



Authentic Trainings, LLC

PRACTICAL, RELATABLE, & COMPASSIONATE

Greetings!

Welcome to your monthly dose of expert insights for professional development in SUD. It's a short list of articles and evidence-based tools to help you foster high engagement and retention and nurture the ideal conditions for lasting change. I've also included a self-care tip to help you kindle joy and excitement in your work.

If so moved, please forward this email to another SUD professional who could use it.

On Family Inclusion

To the Family Member Who Stepped In

You may not have planned for this role.

You may be a grandparent, aunt, uncle, sibling, cousin, or another person who simply knew that a child needed you—and you stepped forward.

What you are doing matters.

You are creating stability in a time of uncertainty. You are helping a child feel safe, connected, and cared for when so much around them may feel confusing or unpredictable. You are making meals, keeping routines, getting children to school, showing up for appointments, answering difficult questions, and carrying responsibilities that others may never fully see.

You may also be carrying your own grief.

You can love the child deeply and still feel tired, overwhelmed, angry, worried, or heartbroken about how your family arrived here. You may be trying to support someone you love who is struggling with a substance use disorder while also protecting the well-being of the child in your care. Those experiences can exist together.

You do not have to be perfect to make a difference.

Children do not need perfection. They need caring adults who are present, dependable, and willing to keep showing up. The ordinary things you do every day—listening, setting routines, offering reassurance, celebrating small successes, providing a safe place to sleep—can become some of the most important experiences in a child's life.

And while much of the attention may be focused on the person receiving treatment or the child, you deserve support too.

Your needs matter. Your health matters. Your relationships matter. Your hopes for your own life still matter.

Accepting help does not diminish what you are giving. It helps make it possible for you to continue.

So, if no one has said it lately:

Thank you for stepping in.

Thank you for creating safety.

Thank you for loving a child through a difficult time.

Thank you for holding hope when hope may feel hard to find.

What you are doing may not always be visible.

But it is deeply important.

And it matters more than you may ever know.

Stay tuned for our collaboration with Wisdom Thinkers Network, Inc. We are developing a Family Ambassador Program to support families in the community.

On Clinical Offerings

As we move into Recovery Month, **Authentic Trainings LLC is expanding our offerings with a new series of advanced, experiential training and treatment resources.**

Our work builds on the foundation that has always guided Authentic Trainings: Motivational Interviewing, trauma-responsive care, and the belief that meaningful change happens through connection, reflection, and experience.

My master's degree in Adult Learning reinforced something I have seen throughout my years in the substance use disorder field: **people learn best when they can connect the dots between what they know, what they experience, and what they feel.**

Experiential approaches help make those connections possible. Through expressive arts, sociometrics, psychodrama, guided reflection, and other

interactive modalities, individuals can explore their experiences in ways that provide emotional distance and a greater sense of safety and choice.

Rather than requiring someone to recount a traumatic experience in detail, experiential activities can offer symbolic, creative, and indirect ways to tell their story, recognize patterns, acknowledge barriers, and begin making meaning of what they have experienced.

We are excited to offer our Men's Trauma Group Program, an evidence-informed weekly group model that was successfully implemented within a large hospital-based substance use disorder treatment program.

A Ready-to-Implement Program

Organizations receive the structure, materials, training, and ongoing support needed to implement the program.

The complete package includes:

- A fully developed **10–14 week Men's Trauma Group curriculum** incorporating expressive arts, sociometrics, psychodrama, experiential learning, and trauma-responsive practices
- A **comprehensive Facilitator Guide** with step-by-step guidance for activities and group exercises
- A **Participant Guide** supporting reflection and learning throughout the program
- Staff training **to build understanding and prepare the team for implementation**
- **Train-the-Trainer** preparation to develop internal capacity and sustainability
- **Ongoing consultation and implementation support**

The experiential activities are what sets this program apart. Participants are not simply asked to sit in a group and talk about trauma. They are offered multiple ways to tell their stories while maintaining emotional distance, personal choice, and control over how much they disclose.

The goal is not disclosure for disclosure's sake. It is creating opportunities for participants to understand how past experiences may connect with present-day emotions, relationships, substance use, coping strategies, and recovery—and to begin identifying possibilities for growth and healing.

