

Foundations for Divergent Minds

Changing the Way We Support

Course Syllabus

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Lesson

1

Disability History

Q1: Locate one standard practice (evaluation, treatment, etc.) that exists in your professional domain that uses a deficit model.

Q2: Choose one national or local Autism Organization and survey their website. Locate their mission statement. Share a short analysis of whether the group is promoting a social or medical model and what language indicates that.

Lesson

2

The Neurodiversity Paradigm

Q1: Read Sinclair's History of ANI, with attention to Doyle and Rita. Write a short response describing their allyship and what could be some potential takeaways from their work.

Q2: What would a "paradigm shift" look like in your field. Be creative. This is a time to articulate an imaginary future where this shift is fully realized.

Lesson

3

Autistic Traits

Q1: Choose one "symptom" of autism and explain how you learned about it and from what lens. Then write a short paragraph on how that "symptom" references neurotypicality as the default.

Q2: Think back to a case you have worked on where behavior was NOT interpreted as communication. What was the result?

Lesson

4

The Five Foundations

Q1: Choose a foundation that is not traditionally treated in your field and explore the ways in which it impacts your care of neurodivergent children.

Q2: Reflect on the ways the deficit model determines what a neurodivergent child needs and create goals. Write a paragraph on how these goals can be changed to respect difference.

Lesson

5

Foundation 1: Sensory Integration

Q1: Pick one other Foundation and describe how Sensory Regulation can affect that Foundation, using specific examples.

Q2: Think of a client (current or former) and design/describe several accommodations or supports that they use(d) to regulate their sensory system. Then describe how their other Foundations were supported by these accommodations.

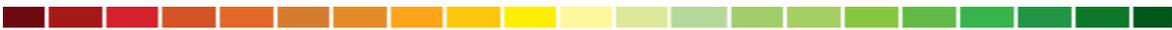
Lesson

6

Foundation 2: Executive Function

Q1: Identify an area of Executive Function you previously have NOT been thoroughly exposed. Explore how this area is characteristic of a trait often associated with a neurodivergent disability and how to support it.

Q2: Think of the ways that the 8 areas of executive function overlap with one another and discuss how supporting one area may benefit another area.



Lesson

7

Foundation 3: Communication

- Q1: Think of a time a neurodivergent child has stumped, appeared aloof or has had mild behaviors. Determine what their emotion was based off their body language and how you could respond if presented with similar emotions in the future.
- Q2: Recall a student who speaks regularly but sometimes struggles. Determine what supports, tools, accommodations or AAC could be used to augment their daily speaking.

Lesson

8

Foundation 4: Social Interaction

- Q1: Select an interest of one of your students or clients. Tell how you would help that client either find a group who shares the same interest or create a social outlet in that area of interest.
- Q2: Explore the ways consent is currently ignored in standard autism practices. Discuss the way that ignoring consent can affect an autistic person as they get older.

Lesson

9

Foundation 5: Emotional Regulation

- Q1: Identify one major cause for disruption in emotional regulation in a student or client of yours. Which foundation does this trigger belong to?
- Q2: Apply your knowledge of the five foundations and determine ways to provide support in emotional regulation throughout the day.

Lesson

10

Systems of Support and Accommodation

- Q1: Read all evaluations even if they are not in your field. Discuss and collaborate on what systems of support and accommodations you would recommend.

Lesson

11

Goals towards Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination

- Q1: Using the evaluations you were provided in the last lesson, determine one goal in each of the five foundations to increase the student's self-advocacy and/or self-determination skills.

Lesson

12

Revisiting Ages and Stages

- Q1: Focus on the evaluation in your field from our test evaluations. Discuss how to reframe any observation given the information you have. Discuss how to rewrite what is seen as deficits as a relationship between a trait and the environment and what your recommendations would be for the student's staff.