and provide initial support to children and adolescents who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem and help connect them to the appropriate care. Participants receive certification from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing valid for 3 years.

Attendees will be required to complete a 2-hour, self-paced online course, before participating in the instructor-led session.

Adult and Pediatric CPR/First Aid/AED

This course teaches participants how to recognize and respond appropriately to cardiac, breathing, first aid, and opioid overdose emergencies. Participants learn the skills needed to give immediate care to an injured or ill person, including NARCAN administration and when to call for advanced medical care. Participants receive a 2-year CPR and First Aid certification through the American Red Cross. This is an in-person training course.

Foundational Concepts of Client Engagement

Our work in the human services field is primarily accomplished through relationships. The ability to authentically connect with a client is the factor that most significantly contributes to successful outcomes. This training will explore the basic elements of client engagement and offer participants the opportunity to practice techniques that will create the conditions for a positive, collaborative relationship with clients. Topics covered include reflective listening, building rapport, enhancing client motivation, and managing conflict in the helping relationship.

Mastering Professional Communication

Clear communication – the ability to accurately convey ideas to colleagues and clients – is a critical skill in the helping professions. An essential component of effective communication is understanding that everyone has a unique communication style, and that problems and misunderstandings can arise when styles clash. This training will teach participants how to recognize and effectively work with, not against, any communication style, greatly enhancing our efficiency, effectiveness, and our ability to empathize with others.

Emotional Intelligence for Human Services Providers

Emotional intelligence is widely recognized as an invaluable skill that enhances communication, leadership, problem-solving, and relationships in the workplace. Individuals with a high level of emotional intelligence are better able to regulate their emotional responses, recognize when others are becoming dysregulated, and respond appropriately and tactfully to challenging situations. Importantly, this is a skill that can be improved with training and practice. In this training, participants will explore the relationship between emotions, feelings, and behavior, and learn strategies for modulating our emotional reactions to ensure optimal functioning in our professional roles.

Lifelong Impact of Early Trauma: Work with Adult Survivors of Childhood Abuse

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) study brought to light the lifelong effects of early trauma, changing the way we think about adult physical and mental health, from substance use to eating disorders. This course will focus on the effects of early trauma from a perspective that integrates the physiological and psychological effects of trauma; specifically, how this impacts the helping process. Participants will learn how to avoid common triggers and establish the safety that is central to a therapeutic alliance that nurtures healing and resilience.

Providing Care Through a Trauma-Informed Lens

This comprehensive training provides an in-depth exploration of the art and science of trauma-informed care, with a focus on applying theory to direct practice applications. Trauma will be discussed as a universal human experience, giving participants the opportunity to think about the complex trauma of those served, the life experience that each helper brings to the work, and how to form healing relationships that position clients for optimal success. Key topics include: the science of traumatic memory, viewing challenging behavior as the communication of a need, the importance of self-awareness and self-care for providers, and strategies for building safety and trust.

Engaging with Clients in a Crisis

Effective crisis de-escalation is a necessary skill for anyone who works with people. In the human services, mastering the art of crisis management is not only necessary for the safety of staff and clients; it also offers powerful opportunities to assist clients in modulating their emotions and can also enhance engagement. This course will present a trauma-informed approach to crisis management, which begins with a mindset of connection vs. control. As helpers we tend to move quickly to a “squash it and fix-it” approach, which can quickly enflame situations. In contrast, a focus on empathic engagement will move clients out of fight, flight or freeze states so they can problem-solve rather than react. The Heart-Head-Heart model will be presented as an extremely effective way to validate, deescalate, and provide solution-focused strategies to assist those in need. Suggested prerequisite course: Providing Care Through a Trauma-Informed Lens.

Understanding the Complex Trauma of Homelessness

The loss of one’s home is extraordinarily traumatic, and often leads to a host of secondary traumatic experiences for individuals and their families. Sleeping on the street, in an abandoned building or car, in a shelter, or a series of temporary homes results in extreme vulnerability, loss of control, and feelings of hopelessness. Past traumatic life experiences greatly compound the stress of homelessness. This training will explore the unique traumatic impact of homelessness on adults and children. Practitioners will learn how to recognize trauma-based reactions in their clients, and how to implement trauma informed strategies for supporting people experiencing housing instability.

Defining and Maintaining Professional Boundaries

As the basic framework for the helping relationship, clear and appropriate boundaries are the foundation of quality client care. Professional boundaries are also essential for our own self-care. This training will teach participants the skill of staying in the “zone of helpfulness” – neither disengaged nor overly involved. Topics covered will include building awareness of factors that can compromise healthy boundaries, the art of self-disclosure, common conflicts of interest, and how to distinguish boundary transgressions from boundary violations. Understanding how and when the boundaries we set become compromised is a key skill of the effective, self-aware professional.

The Art of the Case Note

“If it’s not documented, it didn’t happen.” The accurate and timely recording of work with clients is an essential skill in the human services and an important indicator of effective case planning but writing a good case note is not as easy as it may seem. This workshop will give participants the knowledge they need to produce documentation that is professional in both tone and content, providing a thorough record of client progress, and the role of the practitioner in facilitating change.

Unconscious Bias: Impediments to the Therapeutic Relationship

Practitioner self-awareness is a hallmark of an effective human services provider. The ability to reflect on one’s behavior and emotional reactions is a necessary component of quality client care and practitioner self-care. This course will be an opportunity for each participant to explore the unique values, motivations, and attitudes that underly their professional behavior with clients. Case studies will highlight the harm that can arise from unconscious bias. Strategies will also be presented for ensuring a truly collaborative, nonjudgmental relationship with those we serve.

Validation: The Essential Element of Empathic Communication

Validation is the cornerstone of reflective listening and a key skill for crisis de-escalation. Often it is relegated to a brief acknowledgement of the obvious by restating the concern expressed and adding “but” to the end of the phrase. That addition of “but”, whether spoken or unspoken, effectively stops communication in its tracks and sends the message that we are not really listening. This course will offer a validation boot-camp, taking a deep dive into the communication skill that gives clients the direct experience of being heard. We will clarify exactly what we are validating, explore our reluctance to spend more time on this vital step, and hone the critical skill of listening to understand.

