



**EMBRACING  
TRANSFORMATION**

CESBA Conference 2023  
December 6-7

**ACCUEILLIR LE  
CHANGEMENT**

Conférence de CESBA 2023  
6-7 décembre

# Beyond Drugs: Understanding Problematic Substance Use Through a Trauma Informed Lens

with

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She is the current Program Coordinator of the Euroasian Network of People who Use Drugs (ENPUD)

(<https://www.hri.global/contents/1815>)

# Language Matters



Person who uses drugs	Drug User
Person with a substance use disorder/Person struggling with substance use	Addict, Junkie, Druggie, Alcoholic, Pothead, Drug Abuser, etc.
Treatment	Rehab
Use/Misuse	Abuse
Substance Use Disorder, Addiction*	Drug Habit, Addiction*
Substance-Free, Abstinent, Sober	Clean/Dirty
Person in Recovery	Recovering Addict, Recovering Alcoholic, Former Addict, etc.
Medication-Assisted Recovery	Substitution/Replacement Therapy
Recurrence of Use, Return to Use	Relapse*

<https://www.safeproject.us/resource/person-first-language/>

## SUBSTANCE USE HEALTH

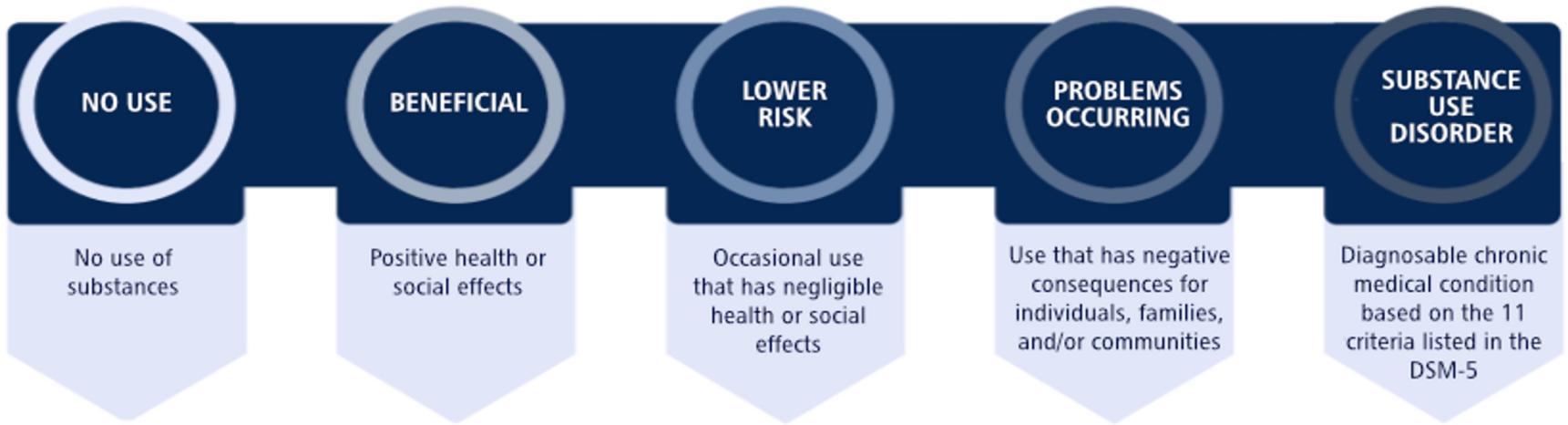


Diagram by OPH & CAPSA, 2021

Your understanding  
of the problem  
determines your  
solutions.”

-Dr. Stuart Ablon

[www.thinkkids.org](http://www.thinkkids.org)

# Models of Understanding

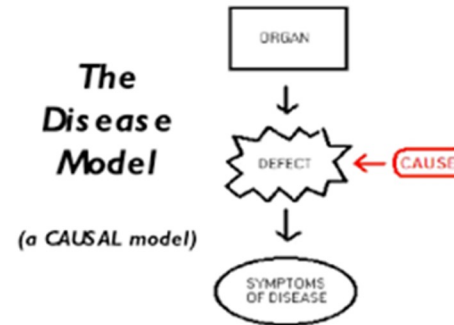
## Moral Model

What are the solutions when we understand psu/sud as a moral issue?

