



# Professional & Organizational Development Services

Training, Coaching & Consulting to Advance Social Justice Goals



# Welcome to MindOpen Learning Strategies

It's one thing to have a vision of social change, it's another thing to align people, processes and systems to best reach that vision. We partner with you to go beyond the status quo and get positive new ways of working into your muscles and the culture of your organization so that you can best meet your mission.



## MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER

Having been on the front lines of the always- evolving human services profession, my passion is for helping organizations become healthier places to work for the helpers, so that we can sustain the urgent quest for equity, justice, and safety for all. MindOpen Learning Strategies is dedicated to collaborating with today's agents of change to overcome challenges, envision new possibilities, and build thriving communities.

MindOpen Learning Strategies provides truly engaging, transformative learning experiences for individuals, groups, and organizations working toward social justice goals.

We specialize in times when team members need to learn new ways to work-- whether it's adopting evidence-based practices, applying an equity lens, capturing meaningful metrics, or any of the countless ways in which success depends on constant readiness for change while keeping a clear mission-driven vision.

With the fast pace and competing demands of today's workplaces, it is all too easy to lose the full value of training, coaching, and consulting when employees' minds are somewhere else. MindOpen Learning Strategies is different because we use research-based, field-tested techniques to draw out each participant's unique expertise and ensure their Minds are Open to taking in new information and skills.

# Our Services

CUSTOMIZED STRATEGIES FOR LEARNING



## CONSULTING

Align goals, roles and systems to meet your mission



## TRAINING

Shared learning experiences that engage employees and build community



## COACHING

An objective, supportive, personalized relationship to bring a desired change into reality

We use the word “training” here because it’s commonly used to describe workplace learning experiences—but “group learning sessions” more accurately describes MindOpen’s interactive and collaborative approach. Investing in time away from the daily work schedule is essential to keep the work fresh and make space for the innovation that is so needed in the fight for social justice, yet most professional development is never fully leveraged back in the workplace. Using field-tested techniques for full inclusion and engagement, MindOpen’s learning sessions are designed to “stick.”

In addition to our professional development courses and signature initiatives, we can always speak on and customize offerings on topics including:

### PROGRAM PRACTICE

- Putting Trauma-informed Care into Practice
- Managing Vicarious Trauma
- Person-Centered Practice within Specific Service Systems (Criminal Legal, Mental Health, Homelessness & Housing, Education, Child Welfare, Workforce Development, etc.)
- Group Facilitation
- Destigmatizing Mental Health
- Motivational Interviewing
- Child and Youth Development
- Family and Caregiver Engagement

### LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

- Foundations of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion with an Anti-Racist Lens
- Understanding Organizational Culture & Change
- Overcoming Implicit Bias in Hiring
- Effective Supervision & Staff Development
- Team Building
- Conflict Management
- Communication Skills & Styles
- Train-the-Trainer

(if you don’t see what you’re looking for, just ask):

# Table of Contents

- **Meet The Team**
- **Results & Impact**
- **Workshop Descriptions**
  - P.E.A.C.E. In the House: Verbal De-escalation and Power Dynamics
  - Build to Bloom Racial Justice Series
  - Sustaining Ourselves: Navigating Vicarious Trauma in the Helping Professions
  - Beyond Self-Care: Organizational Accountability in Vicarious Trauma
  - Collaborating in the Change Journey: Introduction to Motivational interviewing
  - Power Up: Co-creating a Healty Organizational Culture
  - Reflective Resilience: Anti-oppressive Supervision in Action
- **Signature Initiatives**
  - Fair Chance Forward in partnership with THE REENTRY INSTITUTE OF AMERICA
  - Empowered Career Development Coaching Cadre
  - Curriculum Developtment MasterMind

# Meet The Team



## **ELIZABETH SPECK, PH.D**

FOUNDER & PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT

Dr. Elizabeth Speck knows firsthand that well-timed transformative learning leads to better client services and less burnout among staff. With 25 years of direct service, management, and capacity- building experience in New York's complex human service systems, Elizabeth has adapted to many program and policy changes, broken down systems silos, and built a network of leaders committed to moving beyond the status quo.

MindOpen Learning Strategies projects draw on a team of dynamic subject matter experts known for their commitment to and innovation in advancing social justice.



## **TARIK GREENE**

Affiliate Consultant,  
Fair Chance Forward



## **MELISSA D. ELLIOTT**

Affiliate Consultant, Trauma-informed Practice &  
Mental Health



## **PEGGY SHORR**

Affiliate Consultant, Curriculum Development



## **DALVEER HARGOBIND KAUR**

Affiliate Consultant,  
DEI Strategist &  
Equity Advocate



## **KAREN SIMMONS**

Affiliate Consultant  
Family & Youth Support, Leadership  
Development, Community & Faith- based  
Engagement

# Results & Impact

**40+** Organizational clients since 2017  
**1,000+** Individual Training Participants

“We worked with MindOpen to support our staff with vicarious trauma and to build trauma resilience. MindOpen staff coached supervisors in their own journeys towards trauma resilience and in their capacity to support staff as they worked with survivors of trauma. Elizabeth, Melissa and the MindOpen coaches were responsive and flexible to our needs and goals. We were impressed with their experience, approach, support, and compassion.”

