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The Art & Science of Therapeutic Presence

Jennifer Llado, MS, CCC-SLP
Brenda Lovette, MS, CCC-SLP

Moderated by:
Amy Natho, MS, CCC-SLP, CEU Administrator, SpeechPathology.com

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How to earn CEUs

- Must be logged in for full time requirement
- Log in to your account and go to Pending Courses
- Must pass 10-question multiple-choice exam with a score of 80% or higher
  - Within 7 days for live webinar; within 30 days of registration for recorded/text/podcast formats
- Two opportunities to pass the exam

The Art & Science of Therapeutic Presence

Jennifer Llado, MS, CCC-SLP
Brenda Lovette, MS, CCC-SLP
Financial Disclosures

Jennifer Llado
- Founder of Bright Side Therapy, LLC which produces SLP treatment products
- Author of Mindful Healthcare: 20 Brief Exercises to Get in the Zone with Your Patients

Brenda Lovette
- Founder of Healthy Expression, which provides coaching, nutrition education, products and holistic SLP services to clinicians and clients.

Jennifer & Brenda
- Webinar: Meditation & Breath Work for Clinicians
- Received stipend for courses on speechpathology.com
- Co-Aauthored and receive royalties for Relaxation & Mindfulness after Brain Injury tip card by Lash & Associates

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Learning Outcomes

- Define therapeutic presence.
- Describe the five components of therapeutic presence and how they relate to mindfulness.
- Explain how application of therapeutic presence may affect personal strengths and opportunities for growth.
# Course Outline

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**Mindfulness Exercise & Intention**

“Intention creates your reality.”

- Dr. Wayne Dyer
Beginner’s Mind Meditation

- Find a comfortable seat
- Close your eyes

“And have an attitude of openness, eagerness and lack of preconceptions.”

Intention

Our Intention: Encourage clinicians to embody greater therapeutic presence in order to maximize their impact.

What is yours? Consciously decide what is important to you with regard to this course.
Therapeutic Presence Defined

- **Availability**
  - to the client

- **Openness**
  - to one’s own experience

- **Capacity to Respond**
  - objectively

---

**MEDITATION/MINDFULNESS** practice

- Strengthens attention

- Enhances awareness of physical, mental, emotional states

- Lays groundwork for **THERAPEUTIC PRESENCE**
Mindfulness

"Paying attention in a particular way on purpose in the present moment nonjudgmentally."

- Jon Kabat-Zinn

- Regulates nervous system
- Regulates emotions
- Flexibly-focused
- Intentional responses (vs. impulsive)
- Less susceptibility to emotional hijacking
- Promotes compassion

Mind-Body Connection

- Interconnected connectome = how differentiated areas of the brain link to each other
- A more connected connectome =
  - Decreased stress
  - Increased immune function
  - Increased cardiovascular function
  - Slowing of the aging process
  - Changes in epigenetic regulators that effect inflammation
Therapeutic Presence

- Mindfulness
- Intention
- Emotional Intelligence
- Compassion
- Growth Mindset
- Gratitude

Intention
Tony Robbins’ 6 Human Needs

**PERSONAL**
- Certainty
- Uncertainty
- Love & Connection
- Significance

**SPIRITUAL**
- Growth
- Contribution

*Everyone has ALL 6 needs. But, your top two needs will drive every decision you make.*

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<th>Ego-Based</th>
<th>Balanced</th>
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<tr>
<td>Certainty</td>
<td>“I know what is best for you.”</td>
<td>“I use evidence-based practice with each patient.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uncertainty</td>
<td>“I might quit tomorrow.”</td>
<td>“Every day I am a faced with something new.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>“I make people better.”</td>
<td>“I am helping each patient achieve his/her full potential.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection</td>
<td>“They need me to make this place run.”</td>
<td>“I am energized by collaborating with my colleagues.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>“I don’t get paid enough for what I do.”</td>
<td>“I’m learning every day.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution</td>
<td>“I’m an effective therapist.”</td>
<td>“I am sharing my gifts.”</td>
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</table>
Interpersonal Interactions

- Patients and co-workers are also playing out their top needs

- It is in our interactions that we have an opportunity to navigate these or allow them to block progress.

- Using intentional communication can help...

Non-violent Communication

- Clearly expressing how I AM without blaming or criticizing.

- Empathically receiving how YOU ARE without hearing blame or criticism.

Non-violent Communication

Observation
- When you hear people say, “But you look fine.”

Feelings
- You feel frustrated and discouraged

Needs
- You need support and understanding from your loved ones.

Requests
- Would you like to educate them about what you are working on in therapy to help them appreciate where you are in your recovery?

Heart-Centered Customer Service

Would you rather be HAPPY or RIGHT?

“Responsibility means the ability to have a creative response to the situation as it is NOW.” – Tony Robbins
Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Management
Self-awareness

- Accurately perceive your own emotions in the moment

- Understanding your tendencies across situations

- 83% of top performers are high, while only 2% of bottom performers are high self-awareness


Bias & Unconscious Beliefs

- Your unconscious beliefs can drive behavior and decisions

- Examples: race, gender, sexual orientation, substance abuse, mental health, socio-economic status, education level

- Awareness of these beliefs creates an opening
Self-Management
Self-Regulation

- Acting or not acting based on your emotions
- Managing emotional responses to situations and people
- Examples: frustration, judgement


Social Awareness

- Identify and understand the emotions of others
- Not letting your own thoughts and feelings to get in the way of objectively observing what is really going on

**Relationship Management**

- Using the knowledge of your own emotions and the emotions of others to create effective interactions and connections

- Flexibly shifting your plan to account for the patients emotional state is vital to the success of the treatment session. “Clearing the weeds.”

