

St. Mary's Healthcare PROS Program
Class Overview

SEEKING SAFETY

PROS Component: IR

PROS Service: IDDT

Course Overview: This evidence-based class is structured to focus on 5 central ideas: 1. Safety as the priority of this first-stage class; 2. Integrated recovery of trauma w/substance abuse and mental health; 3. A focus on ideals; 4. Three content areas: Cognitive, Behavioral, and Interpersonal; and 5. Attention to counselor processes.

“Safety” is an umbrella term that signifies various elements: Discontinuing substance use and other addiction manifestations, reducing suicidality, minimizing exposure to HIV (and other) risk(s), letting go of dangerous relationships (such as domestic abuse and drug-using ‘friends’), gaining control over extreme symptoms (such as dissociation), and stopping self-harm behaviors (such as cutting). ‘Seeking Safety’ refers to helping participants free themselves from such negative behaviors and, in so doing, to move toward freeing themselves from trauma at a deep emotional level.

GOAL: To increase participant’s ability to stay safe and reduce suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

OBJECTIVES: This course will include but is not limited to the following objectives and strategies.

- To increase participants’ hopefulness; and learn to identify and ask for help from safe people.
- To teach participants how to utilize community resources,
- To explore ‘recovery thinking’, taking good care of one’s body, rehearsing honesty and compassion.
- To increase self-nurturing activities.

BARRIERS: Low self-esteem, negative attitude, stigma, lack of trust, unhealthy relationships, dishonesty, fear of success/self-sabotage, anxiety, depression, poor boundaries, impulsivity, isolation, unhealthy life choices.

STRATEGIES: Increase use of community resources, reduce incidents of self-injurious behaviors, rehearse use of “I” statements daily, role-play on how to establish healthier boundaries.

Seeking Safety

Weekly Lesson Plan – All weekly activities can be substituted at any time. They do not need/have to be in a linear order.

Date:		Time:		
PROS Component:	CRS _____	IR <u>X</u> _____	ORS _____	CT _____
PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders		Lesson/Unit: Week #1 and Week #2		
Course Title: Seeking Safety		Specific Topic: Safety		
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them.</p>				
<p>Objectives: Begin with chapter 1 quote from <i>Seeking Safety (Najavits, 2002, p. 87)</i> "It's never too late to be what you might have been" – G. Eliot And/or quote from p. 100 "Although the world is full of suffering, it is full also of the overcoming of it." – H. Keller</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To define what it means to experience signs of recovery - What is Safety <i>to you</i>? (Discussion on who one feels safe with, what activities one feels safe doing, and where one feels safe). (Handout 1 from page 101-102) - Explore, educate, and discuss Safe Coping Skills – Handout 2 p. 103 – 108 (should take 2 classes to review) 				
<p>Activity/Content:</p>				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-Exploration. Help participants explore ways in which they are currently safe. Reinforce safe coping. 2. Discussion: Do these stages make sense to you? Why or why not? What does safety mean to you? For example, living in a safe environment, being able to sleep at night. Why do you think safety has to happen first? What is your Old Way of coping versus your New way 3. Provide Ideas for a Commitment (7 examples for options): page 109 Ex: Try using new coping skill learned this week, Start keeping a journal of 'successes' – times you coped safely, overcame obstacles, successes in resisting substance use, etc. and/or any other coping skills used 				