**-Director of Law and Policy, Her Justice, Inc.**

“The learning experience with MindOpen leads with a thoughtful, empathetic approach that creates the foundation for discussion moving forward. Tarik Greene and Elizabeth Speck are both expert communicators with strong hearts of service sustaining a ripple of change throughout New York State. My experience with MindOpen has been extremely positive, and points made during the trainings have deeply impacted how I approach connecting with our [county’s] neighbors aiming to re-enter the workforce.”

**-Disability Resource Coordinator, Rockland Works American Job Center**

“In all my professional endeavors, I have never met a person more intentional, empathetic, and capable of setting the right expectations than Elizabeth Speck. Her leadership, insight, and "stick-to-it-iveness" allowed the Youth WINS partnership to grow into a strong collaborative. Elizabeth proved to be an invaluable problem-solving consultant who helped our team stay accountable and to develop effective strategies of continuous communication that has kept us on task, positive, and moving ever forward.”

**-Michael De Vito, Jr., Executive Director  
New York Center for Interpersonal Development**

“The trainings received from MindOpen Learning has been truly vital. The techniques, skills development, and methodologies infused into each training session have helped enrich staff’s understanding of the case management process. Specifically, the creation of meaningful Case Management Guidelines will allow us to better assist all stakeholders served through our program. Moreover, the knowledge, confidence and courage gained will certainly help to empower all staff and clients receiving our services.”

**-Program Director, Internship Placement Services**

# Course Descriptions



Field-tested content, grounded in adult learning principles, ensures engaging sessions tailored to your audience.

Enjoy flexibility with virtual, in-person, or hybrid options. Most sessions will last 3 hours in-person or 2 hours online.

# Professional Development Courses

## P.E.A.C.E. in the House: Verbal De-escalation and Power Dynamics

Practice the art of verbal de-escalation in high-stress situations. This dynamic, two-session training equips professionals to effectively navigate conflict, especially when supporting individuals in crisis. Learn to prevent coercion, prioritize alternatives to criminalization, and establish environments that are physically and emotionally safe.

### Participants will:

- Master the P.E.A.C.E. framework for navigating conflict constructively
- Develop advanced skills in trauma-informed de-escalation to minimize harm and cultivate spaces of collaborative understanding
- Gain the ability to navigate power dynamics effectively and build trust in challenging situations



“

*Excellent training that helps staff learn how to put ideas into practice through teamwork exercises. The role-playing exercise and case study helped us think through which skills to apply.*

”



# Professional Development Courses

## Build to Bloom Racial Equity Series

These courses provide a common ground for meaningful discussion and action in the continual journey towards a society where everyone has equal access to safety, freedom, and opportunity. Getting comfortable with the discomfort of talking about racism is foundational to move forward and address barriers to inclusion for people of all identities.

**Three (3) sessions about equity, justice, and belonging within the nonprofit sector and community.**

- 1 Becoming Part of the Solution: Recognizing Internal Bias and Racism
- 2 Dismantling So We Can Rebuild: Understanding Structural and Systemic Racism
- 3 Build to Bloom: Developing and Strengthening Your Organization's Racial Equity Strategy

### Participants will:

- Gain shared language for discussing racial equity and justice
- Gain awareness of personal biases
- Plan action steps to contribute to workplace diversity, equity, and inclusion



“

*I appreciated the balance between information and interaction. It was fantastic to get to hear and learn from my colleagues; lived experience in this arena provides invaluable insight!*

”

“

*It didn't feel forced. program had a good mix of instruction, free conversation, and breakout activities.*

”

# Professional Development Courses

## Sustaining Ourselves: Navigating Vicarious Trauma in the Helping Professions

This training empowers us to openly discuss vicarious trauma, prioritize self-care and community care, and create a more sustainable and supportive work environment that fosters our long-term well-being.

### Participants will:

- Develop a deeper understanding of vicarious trauma and its specific impact on professionals working in helping roles
- Learn to identify the signs and symptoms of vicarious trauma in themselves and others
- Learn practical strategies to build personal resilience
- Cultivate a supportive work environment that prioritizes well-being for all helping professionals through self-care and community care practices



“

*Thank you for providing an avenue for me to give voice to this. I've thought about it for a long time now, but didn't want to be seen as a "complainer" by bringing it up with my supervisors.*

”

# Professional Development Courses

## Beyond Self-Care: Organizational Accountability in Vicarious Trauma

While self-care is crucial, "**Beyond Self-Care: Organizational Accountability in Vicarious Trauma**" goes further. This three (3) hour leadership training delves into the vital role of organizations in fostering a trauma-resilient environment. Building upon the "Sustaining Ourselves" foundation, it equips leaders to create sustainable support systems for helping professionals facing secondary traumatic stress.