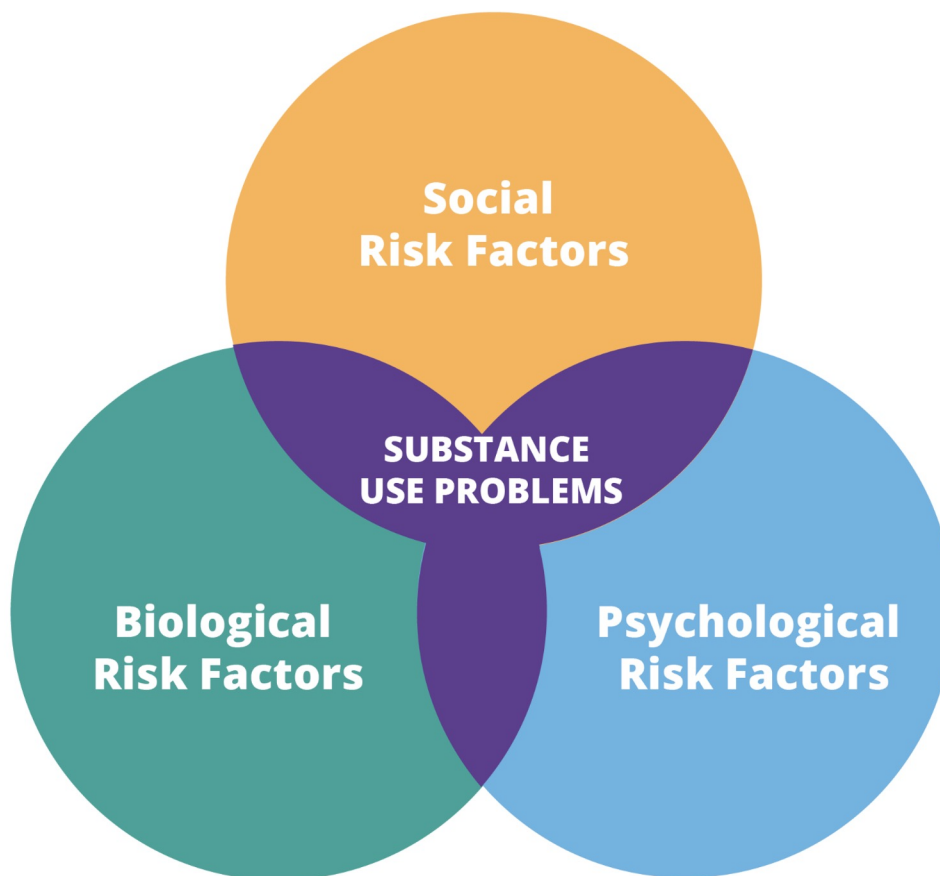


## Disease Model

What are our solutions when we understand psu/sud as a disease?



# Current Model of Understanding



*Venn diagram of risk factors for substance use problems. Credit: Brown-Rice, K., & Moro, R.*

## Social Risk Factors

- Substance loving
- Emotionally disconnected
- Education based on the moral/abstinence model
- Societal Inequalities

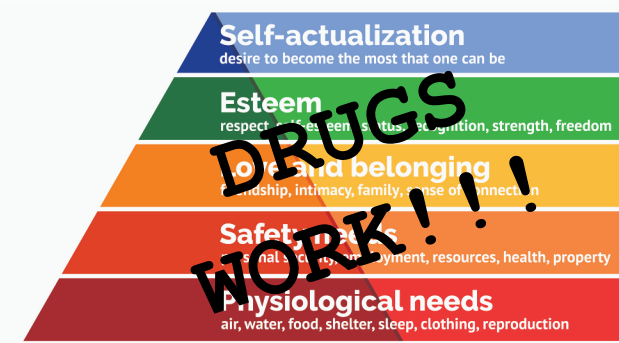


## Biological Risk Factors

- Reinforcement System
- Motivation System
- Pre-frontal Cortex



## Psychological Risk Factors





# BioPsychoSocial + Trauma



# Trauma-Two Definitions

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“Trauma is the lasting emotional response that often results from living through a distressing event. Experiencing a traumatic event (experience) can harm a person’s sense of safety, sense of self, and ability to regulate emotions and navigate relationships. Long after the traumatic event (experience) occurs, people with trauma can often feel shame, helplessness, powerlessness and intense fear. “

CAMH-camh.ca

“Trauma is when we have encountered an out of control, frightening experience that has disconnected us from all sense of resourcefulness or safety or coping or love.”

