2020 / Lisa M. Najavits, PhD

***Best Self*: a new model for trauma, addiction or both**

This presentation will describe *Best Self*, a new recovery model for trauma and/or addiction. *Best Self* can be used as self-help, by family members, peers, as well as by counselors in group or individual format. It offers 36 short chapters, each addressing a specific facet of trauma and/or addiction. Examples include: *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; How to survive a relapse; The decision to grow; Dark feelings (rage, hatred, revenge, bitterness); Imagination; Create a healing image.* Chapters can be done in any order and in as few or many sessions as time allows. It is a flexible model for any client, in any setting. Much like the well-known model *Seeking Safety*, this one too strives to increase hope through emphasis on ideals; offers exercises, emotionally-evocative language, and quotations to engage patients; and provides concrete strategies to build recovery skills.

**Objectives**

1. Describe current understanding of trauma, addiction, and their 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
4. Address the importance of adaptation with respect to the culture
5. List key principles of the model
6. Identify how topics relate to phase-based treatment for trauma and/or addiction
7. Provide resources for trauma and addiction

**References**

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