

Facilitating Experiential Therapy with Individuals, Couples, Families, and Groups Training group

9 CEUs for VT-LCMHCs (pending)

Winter 2024 – 6 weeks

Join us for a training group for mental health professionals who want to learn how to facilitate counseling sessions using creative, action oriented experiential methods. This training group is designed to provide education, practice, and knowledge of experientially based therapy methods. We learn experiential therapy methods by participating in experiential work, therefore, there will not be PowerPoint slides, a computer screen and/or note taking as happens with typical trainings. Participants will experience being a member of a group and be asked to use material from their own personal life (rather role play) to work with. Group members will be asked to experience the process as a participant first, and then we will discuss the mechanics and specifics of the work second. Finally, group members will have an opportunity to practice and tap into their own style of leading experiential work.

The facilitators will demonstrate how to create emotional safety and foster willingness with clients as well as demonstrate specific interventions and enactments to help clients achieve their goals. Particular focus will be on suitable experiential therapy methods for individual and couples sessions, since those are the services most counseling professionals provide. Matters related to therapy groups and family sessions will also be discussed.

Learning objectives:

1. Determine what clients are best suited for experiential methods and when this approach is contraindicated.
2. Know how to build and maintain emotional safety in counseling sessions.
3. Understand why experiential counseling methods can be more effective in helping clients achieve their goals than cognitive-based traditional talk therapy.
4. Come away with at least six new experiential exercises to use with clients.
5. Learn specific ideas on how to incorporate experiential, action-oriented counseling methods into the counseling process.
6. Learn ways of integrating animal interactions into your clinical work. This will include demonstrations with the office cat, as well as discussions of how integrating dogs, horses, and other animals into the work can be beneficial to clinical work.

Facilitators:

Phil Prothero, LCMHC, and Aubrey Welch, LCMHC will be facilitating this workshop. Early in his adult life, Phil switched careers from environmental engineering to counseling after completing his Masters of Arts in Counseling and Masters of Divinity from Mars Hill Graduate School, now known as The Seattle School of Theology and Psychology. He has been a mental health counselor for 19 years and a Certified Sex Addiction Counselor for 18. He has a clinical interest in animal assisted therapy as well as exploring the role family pets play in the family system. He has specialized training in psychodrama and experiential therapy modalities, and in 2021 he earned his certificate for Equine-Assisted Mental Health Practitioner Certificate from the University of Denver.

Aubrey earned her Masters Degree in Counseling at Springfield College. Upon completion of this degree in 2018, she worked in an alternative school where she was able to experience the integration of horses and counseling. This was a remarkable experience where Aubrey grew her passion for Equine Assisted Psychotherapy. Later, Aubrey began working as a therapist in a Pediatric office primarily with children and families. Quickly, Aubrey realized that her work could be much more meaningful utilizing animals and experiential modalities. Aubrey went on to open her own private practice. Currently, she owns Mountain View Farms in Topsham, VT where she supports people of all ages through equine and other experiential modalities.

Details:

Schedule: This group will run every other week, Mondays from 8:30am – 10am, starting February 12 and ending April 22 for a total of six meetings. Meeting dates are Feb 12th, 26th, March 11th, 25th, and April 8th, and 22nd.

Location: Redeeming Stories office, 205 Billings Farm, Suite 2D, Wilder, VT. Office is ADA accessible. Entry into the building is either via stairs or lift, please inquire in advance about getting access to the lift. Please note, there will be a friendly cat in the office.

CEUs: 9 CEUs available for Vermont LCMHCs who attend all six meetings, for an additional fee of \$25. Sadly, CEU's for Vermont licensed psychologists, social workers and New Hampshire licensed counselors, psychologists and social workers are not available currently. If there is sufficient interest, we can pursue the future option of having CEUs available for these groups.

Cost: The cost is \$120 for each group meeting. The group is limited to 6 participants and is a closed group, meaning you are expected to attend all six sessions and there will not be any new participants added part way through. You pay for your seat in group regardless of attendance, with exceptions for illness and inclement weather. Fee is due at time of service or may be paid in advance. Checks (made out to Mountain View Farms), credit/debit cards, and cash accepted. You are encouraged to register early as the downside of having such a small group is that seats fill up fast.

Questions or to register: Contact Phil: phil@redeemingstories.com or Aubrey: AubreyWelch@mountainviewfarmsvt.com. A short phone/Zoom interview is required to help you and the facilitators decide if this group is a good fit for you. There is no fee for this interview.

To register, you will be emailed a registration form that needs to be completed and returned. Once this is returned and processed, you will receive confirmation from one of the facilitators confirming that you are registered for the group.