---

**EQ in Practice**

Bring to mind a difficult patient or colleague interaction.
Compassion

Participants: 76 healthy individuals

Method: All participants given histamine skin prick. Itchiness/irritation measured before and at 3, 9, 12, 15, 18 minute intervals. Half of the participants given assurance at 3 minutes (“From this point forward, your allergic reaction will start to diminish and your rash and irritation will go away.”)

Results: After assurance, itchiness declined significantly faster.

Compassion vs. Empathy

**Empathy**
“The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.”

**Compassion**
“Compassion is the awareness of a deep bond between yourself and all creatures.”

– Eckhart Tolle

Can you have *empathy* without *compassion*?
Compassion in the Brain

- Distress circuitry connecting to the insula respond
- Compassion mutes empathic distress that can lead to emotional exhaustion or burnout
- Boosts connections between brain’s circuits for joy and happiness and the prefrontal cortex (greater connection = more altruism)


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Science of Compassion

Compassion skills include:
- Relating to the patient as an individual
- Reacting to suffering
- Presence
- Giving time and listening
- Understanding patients’ feelings
- Confronting
- Caring
- Moral virtue
- Intelligent kindness
- Assisting patients to make their own decisions
- Acting in the patients best interest
- Empathy

Space for your Emotions

**Myth:** The therapist needs to be emotionless.

**Reality:** With strong emotional regulation, you can share an emotional moment with your client appropriately (e.g. COMPASSION), which enhances therapeutic value.

---

**Loving Kindness Meditation**

May I be happy. May I be well. May I be safe. May I be peaceful and at ease.”

- Direct loving-kindness towards:
  - Yourself
  - Someone you love
  - Someone you feel neutral towards
  - Someone you have difficulty with
Growth Mindset

Fixed
- Basic qualities are fixed traits

Growth
- Belief that you can improve
- Creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.

“Whether you think you can or think you can’t – you are right.”

-Henry Ford


Growth Mindset for Patient Care

If you don’t believe your patients will get better, how are they suppose to?
Placebo Effect: when a positive outcome occurs as a result of the patient's belief in the treatment

Nocebo Effect: when negative expectations about a treatment/diagnosis result in a negative outcome


Nocebo Effect

- Pioneer study in 1981 had 15 patients undergo a lumbar puncture. 50% of patients that were told to expect a headache, experienced one. 0% of the patients experienced a headache when it was not suggested prior to the procedure.
- Women in labor experienced less pain during the epidural when told they would be comfortable during the procedure vs. it would feel like a bee sting.
- 43% reported sexual side effects with drug when told to expect it vs. 14% non-informed group.
- Description of potential gastrointestinal side effects in the consent form correlated with an astonishing 6-fold increase of reported gastrointestinal side effects.

Prognosis

Acceptance for the current state, will create space for a new beliefs about recovery.

Goal-setting

Acceptance for the current state, will create space for a new beliefs about recovery.
Gratitude

Patient Experience
Gratitude Defined

- **Worldly Definition:** “a) An affirming of goodness or “good things” in one’s life. b) The recognition that the sources of this goodness lie at least partially outside of the self.”

- **Transcendent Definition:** “A deep sense of gratitude to all forms of existence, a gratitude rooted in the essence of being itself, which permeates one’s every thought, speech and action.”


Gratitude Practices

Gratitude practice is systematically paying attention to what is going well in one’s life:

- Journaling
- Mindfulness meditation
- 3 things/daily

“Gratitude may spontaneously catalyze the healing process.”
Gratitude’s Effect on the Brain

**Participants:** 23

**Method:** Participants watched 2-minute documentaries of Holocaust survivors discuss feelings of gratitude for gifts and help they received from strangers. fMRI data collected and compared to self-rating of gratitude

**Results:** Ratings of gratitude correlate with activity in the ACC & the MPFC.


Gratitude in Healthcare

**Participants:** 102 nurses, therapists & doctors at 5 hospitals

**Method:** 3 groups: gratitude, hassle, nil-treatment
Gratitude and hassle completed a diary entry 2x/wk for 4 weeks.

**Results:** Decline in stress and depressive symptoms over time with gratitude group. Maintained 3 months after experiment.

**Job Satisfaction**

People that view their work as their “calling” are:

- more engaged
- miss less work
- more satisfied with work and life

**Mindfulness enhances your ability to see your work in a different light.**


---

**Job Crafting**

- Expand/restrict the boundaries of your job
- Relationships with clients and co-workers
- Cognitive crafting (how you think about your job)

Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras
Sutra 2.33: vitarka badhane pratipaksha bhavanam

When you notice negative thoughts, replace them with the opposite point of view.

Example:

“I’m so busy. How can I possibly do a good job with this many people on my caseload?”  
Wow! Today, I have the opportunity to enhance the lives of so many people.

Living Your Truth

Opportunity

Strength

Passion

PURPOSE
Maintenance Practices

- Meditation practice
- Gratitude practice
- Accountability groups or partnerships
- Self-development courses, books, exercises

Tools for Self-Understanding

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<td>6 Human Needs</td>
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<td>Shadow Effect</td>
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• PODCASTS
  • Tony Robbins (6 Human Needs)
  • Hidden Brain (Dream Job)

• WEBSITES
  • Greater Good In Action

• BOOKS
  • EQ 2.0 (T. Bradberry & J. Greaves)
  • Nonviolent Communication (M. Rosenberg)
  • Biology of Belief (B. Lipton)
  • Mindset (C. Dweck)
  • Purpose and Meaning in the Workplace
  • Altered Traits (Goleman, D. & Davidson, R.)

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Questions & Comments…

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Holistic SLP Mastermind Group