

# STRENGTHS APPROACH TRAINING

*To inspire, develop and resource your practice*

A strengths approach to practice highly values the strengths within every person, family and community. It focusses on hopes, possibilities and what is working well rather than on problems and deficits. We believe that a strengths approach applies to the whole organisation; enhancing, developing and sustaining organisational culture, from direct service delivery through to administration and management structures. Educators, social workers, counsellors, parents, managers, businesses and local governments—anyone who works with others—can become a catalyst for building cultures where strengths and connectedness flourish.

**OUR HIGHLY-INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS DEMONSTRATE THE STRENGTHS APPROACH IN ACTION!**

We specialise in working with you to offer tailor-made training at your organisation. Training can vary from half to three days or more, delivered on consecutive days or over a period of time. Our practice training can include the following workshops in formats negotiated with you:

## STRENGTHS APPROACH TO PRACTICE

Everyone has strengths. Our qualities, capacities, relationships, values, stories, experiences, skills and material resources can all be strengths. But 'The Problem' can easily be experienced as all-consuming, keeping clients and services alike stuck and creating barriers to change. Strengths-based practice focusses squarely on identifying, mobilising and celebrating clients' strengths. Social workers, counsellors, managers, educators—and anyone who works with others—can become a catalyst for building cultures where strengths and connectedness flourish, so that individuals, teams and organisations can build resilience, capacity for lasting change and genuine 'agency' in their own lives. This highly engaging and practical training facilitates participants' learning of strengths-based principles, skills and resources which can be applied immediately in their work.

### **This workshop includes:**

- What is the strengths approach?
- How does it align with person-centred, solution-focused practice?
- Principles of practice including power-over and power-with.
- Strengths approach skills including: noticing change, scaling, externalising, reframing
- The column approach
- Creating conditions for change.

## STRENGTHS APPROACH TO SUPERVISION

This workshop is designed for anyone who gives or receives supervision. Using group discussion, exercises, demonstrations and hands-on tools, participants will learn to apply a strengths approach to supervision with the aim of building reflective, creative and effective supervision conversations, agreements and relationships. These play a major role in building organisational culture and worker satisfaction, and ultimately create better outcomes for clients.

### **This workshop includes:**

- Review of principles and skills of strengths approaches to practice
- 'Traditional' supervision compared with a strengths approach to supervision
- How do our values intersect with supervision?
- Exploration of supervision functions
- Supervision demonstration and practice
- Exploring current supervision practice
- Supervision and your learning style
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Challenging conversations and 'straight talk'
- Supervision agreements.

## STRENGTHS APPROACH TO BUILDING YOUR TEAM

Do you want to build a culture within your team of 'where to?' rather than focussing on what is not working? Does your team want to find ways of moving forward by reflecting upon the individual and collective strengths it possesses? Founded on strengths-based, solution-focused and Appreciative Inquiry principles, this highly interactive workshop is an opportunity for your team to gather and explore the values that drive practice, foster a team approach to goal-setting and develop cultures of feedback, shared leadership and collaboration.

### This workshop includes:

- Strengths approach values and beliefs
- Exploring individual, group and organisational strengths, which include not only qualities but also skills, knowledge and resources
- Reciprocity: asking for help and offering yours
- Seeking and giving permission
- Goal-setting, decision-making and next steps
- Practice reflection
- Creating organisational cultures of shared leadership and collaboration.

## STRENGTHS APPROACH TO CRITICAL REFLECTION

Human services professionals often work in complex, challenging situations. Sometimes we question our motives and wonder what we could do differently. Reflecting on practice can give life and longevity to our work, and provide a foundation for putting values into action.

### This workshop includes:

- What is practice reflection and why do it?
- Questioning our assumptions
- Exploring personal values, team values and social work principles
- What are practice 'truths' and who owns them?
- Who is in the room?—exploring the dynamic we bring
- Why am I doing this?—thinking about why we do what we do
- Using questions and enquiry to examine practice
- Exploring significant incidents using a reflective framework.

## STRENGTHS APPROACH TO CLIENT RECORDING

Human services professionals, whether from a health, family, youth or education perspective, are often required to keep track of service through completing 'notes', compiling documentation and collating files or folders. How can the documentation of interactions between us and the people we work with foster autonomy and self-determination? How can recording a meeting between a worker and client be an opportunity for change and empowerment? This interactive workshop will explore the principles and practices behind client-centred, strengths-based, therapeutic recording. Participants will learn to apply skills that maximise the opportunities for change and empowerment when recording takes place.

### This workshop includes:

- Implications of the pervasive 'medical model' for recording in terms of power, ownership, access and deficit labelling
- Recording as a purposeful, therapeutic activity
- Co-constructed recording
- Principles and skills of strengths-based recording
- Letter writing and an array of other techniques for recording interactions, establishing next steps and measuring change.

## ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

What if we viewed clients as advisors, experts, community builders, and holders of wisdom? How might this paradigm shift fundamentally change practice?

This workshop is for managers and workers of all community service programs including child, youth and family, housing, drug and alcohol, mental health, disability and juvenile justice.

Use this workshop to challenge yourself to change your role from being 'the expert' to being the supporter and facilitator.

### This workshop includes:

- Learning about five domains of social inclusion
- Identifying the barriers to better social inclusion outcomes for clients
- Understanding the role of building social inclusion
- Viewing clients as change agents for themselves and others
- Considering how clients can be contributors to the design, delivery and governance of services
- Creating a practical, measurable action plan for themselves, their teams, and their organisation to build better social inclusion outcomes for clients.

## ADVENTURES IN FACILITATION: ACTIVITIES AND IDEAS TO ENRICH FACILITATED LEARNING

This engaging and participatory workshop is bursting with activities and ideas for enriching facilitated learning in teams, groups, classrooms, clubs, workshops and professional development activities. Never have another boring planning day! Learn and share strengths-based, solution-focused facilitation skills to enrich different groups and learning styles.

### This workshop includes:

- Ground rules for participation, and considerations for helping to keep groups safe and respectful
- Participant-centered, interactive groupwork activities including handling ragged starts, using sparkling moments in introductions, stretch listing, energisers, dealing with challenging dynamics, wrapping up and many more
- Role of a facilitator and elements of a strengths-based, solution-focused approach to facilitation
- Participants practise facilitating a segment of the workshop using a scripted interactive activity
- Hands-on experimentation with a range of fun, meaningful and soulful resources, items and artifacts.