



CENTRE FOR
MENTAL HEALTH
NURSING

Coproducing excellent practice.

Dr. Haley Peckham



“Dr Peckham draws on her unique mix of expertise across neuroplasticity, mental health nursing practice and her personal experience of recovery, and weaves together in accessible ways the cutting edge science with invitations to curiosity and empathy for its impact on people with trauma histories”

Bridget Hamilton Director Centre for Mental Health Nursing

Working with people with a trauma history: Understanding neuroplasticity can help in everyday practice



Many people who access mental health services have complex trauma arising from early experiences. These experiences may include parentification, enmeshment or invalidation as well as emotional, physical and sexual abuses and neglect. The brains and nervous systems of infants and children are powerfully influenced by early relationships and this course seeks to illustrate ways that we neurobiologically adapt to our early experiences. The same property of the brain that allows it to be so profoundly affected by early experiences can be harnessed in the service of recovery from complex relational trauma. Mental health workers can utilise this in their everyday interactions with consumers.

Neuroplasticity shows us that our subjective experience shapes our brains in ways that help us adapt to our early environment. This course weaves Bowlby's Attachment Theory and patterns of attachment, together with Schore's Affect Regulation Theory showing how biological mechanisms of neuroplasticity are foundational to these complementary theories. Many consumers have a background of complex trauma and disrupted attachment and struggle to regulate their emotions as a result, often turning to addictions or other compulsive self-harming behaviours. This course helps practitioners understand the origins of these difficulties, and how to work compassionately with them, offering both psychoeducation and new experiences of emotional regulation.

Attachment Theory & Affect Regulation Theory How experience shapes brains, emotions and relationships.



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[The Neuroplastic Narrative: a non-pathologizing biological foundation for trauma-informed and ACE aware approaches](#)