Working with Mandated Clients

The ideal client is often viewed as one who is self-motivated to seek help: easy to engage and more likely to have positive treatment outcomes. Mandated or involuntary clients, directed to enter treatment from an external source, are often assumed to be difficult to work with, resistant to change, and requiring a firm approach. The truth is that work with mandated populations is undeniably challenging and can take an emotional toll on us. We may become increasingly negative about the job or the clients, develop directive and controlling behavior, and eventually succumb to burnout which greatly impedes our ability to form non-judgmental helping relationships. This training will help us better support our mandated clients and care for ourselves by understanding and managing our own emotional responses, validating the emotional experiences of our clients, and tapping into our natural capacity for empathy and compassion. Pro-social modeling will be discussed as a powerful tool to encourage behavioral change. When we learn to work with rather than against our clients, we can experience the tremendous rewards of truly collaborative work with this vulnerable population.

QPR: Suicide Prevention Training

This 2-hour training will provide participants with the tools on how to Question, Persuade and Refer someone who may be suicidal, explore common causes and warning signs of suicide behavior, and how to assist someone who is in crisis. This evidence-based training is ideal for behavioral health professionals and family members of individuals experiencing mental illness.

Safety in the Community

Work in the community requires attention to safety: developing a high level of environmental awareness, knowledge of potential dangers, and following a plan including program and agency protocols to ensure your wellbeing and that of those you serve. This training will focus on services provided in the home of clients, teaching the skills of preparation before the home visit, precautions when traveling to and from the residence, and managing safety issues that may arise in during the visit. We will also discuss how to prevent conflict from escalating into safety issues using validation and respectful communication. Case studies will be used to illustrate the principles discussed.

Personal Efficiency: Your Guide to Ultimate Productivity

Have you ever wondered whether you could be doing your work more efficiently? Optimizing your organizational skills will result in greatly enhanced productivity, reduced daily stress, and ultimately improved job performance and satisfaction. Through increasing your personal and professional awareness, you will learn to create clear and focused goals, reduce time-wasting tasks, prioritize, and manage demands, and make the best use of your time, so you are able to work smarter, not harder.

Professionalism: Cultivating Your Personal Brand in the Workplace

Some of the most important professional skills are never formally taught - we learn them by trial and error. While many social service trainings address effective communication with clients, the skill of interfacing with other professionals is equally important but rarely the focus until a problem or misunderstanding occurs. Maintaining positive relationships with funders, supervisors, and colleagues hinges on our ability to communicate respectfully and effectively through digital, oral, and written means. This course will teach participants the skills of professional communication that will present you and your organization in the best possible light.

Understanding the Effects of Family Violence Through a Trauma Lens

Many trainings on the effects of violence are approached from a medical model, with behavioral and emotional sequelae characterized in terms of physiological and psychiatric categories (physical harm, depression, anxiety, etc.). A trauma-informed approach includes that perspective but offers a much richer and more nuanced understanding of the ways that chronic victimization/exposure to violence alters the nervous system, as well as one's basic worldview. This is especially important for helpers to understand: the behaviors that keep families safe are often the very same behaviors that make the helping process so challenging and contribute greatly to burnout and compassion fatigue. This training will focus on the most common trauma-based beliefs and behaviors of victims of violence. We will discuss strategies to enhance engagement, and also address care for the caregiver.

The Art of the Ask

In these times of fiscal uncertainty, transforming a good idea into a proposal for partnership is a vital skill for nonprofit leaders. In this training, participants will learn how to approach a potential partner and pitch their idea. Prospecting for resources and the importance of expressing gratitude to community partners will also be discussed.

How to Be an Excellent Brand Ambassador and Effective Networker

It isn't always easy to work a room. This training will give you the confidence to comfortably connect with colleagues and supporters with purpose. Participants will learn best practices for representing themselves and their company at community events, etiquette for social interactions, and review successful approaches for networking events.

Networking for Career Advancement

When we invest in networking by establishing, building, and nurturing long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with the people we meet, we can use those relationships to grow, learn and advance our professional lives. Join us for this course to learn more about how to deepen your professional relationships, widen your network by meeting new people, and how to leverage your network to gain access to the necessary resources that will foster your career development.

The Art of Group Facilitation

This course will discuss the fundamental concepts of effective group facilitation, and the natural stages of a group from inception to termination. Participants will learn the mechanisms by which groups facilitate change, how to set group and individual goals, how to understand the roles of group members, and strategies to maintain strong group cohesion. We will also discuss the dynamics of open vs. closed-ended groups, and techniques for managing challenging behavior.

Beyond Grief: Supporting Individuals Through Loss

This course will explore the psychology of the bereavement process in all its complexity, debunking common misconceptions that are not helpful and rarely reflect the lived experience of grief. The stages of grief do not proceed in logical, sequential steps. Grief is not a medical condition, a weakness, or something we need to “get over.” It is, however, an unavoidable part of life, and the path of bereavement is the path to healing. This course will offer support, insight and concrete guidance for anyone interested in this important topic, for those who are supporting a loved one through the journey, or for those who are finding their way on the path.

CT Fair Housing Laws: Helping Clients Understand Their Rights

This training is designed to help you become a better housing advocate for your clients through providing crucial information about accessing and protecting their rights. Topics covered will include common housing related issues, tenants’ rights, and Connecticut housing laws.