Interested in bringing the Men's Trauma Group Program to your organization?

Contact Authentic Trainings LLC at sandy@authentictrainings.com.

For Peer Professionals

FREE 9 Hour Ethics Training

Friends of Recovery - New York proudly presents a FREE 9 Hour Ethics training, facilitated by Ruth Riddick on September 17-18, 2026.

Register [here](#).

CELEBRATE RECOVERY MONTH - SEPTEMBER ONLY
Sponsored renewal training from FOR-NY

- Certified as a CRPA (not CRPA-P)?
- Need 9-hours ethics for your renewal?
(required for CRPA renewal since July 1, 2026)
- Looking to celebrate Recovery Month as a peer professional?

FREE
(\$345 value)

EXCLUSIVE SPONSORED TRAINING EVENT ON ZOOM
Good Behavior Ethics
NYCB-approved 9-hour renewal
Thursday 17 & Friday, September 18, 2026
9.30-2.30pm

- Evaluate your experience of real-world ethical dilemmas
- Identify when you're becoming unconsciously attached to outcomes and how to get back on track
- Incorporate core recovery values into your ethical decision-making process
- Confront the major external influences on ethical performance
- Understand the responsibilities of your twin role as a peer professional and as a program/agency employee
- Agree why it's necessary to stay current with emerging trends in the field and to upgrade your role-based skills

Author/Trainer:
Ruth Riddick, CARC-RCP/f, RTR-S
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ruthriddick/>
Recipient of the **2024 NYS Justice Peer Initiative Impact Award in Training & Development** and co-founder/member of the **NYCB Trainer Registry**.

Registration:
<https://app.dvforms.net/api/dv/x734d7>

On Non-Traditional Approaches

6 CARC/CRPA, CASAC/PPP/CPS CREDITS



TAI CHI FOR RECOVERY

EMOTION REGULATION,
SELF CARE TEAM BUILDING
TRAINING RETREAT

REGISTER HERE



\$210 CREDIT CARD

\$105 SELF PAY

\$200 AGENCY CHECK



IN PERSON BALLSTON SPA, NY

FRIDAYS

SEPT 25, OCT 30, OR NOV 20, 2026

9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

EMAIL:
THERESA@THERESAMKNORR.COM



On Self-Care



At Vital Voyage



Hop over to the Vital Voyage Blog to read my recent posts on moral injury and its connections to substance use disorder.

[Read at Vital Voyage](#)

On Motivational Interviewing

ON-DEMAND MI COURSES FOR YOUR WORKFORCE



Motivational Interviewing Training: A Step-by-Step Guide to Empower Others Toward Positive Change and Growth

Build the communication skills that inspire change.

Ever feel like you're talking *at* your clients instead of truly connecting *with* them?

Or do you watch people repeat the same patterns, even when you're trying your best to help?

The truth is, most professionals were never taught the specific skills that motivate lasting change, especially with people who feel stuck, ashamed, or hopeless about the future.

This on-demand course in Motivational Interviewing gives you simple, proven tools you can start using right away. You'll learn how to...

- Turn difficult conversations into collaboration
- Use core MI skills like open questions, affirmations, reflections, and summaries
- Apply MI across fields such as social work, healthcare, and education
- Take a trauma-informed, person-centered, and strengths-based approach

The course includes engaging videos, real-life examples, guided exercises, and a downloadable learning guide. You'll earn **4 CE credits (NY OASAS)** and enjoy a full year of access so you can review anytime.

By the end, you'll know how to build authentic connection, turn resistance into teamwork, and **help people believe in their ability to change.**

[Preview the course for your team.](#)



MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

for Criminal Justice Professionals

Frustrated with the same conversations that go nowhere?

Many justice professionals want to help people change, but old communication habits just aren't working. Clients fall back into the same patterns, and it's exhausting to keep talking *at* people without seeing progress.

This on-demand course in Motivational Interviewing (MI) for Criminal Justice Professionals shows you how to break through.

MI is proven to help justice-involved individuals feel motivated, engaged, and invested in their own change.

You'll learn how to:

- Build trust quickly
- Turn resistance into collaboration
- Encourage real commitment to a better future

Who should take this course?