Tara Brach, 2011

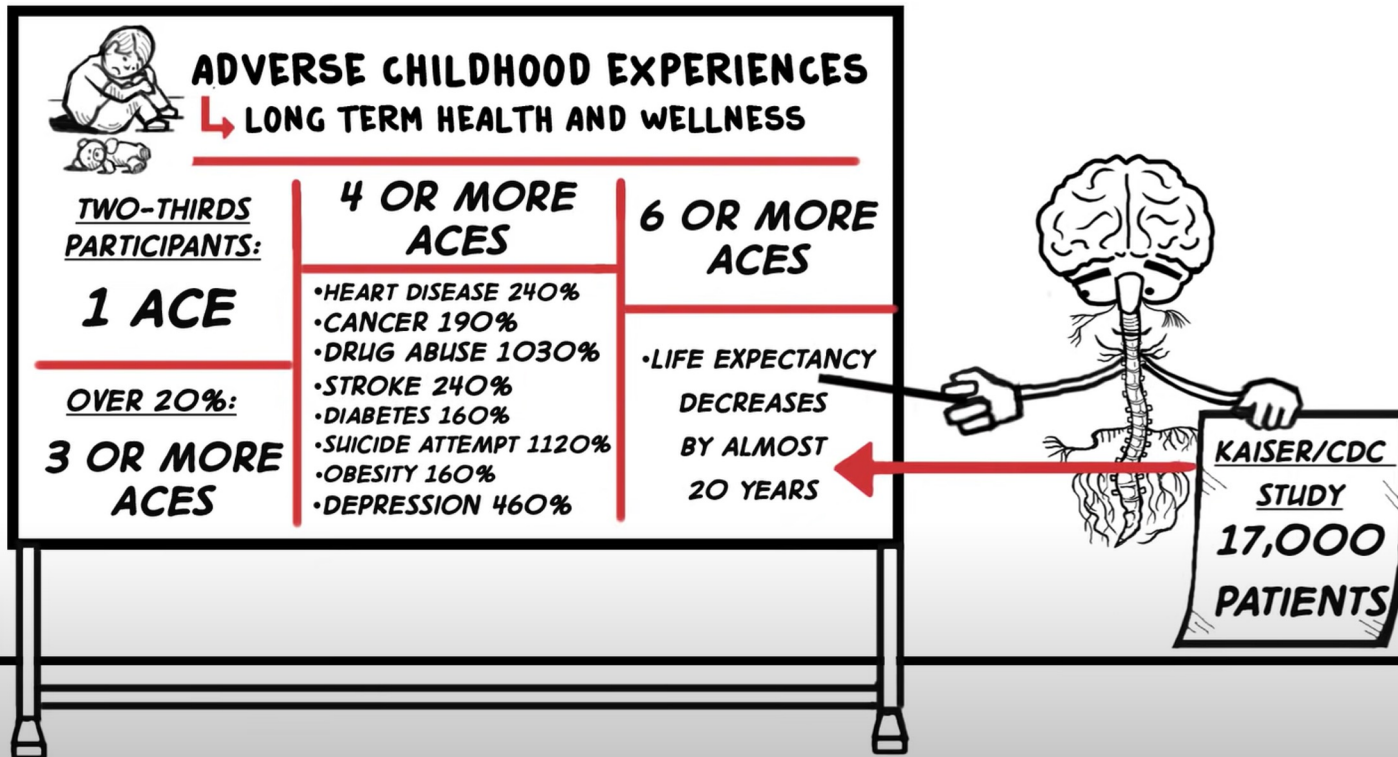
# Trauma

Adverse Childhood Experiences include:

- physical/emotional/ sexual abuse
- parental addiction/mental illness
- death of a parent
- witnessing abuse
- parent in prison
- emotional/physical neglect



# Impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences



Trauma and the Nervous System-<https://youtu.be/ZdlQRxwT110>

# Intergenerational Trauma

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<https://ca.ctrinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Intergenerational-hands-black-and-white.jpg>

“When trauma is ignored and there is no support for dealing with it, the trauma will be passed from one generation to the next”

Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 1999, A5



# Trauma Informed Approach

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## Trauma Informed Care:

“Trauma-informed services take into account an understanding of trauma in all aspects of service delivery and place priority on trauma survivors’ safety, choice and control.