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Date:		Time:		
PROS Component:	CRS _____	IR <u>X</u> _____	ORS _____	CT _____
PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders		Lesson/Unit: Week #3 and Week #4. There is possibility for Week #5 with this material		
Course Title: Seeking Safety		Specific Topic: Taking Back Your Power		
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them.</p> <p>Weeks #3 and #4 – Objective: Define PTSD, The Link between PTSD, Substance Abuse, Using Compassion to Take Back Your Power, and Long-Term PTSD Problems</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Materials: p. 118 What is PTSD p. 119 The Link Between PTSD and Substance Abuse p. 120-121 Using Compassion to Take Back Your Power p. 122-124 Long-Term PTSD Problems and Ideas for a Commitment</p>				
<p>Objectives: Define PTSD</p> <p>Quote: p. 117 “You are not responsible for being down, but you are responsible for getting up.” Jesse Jackson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To define PTSD - Make sure participants understand the connection between their trauma and PTSD symptoms - In addition to education about PTSD, the goal is to help participants feel validated - Explore the connection between PTSD and substance abuse - Help participants ‘take back their power’ by viewing PTSD and substance abuse with compassion <p style="text-align: center;">Activity/Content/Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. “Does anyone know what PTSD is? Does anyone know what the letters PTSD stand for? What are the main symptoms of PTSD?” What PTSD symptoms most bother you? What does it mean to say that PTSD is a ‘normal reaction to abnormal events’? What coping strategies work best for your PTSD? 5. Allow participants to decide what was traumatic for them. It is less important for participants to learn facts about PTSD and substance abuse than to relate the material to their own experience 6. How are PTSD and substance abuse related for you? Was using substances a way for you to cope with PTSD? How does it feel to see the connection between the two disorders? Can linking PTSD and substance abuse help your recovery? 				

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PROS Component:	CRS _____	IR <u> X </u>	ORS _____	CT _____
PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders		Lesson/Unit: Week #6		
Course Title: Seeking Safety		Specific Topic: Detaching from Emotional Pain		
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them.</p> <p>Week #6 – Grounding – Handout p. 133 – 136 Using Grounding to Detach from Emotional Pain</p> <p>Objectives: Detaching from Emotional Pain</p> <p>Quote: p. 132 “No Feeling Is Final.” - Rainer Maria Rilke (20th century poet)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To teach a powerful strategy known as ‘grounding’ to help participants detach from emotional pain. - Three types of grounding are presented (mental, physical, and soothing), with an experiential exercise to demonstrate the techniques. The goal is to shift attention toward the external world, away from internal feelings <p style="text-align: center;">Activity/Content/Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teach grounding as a set of simple but powerful techniques to detach from emotional pain 2. Conduct an in-session experiential exercise on grounding 3. Explore how grounding can be applied to participants’ day-to-day problems (cravings, etc) 				

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PROS Component:	CRS _____	IR <u>X</u> _____	ORS _____	CT _____
PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders		Lesson/Unit: Week #7		
Course Title: Seeking Safety		Specific Topic: When Substances Control You, part 1		
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them.</p> <p>Week #7 - Handout 1 – What Is Substance Abuse? P. 151 Handout 2 – How substance Abuse prevents healing from PTSD – p. 152 Handout 3 – Choose a Way to Give Up Substances – p. 153-154</p>				
<p>Objectives: No Matter What Happens You Can Cope Without Substances <i>Quote: p. 150 – “Not to laugh, not to lament, not to judge, but to understand.” – Baruch Spinoza (17th C. philosopher</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help students honestly evaluate whether they have a substance use disorder - Raise students’ awareness of how substance abuse prevents healing from PTSD - Identify an immediate plan to relinquish substance use that is <i>realistic</i> and <i>acceptable</i> to the student. Three choices are offered: ‘Quit all at once’, ‘Try an experiment’, or ‘cut down gradually’. 				
<p>Activity/Content/Questions:</p> <p>“How do you notice substances controlling your life these days?” “What areas of your life are currently affected by your substance use? (Relationships, work, physical health, leisure time, your development as a person) “What do you think your life would be like if you gave up substances?” “Can you see ways that your substance use is interfering with your healing from PTSD?” “How would it feel if you could learn to manage your PTSD without substances” “Do you have any recent examples of using a substance to manage your PTSD” In reference to a way to give up substances: “Which plan is most appealing to you?” “Which plan do you think is best for you?” Which plans have you tried before? Have any worked or not worked for you before? How can you make sure to stick to the plan that you selected?</p>				

