



CORE ELEMENTS OF THERAPEUTIC ADVENTURE SPECIALIST TRAINING

Therapeutic Adventure(TA) Technical Skills

Definition: This element focuses on the knowledge of technical skills, competencies, and limitations related to TA interventions, risk management protocols specific to therapeutic adventure populations and settings, and environmental practices of therapeutic adventure specialists.

- Practicing within one's competencies based on technical skills training and assessed competency. Competency can be assessed by having a certification or an assessment of skill competency from a reputable training organization or employer.
- Conducting risk analysis of sites and activities that are utilized
- Environmental awareness
- Minimizing and recognizing the impact of TA on the environment

Facilitation and Processing in TA

Definition: This element focuses on the effectiveness of the therapeutic adventure experience, assists clients in finding direction and sources for functional change, and creates changes that are lasting and integrated into the clients' lives.

- Establishing norms
- Engagement and cohesion-building strategies
- Awareness of trauma responses in TA
- Adapting intervention to incorporate isomorphic metaphors
- Utilizing models for stages of change and group development while conducting TA services
- Generalizing adventure experiences to everyday life.
- Matching and facilitating an activity towards a clinical goal with the transfer of skills

Therapeutic Alliance Building in TA

Definition: This element focuses on the ability of the therapeutic adventure specialist to co-construct an effective therapeutic alliance with clients. The building of this positive form of therapeutic relationship incorporates the use of natural environment elements and adventure programming concepts. Special attention is paid to various clients' specific and diverse contexts (e.g., social, cultural, systemic, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, etc).

- Respecting and honoring inclusivity and diversity when providing TA services
- Recognizing the impact of TA on the client-therapist relationship
- Awareness of the breadth of interaction and communication styles during TA services
- Demonstrating empathy, genuineness, and unconditional positive regard
- Repairing ruptured therapeutic relationships during TA interventions
- Ensuring clients' rights when receiving TA services.

Assessment in TA

Definition: This element focuses on how the therapeutic adventure specialist examines clients in mental health settings through adventure experiences and uses supportive documentation for screening and creating potential interventions.

- TA interventions as part of ongoing client assessment
- Adventure-based assessment to inform therapeutic facilitation decisions
- Seeks information about clients from multiple areas to deliver effective TA services
- Evaluation and management of risk (emotional, physical, environmental, trauma-informed)

Therapeutic Adventure Interventions

Definition: This element focuses on implementing therapeutic adventure strategies and processes to produce functional client change in an appropriate, culturally relevant, lasting manner.

- Activities and techniques used in TA programming
- Selecting culturally relevant adventure experiences
- Interaction with the therapeutic environment is an integral part of the therapeutic process
- Selecting and conducting TA interventions that are appropriate and individualized to the client.

Therapeutic Monitoring in TA

Definition: This element focuses on the continual connection to clients involved in therapeutic adventure programming, including ongoing evaluation of therapeutic experiences.

- Monitoring transfer of learning from adventure activities to “daily life” over time
- The use of adventure activities for formal and informal outcome evaluation purposes.

Professionalism in TA

Definition: This element focuses on the expected professional behavior of a therapeutic adventure specialist.

- Will follow all professional regulatory laws and ethics of the region, state, province, or country in which one practices.
- Ethical Standards specific to TA services
- Knowledge of commonly accepted practices in TA
- How to use supervision for developing specific TA interventions.
- HIPAA and confidentiality considerations of providing AT services (e.g., storage of AT documentation and files in the field and in the office)
- Assumption of Risk and Liability Releases Appropriate for Adventure Programming
- Incident and Accident reporting.
- Use of clinical language in notes to reflect the intent of AT interventions and client progress.

Socio-Cultural Considerations in TA

Definition: This element focuses on the awareness and practices related to diversity needs, power, privilege, and environmental stewardship.

- Recognition of practitioner biases.
- Practicing reflection to increase awareness and manage bias.
- Practice environmental ethics appropriate to your location and region of practice.
- Advocacy for diversity, equity and equality, and environmental conservation and protection with an awareness of climate change and the history/traditions of indigenous peoples.

Environmental Considerations in TA

- Practice environmental safety and ethics appropriate to your setting, activity, and region of practice.
- Advocacy for environmental conservation and protection with an awareness of climate change and sustainability.

Trauma-Informed Practices in TA

- Practice environmental safety and ethics appropriate to your setting, activity, and region of practice.
- Advocacy for environmental conservation and protection with an awareness of climate change and sustainability.

- Facilitation of client choice and client ability to set the level of their own participation or change their mind.
- Tracking of client arousal, anxieties, and vigilance.
- Integration of regulatory activities/options.
- Adapting TA services to meet clients' immediate, short-term, and/or long-term needs upon experiencing trauma responses.
- Attune to environmental factors/variables that may induce trauma responses
- Recognition of personal trauma responses as a program/group facilitator
- Recognition and appropriate balance of power differentials inherent in adventure programming
- Promoting trustworthiness, transparency, mutuality, and collaboration during adventure programming