Designing & Implementing a Comprehensive TC Curriculum & Integrated QA System at Multiple Sites

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Naya Arbiter
Extensions

Outline

- Cultural background of the TC
- Rising need for evidence based practices
- Development of TC curriculum
- Assuring quality of services
- Practical application of collected data
- Future perspectives and possibilities

Cultural background of the TC

- Historically, the TC tradition was passed along orally
- Community was generally composed of people with high IQ, but low academic exposure
Rising Need for Evidence Based Practices

- Need to ask: “What really works?”
  - Which faculty/staff are most effective in the TC?
  - Current funding “buzzword” – how do we adjust for what funders want and retain essence?
  - How do we adjust for socialization in a society where 1 in every 100 is incarcerated?
    - In California (2007), 70,000 men and women were returned to custody on technical violations

Evidence Based Practices

- Our communities are driven by the “evidence” of who is actually in trouble
- Curriculum content was designed out of focus groups, retreats, etc. to ensure that it was relevant to the population it aimed to serve

Why Curriculum?

- Promotes strength-based practices
- Fosters development of pro-social norms
- Non-punitive focus in community
- Equips faculty and students with transferable skills
- Defines expectations, boundaries and direction of treatment process
- “catch people doing something right”
- Ensures that everyone has access to same content in terms of treatment
Extensions Curriculum

- Current curriculum has been developed over course of several decades; Volume format in recent years
- Originally existed in format of retreat books, workshop materials, seminar handouts, etc.
- Field tested for relevance: multicultural groups, variable socio-economic backgrounds, marginalized populations, etc.
- Materials presented as student workbook and accompanying demonstrator (teaching) guide

Teaching Tools & Learning Styles

- Curriculum designed to account for varied learning styles represented in TC population
- Each TASK/Module utilizes a variety of tools that support the modern TC as a strength-based, performance-oriented, interactive model
- De Leon Elements are incorporated into content and delivery method in curriculum

Curriculum and De Leon Essential Elements

- De Leon’s 8 Essential Elements are addressed in curriculum
  - Directly
  - Indirectly
    - eg: Encounter group (regardless of topic)
      - Is a COLLECTIVE FORMAT FOR GUIDING CHANGE
      - Promotes OPEN COMMUNICATION
      - Elicits MEMBERSHIP FEEDBACK
      - Is effectively based on RELATIONSHIPS
Tools for the TC Practitioner

- Framing & Closing Sessions (Emotional Sanctuary)
- Physical Environment (Physical Sanctuary)
- Drill Questions
- Documentary Movies
- Interchange/Polarized Teaching
- Teaching Circles
- Workshops
- Journal Pages
Curriculum Domains and Lodge Structure Format

*(Based on the Native American concept of the Medicine Wheel)*

**Curriculum Domains**

**DOMAIN 1** (East Lodge)
- Self-Help Restorative Paradigms

**DOMAIN 2** (South Lodge)
- Family Dynamics & Basic Psychology

**DOMAIN 3** (West Lodge)
- Moral Development

**DOMAIN 4** (North Lodge)
- Emotional Literacy

**East Lodge**
- Orientation
- Circles for Beginners
- Origins of Restorative Paradigms
- Basic Assumptions of the Therapeutic Community (Vol. 1)
South Lodge
- Beginnings: Family Dynamics

West Lodge
- Resentment, Rationalization, Resistance, Reaction & Perseverance
- Vocabularies of Violence & Affection

North Lodge
- Emergence
- Tending the Heart’s Garden
- Number to Name
Thresholds of Change Series

VOLUME 1
- Introduction to the TC
- Self Help Groups

VOLUME 2
- Basic TC Concepts
- Motivation for Continued Treatment
- Relapse Prevention

VOLUME 3
- Fundamental Social Skills
- Conflict Resolution
- Personal Moral Development

Macroscopic Benefits of Curriculum

- Future benefit: what went right? What went wrong?
- Ensures adherence to model & creates a consistent culture within an agency
- Removes the “black box” of the TC process
- Research project

Community Level Benefits

- New personnel have a clear understanding of expectations in terms of performance
- Defines a common language and framework
- Unify a heterogeneous staff
- Encourages role development: “teacher” and “learner/student”
Community Level Benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTICIPANT</th>
<th>FACULTY</th>
<th>ADMIN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- sense of completion &amp; accomplishment</td>
<td>- sense of completion &amp; accomplishment</td>
<td>- awareness of content of treatment</td>
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<td>- engaged in learning process</td>
<td>- awarded with letter of recognition</td>
<td>- ability to track performance of staff &amp; retention of participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>- balanced exposure to whole person education</td>
<td>- build professional portfolio with tangible feedback</td>
<td>- ability to &quot;course correct&quot; or make modifications</td>
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<td>- exposure to culture &amp; history beyond their own experience</td>
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<td>- informs goal setting for the community</td>
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Why Quality Assurance?