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Date: _____			Time: _____	
PROS Component:	CRS _____	IR <u>X</u> _____	ORS _____	CT _____
PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders			Lesson/Unit: Week #8	
Course Title: Seeking Safety			Specific Topic: When Substances Control You, part 2	
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them.</p> <p>Week #8 - Handout 4 – Climbing Mount Recovery – p. 155 Handout 5 – Mixed Feelings – p. 157 Handout 6 – Self-Understanding of Substances Use – p. 158-159</p>				
<p>Objectives: No Matter What Happens You Can Cope Without Substances <i>Quote: p. 150 – “Not to laugh, not to lament, not to judge, but to understand.” – Baruch Spinoza (17th C. philosopher</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct an imaginative exercise, Climbing Mount recovery, to help students realistically prepare for giving up substances - Help students recognize that it is normal to have mixed feelings about giving up substances, as long as their <i>actions</i> remain safe - Help students seek a compassionate understanding of substance use incidents, rather than self-blame. 				

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PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders		Lesson/Unit: Week #9		
Course Title: Seeking Safety		Specific Topic: When Substances Control You, part 3		
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them.</p> <p>Week #8 - Handout 7 – Self-Help Groups – p. 160 Handout 8 – Substance Abuse and PTSD: Common questions – p. 161 - 162 Handout 9 – Ideas For A Commitment – p. 163</p>				
<p>Objectives: No Matter What Happens You Can Cope Without Substances <i>Quote: p. 150 – “Not to laugh, not to lament, not to judge, but to understand.” – Baruch Spinoza (17th C. philosopher</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss the role of self-help groups and encourage students to attend them - Help students make sense of confusing messages they may hear about recovery from PTSD and substance abuse - Help students seek an option for commitment that would work for them 				

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PROS Component:	CRS _____	IR <u>X</u> _____	ORS _____	CT _____
PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders		Lesson/Unit: Week #10		
Course Title: Seeking Safety		Specific Topic: Taking Good Care of Yourself		
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them.</p> <p>Week #10 - Handout 1 – Asking for Help p. 171 Handout 2 – Approach Sheet and Ideas for a Commitment – p. 172 - 173</p>				
<p>Objectives: Each of the disorders – PTSD and substance abuse – leads to problems in asking for help. Today’s topic encourages students to become aware of their need for help, and provides guidance in how to do so effectively.</p> <p>Quote: p. 170 – “Don’t compromise yourself. You are all you’ve got.” – Janis Joplin (20th C. American singer)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss effective ways to ask for help. - Rehearse how to ask for help - Explore students’ experiences in asking for help <p style="text-align: center;">Activity/Content:</p> <p>“What do you most want help with?” “Why is asking for help such a crucial coping skill?” “Was there a time recently when you needed to call someone for help, but didn’t?” “Is it harder to ask for help with your trauma issues, your substance abuse, or both equally?” “Why might PTSD and substance abuse make it hard for you to ask for help?” “What happens when you do not ask for help?” “Are there any successes you’ve had in asking for help?” “What made these possible?” “Do you think you can learn to ask for more help?” “Why would asking for help make you more <i>independent</i> in the long run?” “Can you coach the other person in advance on what you want him or her to say?”</p>				

