

# **“Evidence-Based Steps to Effective Management of Difficult Clients”**

*Presented by*  
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## **OBJECTIVES**

- **Recognize the difficult patterns in past and current therapeutic interactions that impede treatment progress.**
- **List the past, present and future components of problem exchanges with one’s clients.**
- **Demonstrate skill in managing difficult client interactions by conducting in-the-moment assessment.**
- **Develop a personal intervention plan using straight-forward, evidence-based and research-supported interventions.**
- **Through guided practice, demonstrate skills for proactively intervening with clients.**

## **PROGRAM OUTLINE**

### **Assessment: Unraveling the Strands of the Treatment Relationship**

- **Integration of all assessment and intervention components**
- **Assessing the past: Clinicians’ emotional “philosophy”: – What is it, where did it come from, and how it impacts clinical work**
  
- **Common, treatment-blocking patterns with difficult populations:**
  - **Secondary trauma patterns with abuse/trauma/attachment disrupted child and adult clients**
  - **The “change spiral” with substance abusers**
  - **“Knee-jerk” reactions to intense, acting-out clients**
  - **Boundary-testing “traps” with personality disordered clients**
  
- **Traps with personality disordered clients**
- **Assessing the present: The neuropsychological and behavioural aspects of client AND clinician reactions in session**
- **Assessing the future: The ripple effects of “tug-of-war” interactions during clinical interactions**

- **Treatment planning tool for quick, in-the-moment, assessment of actions and reactions during clinical work**

### **Intervention: Overview of Effective Management Strategies for Difficult Clients**

- **Mindfulness and acceptance strategies for defusing unhelpful exchanges**
- **Defusion from unhelpful thinking and focusing on the core values of one's work**
- **Orient toward the client using present moment contact and skills of empathic attunement**
- **Client-centered, assertive engagement and boundary maintenance**

### **Intervention: Putting it into Practice**

- **Implementation of the strategies with difficult clients: Prototype intervention plans for**
  - **abuse/trauma clients,**
  - **substance abusers,**
  - **emotional/behavior disordered children and adults, and**
  - **personality disordered clients**
- **Designing your own intervention plan for work with a specific client**

### **Summary and Conclusions: Tying it all together *without* touching the rope**

- **It's never too late: What to do if negative outcomes have already occurred**
- **Re-scripting your professional identity as a clinician**