- Success is typically measured by standard of funding source (medical model)
- Keeps faculty learning and growing
- An accurate alert to problem areas
- Effective utilization of training dollars
- An opportunity to affirm good work and bring attention to effective communities

Current QA Strategies

1. Learning Sheets
2. Daily Reports
3. Curriculum Competency Questionnaires (CCQ)
4. Curriculum Comprehension Assessments (CCA)
5. Curriculum Summaries
   a. Certificate of Completion (Student)
   b. Letter of Acknowledgement (Faculty)
1. Learning Sheets

2. Daily Report

3. Curriculum Competency Questionnaire (CCQ)
   - Performance-based questions
     - “What recommended reading materials have you read?”
     - “Have you hosted a workshop (extended session) for your students?”
   - Knowledge-based questions
     - “De Leon cites 4 components that enable ‘community’ as a method for change. What are they?”
     - “What is wrong with this scenario?”
CCQ’s  
(Continued)

- Currently 5 versions of CCQ test
- Range in emphasis on PERFORMANCE vs. KNOWLEDGE based questions
- Variety of type of question – accessibility and fairness to test taking strengths

4. Curriculum Comprehension Assessments (CCA)

Student test
- Designed to assess the knowledge gained by the student during the course of the curriculum

Entry Level Demonstrator test
- Is a measure of staff performance. It covers the fundamental content of the material and gauges whether staff have performed the recommended tasks, ceremonies, etc.

Master Level Demonstrator test
- Designed to gauge faculty members’ understanding of theory of curriculum

5. Curriculum Summary

- Gathers salient data of treatment during timeframe of curriculum
- “At-a-glance” review of key information
  - Participant retention
  - Duration
  - Staff participation
  - Community information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstrator Name(s)</th>
<th>Description of Demonstrator Contribution and Role</th>
<th>Curriculum Start Date</th>
<th>Curriculum Completion Date</th>
<th>Estimated number of hours spent on course work</th>
<th>How many participants received a student workbook?</th>
<th>How many participants completed this curriculum?</th>
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When asked to describe a “convict,” most people generate a stereotypical, well as “teacher” position of “learner” as themselves from the opportunity to express personal histories of incarceration. Through the exercises and encounter groups, students develop and articulate the effects of incarceration in their lives (microcosm) and in society (macrocosm). Students identify anti-social behaviors that preceded their incarceration, and develop impact made by those with a vision for change. It is the culmination of the work that has been done in the therapeutic community. The material in this curriculum addresses current societal attitudes towards incarceration, rehabilitation and habilitation, and the powerful response to punishments of public humiliation, stocks, tar-and-feathering, and more. Few people are aware that the Eastern State Penitentiary was the largest public building of its time, and the first to have flushing toilets…even before the White House.

Incarceration creates an environment in which people are dehumanized and excluded, isolated even from their own experience. This was the largest public building of its time, and the first to have flushing toilets…even before the White House.

Contains salient data
Participant receives certificate of completion
Participant receives acknowledgement of the work they have done
Contains salient data from the course work
Summary narrative of curriculum content presented

Certificate of Completion

• Participant receives acknowledgement of the work they have done
• Contains salient data from the course work
• Summary narrative of curriculum content presented

Retention information
Student participation information
Affirm student completers with certificate of completion

Subjective feedback from faculty member
Role development: an opportunity to express themselves from the position of “learner” as well as “teacher”
Practical Application

Of what use is the collected data?

- Baseline of performance
  - Individual
  - Community
- Inform goal setting
- Alert to under-performing communities and personnel, affirm effective personnel
Hypothetical Situation #1

- Employee “Sally”
  - Scores 60% on new hire CCQ assessments
  - At next assessment, scores 83%
  - Has delivered 2 curriculums in first employment year
  - Submits quality documentation and thoughtful, introspective responses in written work
  - Averages better retention than faculty peer group
What if the data said…

- Senior faculty members with below avg. CCQ scores who demonstrated no improvement?
- A community with trends of lack of curriculum delivery over several month period?
- Low student retention rate?

In Retrospect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNHEALTHY</th>
<th>HEALTHY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum completion drops suddenly</td>
<td>Consistent curriculum delivery by full range of staff members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disproportionate emphasis in curriculum selection</td>
<td>Balance of curriculum spectrum</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCQ scores do not show improvement</td>
<td>Testing scores are consistently good and/or show improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior staff are not active in curriculum delivery</td>
<td>Consistently high quality of work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor quality of work submitted</td>
<td>Good student retention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor student retention</td>
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Future direction & possibilities

- By evaluating meaningful evidence, we can make informed decisions in our communities and take effective action
- Equipping TC practitioners with community norms that are pro-social encourages a positive culture
THANK YOU