

Making a Better Life Happen: Integrating the Good Lives Model into Sexual Offender Treatment

Gwenda M. Willis, Ph.D., PGDipClinPsych.

Pamela M. Yates, Ph.D., R.D.Psych.

David S. Prescott, L.I.C.S.W.

The Good Lives Model (GLM) has become a popular approach to sex offender treatment; however, substantial variation has been observed in terms of how the model has been applied in practice. This workshop focuses on integrating the GLM into program structure and content, and is suitable for treatment providers and program administrators working in prison, civil commitment, and community-based settings who wish to integrate the GLM into their programs. Preliminary research suggests that, integrated appropriately, the GLM offers potential for improving outcomes of programs that follow a cognitive-behavioral (CBT) approach and that operate according to the Risk, Need, and Responsivity (RNR) principles. For example, research suggests that the GLM's focus on engaging clients in the treatment process enhances treatment engagement, an important element of program effectiveness. However, misguided or otherwise poor application of the GLM in practice could increase the very risk programs are designed to prevent and manage. This workshop provides practitioners and others with information as to how to translate and integrate the GLM into practice in the overall structure and content of sex offender treatment programs, and illustrates key assessment and treatment components using practical application. The workshop provides an overview of GLM-based assessment and intervention planning and describes the module or phase-based structure of a RNR/CBT treatment program using the model. Lastly, the workshop addresses how typical program modules targeting dynamic risk factors such as sexual and general self-regulation can be developed and integrated using a GLM approach. This workshop is not intended to provide an in-depth description of the model, but aims to provide participants with concrete strategies for integrating the GLM into existing treatment programs. As such, it is assumed that participants will have at least an intermediate level of understanding of GLM theory.