They create a treatment culture of nonviolence, learning and collaboration.

Services are provided in ways that recognize needs for physical and emotional safety, as well as choice and control in decisions affecting one’s treatment.”

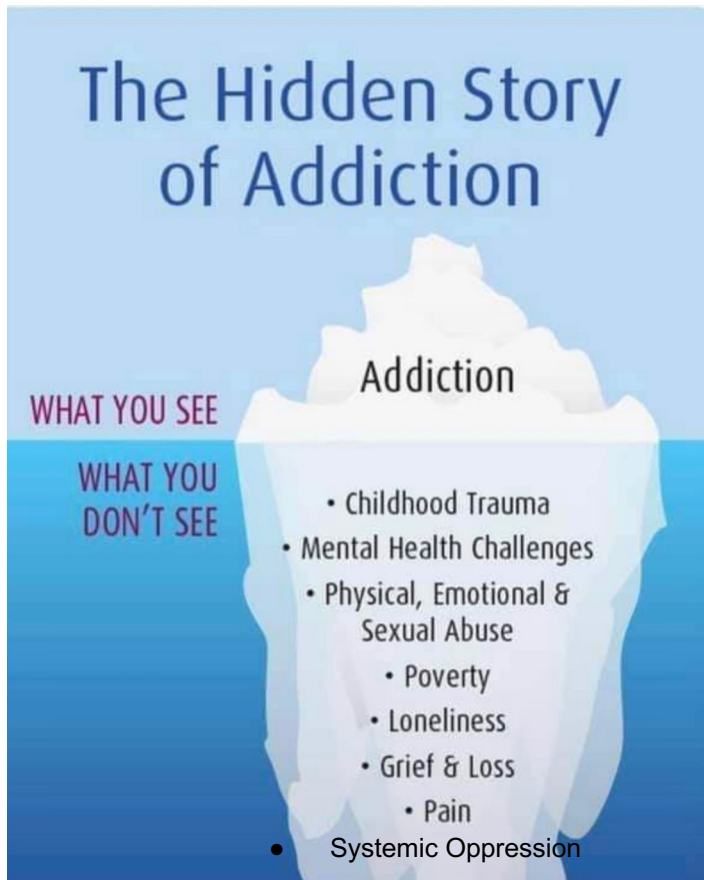
CCSA, Trauma Informed Care  
Toolkit (2014)

## Trauma Informed Care Principles:

- Trauma awareness
- Emphasis on safety and building trust
- Opportunity for choice, collaboration and connection
- Strengths based and skill building



# Trauma Awareness



Moving from:

“What’s wrong with you?”

To

“What’s happened to you?”





# Harm Reduction:

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- Is a non-judgemental, **effective** approach in making changes to a behaviour that can have negative impacts
- Decreases safety risks/negative impacts without requiring the activity stop
- Does not encourage or discourage substance use
- Creates many different opportunities for people to make changes for a healthier life

# Harm Reduction Approach

## Harm Reduction:

“Harm Reduction is an evidence-based, client-centred approach that seeks to reduce the health and social harms associated with addiction and substance use, without necessarily requiring people who use substances from abstaining or stopping.

Essential to a harm reduction approach is that it provides people who use substance a choice of how they will minimize harms through non-judgemental and non-coercive strategies in order to enhance skills and knowledge to live safer and healthier lives.”

CMHA, Harm Reduction, (n.d.)

## Principles:

- Accepts that there are benefits to use
- Understands that abstinence may not always be attainable, desirable or necessary
- Focuses on reducing the harms associated with substance use, rather than the substance use itself
- Provides individuals with choices/options and promotes personal autonomy and decision making
- Small gains will increase over time
- Recognizes that individuals know what is best for them

# Harm Reduction as Trauma Informed Care

## Harm Reduction Principles:

- Accepts that there are benefits to use
- Understands that abstinence may not always be attainable, desirable or necessary
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## Trauma Informed Care Principles:

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# Coffee Challenge



# Building Towards Sustainable Change

Substitute	Delay	Decrease risk/use	Replace
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Have decaf</li> <li>*Switch to tea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Space out caffeine drinks</li> <li>Have a bottle of water between your <u>Redbulls</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Use more milk/cream in your coffee</li> <li>*Use a smaller cup</li> <li>*Cut out the afternoon caffeine kick</li> <li>*Learn deep breathing techniques</li> <li>*Inform colleagues you're changing your caffeine use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Drink more water</li> <li>*Get better sleep</li> <li>*Increase exercise</li> </ul>

Substitution, Delay, Decrease Risk and/or Use and Replace are all harm reduction methods can be applied to almost **any substance** and can be used to help discuss a harm reduction plan.



