Authentic Trainings, LLC

PRACTICAL, RELATABLE, & COMPASSIONATE

Greetings!

As a member of the ASAP-NYCB Trainers Registry, I am always amazed at how Certified Peer Recovery Specialists and Certified Addiction Recovery Coaches easily demonstrate positive regard for others.

Their lived experience brings genuine humility, compassion, and positive regard for everyone they work with.

Positive regard is a component of radical acceptance that must be genuine. We can't use the phrase "fake it until you make it" here. Peers come into the relationship as partners, not experts.

Let's look at how genuine positive regards regard is essential in counseling relationships.

Think about a time when someone was trying to show you respect, and you knew they didn't mean it. *We know, don't we?*

It shows in their body language, eye contact, and tone of voice; they cannot maintain the charade over time.

Genuine positive regard is a powerful tool in fighting the stigma of alcohol and substance use disorder.

Carl Rogers believed unconditional positive regard, accurate empathy, and genuineness were necessary for healing. William Miller and Theresa Moyers

identified internal and external aspects of Positive Regard in their book *Effective Psychotherapists, Clinical skills that improve client outcomes*(2021)

Internal positive regard is an "unconditional respectful and benevolent disposition towards clients, anticipating and appreciating their strengths and potential for growth. External positive regard is a "behavioral expression in practice, communicating positive regard to your clients." (pp. 43-53)

In my 30+ years working in the field of alcohol and substance use disorder, unfortunately, I have not always witnessed clients treated with positive regard. But I have witnessed, and the research bears this out, those people who demonstrated genuine positive regard had the best client outcomes in terms of engagement and completion rates.

When I find something to like about the person I am working with (in any capacity), my mindset shifts, and my tone becomes genuine.

When I can embrace vicarious resilience by seeing the best in people and focusing on what they have overcome, rather than what they have done, I admire their courage, spirit, tenacity, and resilience.

An added benefit is that the pleasure center in my brain lights up and insulates me from burnout. A vital lesson that people with longevity in this field have learned.

Genuine positive regard is more than a skill. It is a mindset change that allows us to see the humanity in all people. Carl Rogers believed it is a privilege to witness someone's natural ability to heal. It allows us to see the potential in all of us.

How often have you had to work with someone you didn't believe wanted to change, and three months later, they were a different person? What changed?

Usually, the helper demonstrates genuine positive regard, radical acceptance, a non-judgmental attitude, and affirms autonomy. The defenses come down when I feel like someone genuinely wants to partner with me and believes I can change.

Studies show that there is a mirror process that happens in all relationships.

What I bring to the relationships is what I get back.

If I am calm and centered and demonstrate genuine positive regard for the people I work with, they are more willing to engage and partner with me. When I enter into a partnership, rather than being the expert, people are more likely to move toward healing.

In alcohol and substance use disorder recovery services, our clients face some of the worst stigma imaginable.

Instead of looking at why they are not engaging in recovery, look inwards, and embrace the skills that make engagement more accessible. The one thing that I can control is myself. **Changing my mindset has a ripple effect that can impact my worldview.**

Motivational Interview and Trauma Responsiveness are two evidence-based strategies that encourage counselors, therapists, peers, and healthcare providers to develop positive regard, radical acceptance, and all the skills that

lead to better outcomes.

Reply to this email to schedule a staff training or join a scheduled class.

Together, we can make a difference. One training at a time.

Many thanks,

Sandy

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