

The Trauma Triangle  
Presented by Joy Wong Liu  
A Workshop for Mental Health Professionals

### **Syllabus**

#### **Course Description**

This experiential workshop will introduce participants to the Trauma Triangle, a simple yet profound way to understand how trauma on the outside impacts survivors on the inside. The Trauma Triangle also empowers trauma survivors with an easy to understand road map to recovery. Adapted from the Karpman Triangle for interpersonal relationships, the Trauma Triangle focuses on the intrapsychic roles and patterns taken on to cope with trauma. It is one of foundational concepts of the Therapeutic Spiral Model, a clinical form of psychodrama developed for the treatment of trauma.

#### **Course Objectives**

1. Participants will become familiar with the 3 roles in the Trauma Triangle and how these affect trauma survivors.
2. Participants will understand the role of the Appropriate Authority in the healing of the 3 trauma roles.
3. Participants will be introduced to some of the key concepts of the Therapeutic Spiral Model, including several safety structures.

#### **Course Overview/Outline**

This course will provide an introduction to several key concepts from the Therapeutic Spiral Model, a clinical model of psychodrama developed for the treatment of trauma. The workshop will include experiential exercises and teaching about the following concepts:

- Circle of Strengths
- The Trauma Triangle
- The Role of the Appropriate Authority
- Q & A

#### **Selected Bibliography**

Hudgins, K. & Toscani, F. (Eds.) (2013). *Healing world trauma with the therapeutic spiral model: Psychodramatic stories from the frontline*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

#### **About the Presenter**

Joy Wong Liu is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (MFC# 53681) who has been affiliated with Christian Counseling Centers since 2012. Joy currently co-leads a drama therapy group for trauma survivors at CCC Hayward. Joy received her Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Western Seminary and also holds a Bachelor's Degree in drama from Stanford University. Joy is trained in EMDR for the treatment of trauma and also is currently pursuing International Certification in Trauma Therapy using the Therapeutic Spiral Model (TSM). Joy has received over 100 hours of post-graduate training in TSM from Sylvia Israel, MFT, TEP, RDT/BCT, and Kate Hudgins, Ph.D., TEP, the founder of TSM.

## Post-Test

1. Which of the following roles are part of the Trauma Triangle?
  - (a) Victim
  - (b) Perpetrator
  - (c) Abandoning Authority
  - (d) All of the above
2. Which of the following is NOT the role of the Appropriate Authority?
  - (a) To remind the abandoning authority of the child's worthiness to be cared for.
  - (b) To tell the observing ego to stop observing so many things.
  - (c) To set limits and/or transform the role of the perpetrator.
  - (d) To nurture and comfort the wounded child.
3. According to the Therapeutic Spiral Model, what brings about transformation of trauma?
  - (a) The client connecting to prescribed roles, such as the Strengths, the Observing Ego, and the Containing Double.
  - (b) The client re-experiencing traumatic memories with full intensity.
  - (c) The client playing the role of the Wounded Child.
  - (d) The client seeing someone else play a strength role.
4. Which of the following is one of the kinds of Strengths in the Circle of Strengths?
  - (a) Personal (Intrapsychic) Strengths (e.g. humor, creativity, courage)
  - (b) Interpersonal Strengths (e.g. friends, mentors, fictional characters, pets)
  - (c) Transpersonal Strengths (e.g. God, nature, spirituality)
  - (d) All of the above
5. Which role in the Trauma Triangle remembers the pain of the trauma?
  - (a) Victim Role
  - (b) Perpetrator Role
  - (c) Abandoning Authority Role
  - (d) Rescuer Role