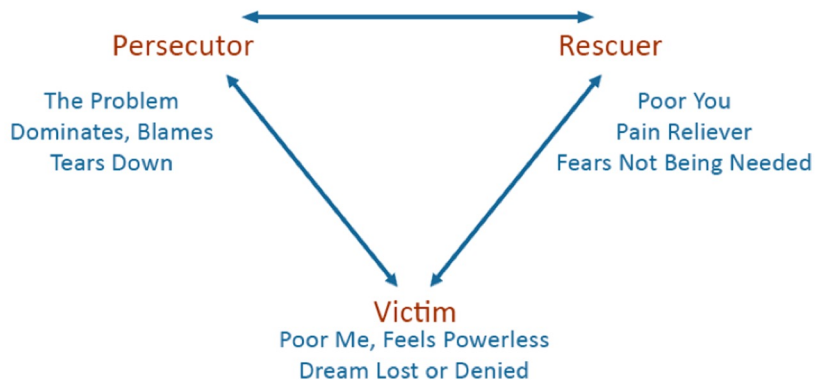
	<b>Alcohol</b>	<b>Cannabis</b>	<b>Amphetamines*</b> (meth, cocaine, MDMA, etc.)	<b>Benzos*</b> (xanax, klonopin, valium, etc.)	<b>Opioids*</b> (morphine, heroin, fentanyl, etc.)
<b>Substitute</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Light beer</li> <li>- Non-alcoholic beer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lower THC strains</li> <li>- Avoid synthetic cannabis products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Caffeine</li> <li>- Regulated (prescription) stimulants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Anti-depressants, anti-psychoics, beta-blockers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Methadone</li> <li>- Suboxone</li> <li>- Safe supply (regulated opiates)</li> </ul>
<b>Delay</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Space drinks 1h apart</li> <li>- Drink water in-between alcoholic drinks</li> <li>- Budget for necessities before using</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set limits &amp; stick to them</li> <li>- Limit use to evenings / weekends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set limits &amp; stick to them</li> <li>- Budget for necessities before using</li> <li>- Allow time for come-down so use doesn't interfere with responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set limits &amp; stick to them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set limits &amp; stick to them</li> <li>- Budget for necessities before using</li> </ul>
<b>Decrease risk / use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set a short-term goal for reduction</li> <li>- Avoid using with other substances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set a short-term goal for reduction</li> <li>- Choose a safer ROA (edibles, vaping, etc.)</li> <li>- Avoid using with other substances</li> <li>- Avoid using with tobacco</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set a short-term goal for reduction</li> <li>- Start low, go slow</li> <li>- Choose a safer ROA (ingesting, snorting, booty bumping)</li> <li>- Avoid using with other substances</li> <li>- Eat before use &amp; stay hydrated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set a short-term goal for reduction</li> <li>- Start low, go slow</li> <li>- Avoid using with other substances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set a short-term goal for reduction</li> <li>- Never use alone</li> <li>- Start low, go slow</li> <li>- Avoid using with other substances</li> <li>- Choose a safer ROA (ingesting, snorting, smoking, booty bumping)</li> </ul>
<b>*Always carry naloxone when taking unregulated substances</b>					
<b>Replace</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-alcoholic beverages</li> <li>- Non-alcoholic beer</li> <li>- Develop stress management skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop stress management skills</li> <li>- Increase self-care activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase non-substance related activities</li> <li>- Establish a daily routine</li> <li>- Develop stress management skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Taper, don't quit abruptly!</li> <li>- Develop stress management skills and emotional regulation skills</li> <li>- Practice CBT and mindfulness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use alternatives for managing chronic physical / emotional pain</li> <li>- Establish a daily routine</li> <li>- Develop stress management and emotional regulation skills</li> </ul>

• <https://www.waterlooregiondrugstrategy.ca/en/prevention-and-safer-drug-use/substances.aspx>