Understanding Borderline Personality Disorder

Adult Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is highly correlated with experiences of early childhood trauma, and many direct care staff and case managers in the human services will likely support individuals with this serious condition at some point in their careers. The high degree of emotional dysregulation and mood instability characteristic of BPD can wreak havoc on relationships, including the therapeutic alliance. This training will explain the symptoms and behaviors commonly associated with BPD, with a focus on strategies to establish and enhance engagement. The importance of self-care and boundaries will also be discussed as crucial elements of maintaining a healthy helping relationship that protects you and your client.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

PTSD is extremely common in the general population, and the term itself has become somewhat ubiquitous. Nevertheless, the condition itself can be extremely debilitating, and treatment to address symptoms is a complex process. This training will discuss the causes of PTSD, understanding symptoms, and treatment options of proven effectiveness. We will also distinguish between classic PTSD and Complex PTSD, such as that which results from early childhood traumatic experiences. Participants will learn to recognize trauma-based reactions and behaviors and will learn techniques to engage with and de-escalate those who are experiencing a triggering event.

Cultural Competence

Developing intercultural competence, an absolute necessity for anyone working in the human services field, is an ongoing process involving awareness building, knowledge, and excellent communication and interpersonal skills. This course will explore culture from the perspectives of diversity, equity, and inclusion, with a focus on identifying the unconscious bias we all harbor and which can be a hindrance to the therapeutic alliance.

Hoarding

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, hoarding behavior that reaches a level of clinical pathology is not uncommon, affecting up to one in twenty people. In addition to creating extremely unsafe living environments, this potentially devastating condition can have significantly negative cognitive, emotional, and social effects on the lives of individuals and families. This comprehensive training will discuss theories about the root causes of hoarding behavior, dispel common myths, and discuss other mental health disorders associated with hoarding. “Dos and Don’ts” for empathically supporting those living with this disorder will be presented.

Social Media Impact on Mental Health

Social media has become an integral and even unavoidable part of our lives. At its best, it offers a means of communicating and connecting with others, a space to share advice, information, and resources, and a supportive community. But social media also comes with risks: cyberbullying, feelings of inadequacy when we compare ourselves to others, and an increase in depression and anxiety when our use becomes excessive. This course will increase awareness of the potential benefits and risks of social media use for ourselves and our children, as well as the ways in which social media can be used to promote positive mental health and wellness.

Establishing Your Work/Life Balance

We all want to strive for harmony between our professional and personal lives but sometimes can find it to be a real struggle. This course will challenge the way you view and define this concept while moving through practical tools you can add to your current work and home life to bring you greater satisfaction. This session will delve into the dimensions of work and home to help you apply real tools to manage both, no matter what each looks like for you in your current circumstance. Both office and remote settings will be included along with a lens for both employee and supervisor.

Building Compassion & Empathy: The Paradox of Shame

Shame is one of the least understood human emotions. A very common aftermath of traumatic, invalidating childhood experiences, shame is a deeply personal phenomenon that significantly impacts healthy self-identity. It also has powerful social implications, contributing to feelings of alienation and isolation. This training will explore the many ways shame affects our ability to fully engage with life and relationships, and how we can move toward acceptance and compassion. Shame-sensitive practice will be discussed as an essential element of trauma informed care, with a focus on avoiding the common mistakes that trigger this toxic emotion, which inevitably retraumatizes those we are supporting. The profound influence of social media's outrage culture and the impact of public shaming will also be addressed.

Ethical Practice in the Human Services

Work in the human services is profoundly rewarding but carries with it a tremendous responsibility to protect our clients from actions that would result in harm or exploitation. While acts of deliberate wrongdoing do occur, it is more common for well-meaning efforts to result in unintentional ethical breaches through lack of knowledge and training. This course will present the foundational principles of work in the helping professions: protection of client rights; ensuring confidentiality; maintaining professional boundaries; and avoiding conflicts of interest. An ethical model will be presented which will assist practitioners in ethical decision-making. This training is highly interactive, with many examples of common ethical dilemmas for discussion. The importance of individual responsibility to report unethical behavior will be discussed, as well as the necessity of developing an organizational culture of shared accountability.



The Essentials of Treatment Planning

Treatment plans are the road maps driving the process of meaningful behavioral change. One of the major challenges for clinicians is creating a clear plan that has person-centered goals, broken down into achievable steps that move the client forward and instill hope. In this training we will review the function of treatment planning in behavioral health and outline the essential elements of a clinical treatment plan. Evidence-based theoretical orientations including Motivational Interviewing and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy will be highlighted as effective strategies to facilitate collaborative therapeutic relationships that sustain client engagement and ensure ongoing progress.

Best Practices for the Care of Clients with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness

Individuals with severe and chronic mental health challenges are among the most vulnerable citizens in our communities, facing a host of risks including poverty and homelessness, victimization, legal issues, substance use problems and unmet medical and psychiatric needs. Social isolation and stigmatization greatly compound their trauma and reduce the likelihood of obtaining necessary care. This training will focus on holistic, client-centered treatment planning for this population which ensures that basic needs are met, medical and psychiatric care is readily accessible, and fulfilling social connections are prioritized. Strategies to establish and maintain client engagement will be addressed, in the context of a model of support that maximizes independence and dignity.

Best Practices for Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder

This workshop will present an evidence-based overview of the dynamics and effective treatment of Opioid Use Disorder. Topics covered will include the classification of opioids; indicators and risk factors for opioid misuse; and strategies to promote prevention, treatment, and recovery. Medication Assisted Treatment will be addressed, as well as therapeutic interventions to promote whole person wellness. **Note: this webinar is being offered at no cost.**

Assessing & Managing Suicide Risk

In our work with vulnerable client populations, it is not uncommon for clients to express suicide ideation or intent. This training will provide an evidence-based framework for evaluating suicide risk, and guidelines for responding in an effective, empathic manner. Topics covered will include recognizing the risk and protective factors for suicide, using structured screening and assessment tools to drive decision-making, and learning supportive interview strategies to enhance trust and safety. This training will prepare participants to support those in crisis with confidence and in accordance with best practice guidelines, protecting clients, your organization, and you as a service provider.

Introduction to Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is an evidence-based treatment used by practitioners to treat a large variety of problems in clients who experience Depression, Bipolar Disorder, PTSD, and Substance Abuse. Participants will explore DBT from theory to application in this introductory course. This training will give service providers an understanding of the basic elements of DBT and demonstrate how it can be used by clinical and non-clinical staff with clients experiencing a crisis or having difficulty managing strong emotions or challenging behaviors.

