



IACTP
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CORRECTIONAL TRAINING PERSONNEL



The Correctional Trainer

Winter 2022



Table of Contents

Page(s)

Table of Contents	2
Presidents Address	3
Board Members	4-5
The President Elect's Corner	6-7
Power of the Pen, IACTP Needs You	8
The 4 E's of Transformational Trainings, Part I	9-13
Our Sponsors	15
Icebreakers	16-18
IACTP Training Webinars	19
The Twenty Minute Trainer	20-22
IACTP Regional Training Initiative	23
Membership Fee Structure	24
Yesterday in IACTP	25-26
What Can IACTP Do For you?	27
IACTP Awards of Excellence	28-29



President's Address

The 4 E's of Transformational Trainings, Part I

By John A. Shuford

You never change things by fighting the existing reality.
To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.
Buckminster Fuller

It is very frustrating to realize there is a need for change, but not know how to make those changes happen. We are losing more staff than we are gaining. Not only that, but we have unacceptably high rates of stress, PTSD, depression, divorce, heart attacks, not to mention suicides. These are not getting much better. Our current approach is unsustainable. Why are we not able to make significant inroads on those issues? We can learn from Albert Einstein, who said, "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them." Many training academies have made changes. They realize the importance of experiential learning and have made changes in their training methods, and this is good. [Tell me and I will forget; show me and I may remember; but involve me, then I will understand.] However, this is only part of the solution. We need to change our thinking about the training itself if we are to reduce the harm done to many staff by our work.

This will be a two-part article. In the first part I will describe the 4 E's Principle around which I design training. To that I will add trainee comments related to each of the 4 E's as examples of how participants react to this model. In the second part, I will describe some of the training activities in detail and how they relate to the design model.

The 4 E's Principle

First, most of existing training is good. However, a major piece is missing; that of the human element. Staff are not robots without emotions or egos, so a major underlying theme of training should address the psychological needs of staff. Because, by not doing this, we have created a serious problem with high rates of PTSD, depression, anxiety, chronic stress, suicides and burnout. But, how do you accomplish this? By providing emotional intelligence training for orientation and especially in-service, and the most effective training designs incorporate the 4 E's of Transformational Trainings: Engage, Energize, Empower and Enjoy. All four elements are necessary if the training is to be effective.

Engage them: the trainer must get the attention of the participants. This is done through creating a container of safety and gaining the respect of the participants. This is accomplished through positive conditions of affirmation, respect, and caring, rather than through negative reinforcement. The trainer must also show they know the subject matter well, are enthusiastic about it and motivated to help the participants learn it. The subject matter must be both important and relevant in the eyes of the participants.

Energize and Excite them: the training gives participants the sense of hope that personal and institutional change is possible. Part of this sense of energy comes from increased self-awareness, which increases their connection to and understanding of their own emotions, and a

feeling of being connected to other staff, especially staff of different rank and from different departments. This sense of hope, which comes from this feeling of connection and learning the skills taught in the training, counters the hopelessness and disconnection staff feel when experiencing burnout, depression, PTSD, anxiety, lack of trust and suicidal ideation. This results in participants being open to the rest of the training and is clearly important for when they return to their post.

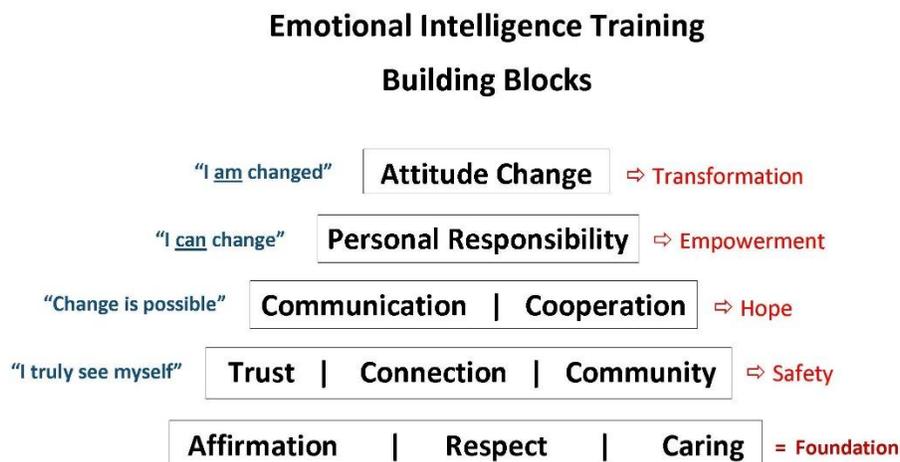
Let me say a bit more about disconnection from one’s self, because self-awareness is the foundation for emotional intelligence. Correctional staff training, just like military training, disconnects trainees from their emotions so that the job can get done, and this is reinforced by the work culture, especially the code of silence. The price staff pay in physical and emotional issues is a price they neither signed-up for, nor should have been made to pay, in order to work in a field that could make such a positive contribution to our community.