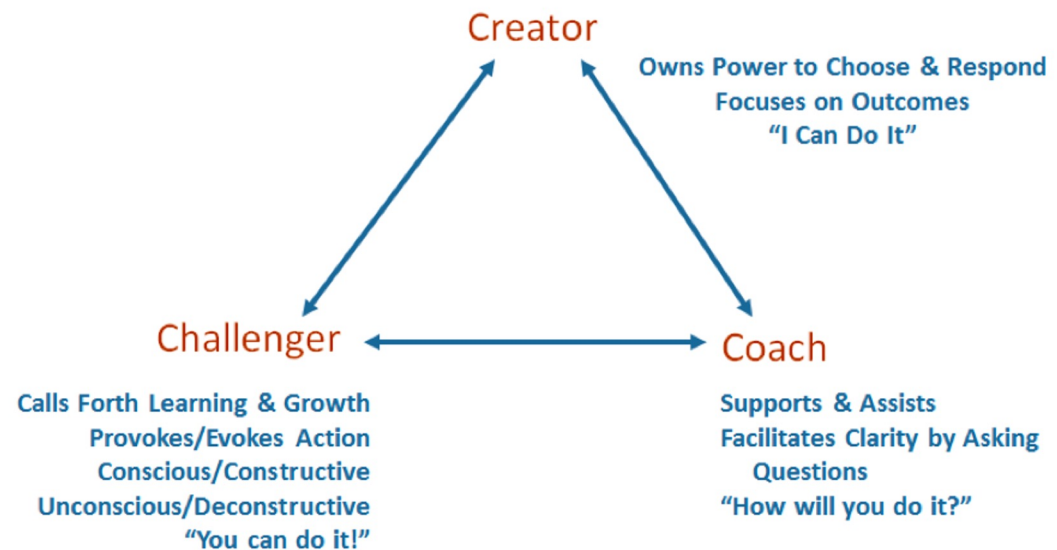
# Relationships Matter-Connection Matters

## DDT: THE DREADED DRAMA TRIANGLE™ (KARPMAN DRAMA TRIANGLE)



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Your understanding  
of the problem  
determines your  
solutions.”

-Dr. Stuart Ablon

[www.thinkkids.org](http://www.thinkkids.org)



what people think  
it looks like



what it really  
looks like



**Questions?  
Concerns?  
Takeaways?**



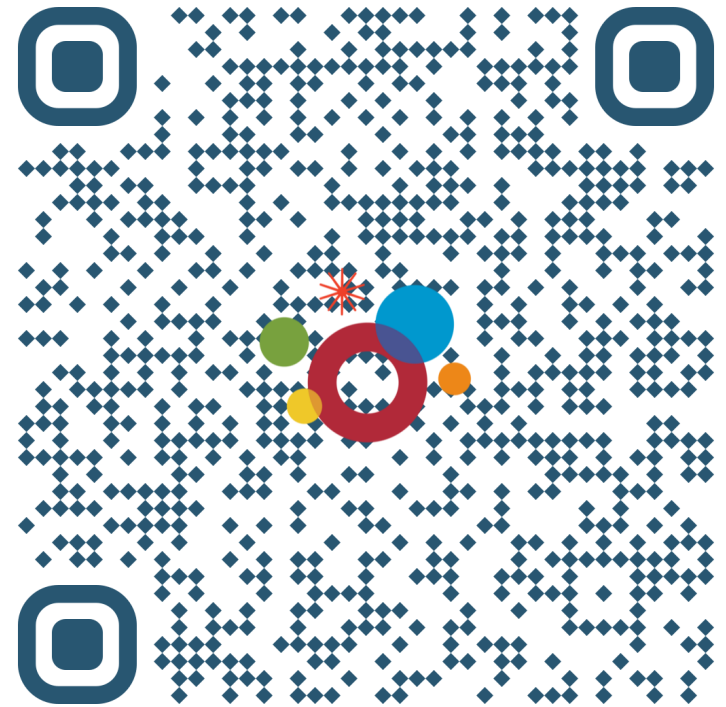
**Rideauwood Addiction and Family  
Services Presentation Evaluation -  
CESBA**



# Evaluation Surveys | Sondages d'évaluation

Provide your feedback with the QR codes or visit [cesba.com/2023surveys](https://cesba.com/2023surveys)

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