

Introduction to Sex Therapy Training Program Course Outline

Course Description

The Introduction to Sex Therapy course is designed to align with the core knowledge competencies outlined by the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counsellors, and Therapists (AASECT). It covers a wide range of topics, including professional communication, ethics, developmental sexuality, socio-cultural factors, sexual orientation and gender identity, diversities in sexual expression, sexual anatomy and physiology, sexual health, and more.

The course provides a comprehensive overview of the role of sex therapists, ethical communication, basics of sexuality, sexual dysfunction and functioning, gender and relationships, compulsive behaviors, and treatment options. It incorporates both theoretical knowledge and practical insights, introducing students to sex therapy and providing insight into the AASECT core competencies. This introductory course is 3 hours (including breaks). Course content is **2.5 hours long (2.5 AASECT CEs)**.

Course Topics in Brief

Below is a list of the course topics in brief:

- Professional Overview
 - A Day in the Life of a Sex Therapist
 - Understanding Basics
 - Exploring Sexuality
 - Factors in Sexual Motivation
 - Sexual Dysfunction and Functioning
 - In-Depth Dysfunction Analysis
 - Exploring Gender and Relationships
 - Compulsive Behaviors
 - Treatment for Sex Compulsion
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Method of Delivery

This course will be delivered simultaneously in person and via synchronous video-conferencing. It may also be recorded for future students to access.

Instructors



Instructor - Dr. Cory Hrushka, Registered Senior Psychologist, Clinical and Forensic Psychologist, PhD, CCS, DST, AASECT Certified Sex Therapist, (He/Him)

Description: Dr. Cory Hrushka is a Senior Clinical/counselling and Forensic Psychologist. He is also an AASECT certified (Diplomate) Sex Therapist/ and Supervisor, an Associate in Sex Education and a Clinical Sexologist.

Cory provides psychological/forensic assessment services and counselling to adolescents, adults, couples, and families. Although he uses numerous psychological approaches to achieve client success, his foundation is in client-centered, cognitive behavioral therapy within a systemic model that focuses on pushing through issues for growth and success.

As a psychologist, Cory specializes in couples and sex therapy-related issues and assessment services (primarily looking at parenting psychological assessments, custody and access assessments, and forensic components). He also supervises many of the professionals here at Insight. This includes supervision of the Master's level practicum student therapists, provisional psychologists, as well as consulting with the registered and senior psychologists. This comprises the majority of his work. Cory also works with the Management Team to support, develop, and investigate new projects that are up and coming, provide content for projects, and address inquiries regarding our services. Occasionally, he is asked by the media to comment or provide support on current topics or to give presentations in the community.

Insight is very important to Cory – it's his life's work, and he is particularly proud of the current family-oriented sense of community that the Insight team has grown into over the last few years. The breadth and quality of services offered are unique to Insight. It was great to be recognized by Canadian Business as one of Canada's fastest growing companies in 2018.



Instructor - Brandi Enns, Registered Provisional Psychologist, Assistant Director of Clinician Engagement, MACP, B.Ed, (She/Her)

Description: Brandi joined the Insight Psychological team in May of 2020, as a Registered Provisional Psychologist, and works most often in the areas of sex therapy, trauma, and

assessments. She also supervises practicum students during their practicum, co-hosts the podcast “Up the Rabbit Hole” with the owner and CEO of Insight, Dr. Cory Hrushka, and recruits future practicum students with Insight’s Open Houses and onboard the students before they start their practicum.

Before joining Insight, Brandi was a teacher with Edmonton Public Schools for 18 years. She worked primarily with special needs students at the junior high school age, coached Volleyball for a few years, and mentored new student-teachers as they started their new exciting career paths.

As the Assistant Director of Clinician Engagement, Brandi looks forward to helping practicum students realize their potential and complete their practical hours in a safe, empowering, and supportive atmosphere. She is also excited to be a part of propelling Insight into the top tier of psychological development training centers in the province.

As a psychologist, Brandi’s goal is to assist clients in overcoming the obstacles that are interfering with their everyday lives. She is compassionate, nonjudgmental, and an empathetic person who creates trust and a safe and comfortable space for clients to disclose information and explore their experiences. Brandi looks forward to helping clients reach their desired goals and outcomes.



Instructor - Sabrina Brady, Registered Provisional Psychologist, Manager of Clinical Programs and Community Relations, MC (She/Her)

Description: Sabrina has been working in the area of mental health and wellness for the past 15 years. She joined Insight Psychological in 2020, after completing her Master of Counselling (MC) through the University of Calgary. To date, her work has included clinical practice, program development, and teaching as a sessional instructor. In her clinical practice, Sabrina carries a generalized caseload with subspecialties in sex and forensics. She has developed programs for neurodiverse individuals, contributed to the development of addictions programming, supported the expansion of group programming for forensic populations, and provided feedback on curriculum development. Sabrina also sits on several boards, including the Edmonton Violence Prevention Centre and the Diverse Voices Steering Committee, and she volunteers with her local Special Olympics. Sabrina believes strongly in community connection and lifelong learning!

