

## **Outline and objectives** **Half-day training on *Seeking Safety***

**Title:** *Seeking Safety*: An evidence-based model 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](#). 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](#), an evidence-based model for trauma and/or addiction (clients do not have to have both issues). By the end of the training, participants will have an overview of Seeking Safety and can implement Seeking Safety in their setting if they choose to and/or attend a longer training in the future.

*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 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) basic aspects of clinical implementation. Assessment and treatment resources are provided. The training offers some brief exercises to “learn by doing”; methods also include powerpoint, video, and discussion. For more information on *Seeking Safety* see [www.seekingsafety.org](http://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 provide assessment and treatment resources.

### **References:**

1. Black, C. (2018). *Unspoken Legacy: Addressing the Impact of Trauma and Addiction within the Family*. Las Vegas: Central Recovery Press.
2. Briere, J. N., & Scott, C. (2015). *Principles of Trauma Therapy: A Guide to Symptoms, Evaluation, and Treatment (DSM-5 Edition)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
3. Herman, J. L. (1992). *Trauma and Recovery*. New York: Basic Books.
4. Herman, J. L. (2023). *Truth and Repair*. New York: Basic Books.
5. Krause, S. (2023). *Adolescent Toolkit for Seeking Safety*. See [www.seekingsafety.org](http://www.seekingsafety.org).
6. Najavits, L. M. (2002). *Seeking Safety: A Treatment Manual for PTSD and Substance Abuse*. New York: Guilford.
7. Najavits, L.M. (2019). *Finding Your Best Self: Recovery from Addiction, Trauma or Both*. New York: Guilford.
8. Najavits, L.M., Clark, H.W., DiClemente, C.C., Potenza, M.N., Shaffer, H.J., Sorensen, J.L., Tull, M.T., Zweben, A. & Zweben, J.E. (2020). PTSD/Substance Use Disorder Comorbidity: Treatment Options and Public Health Needs. *Current Treatment Options in Psychiatry*, pp.1-15.
9. 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 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)*. Springer-Verlag.
10. Najavits, L.M. & Krause, S. (2023). Group Delivery of Seeking Safety for Trauma and/or Addiction. In *Group Approaches to Treating Traumatic Stress in Adults* (Ruzek, Yalch & Burkman, eds.). New York: Guilford.
11. Najavits, L. M. (2024). *Creating Change: A Past-Focused Treatment for Trauma and Addiction*. New York: Guilford.
12. Rubenstein, A., Duek, O., Doran, J., & Harpaz-Rotem, I. (2024). To expose or not to expose: A comprehensive

perspective on treatment for posttraumatic stress disorder. *American Psychologist*, 79(3), 331.

13. Ruglass, L. M., Gette, J. A., Morgan-López, A. A., Ye, A., Smith, K. Z., et al. (2025). Indirect effects of Seeking Safety plus sertraline on alcohol use: The mediating role of reductions in posttraumatic stress disorder symptom severity. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 10.1002/jts.70031.
14. 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.
15. 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.
16. van der Kolk, B. A. (2015). *The body keeps the score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the healing of trauma*. Penguin Books.
17. Washton, A. M. & Zweben, J. E. (2023). Treating Alcohol and Drug Problems in Psychotherapy Practice (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). New York: Guilford Press.

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

### Typical training day

The total teaching time is three hours. Thus a typical format is 9am-12pm. The schedule below assumes 9a-12pm but you can change it based on your scheduling (e.g., earlier or later start time, adding a brief break in the middle and thus extending the end time by that much). If you do, please verify it with the trainer.

### Agenda

1. **Background** (9a to 10:30a)
  - a. Brief overview of trauma, addiction, and stages of treatment
  - b. Initial description of *Seeking Safety*
2. **Treatment** (10:30a to 12p)
  - a. Description of *Seeking Safety* topics, including brief exercises
  - b. Brief summary of evidence base
  - c. Brief implementation guidance
  - d. Assessment and community resources
  - e. Wrap up and options for continued learning.