Advanced Approaches to Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) approach can be an extremely powerful tool to create long-lasting behavioral change and improve your treatment outcomes. DBT combines empirically validated techniques from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) with core mindfulness concepts in order to change deeply ingrained, maladaptive behavioral patterns — perfect for those clients who seem resistant to your current therapeutic techniques. This practice-oriented training will teach DBT techniques through focused discussion and direct demonstration.

This advanced course is recommended for those with previous DBT training.

Introduction to Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a short-term, skill-based psychotherapy treatment that helps people learn to assert more influence over their thoughts, behaviors, and feelings. When facing potential stressors, the way we interpret what we are experiencing can greatly exacerbate our stress or minimize it, which in turn largely determines our behavioral responses. Participants will explore CBT from theory to application in this introductory course. This training will give service providers an understanding of the basic elements of CBT and provide techniques to help clients identify and challenge distorted thinking, promoting growth and resilience in meeting life challenges.

Using Cognitive Reframing to Change Perspective

The way we view what we are experiencing can exacerbate our stress or minimize it. Cognitive reframing is a psychological technique that consists of identifying and changing the way we perceive situations, experiences, and emotions. Reframing is a strategy that enables us to intentionally alter our perceptions of life challenges, significantly relieving stress and creating a more emotional positive response before making any changes in our circumstances. This training will give service providers specific techniques to help clients identify and challenge distorted thinking and promote growth.

Narrative Approaches for Healing Trauma

Many of our clients have experienced trauma at its most impactful: direct physical and emotional harm and/or neglect in early childhood, often compounded by experiences of racism, poverty, homelessness, and behavioral health challenges. The result is often an early life marked by pain and confusion, and an identity of being unwanted. The basic concepts of narrative therapy offer a powerful antidote to this complex trauma. The techniques described in this training can be implemented by anyone, most importantly providers, who can help shape everyday conversations into opportunities to create healing and empowering life stories for clients entrusted to our care.

Intersectionality of Substance Use and Mental Health

Co-occurring disorders are underlying mental health issues that appear alongside substance use disorders. Addiction and mental health have a very close relationship. Individuals with a dual diagnosis need an integrated treatment program that addresses both their addiction and mental health needs. This training will cover the symptoms of dual diagnosis, common mental health and substance use disorders, and how co-occurring substance use and mental health disorders are treated.

Problem Gambling 101

Often called “the hidden addiction,” problem gambling is a progressive disorder that often goes unnoticed until the cumulative financial and emotional effects result in criminal activity or a mental health crisis. While many people enjoy the fun and excitement of occasional gambling, problem gambling is an addiction with the potential to devastate the lives of individuals and families, hijacking brain functioning just as surely as alcohol and drugs. This course will discuss the underlying risk factors, identification, and treatment of problem gambling disorder.

Serving Those Who Serve: Support for Veterans and Their Families

Many professionals will work with individuals who have served in the military, or the people supporting them. The multiple challenges faced by veterans in reintegrating themselves into their families and communities following service are now widely recognized as a public health issue. This training will focus on the unique needs of veterans and their support network. Topics to be covered include understanding military culture, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in individuals returning from combat, traumatic brain injury, and suicide prevention. Participants will be given behavioral health and other community resources to support our veterans and their loved ones. This course fulfills the continuing education requirement for training in Veteran Services.

Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), once considered rare, are a group of neurodevelopmental conditions characterized by challenges with communication and social interactions affecting approximately 1 in 44 children and over 5.4 million adults in the United States. Early identification of an ASD will help ensure that individuals receive the services they need to live fulfilling lives, regardless of the severity of the condition or life stage, with maximum independence. This course will discuss the continuum of conditions covered under ASD and explore the supports and treatment approaches of proven effectiveness.

Narcissistic Personality Disorder: Exploring Dual Trauma and Relational Impact

Personality disorders are among the most challenging conditions for clinicians to treat and can cause significant problems in interpersonal relationships. Narcissism occurs along a continuum, from meeting the diagnostic criteria of Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD), to individuals exhibiting narcissistic personality traits. This course will explain the defining behavioral and characterological aspects of narcissism, distinguishing NPD from antisocial personality disorder, and will present the latest research on its etiology and treatment. We will also discuss the dynamics of relationships with individuals with NPD, and ways to maintain healthy boundaries.

Early Signs of Mental Health Disorders in Youth

It is normal for children and youth to experience various types of emotional distress as they mature due to a variety of social, familial, and academic factors. While many adolescents experience positive mental health, an estimated 49.5% will develop an actual mental health disorder during this vulnerable developmental period. This 2-hour training will empower participants with the skills to recognize and address the symptoms of the most common mental health conditions in youth, including Depression, Anxiety, and eating disorders. A model of supportive response based on validation, engagement, and empathy will help ensure safety and stabilization for youth in crisis.

Becoming a Leader

Making the transition from individual contributor to the supervisor of others is a critical stage of professional development. This training will prepare novice supervisors and managers for their new responsibilities: nurturing the most valuable asset of any agency — its staff — while also ensuring the effective and appropriate provision of services to clients. The first half of the training will discuss the role of the supervisor and what it means to be a leader of others. Self-awareness — understanding our values, biases, and natural leadership style — will be the focus. The second half of this training will explore the importance of emotional intelligence for supervisors and will outline a trauma-informed approach to supervision. This two-day training will provide new and experienced supervisors with an understanding of the essential elements of effective supervision, and the tools they need to develop a competent and confident team that feels supported and valued by the organization.

Optimal Communication Strategies for Managing Supervisory Challenges

Moving into a supervisory position means meeting new challenges, taking on new responsibilities, and mastering new skills. This training will discuss the crucial aspects of becoming a new supervisor, which include effective communication, building trust and gaining respect, motivating others to achieve results, and developing your management style. What you learn in this class will arm you with a powerful new set of skills, strategies, and techniques for dealing with the new encounters you will face as you take on your new position and move forward in your career.

