



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

On October 14, Ruth Riddick and I will lead a Fireside Family & Friends Invitation to Change: Support and Skills group.

It's a free, 15-week virtual drop-in support group for NYS family members navigating a loved one's substance use or other harmful behaviors. This group offers practical, evidence-based tools to help participants respond to a loved one in ways that foster connection while maintaining boundaries.

Participants will learn skills that strengthen communication, reduce conflict, and support their own well-being while connecting with other families. This group is funded by a generous grant from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation.

Register → [here](#)

Fireside Family and Friends Invitation to Change: Support & Skills Group

Free **drop-in support group** for anyone who knows someone struggling with substances.



cmc: foundation for change

Wednesdays 6-7:15pm ET

Online on Zoom

With Ruth Riddick – Sobriety

Together, Sandy Rivers – Authentic Trainings —



Scan to Join Zoom



For Peer Professionals

New Peer Professional Training Cohorts Begin in October and January!

Lived experience can become one of the most powerful tools you bring to the recovery field.

Our upcoming **Recovery Coach Academy** and **Ethical Considerations for Recovery Coaches** trainings are designed for

- people pursuing CRPA or CARC certification,
- current peer professionals who want to strengthen their skills, and

- family members who want to use their own lived experience with substance use disorder to support and coach other families navigating similar challenges.

The [30-hour Recovery Coach Academy](#) provides the foundational skills needed for peer recovery work, including active listening, Motivational Interviewing, recovery planning, professional roles, and supporting multiple pathways to recovery. It meets New York State's 30-hour core foundational training requirement for CRPA and CARC certification.

The [16-hour Ethical Considerations for Recovery Coaches](#) training focuses on the boundaries and decision-making skills that make peer support effective and sustainable, including role clarity, ethical dilemmas, recovery values, self-care, and learning how to support others without overstepping your role. It is also a foundational requirement for initial CRPA and CARC certification.

Both trainings are live, virtual, and highly interactive, with new cohorts beginning in October and January.

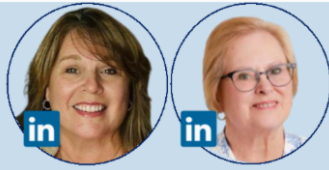
Whether you're building a new career in peer support or looking for a way to use what your own family has lived through to help someone else, this training offers a practical place to begin.

→ [\[Learn more and register for an upcoming cohort here.\]](#)

APPROVED FOUNDATIONAL TRAINING FOR

CRPA or CARC

We've Got You Covered – on Zoom!



30 hours | 4 days + 2 x half-day training

CCAR Recovery Coach Academy

Oct 22, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30

Trainers: Lisa Ardner, CARC & Sandy Rivers, CASAC



16 hours | 3 training days

CCAR Ethical Considerations

Nov 3, 5, 6

Trainer: Ruth Riddick, CARC



4 hours | self-paced

Medication Supported Recovery (MSR)

Trainers: Ruth Riddick, CARC & Lisa Nichols, CRPA



Prep the IC&RC Exam for CRPA

With a Subject Matter Expert
Item Writer of the IC&RC
Peer Recovery Exam

NEW in 2026!

3 hours | self-paced

IC&RC (CRPA) Exam Prep Workshop

Includes new Harm Reduction materials

All trainers are members of the **New York Certification Board Trainer Registry**; approved to deliver these programs for credits; **CCAR Recovery Coach Professional Facilitators**; and members of the **Mid-Atlantic Facilitators Network**. Among other credentials, Lisa and Sandy hold **MA (Adult Learning)** and are members of the **Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT)**; Ruth holds a certificate in **RTR-Sociometry**.

