



Course Syllabus

Becoming 401: Becoming the RN–Psychotherapist— Reclaiming Depth in Clinical Nursing Practice

Brief Course Overview

“Becoming 401: Becoming the RN–Psychotherapist” immerses you in a holistic understanding of trauma’s impact on body, mind and spirit while introducing narrative, somatic, Internal Family Systems and the Becoming Method®—all framed within Ontario’s regulatory guidelines for psychotherapy. Designed for nurses who are ready to deepen their compassion and explore the path to an RN-Psychotherapist specialization, this concise course clarifies next steps and inspires you to lead trauma recovery in your community.

In-Depth Course Description

Becoming 401 “Becoming the RN–Psychotherapist—Reclaiming Depth in Clinical Nursing Practice” is a concise, three-week course designed to help nurses explore trauma through a holistic lens and to navigate the transition from traditional nursing practice to psychotherapeutic care. Each week combines live online instruction with reflection activities and discussion, guiding participants through the ways trauma affects the body, mind, soul and spirit. You’ll gain an introductory understanding of Narrative Therapy, Somatic Therapy, Internal Family Systems (IFS), and the Becoming Method®, seeing how these approaches align with trauma recovery and how they differ from conventional talk therapy. The final session demystifies Ontario’s psychotherapy regulations, clarifying the Safe and Effective Use of Self (SEUS) and outlining the pathway for nurses to practise psychotherapy legally and ethically. By the end of the program, you’ll have a solid grasp of holistic trauma care and a clear sense of whether pursuing certification—such as the Becoming Institute’s Trauma Recovery Certificate or the RN-Psychotherapist Credentialing Program—is right for you.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. **Explain** how trauma affects individuals holistically, including physical, psychological, relational and spiritual dimensions.
2. **Describe and contrast** four trauma-informed modalities—Narrative Therapy, Somatic Therapy, Internal Family Systems and the Becoming Method®—and discuss how they support healing beyond symptom management.



3. **Summarize** the therapeutic process and the principles of Safe and Effective Use of Self (SEUS) as they apply to nurses in psychotherapeutic practice.
4. **Interpret** key regulatory guidelines from the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) and the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) regarding psychotherapy and the RN-Psychotherapist role.
5. **Identify** personal next steps toward specialization, including whether to pursue further trauma-recovery training or certification programs.

Course Goals

Holistic Trauma Insight & Modalities

This course aims to provide RNs with a comprehensive overview of trauma's physical, psychological, relational and spiritual impacts and introduce Narrative Therapy, Somatic Therapy, Internal Family Systems and the Becoming Method®. Participants will learn to recognise trauma's signs in their patients, begin applying introductory techniques and identify which modalities they may wish to study further.

Transition to Psychotherapeutic Practice

This course aims to prepare nurses to bridge their existing competencies into the RN-Psychotherapist role by aligning nursing skills with psychotherapeutic principles, cultivating self-awareness and compassionate presence, understanding regulatory and ethical considerations, and developing a personal plan for further training.

Course Textbooks

- Baranowsky, A. B., & Gentry, J. E. (2023). Trauma practice: A cognitive behavioral somatic therapy. Hogrefe Publishing.
- van der Kolk, B. A. (2015). *The body keeps the score: Brain, mind, and body in the healing of trauma*. Penguin Books.

Relevant Resources

- [CRPO Standards of Practice](#)
- [CRPO Entry to Practice Guidelines](#)
- [CNO PRACTICE GUIDELINE: Independent Practice](#)



Course Schedule

Week	Module	Resources	Assessment(s)	CRPO Entry to Practice Competency
Week 1	Introduction to Trauma & Holistic Trauma Responses	<p>Required Readings: van der Kolk, B. A. (2015). <i>The body keeps the score: Brain, mind, and body in the healing of trauma</i>. Penguin Books—Chapter 11, 12</p> <p>Felitti, V. J., Anda, R. F., Nordenberg, D., Williamson, D. F., Spitz, A. M., Edwards, V., & Marks, J. S. (1998). Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. <i>American journal of preventive medicine</i>, 14(4), 245-258.</p>	Weekly Reflection and Discussion: Week 1 (due the following Thursday at 11:59PM EST)	1.1 Integrate a theory of human psychological functioning 1.2 Work within a framework based upon established psychotherapeutic theory 1.3 Integrate knowledge of comparative psychotherapy relevant to practice 1.5 Integrate knowledge of human and cultural diversity
Week 2	Holistic Approaches to Trauma Recovery	<p>Required Readings: Samuels-Dennis, J. (n.d.). <i>The Becoming Method®: Evolving how we understand and treat traumatic responses to adverse life experiences</i> [Unpublished Manuscript]. Becoming Institute Inc.</p> <p>Baranowsky, A. B., & Gentry, J. E. (2023). Phase 0: Foundation of the Trauma Practice model. In <i>Trauma practice: A cognitive behavioral somatic therapy</i> (4th ed., pp. 9-19). Hogrefe Publishing.</p>	Weekly Reflection and Discussion: Week 1 (due the following Thursday at 11:59PM EST)	1.1 Integrate a theory of human psychological functioning 1.2 Work within a framework based upon established psychotherapeutic theory 1.3 Integrate knowledge of comparative psychotherapy relevant to practice 1.5 Integrate knowledge of human and cultural diversity 4.3 Ensure safe and effective use of self in the therapeutic relationship 4.5 Structure and facilitate the therapeutic process 5.1 Remain current with professional

				literature
Week 3	Professional Integration of the RN-Psychotherapist Role	<p>Required Readings: CRPO Standards of Practice CRPO Entry to Practice Guidelines CNO PRACTICE GUIDELINE: Independent Practice</p> <p>Welling, H. (2005). The Intuitive Process: The Case of Psychotherapy. <i>Journal of Psychotherapy Integration</i>, 15(1), 19-47.</p> <p>Video: Accessing intuition as a tool: your internal guidance system</p>	<p>Weekly Reflection and Discussion: Week 8 (due the following Thursday at 11:59PM EST)</p> <p>Self-Care Wheel Self-Care Checklist</p>	<p>1.1 Integrate a theory of human psychological functioning</p> <p>1.2 Work within a framework based upon established psychotherapeutic theory</p> <p>1.3 Integrate knowledge of comparative psychotherapy relevant to practice</p>

Assessments

Assessment	Weight	Due Date
Module 1 Assignment: Integrative Reflection	33%	Thursday at 11:59PM (EST) after Week 1
Module 2 Assignment: Model Attunement Reflection	33%	Thursday at 11:59PM (EST) after Week 2
Module 3 Assignment: My Identity as an RN-Psychotherapist Reflection	33%	Thursday at 11:59PM (EST) after Week 3