Team Building: Cultivating Collaboration and Trust

Supervisors are responsible for the individual contributions of their staff members but facilitating collaboration among staff is equally important. The ability to create a team that works effectively toward shared goals is a critical management competency. This module will teach new supervisors the skills of integrating new members into the team, enhancing communication, building, and maintaining trust, cultivating positive motivation, and managing conflict on the team.

Performance Management

Performance management is an ongoing process of communication and feedback between supervisors and employees. Role clarity, setting clear expectations, and developing standards for evaluation are critical supervisory skills. This training will explore the continuum of supervisory activities from coaching and providing feedback, to progressive discipline and managing difficult conversations. The emphasis will be on identifying and addressing performance issues as early as possible to support staff in their efforts to make positive change.

Retention-Oriented Supervision

Employees are the most valuable asset of any organization. While retention is a systemic issue usually relegated to HR departments, program culture and management practices have a significant impact on employee morale and well-being. There is enormous potential in the supervisory role to create program environments that keep staff engaged, stimulated, and deeply invested in the mission of the organization. This session will focus on the continuum of staff care and client care through the role of the supervisor. Participants will learn how leaders can create high-functioning program cultures in which staff feel effective in their roles and truly valued, which in turn creates the conditions for organizational stability and optimal client outcomes.

Planning and Facilitating Effective Meetings

Well-planned meetings are an excellent way for leaders to communicate change, discuss concerns and ideas, and to give and receive feedback. Effective meetings will greatly enhance organizational productivity and efficiency, while poorly planned and facilitated meetings can waste valuable time and frustrate participants. This training will teach managers how to decide whether a meeting is necessary; how to purposefully plan a meeting, including creating and adhering to an agenda; and how to encourage meaningful participation for all team members.

The Neuroscience of Self-Care

The concept of self-care has become so ubiquitous that it can mean almost anything. We all know it's something we need to be focusing on, but where do we even start, and how do we know what really works? This training will begin from a foundation of our nervous system: the means by which we experience and interpret the world. We will focus on the unique challenges of self-care for workers in the human services field, exploring the science behind many popular recommendations and focusing on the techniques that are proven to heal and calm our chronically activated nervous systems.

Maximizing the Power of Peer Support in Your Program

Peer Support is widely accepted as a key component in recovery treatment models and is often a funder program requirement. The unique connection peers form with clients by virtue of shared lived experience leads to enhanced engagement and better treatment outcomes, but these benefits will be severely hindered, and peer supporters potentially traumatized, in the absence of thoughtful planning. This training will discuss the necessary components of the successful implementation of peers onto your team. We will also address the most common pitfalls encountered when introducing peer support into existing programming, including lack of role clarity, inadequate preparation of current staff, a one-size-fits-all supervision model, and failing to recognize and address tensions on the team.

Program Evaluation: Cultivating a Learning Orientation

Developing a learning-oriented approach to program management is an often overlooked but critical skill in the human services. Evidence-based programming – the gold standard of care – necessitates protocols to ensure fidelity to the model, systems for monitoring outcomes, and a clear understanding of the role of each team member in the process of change. It also follows that sending employees to training with no guidance as to why it is important, or follow-up to ensure effective implementation, severely limits its effectiveness and reduces motivation to change and grow. This important training will help leaders cultivate a data-driven, outcomes-oriented approach to care which ensures the best possible alignment between program model, program practices, and ongoing staff development. The benefits are truly transformative: these are the programs that funders want to support, with the highest rates of staff retention and optimal client results.

Motivational Training for Professionals: Approaches that Drive Employees to Success

It is a common belief that the primary motivator for employees is money, but that myth has been debunked by multiple employee satisfaction surveys. Engaged employees seek new challenges and opportunities to be provided with meaningful, stimulating work that makes a difference to the organization and the lives of clients. Finding ways to enhance employee motivation and engagement is a crucial management skill, one that begins with tapping into our own motivation and excitement for the work. This training will discuss goal setting, talent development, and employee engagement strategies that will optimize program outcomes and create stimulating program environments where people will want to stay.

Best Practices for Conducting Employee Evaluation Reviews

Annual performance reviews rarely evoke positive feelings in employees or their managers. More than half of employees view the process on a negative continuum from meaningless to unfair. Many managers are equally jaded, citing fear of employee reactions to negative feedback and a sense that annual evaluations are a formality that does not result in improved performance. Some organizations have chosen to forgo them entirely, but this is missing a valuable opportunity. In fact, a performance review as the “capstone” of ongoing staff support, coaching, and career guidance can be a powerful contributor to employee retention and higher productivity. This training will present strategies for managers and employees to optimize the performance review process, working within organizational systems to create a process that is meaningful, fair, and facilitates accountability and motivation through a professional development focus.

HIPAA Privacy and Security Officer Training: Safeguarding Patient Data and Ensuring Compliance

In an era of advanced digital technologies and increasing concerns about the privacy and security of sensitive health information, the roles of HIPAA Privacy and Security Officers have become pivotal in safeguarding patient data and ensuring compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). This training will provide guidance to the individuals fulfilling these roles, beginning with an overview of HIPAA regulations that emphasizes the importance of protecting patient privacy and maintaining the security of health information. We will address how to prevent security breaches, and best practices for identifying and responding to data breaches when they occur including investigation, assessment, and response. Attendees will learn how to identify who within their organization should be appointed to the role of HIPAA Privacy and Security Officer, and how the individuals in these roles can effectively promote patient/client trust, maintain data integrity, and oversee regulatory compliance for their organizations.

Understanding Your Attachment Style

Our innate attachment style — secure, avoidant, or anxious — exerts a powerful and largely unconscious influence on every relationship we have. Everyone has a unique default mode of relating to others based on our earliest experiences with caregivers, but this does not mean we need to remain locked into old repetitive patterns of interaction. Through building our understanding of attachment and enhancing self-awareness about our own behavioral patterns, we can greatly improve our ability to connect with others: to exert positive influence as a leader, to form stronger therapeutic relationships with clients, and to improve relationships with family and friends.

