

# 2025 GUIDE TO BECOMING A NURSE-PSYCHOTHERAPIST IN ONTARIO

Your Roadmap to  
Serving Beyond  
the Bedside



Presented by:  
**BECOMING INSTITUTE**  
[www.becominginstitute.ca](http://www.becominginstitute.ca)

**SEPTEMBER  
COHORT**  
NOW ENROLLING





# WELCOME FROM THE DEAN

## Joan Samuels-Dennis, Ph.D

Ph.D, RN–Psychotherapist  
Founder, The Becoming Institute  
Creator of The Becoming Method®



Dear Prospective Student,

Thank you for your interest in the RN–Psychotherapist Credentialing Program.

In recent years, nurses have delivered care under extraordinary conditions—often without the authority or support needed to lead with confidence. Many are now seeking new ways to practice: ways that are not only clinically sound, but deeply meaningful.

This program was created for nurses like you—professionals who want to expand their scope, transition into trauma-informed mental health care, and take on leadership roles in a changing healthcare landscape.

At The Becoming Institute, we’ve built a clear, regulation-aligned pathway that supports you in becoming a confident, competent nurse–psychotherapist. Our approach bridges nursing practice, psychotherapy competencies, and trauma recovery expertise—without requiring a full career change or another degree.

In this guide, you’ll find:

- A breakdown of your credentialing options in Ontario
- An overview of our three-level training model
- Common questions and practical next steps

Whether you’re actively planning your next move or just beginning to explore your options, we hope this guide provides the clarity and encouragement you need.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Joan".



# WHAT IS AN RN-PSYCHOTHERAPIST?

An RN-Psychotherapist is a registered nurse who integrates psychotherapy into their clinical practice, in alignment with Ontario's Controlled Act of Psychotherapy.

## Regulatory Context

- ✓ Must be registered with the CNO
- ✓ Must meet the CNO's Psychotherapy Practice Standard
- ✓ May also pursue optional registration with CRPO

## Where RN-Psychotherapists Work

- ✓ Private practice
- ✓ NP-led clinics
- ✓ Public health units
- ✓ Employee wellness programs
- ✓ Trauma recovery centres

“

This program helped me reclaim my power as a nurse. I finally feel like I'm practicing in a way that reflects who I really am.

— S. Walters, 2024

”

## Why Nurses Are Uniquely Positioned For This Role



Clinical Insight

Understand medical +  
mental health



Therapeutic  
Presence

Build trust through  
relational care



Whole-Person Focus

Integrate mind, body, and  
spirit in healing



Not all paths to practicing psychotherapy are created equal. Whether you're looking for professional recognition, career flexibility, or a faster route to client impact, here's how the options compare:

## PATHWAYS TO PRACTICING PSYCHOTHERAPY IN ONTARIO

| Pathway                                                              | Time Commitment   | Credential Earned                    | Regulator            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>RN–Psychotherapist Credentialing Program (Becoming Institute)</b> | 6–12 months       | Certified Trauma Recovery Specialist | CNO                  |
| <b>CRPO-recognized psychotherapy training program</b>                | 2–4 years         | Registered Psychotherapist (RP)      | CRPO                 |
| <b>Master's Programs</b>                                             | 2–3 yrs full-time | MA/MSc + RP eligibility              | CRPO + academic body |
| <b>Workshops &amp; CE Only</b>                                       | Varies            | CEUs only                            | N/A                  |



### What Does CRPO Recognized Program Mean For Nurses?

- This path is often lengthy and may not be tailored to nurses' existing expertise
- It can be challenging to meet the supervision and client hours without structured support
- Applicants are fully responsible for sourcing their own clinical placements, supervision, and documentation
- It may result in a career switch rather than an expansion of your current scope



The RN Credentialing Pathway is a 6-month, accelerated program designed to prepare Ontario nurses to deliver trauma-informed psychotherapy in clinical and community settings. Aligned with CRPO entry-to-practice competencies and Ontario's Roadmap to Wellness, the program provides both theoretical knowledge and hands-on practice through supervised placements across the province.

