



## **CORE ELEMENTS OF ADVENTURE THERAPY TRAINING**

### **AT Technical Skills**

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

- Practicing within one's own competencies based on technical skills training and assessed competency. Competency can be assessed either 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 AT on the environment

### **Facilitation and Processing in AT**

*Definition: This element focuses on the effectiveness of the adventure therapy 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 AT
- Adapting intervention to incorporate isomorphic metaphors
- Utilizing models for stages of change and group development while conducting AT services
- Generalizing adventure experiences to everyday life.
- Matching and facilitating an activity towards a clinical goal with transfer of skills

### **Organizational/ Administrative Policies in AT**

*Definition: This element focuses on the organizational processes and policies surrounding adventure experiences used by the adventure therapist.*

- Designing and maintaining policies that reflect awareness of standards in the field
- Laws and regulations impacting AT services
- Development of crisis management response plans
- Medication and medical monitoring
- admission protocols, treatment, discharge, and referrals from AT services
- Supervising client behaviors and safety during AT activities
- Supervision and consultation to maintain ethical practice and AT certification
- Resources for seeking consultation about AT practices
- Logistics of planning AT interventions

### **Conceptual Knowledge of AT**

*Definition: This element focuses on the ability of the adventure therapist to use specific models, practices, philosophies, and applications of adventure therapy for the unique needs of treatment issues with clients*



- History and foundations of the development of AT
- Connecting interventions with the therapist's theoretical orientation
- Key components of AT interventions
- AT Models

### **Therapeutic Alliance Building in AT**

*Definition: This element focuses on the ability of the adventure therapist 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 the specific and diverse context of various clients (e.g., social, cultural, systemic, ethnic, gender, and sexual orientation, etc*

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

### **Assessment in AT**

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

- AT interventions as part of ongoing client assessment
- Adventure-based assessment to inform clinical facilitation decisions
- Seeks information about client from multiple areas to deliver effective AT services
- Assessment and management of risk (emotional, physical, environment, trauma-informed)

### **AT Interventions**

*Definition: This element focuses on the implementation of adventure therapy treatment strategies and processes to produce functional client change in an appropriate, culturally relevant, lasting manner.*

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

### **Therapeutic Monitoring in AT**

*Definition: This element focuses on the continual connection to clients involved in adventure therapy programming, including ongoing evaluation of therapy, maintenance of treatment gains, ongoing treatment planning, and termination.*

- Monitoring transfer of learning from adventure activities to "daily life" over time
- The use of adventure activities for formal and informal outcome evaluation purposes.
- Detailed/formative treatment planning that supports development of appropriate AT interventions
- Co-creation and/or assessment of progress on treatment goals using AT intervention



### **AT Documentation**

*Definition: This element focuses on the accurate appraisal of all steps in the adventure therapy process, including but not limited to screening and intake, participant forms, agreement to participate, waivers, informed consent and other pertinent documentation forms for client benefit.*

- 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 intent of AT interventions and client progress

### **Professionalism in AT**

*Definition: This element focuses on the expected professional behavior of an adventure therapist.*

- Will follow all professional regulatory laws and ethics of the region, state, province, or country in which one practices.
- Ethical Standards specific to AT services
- Knowledge of commonly accepted practices in AT
- How to use clinical supervision for developing specific AT interventions.

### **Socio-Cultural/Environmental Considerations in AT**

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

- Recognition of practitioner biases and controlling countertransference.
- 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