What We're Saying Before We Say Anything: The Emotional Impact of Our Non-Verbal Communication

As helpers and leaders, we put so much focus on saying the right thing, we lose sight of the fact that our non-verbal communication is always sending powerful messages to others, sometimes outside of our conscious awareness. When our body language and tone of voice contradict the well-meaning words we're saying, our non-verbal signals will take precedence every time. This training will discuss the latest research into the science of body language, including the way micro-expressions elicit strong emotional reactions from human beings. Bringing these primitive survival reactions to our conscious awareness — understanding the ways we unknowingly trigger others and become triggered ourselves — is a critical step toward becoming a self-aware practitioner who communicates unconditional positive regard to others regardless of the circumstances.

Emotionally Intelligent Professional Communication

Emotional intelligence is widely recognized as a necessary professional skill that enhances communication, leadership, problem-solving, and relationships in the workplace. Individuals with a high level of emotional intelligence are better able to regulate their emotional responses, recognize when others are becoming dysregulated, and respond appropriately and tactfully to challenging situations. Importantly, this is a skill that can be improved with practice. This training will explore the relationship between emotions, feelings, and behavior. Participants will learn strategies for building awareness of and modulating our emotional states in our written, spoken, and virtual communication to ensure optimal functioning in our professional roles.

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Polyvagal Theory: Accessing the Healing Power of Your Nervous System

Polyvagal theory stunned the scientific world with its description of the way our nervous systems regulate our thoughts, behaviors, and physiology in a process mediated by the vagus nerve: the literal link between our brains and our bodies. Polyvagal theory greatly contributes to our understanding of the way our bodies detect danger and then mobilize for fight, flight, or freeze responses. Often described as the critical missing link in trauma theory, this theory has direct applications to work in the human services field. The knowledge that we can impact processes previously thought to be largely unconscious has important clinical implications for work with traumatized individuals and enables all of us to access our natural ability to experience safety, joy, and connectedness in an uncertain world.

Introduction to the Science of Cognitive and Emotional Adaptability

It is human nature to feel most comfortable with certainty and predictability, but this is not the nature of life, especially in the current world circumstances. Allowing ourselves to adapt and grow during times of change and challenge, to learn from failure, and to face our negative emotions and fears are incredibly empowering. This training, based on the science of cognitive and emotional flexibility, will teach participants how to accept and manage the stresses and uncertainties of life. Goal-directed, solution-focused coping mechanisms will be presented, which will enable individuals to tap into rather than block their natural human resilience.

Staying Healthy at Work

We must face the unavoidable truth that sitting is the new smoking. A sedentary lifestyle and even long periods of inactivity have truly negative consequences on our physical and emotional well-being, not to mention our productivity at work. There is much that we can do in the office setting to break the cycle of inactivity and resultant low-grade, chronic stress that erodes our physical and emotional resilience. This training will present the latest research from the science of wellness to help us infuse our workday with energizing microbreaks that recharge our brains and bodies, and equally important, create new habits that prioritize self-awareness and self-care.

Mental Health Response

Communities everywhere are facing a serious mental health crisis. The loss and uncertainty of the ongoing pandemic has greatly contributed to this growing social problem, but the fact is that mental health and substance use challenges are quite common. One in four people will have a diagnosable mental health disorder in any given year. A mental health crisis can occur unexpectedly at any time. Fear and lack of knowledge greatly impact our ability to respond effectively. To safeguard the wellbeing of valued residents, customers, clients, and employees, staff of public institutions need the competence and confidence to recognize and support people experiencing a crisis. This 2-hour training will empower participants with the skills to recognize and address the symptoms of the most common mental health conditions, including gambling and substance use disorder. A model of supportive response based on validation, engagement, and empathy will ensure a safe environment for all until help arrives.

Compassion Fatigue

Work in the human services can be immensely rewarding, but also undeniably challenging. Our capacity for empathy can put us at risk for what is known as compassion fatigue — a complex phenomenon attributable to several factors, including chronic exposure to the emotionality of our clients, the demands of the work itself, and the interface of these with our own lived experiences of trauma. This course will explore the emotional, physical, behavioral, and spiritual signs of compassion fatigue. Strategies for recognizing and addressing our own unique risk and protective factors will be discussed, and participants will complete their own self-care plan.



Creating Inclusive Trauma-Informed Systems of Care

Becoming a trauma-informed organization requires a strong understanding of a systems approach, and a deep appreciation of the human dynamics underlying any significant organizational change. Most trauma-related initiatives are heavily client and direct-care staff oriented, failing to take into account the key role of administrative functions. This session will discuss how to successfully infuse trauma-informed principles into the everyday operations of all aspects of your organization, in a manner that honors the importance of every role.

Creating the Organizational Conditions for Optimal Employee Wellness

The Covid pandemic has brought to light a growing public health problem: unprecedented numbers of citizens struggling with mental illness. This complex challenge is best addressed from diverse contexts, one of the most important being the work environment, where we devote so much of our time and energy. This session will discuss the multiple ways employers can create the conditions for optimal employee safety and wellness, with a focus on identifying and supporting those who are managing mental health challenges.

SMART Goals and Logic Models: Roadmaps for Change

The ability to create meaningful goals that are achievable, measurable, and clear greatly increases the likelihood of achieving those goals. Goal setting has wide applicability in human services, from treatment planning to charting the course of our own personal and professional development. This course will focus on the five pillars of SMART goals: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time limited. SMART goals then become the foundation of logic models: visual representations of a proposed process of change. This course will give participants a thorough grounding in developing effective goals and incorporating them into an action framework for use in treatment planning, grant writing, and project development and management.

Developing a Customer Service Approach

Providing quality customer service is an integral part of the success of any business, but it is not often a focus in the nonprofit world. Developing a strong customer service culture requires commitment from leadership, as well as competent and engaged staff who are clear about their role in carrying out the agency mission. The supervisor, as the liaison between upper management and program staff, plays a pivotal role in ensuring successful service delivery. This course will give supervisors the knowledge and skills they need to create program cultures that emphasize empathy and excellence for staff and clients alike.