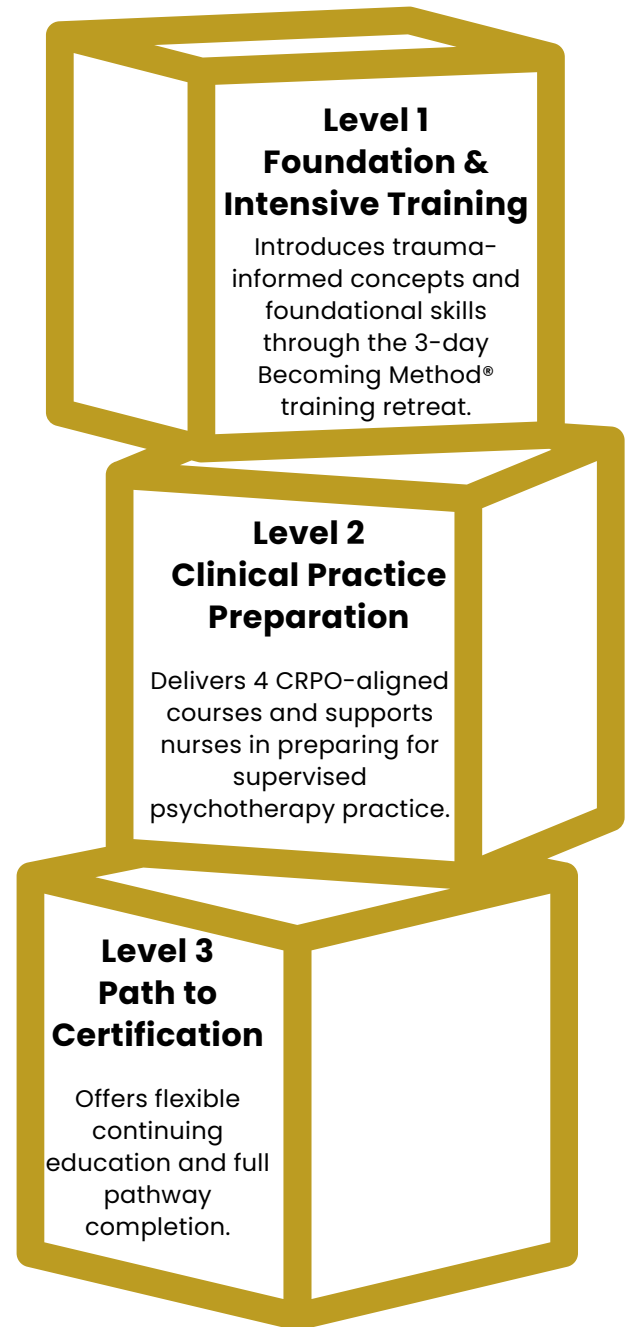
## RN CREDENTIALING PATHWAY

|                      |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Program Name         |   | RN-Psychotherapist Credentialing Program                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Credential Earned    |  | Certified Trauma Recovery Specialist (CTRP)                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Duration             |  | 16 weeks = core coursework<br>6-12 months = full program incl. practicum and placement                                                                                                                                 |
| Delivery Format      |  | <b>Phase 1:</b> In-person 3-Day Live Intensive Training +<br><b>Phase 2:</b> 4 course delivered via D2L BrightSpace + 1,000-hour Practicum<br><b>Phase 3:</b> Career Placement with flexible completion of CEC courses |
| Tuition              | \$                                                                                  | \$9,995                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Who's This For?      |  | RNs, RPNs, NPs, CNSs, PSWs                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Practicum Placements |  | Health centres, hospitals, shelters, reserves, and community agencies                                                                                                                                                  |
| Program Start        |  | Fall 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                              |



## WHAT WILL NURSES LEARN...

FLEXIBLE | STACKED  
CREDENTIALING







# CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

## TRAUMA RECOVERY EDUCATION—STRUCTURED IN 3 LEVELS



Our credentialing pathway is delivered in three progressive levels, combining theory, clinical skills, and real-world practice. Each level is carefully aligned with CRPO Entry-to-Practice Competencies and supports your growth as a trauma-informed clinician.

### LEVEL 1: FOUNDATION & INTENSIVE TRAINING



#### Becoming Method® 3-Day Retreat

Begin with an immersive in-person training that introduces you to the 8 core modalities of the Becoming Method®. You'll build foundational skills in:

- Safe & Effective Use of Self (SEUS)
- Trauma-informed assessment and response
- Therapeutic presence and boundaries
- Somatic and mindfulness-based techniques

This retreat lays the groundwork for ethical, embodied practice and sets the tone for everything that follows.



#### Begin Your First Course

Register for the 3-Day Intensive Training

[Apply Now](#) >>



#### Start Your Application

Apply to the RN-Psychotherapist Program

[Apply Now](#) >>

### LEVEL 2: CLINICAL PRACTICE PREPARATION



#### 4 CRPO-Aligned Core Courses + Clinical Supervision

##### **Becoming 302 – Holistic Therapeutic Assessment**

Learn how to assess trauma across cognitive, emotional, relational, and spiritual dimensions.

