2017 / Lisa M. Najavits, PhD

**Finding your best self: Recovery from trauma, addiction or both**

This presentation will provide an overview of *Finding Your Best Self*, a new recovery model for trauma and/or addiction. The model was designed as self-help and can also be conducted by a counselor in group or individual format. It offers 36 short chapters, including: *Moving forward from trauma, addiction or both; It’s medical—you’re not crazy, lazy or bad; How do people change?; The world is your school; Listen to your behavior; Wish versus reality; Possible selves; The language of trauma and addiction; Social pain; Why trauma and addiction go together; Forgiving yourself; Body and biology; The culture of silence; Tip the scales recovery plan; Every child is a detective; How to survive a relapse; Identity-- how you view yourself; Perception-- how others view you; The decision to grow; Dark feelings (rage, hatred, revenge, bitterness); Imagination; Create a healing image;*

*How others can help—family, friends, partners, sponsors, counselors.* Topics can be done in any order and the treatment can be done in few or many sessions as time allows. It is a very flexible model that can be delivered by any clinician, to any client, in any setting. Much like the well-known model *Seeking Safety*, this one too strives to increase hope through emphasis on ideals; it offers exercises, emotionally-evocative language, and quotations to engage patients; and provide concrete strategies to build recovery skills. It differs from *Seeking Safety* in being able to be done as self-help or counselor-led, and offers different topics.

**Objectives**

1. Describe current understanding of trauma, addiction, and the combination
2. Identify how to use the book topics in counselor-led format
3. Describe how to engage clients in book topics based on their clinical needs related to trauma, addiction, or both
4. Describe the importance of adaptation with respect to the culture
5. Identify key principles of the model
6. Identify how topics relate to phase-based treatment for trauma and/or addiction
7. Describe resources for trauma and addiction