Change Management

Change is inevitable in organizations and programs. Whether planned or unexpected, helping employees cope with the uncertainty of change is a critical management skill. This becomes even more challenging when leaders themselves might be feeling some of the same anxiety their team is experiencing. This training will help managers understand and respond to the potential destabilizing effect of change on the entire team and offer positive strategies for moving forward. Topics addressed include crafting the message in a manner that conveys opportunity, and promoting resilience and empowerment through collaborative, solution-focused approaches.

Project Management

Projects are naturally chaotic. The primary business function of project management is organizing and planning projects to tame this chaos. Ensuring the right people do the right things at the right time and ensuring the team follows the proper process throughout the entire project lifecycle is what makes project management so important to an efficient organization. Surprisingly, many large and well-known companies have reactive planning processes. In addition to key project management strategies, the importance of emotional intelligence in successful project management will be a core area of focus.

Persuasion: The Art of Influencing Others

Life is a series of negotiations — from managing difficult conversations to salary negotiation. Persuasion is not an argument; it is an artful mastery of garnering support for your ideas. This course will teach you how to put persuasion into action, using emotional intelligence as a framework for success in any discussion.



Keys to Writing Winning Grants

This course will demystify the grant writing process, providing clear guidelines for presenting your project to funders in the most compelling way possible to increase your chances of success. Topics covered will include how to tell your story, matching your project with the funder's mission, demonstrating evidence-based need, and learning how to design a logic model based on your theory of change. The skills learned in this course have wide applicability outside the realm of grant writing, including developing a data orientation in your work, writing SMART goals, and presenting ideas for projects to funders, boards, and communities in a professional manner.

Budgeting Basics for Nonprofit Organizations

Effective budgeting is critical for planning and operating the business of your nonprofit organization. Learn how to create and monitor a detailed budget aligned with your organization's strategic goals. This course will introduce the fundamental elements needed to successfully prepare, monitor, and conclude a variety of different types of budgets.

*Note, this course is designed for non-finance staff tasked with budget related duties.

This course will cover the following topics:

- ▶ Understanding your funding and budget
 - ▶ Developing (and maintaining) essential collaboration & working relationships
 - ▶ Coordinating activities across departments and programs to ensure execution
 - ▶ Forecasting income and expenditure (aka profitability)
 - ▶ Identifying variable costs vs. fixed costs
 - ▶ Understand purpose and causes of budget variances (and how to use as a tool for planning)
 - ▶ Reconciling a budget at the conclusion of a fiscal year or special project
 - ▶ Using your budget as a decision-making tool
-

HIPAA and Confidentiality

It is critical that organizations considered to be a Covered Entity under HIPAA (the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) understand regulations and best practices surrounding this act and associated laws, which safeguard client privacy and confidentiality. This training will provide a comprehensive overview for employees at all levels of a nonprofit organization on protecting client information on paper and in electronic systems. The right of clients to access their own information, request changes to information they believe to be incorrect, and pursue complaints for violation of their confidentiality will also be reviewed. HIPAA can be confusing and intimidating, but this course will provide employees with accessible, clear guidelines to ensure that client rights are protected through compliance with HIPAA regulations.

Planning a Consumer Event: Steps for Success

Learn how to plan and execute events for your program clientele that will enhance engagement and help you meet funder goals. This webinar will explore the entire process, from the early planning stages to staffing and running the event itself. Events are a great way to offer clients resources and positive experiences outside of the normal program structure, and this webinar will give you the confidence and tools you need for success.

Microsoft Excel Training Part 1: Getting Started with the Basics

Microsoft Excel is a powerful tool essential for managing and presenting data in today's metrics-driven world. At some point in everyone's career, it is likely that they will be required to create, interpret, or enter data onto a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. In this entry-level Microsoft Excel training course, participants will learn the following topics:

- ▶ Data entry and navigation
- ▶ Adding columns and rows
- ▶ Copying and creating new sheets
- ▶ Sorting and filtering data
- ▶ Creating and formatting tables
- ▶ Cleaning and reformatting or reorganizing data

Microsoft Excel Training Part 2: Exploring Data & Creating Reports

Microsoft Excel is a powerful tool essential for managing and presenting data in today's metrics-driven world. Being able to perform basic functions and create charts/graphs for reports is a crucial function of many professionals. In this intermediate excel session, participants will learn the following topics:

- ▶ Review data tools: text-to-columns and eliminating duplicates
- ▶ Printing from Excel (or creating PDFs)
- ▶ Using formulas to clean and restructure data:
 - ▶ TRIM
 - ▶ CONCATENATE/CONCAT
 - ▶ LEFT/RIGHT/MID
- ▶ Using basic computational formulas including:
 - ▶ SUM
 - ▶ AVERAGE, MEDIAN, MODE
 - ▶ DATEDIF
- ▶ Creating basic graphs
 - ▶ Bar graph
 - ▶ Pie chart
- ▶ Introduction to Pivot Tables to explore data and answer questions

Microsoft Excel Training Part 3: Understanding Advanced Formulas and Creating Graphs

This advanced Excel training course builds on parts 1 and 2 and is designed specifically for spreadsheet users who are already proficient and want to take their skills to the next level. In this advanced excel session, participants will review methods for data analysis including:

- ▶ Review of tools for working with data
 - ▶ Conditional formatting
 - ▶ Data validation and locking cells
 - ▶ Extracting substrings
 - ▶ (LEFT, RIGHT, MID, FIND)
- ▶ Working with dates in spreadsheets and pivot tables
 - ▶ Date math in spreadsheets
 - ▶ Isolating data in pivot tables by year, quarter, month
- ▶ Formulas and Function:
 - ▶ IF/THEN
 - ▶ COUNTIF
 - ▶ VLOOKUP
 - ▶ Reference to fixed vs. relative cells using F4 key
 - ▶ Understanding and addressing formula errors
 - ▶ Macros
 - ▶ CORREL (Calculation statistical correlation)
- ▶ Creating different kinds of graphs

