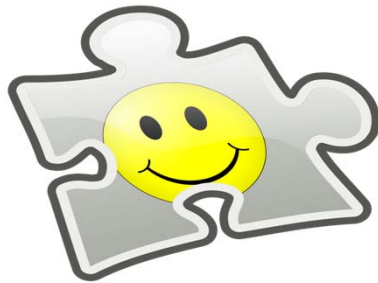


# Mental Health Counseling for Individuals with ASD/ID



## Who can Access Benefit?

- All ages
- At a cognitive level such that the person can engage with sufficient adaptations
- Person is verbal, or has a level of proficiency using an augmentive system
- Person is experiencing challenges such that those challenges interfere with daily functioning. Wide range of influencing variables and responses....

## A Few Words on Trauma

- Trauma is when a person's internal and external resources are insufficient to deal with a perceived threat to their sense of safety
- Trauma impacts the brain and body
- Complex trauma vs. single event; little "t", big "T"
- Important to treat as unintegrated or unprocessed material can influence present day thoughts, feelings and behaviors

COMMON GOALS

- Regulate energy, emotions, behavior
- Build social skills/attachments
- Identify and express emotions
- Process life events
- Build executive functioning
- Increase sense of competency

**VARIED  
INTERVENTIONS**

## Regulation



- Identify times of stress
- Practice noticing cues
- Practice “chill choices”
- Use of energy thermometer
- Use of body mapping
- Use of media to observe others

## Social skills and Attachment



- Learn and practice pro-social skills
- Use of media to observe role models
- Explore successes and challenges from the week prior
- Role plays that can provide for understanding context and social expectations

## Emotions



- What are they?
- When do they happen?
- Why do they happen?
- How do we know what we are feeling, or what others are feeling?
- How do I let someone else know what I am feeling?
- Who is it appropriate to do this with/when?



## Processing

- Use of tool to assist in thinking about how things are going in different life domains
- Starting basic with closed ended questions, with choices if needed
- Identifying structure of telling someone about an event (story cord)

## Executive Functioning



- Small, discrete steps for organization, problem solving, planning
- Practice in session
- Finding and creating supports that can help compensate for more challenging areas

## Competency

- Helping person recognize their unique strengths and talents
- Praising and celebrating
- Assisting with finding ways these gifts can be useful to others
- Helping person to set short term and long term goals



# HELPFUL PRACTICES

- Coordinate across settings whenever possible
- Use of visuals
- Consistent, structured agenda
- Engaging curiosity (use of props)
- Rituals that promote attachment
- Individualized treatment based on unique strengths and challenges
- Concretization of success and growth
- Goal clarity, and one or two items at a time

Questions?