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Building Healthy Relationships since 1975

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Autism: Supports Through the Spectrum

Autism is a word that results in many different perceptions when people hear or read this one word. Autism is a uniquely individual set of differences between people whose neurology is “typical” and those whose neurology is “atypical.” Rather than think of Autism Spectrum Disorders, this workshop looks at Autism Spectrum Differences, and how to best support people, not just their behaviors or diagnosis.

This workshop is specifically designed for mixed groups of parents, families and friends, direct support staff, and others who support people who self-describe as autistic. By integrating information from neurology, psychology, occupational therapy, and writings from the autistic advocacy community, The Mandt System® has developed a workshop that Christina Maulsby, a parent of 2 children with autism and a professional in the field of autism said it was *“a valuable use of my time. I took away many useful tips, approaches to try, a “try a different way” mindset and most importantly I gained an even better understanding of what it is like to be in my sons' world. I feel by attending this training I am better equipped to work with my own two children with ASD and also those I serve.”*

The Objectives of the class are:

- ✓ Demonstrate an awareness of the neurosensory differences associated with ASD
- ✓ Delineate the process of neurosensory development in behavioral input and output
- ✓ Explore the preferred self-description of people with autism as “autistic”
- ✓ Describe how to support autistic people using sensory inputs to address behavior
- ✓ Identify 7 senses and their importance in ASD services and supports



Many people affected by autism perceive that things are “happening too fast.” They then use their behaviour in order to slow down the ways different sounds, sights, tactile contact such as clothing fabric and touch, smells and tastes enter their world.

This workshop uses information from people who self-describe as autistic to understand the ways in which sensory input is processed and becomes behavioural output. Learning about their world view is critical to being able to best support them as people, and not just focus on their behaviours.

Recently staff, supervisors and family members participated in Autism: Supports Through the Spectrum. I was impressed how the session and handout material were practical, research-based and engaged everyone in the room at the same time. The curriculum is immediately useful for people who are just learning about those affected with autism and is complex enough to provide further growth for people who have been supporting individuals for years. It has helped us gain a different perspective on how people affected with autism experience their world. Family members who attended were also connected with the presenter in a way that I've not often seen before. In the weeks since the training staff and supervisors who attended are excited to bring back information to the rest of their teams.

Jim Fagan, Director of Resident Services, Regional Residential Services Society; Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

About the Presenter:

Bob Bowen has been certified in The Mandt System® since 1980, and has extensive experience supporting people with autism as a direct support professional, administrator, and behavioral consultant. In addition to his work with The Mandt System, Inc., Bob is an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Rochester, Rochester, NY. He has presented workshops in Victoria, New South Wales, the ACT, and Queensland, as well as throughout North America, Europe, and Hong Kong.