Anyone working in treatment courts, family courts, probation, substance use treatment, mental health services, or related fields.

What you get:

- Flexible, on-demand lessons you can complete anytime
- Skills tailored for criminal justice and allied professionals
- The latest MI strategies (updated August 2023)
- Practical tools you can use right away to improve outcomes

Research shows MI increases engagement, reduces dropout, and lowers recidivism. As one recent graduate shared, "This training was spot on — exactly what I needed."

Start building the skills that lead to better conversations, better outcomes, and safer communities.

Get Instant Access Today!

As always, thanks for reading.

Sandy

PS. Does your team need professional development in

- *embracing families,*
- *motivational interviewing, or*
- *trauma-informed care?*

Get workforce development that meets your organization's needs. [Email me to get started.](#)

Forwarded this message?

→ [Sign Up Here.](#)

Get exclusive content, private Q&As, training discounts, and inspiring self-care tools delivered to your inbox.

No spam, ever. Just evidence-based tools to help you help others.



R1 Learning Discovery Decks



Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Topic Kit

This deck helps individuals identify which of ten (10) ACEs they experienced and which of the seven (7) Resilience Practices helped/help them endure, survive, and thrive.

Topic Kit includes:

One Discovery Card Deck (one for each group member; buy additional decks to match your typical group size). Card decks include:

- Sorting cards

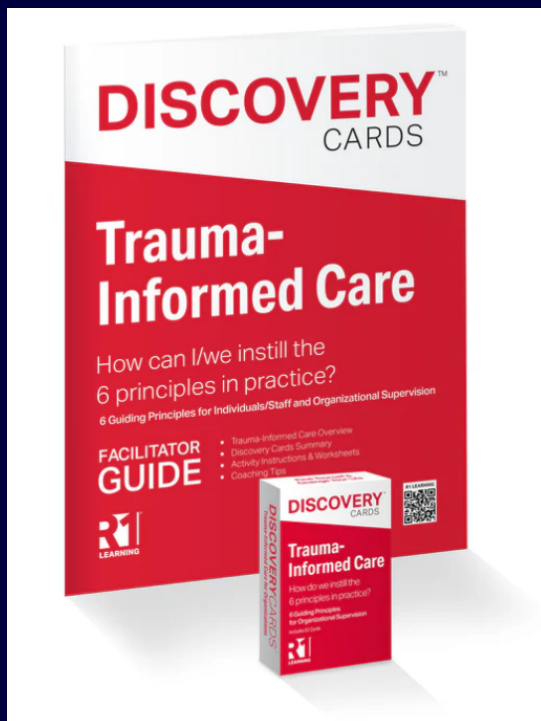
- Category model definition cards
- Activity cards with questions to explore

One Facilitator Guide, which includes:

- Model overview
- Card deck summary
- Activity instructions and worksheets
- Coaching tips

Use the code **SANDY10%** to save on your own **R1 Discovery ACES Deck**.

**Explore the ACES
Discovery Deck.**



Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)
Adopting a TIC approach is not accomplished through any single technique, training, or checklist.

Effective trauma-informed care requires constant awareness, attention, caring, sensitivity, and possibly a cultural change at the organizational level.

On-going individual and organizational assessment of the 6 Guiding Principles will help embed this approach into daily practices.

The purpose of this R1 Learning topic is to help organizations, staff, and practitioners assess services in conjunction with SAMHSA's TIC 6 Guiding Principles and improve the outcomes for individuals served.

Topic Kit includes one Discovery Cards deck and one Facilitator Guide – everything you need to run an effective session.

Buy additional card decks to match your typical group size. Using behavior-based and color-categorized cards, group members will gain a deeper understanding of 6 Guiding Principles and 3 Environment Types.

The Facilitator Guide provides group leaders with everything needed to run structured, action-oriented sessions, including activity worksheets, and coaching tips. Discovery Cards increase engagement, participation,

and self-discovery and spark great discussions in group settings.

Buy today, and improve your engagement and outcomes.

Use the code **SANDY10%** to save on your own **R1 Discovery Trauma Informed Care Deck**.

**Explore the TIC
Discovery Deck.**



Sandra Rivers is a proud member of the
[NYCB Trainer Registry](#).
#20207022.

Connect with Authentic Trainings



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