As the Manager of Clinical Programs and Community Relations, Sabrina looks forward to supporting Insight as they grow their clinical (area) specializations and work towards meeting

the needs of the community. Helping Insight achieve its aim of being the most trusted and sought-after psychological care provider in every single community it serves.

As a psychologist, Sabrina likes to bring empathy and compassion into her work. She views counselling as a collaborative process between herself and you (the client). It takes strength and courage to attend therapy, and Sabrina's goal is to create a safe and supportive environment for you to explore your experiences, gain understanding, and make desired changes. Using a client-centred and integrative approach, Sabrina draws on multiple theoretical orientations, tailoring an approach to best fit your needs.

Course Objective

The Introduction to Sex Therapy Training Program provides attendees with a brief introduction to the field of sex therapy. Touching on AASECT key knowledge areas, the course provides a foundational overview of the field of sex therapy and prepares students for further education and exploration of sex therapy. As a dynamic and ever-changing field, further and ongoing training beyond the scope of this course is encouraged and recommended.

For students interested in obtaining their AASECT Certification, additional training in the AASECT Core Knowledge Areas and the Sex Therapy Training Areas listed below is required.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- 1) Identify a range of professional practices and skills that relate to sex therapy and its practice. (1 hour)
AASECT Core Knowledge Area: Professional communication and personal reflection skills (O)
- 2) Explain the importance of ethical behavior within the field of sex therapy. (0.5 hours)
AASECT Core Knowledge Area: Ethics and ethical behavior (A)
- 3) Explain the importance of ethical behavior within the field of sex therapy. (0.5 hours)
AASECT Core Knowledge Area: Ethics and ethical behavior (A) perspective (B) and Range of sexual functioning and behavior (I)

Key Competencies Related to Sex Therapy

1. *Key to AASECT Core Knowledge Areas:*
 - A. Ethics and ethical behavior.

- B. Developmental sexuality from a bio-psycho-social perspective across the life course.
- C. Socio-cultural, familial factors (e.g., ethnicity, culture, religion, spirituality, socioeconomic status, family values) in relation to sexual values and behaviors.
- D. Issues related to sexual orientation and/or gender identity: heterosexuality; issues and themes impacting lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual people; gender identity and expression.
- E. Intimacy skills (e.g., social, emotional, sexual), intimate relationships, interpersonal relationships, and family dynamics.
- F. Diversities in sexual expression and lifestyles, including, but not limited to, polyamory, swinging, BDSM, and tantra.
- G. Sexual and reproductive anatomy/physiology.
- H. Health/medical factors that may influence sexuality, including, but not limited to, illness, disability, drugs, mental health, conception, pregnancy, childbirth, pregnancy termination, contraception, fertility, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infection, other infections, sexual trauma, injury, and safer sex practices.
- I. Range of sexual functioning and behavior, from optimal to problematic including, but not limited to, common issues such as: desire discrepancy, lack of desire, difficulty achieving or maintaining arousal, sexual pain, penetration problems, and difficulty with orgasm.
- J. Sexual exploitation, including sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and sexual assault.
- K. Cyber sexuality and social media.
- L. Substance use/abuse and sexuality.
- M. Pleasure enhancement skills.
- N. Learning theory and its application.
- O. Professional communication and personal reflection skills.
- P. History of the discipline of sex research, theory, education, counselling, and therapy.
- Q. Principles of sexuality research and research methods.

In Addition To The Core Knowledge Areas - Sex Therapy Training:

2. *Key to AASECT Sex Therapy Training Areas:*

- A. Theory and methods of sex-related psychotherapy, including several different models.
- B. Techniques of sex-related assessment and diagnosis of the 'Psychosexual Disorders' described in the current edition of the *DSM*.
- C. Theory and methods of approach to intervention in relationship systems experiencing sex and intimacy problems. Therapists with no documented graduate or postgraduate training in couples counselling must acquire 16 hours of couples counselling training as part of the 60 hours of Sex Therapy Training (Section VI). Couples therapy is psychotherapy that focuses on the couple and views the couple as the client. Clinical skills such as: attending to the interaction with each partner, knowing the power dynamic/struggle that may occur, teaching effective, authentic communication, understanding, and bringing awareness to deeper, hidden unmet needs and childhood wounds, psycho

education of couples' skills, such as active listening, validation, empathy, asking for what they want and need, and negotiating differences, is imperative. Suggested options to gain couples therapy skills and training are: Imago Relational Therapy, Gottman, Schnarch, Bader & Pearson, and Emotionally Focused Therapy, as possible examples. ** This training may be done online.