Empower: teaching emotional intelligence tools and the experience of positive attitude change are foundational for making desired work culture changes. With these new attitude and skills, there develops a sense of personal responsibility to be part of the culture change itself, which reinforces the effort with other staff, and counters the feeling of helplessness that things have been and will always be as they are. Staff now see a way forward with culture transformation, especially when administration supports change.

Enjoy: when participants feel safe, relaxed and are enjoying themselves, they are more open and accepting of new ideas and information that challenge old thought patterns. This occurs organically because in this environment of safety, the amygdala [our self-defense organ in the brain] quiets and the hippocampus [learning and positive emotions] opens up to accept new information. When we are stressed, the amygdala stops information getting to the hippocampus, and thus learning is diminished or stopped altogether. This is why new training strategies include games like Jeopardy in their sessions.

The Training Model

The Immersive Experiential training model uses the principle of 4 E’s with its emotional intelligence training. The building blocks for this training are:



The foundation of affirmation, respect and caring creates trust and safety within which participants become more open and connection with self and others develops. Participants are able to see themselves and their behavior truthfully. From here, skills of communication and cooperation are taught developing a sense of hope that change is possible. Participants now

have the attitude and skills to change themselves which gives them a sense of personal responsibility to make change. The end result of experiencing the Immersive Experiential training is that they, in fact, are changed in the process and they see themselves and others in a new light. When participants see themselves more clearly, they see everything else, including other people, more clearly.

The Impact of the Training in Staff's Words

The effectiveness of the 4 E's can be seen by the typical evaluation comments below, which were made by staff from all levels and departments:

Engage:

"When I left class the first day, my stress was removed, and I was very relaxed and calm."

"I've shared more in the past 2 days with co-workers than I have in the past 16 years."

"Everyone was comfortable being themselves."

Energize:

"I enjoyed the unity of the class and the energy to want to do better and work as a team."

"This training has inspired my thinking at home and work in a very positive way from day one."

"My attitude and coping skills have very much improved."

"I felt like a dead battery for the last 10 of my 18 years, but this training changed all that. It charged up my morale and my attitude."

Empower:

"I now have a whole new set of tools and it made me think how I can change the prison."

"It will make my journey as an officer safer. Outstanding class."

"A whole new outlook on things on the job as well as at home, my life has already changed."

"Make me a better supervisor. Put my staff first instead of last."

"The training academy told us what our job was, and you taught us how to do it."

Enjoy:

"This training was life altering. Best I have ever had in my 25 years with the state."

"This class was one of the most enjoyable, most beneficial classes I have ever attended."

"The most informative and enjoyable, attention keeping class I have attended."

"I was not looking forward to this, but I so loved this training. I am so glad I was forced to attend."

"I will never forget this training."

The following comments were in response to the evaluation question: What impact has this training had on you? First those that relate to the building blocks:

Trust/Connection/Community:

"It made me more introspective. I am more honest with myself about my faults."

"I learned to trust when I didn't think I could."

"Allowed me to look at my personal and professional self from a different perspective."

"I really got deep into my life. I am a new employee."

Communication/Cooperation:

"It made us come together as one, even though we were practically strangers."

"It has taught me different ways to handle anger and relieve stress."