##### **Becoming 102 – Mindful Fitness for Self-Healing**

Build inner awareness and emotional regulation as tools for clinical practice.



# CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

## LEVEL 2: CONT'D



### **Becoming 303 – Standards of Psychotherapeutic Practice**

Understand legal, ethical, and regulatory frameworks, with emphasis on SEUS, boundaries, documentation, and informed consent.

### **Becoming 304 – 1,000-Hour Supervised Practicum**

Apply your learning in supervised placements across Ontario. You'll work with real clients in diverse settings—receiving direct supervision and consultation throughout.

## LEVEL 3: LAUNCH YOUR CAREER WITH GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

### 8-Month Early Career RN–Psychotherapist Placement



After completing your 1,000-hour supervised practicum in Level 2, Level 3 offers a structured early career placement, supported by Ontario government nursing workforce initiatives. This phase helps you transition into full-time employment as an RN–Psychotherapist with community organizations.

## CAREER-READY EXPERIENCE WITH IMPACT



During your placement, you will:

- Deliver trauma-informed psychotherapy under supervision
- Lead a Major Community Project, demonstrating clinical leadership
- Receive mentorship and professional coaching, enhancing both skills and career clarity

These roles are often positioned as permanent RN–Psychotherapist positions upon successful completion.



### Start Your Application

Apply to the RN–Psychotherapist Program

**Apply Now** >>



# FLEXIBLE LEARNING & SPECIALIZATION



## EMPLOYMENT PATHWAY SNAPSHOT

| Step           | Action                                | Outcome                                |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Level 2        | Complete 1,000-hour practicum         | Demonstrate competency                 |
| Level 3        | Begin government-funded job placement | Receive partial salary support         |
| Post-Placement | Fulfill 2-year commitment             | Earn permanent RN–Psychotherapist role |

## A TRAUMA RECOVERY SPECIALIST IS EQUIPPED TO:

- **Recognize** and **respond** to the signs of trauma across a wide range of client experiences
- **Apply trauma-informed**, evidence-based frameworks in therapeutic care
- Guide clients through processes of **integration, emotional regulation, and narrative healing**
- Hold space for **truth-telling, conscious forgiveness, and reconnection** using the Becoming Method®
- Deliver care that is **ethically grounded, culturally responsive, and clinically aligned** with CNO and CRPO standards





# FLEXIBLE LEARNING & SPECIALIZATION

The Becoming Institute is contributing to the development of a new benchmark for trauma-informed care in Canada—one that bridges clinical training, cultural safety, and systems healing. With the goal of preparing 400 trauma recovery specialists over the next five years, the Institute is supporting both individual recovery and broader transformation in how trauma is understood and addressed across healthcare, education, and community systems.

*“This is the future of healthcare: a model where trauma recovery and community restoration are intertwined, leading to a healthier, more resilient society.”*

— Dr. Joan Samuels-Dennis



# THE BECOMING METHOD®

01

## **Physiological Integration**

The Becoming Method® integrates principles of polyvagal theory to support regulation of the nervous system and foster a sense of safety and emotional balance. Practitioners are trained to recognize signs of autonomic dysregulation and apply somatic and mindfulness-based techniques that help clients shift from survival responses to states of connection, calm, and integration.

02

## **Somatic Memory Transformation**

The Becoming Method® supports the transformation of trauma stored in the body by integrating somatic awareness, guided movement, and body-based interventions. Practitioners learn to help clients access embodied memory and release trauma responses through safe, structured techniques—facilitating healing beyond the cognitive level.

03

## **Relational Imprinting and Identity Reconstruction**

The Becoming Method® incorporates insights from neuroscience and attachment theory to explore how early relational experiences shape identity development. In trauma contexts, individuals may unconsciously internalize the emotional states and behaviors of dysregulated caregivers, leading to the formation of maladaptive identity patterns. This approach helps clients recognize these imprints, restore self-agency, and begin to reconstruct a coherent, empowered sense of self.

04

## **Cognitive Reframing and Defense Transformation**

The Becoming Method® helps practitioners identify trauma-related beliefs and protective defense patterns that may inhibit emotional processing and recovery. Through trauma-informed dialogue, reflection, and cognitive restructuring, practitioners support clients in challenging internalized narratives and fostering healthier thought patterns—creating space for meaningful and sustained healing.



