

Seminars

Transforming Lives: FOCUS for Resiliency and Success Focus On Critical Underlying Strengths

This is a dynamic and highly interactive one-day training for anyone who works or lives with challenged and challenging young people: teachers, parents, youth workers, social workers, foster parents, administrators and others. Research challenges us to help young people understand how they have already overcome adversity and to see themselves as strong, capable and resource rich. Yet, too often we are so distracted by behaviors that are disruptive, self-destructive and just plain annoying, that it is hard to see where the strengths are. This despite the fact that we may (secretly) admire their cleverness or persistence or humor! Gain a strengths perspective and learn practical techniques to recognize and validate strengths while still holding young people accountable for their actions.

Designed to be truly transformative, this seminar goes beyond a solid grounding in the research (Werner & Smith, Marcus Buckingham, Steven & Sybil Wolin), concepts (the alternate mirror, perceptual shifts), and resources of this emerging field. Working progressively from understanding to exploration to mastery, you will...

- Gain a deep and practical understanding of why our strengths are the key to resiliency and success - not just in theory, but action.
- Explore the art of seeing through “deficit” behaviors to the underlying strengths.
- Learn to communicate and grow these strengths - specifically, authentically and effectively - and help young people see themselves as strong, capable and resource rich.
- Begin to Master the art of applying these concepts and skills to the specific kids with whom you work or live.

In the course of the day you will laugh, share, problem-solve, challenge, get specific, make connections and become your own best teacher. What sets this training apart is the depth of the explorations, focus on practical application and the balance of personal and professional growth. In addition, you will receive...

- Extensive training materials, including tools to use back home.
- A copy of Chris audio book, *Reflecting Strengths*, as a CD or an mp3 download.
- A free online follow-up session with Chris and your colleagues from this training.
- A certificate reflecting six (6) hours of continuing education.
- A new support network of like-minded colleagues and access to an online forum for seminar graduates.

If you love to learn from passionate discussions, challenging problem-solving and personal explorations with respected colleagues, this training is for you!

Two-day format

The two-day seminar offers a unique additional learning opportunity for a small group of committed participants from the one-day seminar. Day one is conducted as described above. A small group (10-25) of participants are selected to participate in a second day designed to explore the specific application of these ideas. The day is loosely divided into three segments:

1. **Talking the talk:** One of the barriers to strengths focused work is that our strengths vocabulary and ability to express it effectively and convincingly is far less developed than our deficits vocabulary. We seem to get all "soft and squishy" when we talk about kids strengths - not a good plan, especially when we are meeting with colleagues who "know" the certainty of what is wrong! In this segment, we build these skills and practice using them effectively, both with young people and with colleagues. A favorite exercise is mock meeting, with strengths advocates on one side and traditionalists on the other. When we stop laughing, we find the confidence and clarity to be effective advocates.
2. **Walking the talk:** In this segment, we bring the strengths focus home to our own lives. We identify our personal strengths, the role they have played in our own challenges and successes, our unique barriers to accessing these strengths, and tools for making them part of our daily functioning. This is a powerful exercise and not only will it inform your work/relationships in a powerful way, but will change the way you see every aspect of your life.
3. **Being the talk:** In this segment, we explore what these ideas look like with specific young people - the ones in your life. We practice, problem solve and explore our own authentic styles. With groups of professionals, we explore systems change and how to effect such change. A favorite exercise here is "stump the chump," during which participants have a chance to pose specific questions about the hardest situations, kids and challenges they face.

All participants must have attended the one-day seminar on the previous day. Participants for this group may be chosen in one of three ways:

1. As part of the one-day seminar registration process, participants are offered the opportunity to apply for inclusion in this group.
2. Registrants may register for the second day on a first-come, first-served basis, with registration closing at the designated number of participants.
3. You may invite/recruit a specific group of participants for this second day.

To learn more, contact Chris at 207 767 2024 or at chris@strengthsinfocus.com.