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PROS Component:	CRS _____	IR <u>X</u> _____	ORS _____	CT _____
PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders		Lesson/Unit: Week #11		
Course Title: Seeking Safety		Specific Topic: Taking Good Care of Yourself, part 2		
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them.</p> <p>Week #11 - Handout 1 – Self-Care Questionnaire p. 179-180 Handout 2 – Ideas for a Commitment – p. 181</p>				
<p>Objectives: Each of the disorders – PTSD and substance abuse – leads to problems in asking for help. Today’s topic encourages students to become aware of their need for help, and provides guidance in how to do so effectively.</p> <p>Quote: p. 170 – “Don’t compromise yourself. You are all you’ve got.” – Janis Joplin (20th C. American singer)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss effective ways to ask for help. - Rehearse how to ask for help - Explore students’ experiences in asking for help <p style="text-align: center;">Activity/Content:</p> <p>“What do you most want help with?” “Why is asking for help such a crucial coping skill?” “Was there a time recently when you needed to call someone for help, but didn’t?” “Is it harder to ask for help with your trauma issues, your substance abuse, or both equally?” “Why might PTSD and substance abuse make it hard for you to ask for help?” “What happens when you do not ask for help?” “Are there any successes you’ve had in asking for help?” “What made these possible?” “Do you think you can learn to ask for more help?” “Why would asking for help make you more <i>independent</i> in the long run?” “Can you coach the other person in advance on what you want him or her to say?”</p>				

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PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders		Lesson/Unit: Week #12		
Course Title: Seeking Safety		Specific Topic: Compassion		
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them.</p> <p>Week #12 - Handout 1 – Harshness versus Compassion – p. 186 Handout 2 – Ways to Increase Compassion – p. 187</p>				
<p>Objectives: Contrast harsh versus compassionate self-talk. Rehearse compassionate self-talk. Quote: p. 170 – “<i>You yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection.</i>” – Buddha (5th century B.C. Indian philosopher)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Questions/Activity/Content: “What does your harsh self-talk sound like? What does your compassionate self-talk sound like? How might compassion prevent dangerous behavior? Does it bring up any feelings when you try talking to yourself compassionately? How are PTSD and substance abuse related to harsh self-talk?”</p>				

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PROS Component:	CRS _____	IR <u>X</u> _____	ORS _____	CT _____
PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders		Lesson/Unit: Week #13		
Course Title: Seeking Safety		Specific Topic: Red and Green Flags		
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them.</p> <p>Week #13 - Handout 1 – Signs of Danger versus Safety – p. 194-195 Handout 2 – Create a Safety Plan – p. 196 Handout 3 – Key Points about Red and Green Flags – p. 197</p>				
<p>Objectives: Help students identify their signs of danger (red flags) and safety (green flats). Create a safety plan. Discuss typical patterns in relapse.</p> <p><i>Quote: Chapters of my Life: Chapter 1: I walked down the sidewalk and fell into a deep hole. I couldn't get out and I couldn't figure out why. It wasn't my fault. It took a long time to get out. Chapter 2: I walked down the sidewalk and fell into the same hole again. I couldn't understand. It wasn't my fault. I really had to struggle to get out. Chapter 3: I walked down the sidewalk and fell into the same hole again. This time I understood why and it was my fault. This time it was easier to get out. Chapter 4: I walked down the sidewalk and saw the big hole. I walked around it. I didn't fall into that hole. Chapter 5: I chose another sidewalk</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussion:</p> <p>Which red/green flags are most prominent for you? When did you last use a substance (or had other unsafe behaviors)? Which red flags led to it? Is there some combination of signs that really tells you you're in danger? When your red flags occur, do you think you 'hear' them as messages of distress? Whom can you talk to when you begin a downward spiral? Is there anyone who knows you well enough to alert you when you are in danger?</p>				

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Date:			Time:	
PROS Component:	CRS _____	IR <u>X</u> _____	ORS _____	CT _____
PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders			Lesson/Unit: Week #16	
Course Title: Seeking Safety			Specific Topic: Recovery Thinking part 2	
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them.</p> <p>Week #16 – Handout 3 – About Rethinking – p. 220-221 Ideas for a Commitment – p. 222</p>				
<p>Objectives: Guide students to become more aware of thoughts associated with PTSD, substance abuse, and recovery. Help students experience the power of rethinking by conducting a think-aloud exercise using the rethinking tool. Deepen students' understanding of rethinking.</p> <p><i>Quote: I think I can, I think I can, I think I can. – Watty Piper (20th C. author of the children's book The Little Engine that Could)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussion:</p> <p>What's the difference between the left side of the page and the right in this handout? What thoughts do you notice in yourself? What thoughts would you most like to change: Can you see why it's important to notice what you're thinking? Are there other thoughts you would add to either column? What would life be like if you could think like the right side of the page? How would you act differently? How would you relate to others differently? How would you feel differently?</p>				