D. Theory and method of approach to medical intervention in the evaluation and treatment of psychosexual disorders.**

E. Principles of consultation, collaboration, and referral.

F. Ethical decision-making and best practice.

Course Outline

Introduction (5 mins)

- Welcome and teacher introductions
- Student expectations and housekeeping

Professional Overview (10 mins)

- Role of sex therapists
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Developmental sexuality from a bio-psycho-social perspective (B)
 - Professional communication (O)
 - History of the discipline (P)
- AASECT qualifications and designations
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Professional communication (O)
 - History of the discipline (P)
- Education, training, values, and clinical experience
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Professional communication (O)
 - History of the discipline (P)
 - Ethics and Ethical behavior (A)

A Day in the Life of a Sex Therapist (10 mins)

- Addressing various client issues
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Professional communication (O)
 - Ethics and Ethical behavior (A)
 - Diversities in sexual expression and lifestyles (F)
 - Intimacy skills (E)
 - Sexual exploitation (J)
 - Range of sexual functioning and behavior (I)
 - Pleasure enhancement skills (M)
 - Issues related to sexual orientation and/or gender identity (D)

- Handling common questions
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Professional communication (O)
 - Ethics and ethical behavior (A)
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Understanding Basics (20 mins)

- Fundamentals of sexuality
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - History of the discipline (P)
 - Developmental sexuality from a bio-psycho-social perspective (B)
 - Sexual and reproductive anatomy/physiology (G)
 - Sexual arousal cycles
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Developmental sexuality from a bio-psycho-social perspective (B)
 - Socio-cultural, familial influences (C)
 - Sexual and reproductive anatomy/physiology (G)
 - Principles of sexuality research and research methods (Q)
 - Managing client mentality
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Ethics and ethical behavior (A)
 - Professional communication (O)
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Exploring Sexuality (15 mins)

- The Crucible of Sexual Growth vs. Comfort
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Developmental sexuality from a bio-psycho-social perspective (B)
 - Intimacy skills (E)
 - Pleasure enhancement skills (M)
 - Sex vs. Lovemaking vs. Fucking
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Intimacy skills (E)
 - Pleasure enhancement skills (M)
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Factors in Sexual Motivation (15 mins)

- Sexual elements
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Developmental sexuality from a bio-psycho-social perspective (B)
 - Sexual and reproductive anatomy/physiology (G)
 - Socio-cultural, familial influences (C)
 - Learning theory and its application (N)

- Traits/skills for a sex therapist
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Professional communication (O)
- Arousal templates (common and distorted)
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Developmental sexuality from a bio-psycho-social perspective (B)
 - Socio-cultural, familial influences (C)
 - Diversities in sexual expression and lifestyles (F)
 - Cyber sexuality and social media (K)
 - Issues related to sexual orientation and/or gender identity (D)
 - Sexual exploitation (J)

Sexual Dysfunction and Functioning (15 mins)

- Bio-psycho-social model
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Developmental sexuality from a bio-psycho-social perspective (B)
 - Range of sexual functioning and behavior (I)
 - Health/medical factors that may influence sexuality (H)
- Various dysfunctions and treatments
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Developmental sexuality from a bio-psycho-social perspective (B)
 - Health/medical factors that may influence sexuality (H)
 - Range of sexual functioning and behavior (I)

Break 1: 10 minutes

In-Depth Dysfunction Analysis (10 mins)

- Sexual desire
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Health/medical factors that may influence sexuality (H)
 - Range of sexual functioning and behavior (I)
- Arousal phase dysfunctions
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Health/medical factors that may influence sexuality (H)
 - Range of sexual functioning and behavior (I)
- Premature ejaculation and orgasmic dysfunctions
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Range of sexual functioning and behavior (I)

Break 2: 10 minutes

Exploring Gender and Relationships (20 mins)

- Transgenderism and gender variables
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Issues related to sexual orientation and/or gender identity (D)
 - Sexual and reproductive anatomy/physiology (G)
- Gender binary vs. continuum
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Diversity in sexual expression (F)
 - Issues related to sexual orientation and/or gender identity (D)
- Kink, polyamory, and power dynamics
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Diversities in sexual expression and lifestyles (F)
- Cyber Sex and Digisexuality
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Cyber sexuality and social media (K)
 - Diversities in sexual expression and lifestyles (F)

Break 3: 5 minutes

Compulsive Behaviors (15 mins)

- OCSB
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Range of sexual functioning and behavior (I)
 - Cyber sexuality and social media (K)
- Chemical and hormonal aspects
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Sexual and reproductive anatomy/physiology (G)
- The addictive system diagram and cycle
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Substance use/abuse and sexuality (L)

Treatment for Sex Compulsion (15 mins)

- Understanding the impact on life
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Developmental sexuality from a bio-psycho-social perspective (B)
 - Socio-cultural, familial influences (C)

- Unmanageable and impaired thinking
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Range of sexual functioning and behavior (I)
 - Sexual exploitation (J)
 - Learning theory and its application (N)
 - Substance use/abuse and sexuality (L)
- Available treatments and interventions
 - Introduction to Core Knowledge Areas – Sex Therapy Training
 - Informational: Core Knowledge
 - Ethics and ethical behavior (A)
 - Professional communication (O)

Closing AND Resource Reflection (5 mins)

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