Introduction to Microsoft Teams

Microsoft Teams is a popular integrated communication and collaboration platform in Office 365. This Introduction to Microsoft Teams training course prepares participants for immediate and long-term success by increasing their productivity and communication skills. Participants will learn the following topics:

- ▶ Navigate and use the MS Teams site
- ▶ Review Teams features and capabilities using live interactive demonstrations
- ▶ View and understand Teams layout
- ▶ Create and join a Team and a Channel
- ▶ Chat in a Team or Channel
- ▶ Conduct private chat conversations
- ▶ Uploading and managing files
- ▶ Create, use, and manage Calendar meetings
- ▶ Creating buckets and assigning tasks to users
- ▶ Schedule and join web meetings
- ▶ Integrate Teams with SharePoint and Microsoft Planner

Microsoft Office Overview

Proficiency in Microsoft Office, a suite of productivity software that is used by millions of people around the world, is a must in today's business world. While many of us have developed "on the job" familiarity through daily use, there is always more to learn to unlock its full potential. This course will provide an overview of the most important Microsoft Office applications, including Word, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams and Excel, and explore strategies to help you work more efficiently. This course is intended for anyone who is interested in learning the basics of Microsoft Office.



Prosocial Modeling: Best Practice in Criminal Justice Work

Prosocial Modeling, an evidence-based practice for use with justice involved and other mandated clients, is the process through which staff serve as positive role models for clients in every interaction, at all times. Beyond the skills of individual staff, pro-social modeling is ideally an orientation for entire programs, creating a positive, supportive, respectful program environment for staff and clients alike. Topics covered in this interactive training include establishing clear expectations, the appropriate and necessary use of authority, developing empathic relationships while holding people accountable, and respectfully challenging and confronting undesirable behavior. Participants will learn the skills that give clients the lived experience of support, transparency and respect, the foundations of prosocial behavior.

The Trauma of Incarceration

Supporting the formerly incarcerated as they return to their families and communities is among the most challenging and rewarding jobs in the human services, but staff are often frustrated by lack of client progress or what looks like actual self-sabotage. To be most effective, helpers need to be fully aware of the unique challenges this population faces and understand their extreme vulnerability during the critical period of time between release from prison and reintegration into society. This training will discuss the experience of incarceration from a trauma-informed perspective — its impact on mind, body, and worldview — and explore how common trauma responses prevent clients from fully accessing the resources of reentry programs. Helpers who can truly “start where the client is” will form the kind of trusting relationships that free clients to begin the challenging work of rebuilding their lives with confidence and hope.

Using the Stages of Change Model to Promote Behavior Change

The Stages of Change model (also called The Transtheoretical Model) focuses on the decision-making process of individuals and assessing their readiness to make significant behavioral changes. The model is used extensively in the behavioral health field, particularly with individuals struggling with substance use disorders. Understanding an individual’s readiness to change can help foster a therapeutic alliance and promote motivation, as well as guiding the choice of appropriate treatment strategies. This training will provide human service professionals with the basic concepts and tools needed to effectively use the Stages of Change model when working with clients to make positive life changes.

Risk Need Responsivity Principles in Practice

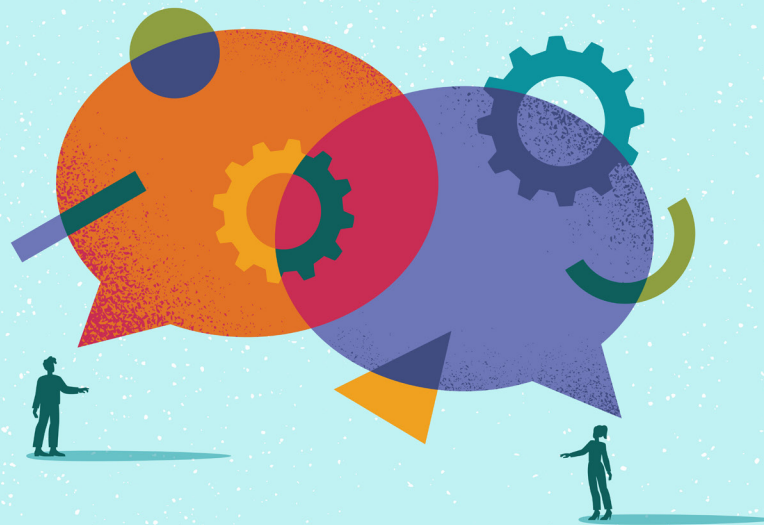
Risk-Need-Responsivity is one of the most studied and well-known theories of addressing criminogenic behavior, but one of the most challenging to meaningfully implement. This pivotal model focuses on using data-driven methods to match supervision level to assessed risk, providing treatment that directly addresses identified criminogenic need, and facilitating full and meaningful program participation by adapting treatment to individual characteristics. This training will translate theory into practice, with tools to enhance program and practitioner effectiveness that will result in optimal outcomes for our justice-involved clients.

Out of Prison and Out of Work: Developing Employment Opportunities for the Formerly Incarcerated

Formerly incarcerated individuals are unemployed at a rate of 27%, which is higher than the total US unemployment rate. Research shows that securing employment after release is a significant factor in promoting economic stability and reducing the likelihood of recidivism. Unfortunately, returning citizens face a multitude of challenges, including structural barriers, limited opportunities, and skills deficits. This workshop will provide community justice workers valuable vocational tools to assist the formerly incarcerated, including resume writing, interview skills, and how to establish a positive relationship with potential employers.

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THE INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATIVE PRACTICE at The Connection can partner with you to create professional development courses that are specific to your organizational needs.

Please contact Assistant Vice President of Training and Grant Management, **MICHELE KLIMCZAK, MA, LMSW**, for more information:

860 343-5500 x1051
mklimczak@theconnectioninc.org