2024 / Treatment Innovations / Lisa M. Najavits, PhD

**Outline and Objectives**

**1.5 or 2 day training on *Seeking Safety***

**Title:** *Seeking Safety:* An evidence-based model for trauma and/or addiction

**\*Alternate title** (please choose one below if you prefer)

⯎ *Seeking Safety:* A model for trauma and/or addiction

⯎ Implementing *Seeking Safety* for trauma and/or addiction

**Trainer:** certified to provide this training by Lisa Najavits, the developer of *Seeking Safety*. To see or verify our list of certified trainers, please see our [list](https://www.treatment-innovations.org/our-trainers.html). Lisa supervises each trainer directly, including preparation and oversight of training materials (slides, videos).

**Summary:** The goal of this presentation is to describe [*Seeking Safety*](https://www.treatment-innovations.org/training.html)*,* an evidence-based model for trauma and/or addiction (clients do not have to have both issues). By the end of the training, participants can implement Seeking Safety in their setting if they choose to. *Seeking Safety* teaches present-focused coping skills to help clients attain safety in their lives. It is highly flexible and can be conducted in any setting by a wide range of counselors and also peers. There are 25 treatment topics, each representing a safe coping skill relevant to both trauma and/or addiction, such as “Asking for Help”, “Creating Meaning”, “Compassion”, and “Healing from Anger”. Topics can be done in any order and the treatment can be done using as few or many of them as time allows. *Seeking Safety* strives to increase hope through emphasis on ideals; it offers exercises, emotionally-evocative language, and quotations to engage patients; and provides concrete strategies to build recovery skills. In this training we cover (a) background on trauma and addiction (rates, presentation, models and stages of treatment, clinical challenges); and (b) overview of *Seeking Safety* including its evidence-base*;* and (c) clinical implementation, including adaptation to various populations (e.g., adolescents, individuals with serious and persistent mental illness, veterans), frequently asked questions, fidelity, engagement methods, and cultural adaptation. By the end of the training, participants can implement Seeking Safety in their setting if they choose to. Assessment and treatment resources are also provided. Learning methods include lecture, slides, video, experiential exercises, role-play, and discussion. For more information on *Seeking Safety* see www.seekingsafety.org.

**Objectives:**

1. To describe current understanding of trauma, addiction, and their combination.
2. To increase empathy and understanding of trauma and addiction.
3. To describe *Seeking Safety,* an evidence-based model for trauma and/or addiction.
4. To identify how to apply *Seeking Safety* for specific populations, such as homeless, adolescents, criminal justice, HIV, military/veteran, etc.
5. To discuss adaptation based on setting, provider, and client factors (e.g., age, socioeconomics, culture, gender).
6. To provide assessment and treatment resources.
7. To identify fidelity considerations.
8. To highlight effective engagement strategies.

**References:**

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Briere, J. N., & Scott, C. (2014). *Principles of Trauma Therapy: A Guide to Symptoms, Evaluation, and*

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Herman, J. L. (2023). *Truth and Repair*. New York: Basic Books.

Krause, S. (2023). Adolescent Toolkit for Seeking Safety. See [www.seekingsafety.org](http://www.seekingsafety.org).

Najavits, L. M. (2002). *Seeking Safety: A Treatment Manual for PTSD and Substance Abuse*. New York: Guilford.

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Public Health Needs. *Current Treatment Options in Psychiatry*, pp.1-15.

Najavits, L. M. (2022). Trauma and Substance Abuse: A Counselor's Guide To Treatment. In M. Cloitre & U.

Schynder (Eds.), *Evidence-Based Treatments for Trauma-Related Disorders* *(2nd edition).* Springer-Verlag.

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Najavits, L. M. (in press). *Creating Change: A Past-Focused Treatment for Trauma and Addiction*. New York: Guilford.

Sherman, A. D. F., Balthazar, M., Zhang, W., Febres-Cordero, S., Clark, K. D., Klepper, M., Coleman, M., & Kelly, U. (2023). Seeking Safety intervention for comorbid post-traumatic stress and substance use disorder: A meta-analysis. *Brain and Behavior*, e2999.

Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (2014). Trauma Informed Care in Behavioral Health

Services *Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series*. Washington, DC: Department of Health and Human Services.

van der Kolk, B. A. (2015). *The body keeps the score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the healing of trauma*.

Penguin Books.

**Audiovisual (if an onsite training):** LCD projector; audio setup (to show video segments); microphone (any type is fine)

**Methods of instruction:** lecture, slides, video clips (if time allows), question/answer.

**Example of a timed outline for a 2 day version** (*can be changed to fit any timeframe)*

A typical format is 9am-4pm, with a half-hour lunch break and two fifteen-minute breaks (one mid-morning and one mid-afternoon). The schedule below assumes this typical format, but you can change it based on your scheduling. Also, if you are doing a 1.5 day training (rather than 2 days), please delete III and V on the Day 2 agenda below.

Agenda (Day 1):

Trauma, Addiction and *Seeking Safety*

**I. Trauma, addiction, and Seeking Safety (9am to 10:30am, followed by 15 minute morning break)**

a. Rates of trauma and addiction

b. Treatment challenges

c. Stages of treatment

d. Introduction to *Seeking Safety*

**II. Treatment (10:45am to 12:30pm, followed by 1/2 hour lunch break)**

a. Overview of *Seeking Safety*, including experiential exercises (e.g., grounding, taking good care of self)

b. Assessment and community resources

**III. Clients' experience (1pm to 1:45 pm, followed by 15 minute break)**

a. Half-hour video on trauma and addiction plus discussion

**IV. Clinical demonstration (2pm to 4pm)**

a. "Walk through" one sample *Seeking Safety* topic

b. Excerpts from video demonstration of *Seeking Safety* topic, “Asking for Help” with real clients

c. Experiential role-play of Seeking Safety session

i. Break into small groups and practice session check-in

ii. Continue in small groups and practice use of handouts and check-out

iii. Discussion and questions

Agenda (Day 2)

Implementation of *Seeking Safety*

**I. More on *Seeking Safety* 9am to 10:30a, followed by 15 minute morning break)**

a. Evidence base

b. Frequently asked questions

c. Special populations, as may be relevant (e.g., adolescents, military/veterans, criminal justice, severe and persistent mentally ill)

**II. Trauma and addiction toolkit exercise (10:45a - 12p, followed by 1 hour lunch break)**

**III. Clients' experience: video on trauma-related symptoms (1pm-1:45pm followed by 15-minute break)**

**IV. Engagement and challenging scenarios (2p-2:45p)**

a. “Tough cases”: group brainstorming in relation to clinical scenarios that may arise

b. Optional mini-role-plays, with a participant playing a client and trainer playing the clinician, to demonstrate enhanced treatment strategies

c. Creative adaptations of Seeking Safety

--Fun and games with Seeking Safety

--Adaptation based on client subpopulations.

--How to address challenging behavior in light of trauma and addiction.

**V. Special implementation topics (2:45pm-4pm)**

a. Group role-play of another *Seeking Safety* topic or discussion of use of *Seeking Safety* fidelity scale and practice rating a session

b. Additional implementation topics as may be relevant, including clinician processes and training, readiness for use of exposure-based treatment for PTSD

c. Cultural aspects

d. Next steps and wrap-up

**Contact information**

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