ROOTED IN CONSCIOUSNESS | GUIDED BY CONNECTION | COMMITTED TO UNITY

# Workforce Alignment & System Responsiveness

Ontario continues to experience a growing demand for culturally responsive, trauma-informed psychotherapy—particularly within equity-deserving populations and underserved communities. While many regulated health professionals are already embedded in these settings, there is currently no formalized, CRPO-aligned pathway to support their transition into psychotherapy practice.

To address this gap, the RN Credentialing Pathway offers nurses, especially those working as public health nurses, nurse practitioners and clinical nurse specialists, a structured route to develop the competencies required for CRPO registration, with an emphasis on care delivery in schools, shelters, community health centres, and reserves. A focused pilot is being prepared in collaboration with one of Ontario's highest-priority communities, pending further engagement and guidance from CRPO.

## **RN-Psychotherapists**

By equipping RNs with the skills, supervision, and regulatory readiness required to provide psychotherapy, the RN Credentialing Pathway strengthens the existing workforce and improves access to care—particularly for individuals navigating poverty, disability, housing insecurity, and complex trauma. This approach supports a more sustainable, upstream mental health response in communities across the province.



# THE PRACTICUM

— FLEXIBLE, PART-TIME —



## 01 **1,000 HOURS OF SUPERVISED PRACTICE**

Each student completes a trauma-focused practicum in real-world clinical and community settings

## 02 **6–8 MONTHS, FLEXIBLE & PART-TIME**

Designed to fit alongside casual or part-time employment—no need to pause your career

## 03 **PRE-APPROVED PLACEMENT SITES**

We match students with health centres, shelters, schools, and community clinics across Ontario

## 04 **Live Supervision & Mentorship**

Includes access to on-site or virtual supervisors, plus ongoing reflective practice support

## 05 **CLASSES HELD FRIDAYS ONLY**

Live sessions run Fridays from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM, giving nurses flexibility to work during the week

# FAQS

## **Is this recognized by the CNO or CRPO?**

No, this is not a regulatory designation. The RN–Psychotherapist Credentialing Program is a post-graduate training pathway aligned with the practice standards of both the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) and the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO).

Nurses who complete this program gain the skills and confidence to practice psychotherapy within their existing CNO scope or pursue CRPO registration independently, if desired.

## **Do I need to register with CRPO to practice psychotherapy as a nurse?**

No. RN are authorized by the CNO to practice psychotherapy and do not need to be registered with CRPO. However, some nurses choose to pursue dual registration if they plan to work outside of nursing settings or use the RP title.

## **Can I really start practicing after this program—or will I need more training?**

Yes—you can begin practicing psychotherapy within your CNO-authorized scope as soon as you complete the program and feel clinically ready. This program is designed to give you the knowledge, structure, and supervised practice support needed to feel confident and competent in trauma-informed psychotherapy.



# FAQS

Is this a good fit if I'm burned out  
or unsure of what's next?

Yes—and you're not alone in feeling that way.



Many of our students come to this program in a moment of transition: tired, questioning, and deeply aware that something needs to change. They've given so much to others—and are now ready to give themselves permission to realign, restore, and reimagine their role as a healer.

This program is designed to meet you where you are. It offers more than professional development—it offers space to reconnect with your values, rediscover your voice, and begin serving in a way that feels sustainable and true.

You don't need to have it all figured out.  
You just need to be willing to explore what's possible.

# WHAT TO DO NEXT

You don't need to have it all figured out to move forward.

Whether you're ready to apply, want to ask a few more questions, or simply need space to reflect—we're here to walk with you.

## 3 WAYS TO GET STARTED



### Book a 15-Minute Call

Speak with a member of our admissions team. We'll answer your questions, talk through your goals, and help you decide if the program is the right fit.

**Book Now**



### Start Your Application

Our process is simple and supportive. You can apply online in under 30 minutes.

**Apply Now**



### Join an Info Session

Learn more about the RN–Psychotherapist pathway, the Becoming Method®, and what it looks like to train with us.

**Schedule**







# BECOMING

—INSTITUTE—

We stand at the threshold of a new chapter in nursing—one that calls us not only to care, but to transform. The RN–Psychotherapist Credentialing Program was born from a vision: that nurses can lead the future of mental health care, not by managing symptoms, but by restoring wholeness. That we can meet trauma not with fear, but with presence. And that healing, when guided with compassion and clarity, can be lasting.

— DR. JOAN

**LEARN & HEAL WITH US**

Unit #2-80 Devon Road  
Brampton, ON  
L6T 5B3  
647-265-0804

[info@becominginstitute.ca](mailto:info@becominginstitute.ca)  
[www.becominginstitute.ca](http://www.becominginstitute.ca)