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PROS Component:	CRS _____	IR <u>X</u> _____	ORS _____	CT _____
PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders		Lesson/Unit: Week #17		
Course Title: Seeking Safety		Specific Topic: Integrating the Split Self		
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them. Week #17 – The Split Self – p. 228 - 229</p>				
<p>Objectives: Discuss the concept of the split self in both PTSD and substance abuse, and the goal of integration. Encourage students to discuss how aspects of themselves may emerge at different times, and how to manage this in their recovery.</p> <p>Quote: “... Be attentive to what is arising within you, and place that above everything else ... What is happening in your innermost self is worthy of your entire love; somehow you must find a way to work at it.” – Rainer Maria Rilke (20th C German poet)</p> <p>What sides of yourself do you notice? Why might you have rejected some part of you? What sides of yourself do you most and least like? What is your healthiest side? How does it keep you safe? How can you try to accept all sides of you? Can you think of times when you were unsafe because of a hidden side of you that came out? Why might rejecting a side of yourself lead to unsafe behavior? How is your PTSD or substance abuse related to splitting?</p>				

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PROS Component:	CRS _____	IR <u>X</u> _____	ORS _____	CT _____
PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders		Lesson/Unit: Week #18 - possibly week 19		
Course Title: Seeking Safety		Specific Topic: Commitment		
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them.</p> <p>Week #18 – Handout 1 – Responsibility and Promises – p. 235 Handout 2 – Creative Solutions Handout 3 – Overcoming Emotional Blocks Action plan</p>				
<p>Objectives: Discuss students’ experiences with commitments. Brainstorm creative strategies for completing commitments.</p> <p><i>Quote: “Never, never, never, never, never, never, never, never, never, never, never give up.” – Adapted from a speech by Winston Churchill (20th C British Prime Minister)</i></p> <p>How can keeping your commitments help your recovery from PTSD and substance abuse? What makes it hard for you to keep commitments? What are your favorite strategies for getting things done? How do you feel when you’ve followed through on your commitments? Do you have Children? If so, what are you teaching your children about commitments by your actions?</p>				

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PROS Component:	CRS _____	IR <u> X </u>	ORS _____	CT _____
PROS Service: IR/Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders			Lesson/Unit: Week #20	
Course Title: Seeking Safety			Specific Topic: Create Meaning	
<p>Goal: Convey the central goal of this class: <i>Safe coping</i>, no matter what happens in life. Discuss safety as the first stage of healing regardless of the symptom. Help participants explore what safety means to them. Week #20 – Creating Meaning – p. 245 - 248</p>				
<p>Objectives: Help students identify meanings associated with PTSD and substance abuse – both those that harm and those that heal. Guide students to shift from harmful meanings to healing meanings</p> <p><i>Quote: “Watch your thoughts; they become your words. Watch your words; they become your actions. Watch your actions; they become your habits. Watch your habits; they become your character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.” – Frank Outlaw (20th C. American writer)</i></p> <p>The handouts say ‘creating meaning’ because we are always actively interpreting the world – making assumptions, evaluation, deciding. By choosing to create meanings that help you to become more safe, you are helping your recovery process. Meanings may be at a very deep level; they may be unconscious for a long time. The goal is to remain open to new possibilities. Your meanings may be true for your past; our goal is to try for better meanings in the future. Meanings are not wrong or right, they are either helpful or harmful. Everyone struggles with harmful meanings at times, not just people with PTSD or substance abuse.</p>				