Register for all trainings at

<https://www.apurpose4life.com/product-catalog>

Questions? Email: lisa@apurpose4life.com



Team Spot Light

Lisa Ardner, MA, CASAC-M, CARC, CCTP, PLC, is a Certified Motivational Interviewing Network Trainer (MINT) with more than 15 years of experience in addiction treatment, recovery and professional education. As a member of the international Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT), she provides engaging, evidence-based training for treatment court teams, behavioral health professionals, peer specialists and criminal justice partners. Drawing upon decades of recovery and family lived experience, Lisa helps professionals practice MI with fidelity, compassion and skill.



Lisa brings a faith-based perspective and has been instrumental in developing a counseling program at her church. She has an amazing way of demonstrating her faith while working with any population. Her love and unconditional positive regard is her signature and she leaves it everywhere she goes.

Lisa has her own training company, A Purpose 4 Life, and she partners with Authentic Trainings LLC., development and training regularly. We are grateful for our many years of partnership and look forward to the future.

On Self-Care



On Mens' Trauma & Motivational Interviewing

Men don't always come into treatment saying, "I need help with trauma."

For some men, trauma shows up first as anger, withdrawal, difficulty trusting others, shutting down when conversations get too close, or a pattern of returning to substance use when difficult emotions surface.

That can make trauma work especially challenging for the clinicians trying to reach them.

That's why we're proud to announce the launch of our Motivational Interviewing-focused Men's Trauma Group curriculum.

This experiential, evidence-informed group was designed specifically for implementation in substance use disorder treatment settings. The 10-week curriculum gives clinicians a structured way to help men approach trauma gradually—building emotional regulation, trust, and safety without forcing disclosure before a participant is ready.

The curriculum was originally implemented in a large, inner-city treatment center with excellent results. Now, we're making the training and complete curriculum available to other organizations that want a practical, consistent way to strengthen the trauma work they are already doing with men.

Participants learn to use Motivational Interviewing alongside experiential approaches, including life timelines, genograms, storytelling, expressive arts, drumming, affirmations, and other tools that help men explore trauma without relying solely on direct, talk-heavy approaches.

Our goal is simple.

Give experienced clinicians a program they can actually use—not another training that leaves them to figure out implementation on their own.

→ [\[Click here to learn more about the Men's Trauma Group Training.\]](#)

At Vital Voyage Blog

The Misuse of the DSM-5-TR Diagnosis of Polysubstance Use Disorder

★★★★★ No ratings yet



At Vital Voyage Blog, read my article ["The Misuse of the DSM-5-TR Diagnosis of Polysubstance Use Disorder."](#)

I look at why “polysubstance use disorder” can become a harmful shortcut—one that increases stigma and overlooks trauma, mental health, and the reasons behind substance use. Effective treatment starts with understanding the whole person.

→ [\[Read it now.\]](#)

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

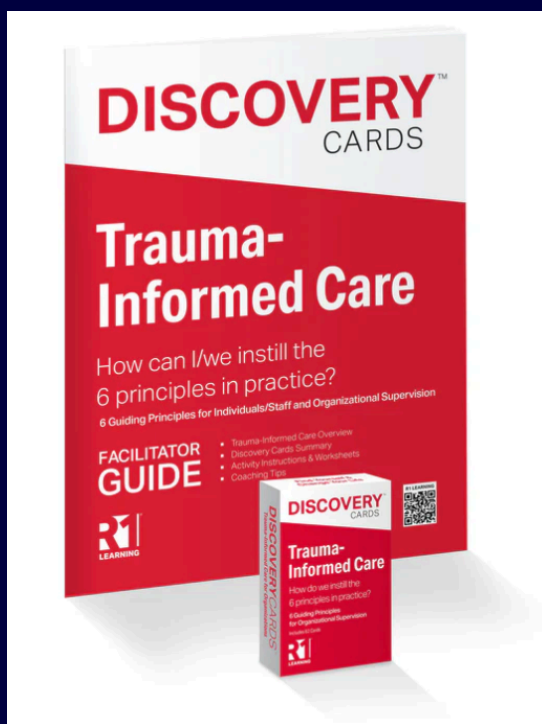
One Facilitator Guide, which includes:

- 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.

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