

# Mental Health Wilderness First Aid



## 5h Introduction certification course outline

### Pre-Course

#### asynchronous work (1.5 hours) via Kajabi (provided online platform)

- What is Mental Health? Introductory concepts including:
  - Relationship building – relationships as protective and foundational for mental health,
  - Mirror neurons – the neurology of relationship and connection
  - Mental health diagnoses (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*), strengths and limitations of the diagnostic model
  - “Wise mind” model of mental health (balancing emotional & rational strategies).
- Communication strategies:
  - Active listening tools – reflecting feelings, values, describe
  - Gentle boundaries, boundaries as choices – strategies for setting limits while preserving relationship
  - Encouraging cooperation – strategies for engaging voluntary cooperation
  - Assertive communication model (DES) – communication model for redirecting behaviour

### Live class

#### delivered via Zoom or in-person (3 hours)

- Nervous system and stress response – “Wizard Brain vs Lizard Brain”, *i.e.* sympathetic vs parasympathetic nervous system responses to stress; beneficial vs detrimental stressors; how the brain acts to protect us in response to perceived threat.
- ABCs of mental health assessment – establishing “safety & stabilization” when coming on scene
- Lizard Brain Interventions: regulation strategies for the nervous system, structured vs. organic strategies, *and why they work*.
- Wizard Brain Interventions:
  - Psychoeducation – providing information about stress response as an evidence-based means of reducing anxiety.
  - Thought Challenging – awareness of and challenging intrusive thoughts that are untrue or unhelpful to mental health.
  - Field Support Planning – brief written plans for ongoing use in the field.

### Post-course

#### (0.5 hour, to be completed and submitted for certification)

- Completion of brief final assignments to complete certification: 1) Field Support Plan, 2) Feedback form