"To see things in a whole new perspective; in the community, my family and inside the prison."

"This type of training needs to be included in basic training and all annual refresher training."

"Before this training, our departments were hostile and barely communicating. Now, we actually enjoy helping each other out."

Personal Responsibility:

"Training was awesome because it challenged us to be open to a new way of thinking and doing."

"Learned to open my eyes to any issue as a whole instead of being closed to my view only."

"I will rededicate my efforts to be an effective manager."

"It gave me a better grasp on encouraging my co-workers, respecting and lifting them up."

"I feel empowered to do my job and share what I've learned with others."

Attitude Change:

"I feel transformed and inspired!"

"IMPORTANT!!! This is a class that everyone is going to have to have to retain employees."

"Huge impact in life. On my marriage, family, work. Life in general."

"The self-help that I needed and did not know it."

"More open minded about things that I thought weren't important. They are now."

"Great impact!!! My wife told me so already."

Administration Comments

Those were comments from staff at all levels and all departments. Here are a few comments from administration:

"It has had a positive impact, staff seem to be melding better since the training. Ones that claimed that it was not for them are exhibiting several traits that can be associated with the training. For me, it has reduced some of the stress associated with working in a Correctional Setting." Unit Manager Pasquotank

"In regards to the training staff have stated over and over it was some of the best training to which the state has offered. It is further noted, that I think the training has helped to rebuild this facility after the tragic event of 2017" [4 staff murdered by inmates]. Warden NC Department of Prisons

Prior to TACT, the receiving room day shift had 5 or 6 uses of force per month. After TACT, there were 5 uses of force in last 2 years. There was also improvement in communication and staff recognizing the value of other departments and there was improved communication between disciplines and between ranks. Departments working better together. Cultural change – increase social focus. Meeting with PPS Deputy Commissioner

"Our staff are also advocates for how much your class has helped them as a team and how much they love passing the training on to the trainees. Once again, I would like to thank you for this immensely fun and dynamically productive program."

Captain, NJ DOC Training Academy

“There is actually a paradigm shift from the rigidity and inflexibility ingrained in Corrections, to the understanding and acceptance of the value of community and teamwork.”

NJ DOC Training Academy Director

“Since your trips to Ohio during which you presented the program, and then returned to train the trainers program. It is generally thought to be the best training program that staff has participated in. The labor unions are strong supporters of TACT. Employee grievances have dropped to an all-time low. Thank you for helping us change the culture at MCI. It is the best investment of resources that we have ever made.” Ohio DORC Warden

"I personally have seen a major difference in the way they perceive themselves, the way they interact with one another and the way they interact with support staff, whether they be social service or maintenance. Also, the rate of sick abuse or not coming to work has dropped and the overall attitude of the workplace has improved." Captain PPS

The impact on supervisors can be seen in the following comment:

“My supervisor came up through the ranks. He acted like he was above his subordinates, always pushing us down, that we had nothing to say to him. It was his way or the highway. Something happened, though, and he changed. He mellowed out, listened more, became a better supervisor. Things were working much better in our unit. He stopped micro-managing. We are all doing better work now since his change. And he seems to be much happier himself. I didn’t know what had happened, what had made the change. I knew he had taken this course, but now that I’ve taken it myself, I see why he has changed.” Recreation Specialist, Philadelphia Prison System

Most efforts at change have focused on tweaking existing training programs, but as the introductory Buckminster Fuller quote states, trying to make adjustments to the existing system will not transform it. A whole new model needs to be developed. There were two previous articles I wrote for *The Correctional Trainer*; “Emotional Intelligence Training” Summer 2021 and “Are We Training Our Staff to Fail? Revisioning Staff Training” March 2020. Those articles discussed the need for emotional intelligence training. Following this introduction to the 4E’s, the article that follows will present more specifics on what I have found to be successful in transforming attitudes and work cultures from my 30 years providing emotional intelligence trainings utilizing the Immersive Experiential training model. It is important to be aware that transformation does not occur through programs alone, it occurs through relationships. That is why emotional intelligence training is so necessary, because it changes attitudes and therefore, relationships.