### Participants will:

- Identify their role in shaping a trauma-informed and equitable organization
- Develop strategies to cultivate a trauma-resilient culture within their organizations
- Gain practical tools to foster a culture that prioritizes well-being and empowers leaders as agents of positive change

“

*This training was just perfect for what I need right now. It helped me see things from a different angle. This should be required for everyone, including executives.*

”

“

*This was a great training. I learned so much and I felt even more knowledgeable after leaving. The facilitators really explained everything so well and kept everyone involved.*

”

# Professional Development Courses

## Collaborating in the Change Journey: Introduction to Motivational Interviewing

Change is challenging. Discover how to empower others to drive their own transformation. This training provides practical skills in trauma-informed Motivational Interviewing (MI). Learn to foster collaborative relationships that respect individual experiences and goals. Suitable for anyone who works with people.

### Participants will:

- Increase understanding of human behavioral change
- Gain insights into common non-motivational habits of helping professionals
- Practice skills to promote others' self-discovery and goal achievement

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*I appreciated the opportunity to begin the conversation about empathy and reflective listening. I always had an awareness of these ideas, but the workshop put it into greater perspective.*

”

“

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*Amazing balance of information and role plays. Not overbearing. Interactive and conversational. Not forced to role play which for me was important.*

”

# Professional Development Courses

## Power Up: Co-creating a Healthy Organizational Culture

This workshop explores how individuals can shape organizational culture. Participants will practice principles of Appreciative Inquiry to identify strengths and areas for growth in diversity, equity, inclusion, access and belonging in the organization. We also focus on personal and collective well-being through self-care and community care planning.

### Participants will:

- Discover key elements of organizational culture
- Identify their role in shaping a trauma-informed and equitable organization
- Develop strategies to cultivate a trauma-resilient culture within their organizations
- Gain practical tools to foster a culture that prioritizes well-being and empowers leaders as agents of positive change

“

*I truly enjoyed working with the group team I was assigned and how all of us would listen to each other, stimulating to participate in discussion, shared varieties of ideas, opportunity to contribute.*

”



# Professional Development Courses

## Reflective Resilience: Anti-Oppressive Supervision

In partnership with AGAPE  
FAMILY THERAPY & COACHING



Supervisory relationships hold immense potential for growth, but power imbalances can undermine trust and well-being for all staff, particularly those impacted by systemic inequities. This 2-session workshop for experienced and new supervisors delves into the complexities often overlooked in traditional supervisory dynamics.

We'll explore the intersection of oppression, trauma, and social identity within the supervisory structure, examining how these factors, including the supervisor's own social location, can influence interactions and perpetuate inequities.

Leave empowered to foster trust, support, and growth within your team while actively working towards a more equitable and just work environment.

### Participants will:

- Take steps to ensure historically marginalized voices are brought to the center and that lived experiences are valued
- Create a values-based mission statement to guide your supervisory relationships
- Activate your sphere of influence for organizational and systemic change-- without burning out

“

*It was really helpful to reflect on how one's social location affects perception of situations.*

”



# Signature Initiatives



MindOpen's signature initiatives are customized programs tailored to meet the evolving needs of organizations.

Leveraging our unique resources and expertise, we create solutions that align with the goals of each sponsor or funder.

# Signature Initiatives

## Fair Chance Forward

in partnership with  
THE REENTRY INSTITUTE OF AMERICA



One in three adults in the U.S. has a criminal record, disproportionately impacting people of color due to systemic inequities in the justice system. This reality presents a significant talent pool, yet many organizations are unprepared to tap into it. Fair Chance Forward helps organizations unlock this potential by fostering inclusive workplaces and equitable hiring practices.

Our comprehensive initiative combines training, coaching, and technical assistance to equip HR professionals and hiring managers with the tools they need to:

- **Understand the landscape:** Grasp the legal and ethical dimensions of fair chance hiring
- **Build inclusive practices:** Develop strategies for recruiting, hiring, and retaining individuals with criminal records
- **Challenge biases:** Address unconscious biases and promote a fair chance mindset
- **Create supportive workplaces:** Foster inclusive environments where all employees can thrive

By partnering with Fair Chance Forward, organizations can:

- Access a wider talent pool
- Mitigate legal risks
- Enhance employer branding
- Build a more equitable and inclusive workforce

Continuing education credits for HR professionals are available through our training modules, which cover topics such as legal compliance, risk management, and building inclusive workplace cultures.

“Knowing that fair chance hiring is good business is one thing. Understanding how to get hiring managers to see the often unconscious attitudes that get in the way of fair chance hiring, and to discuss those attitudes openly is another. No one does this as well as MindOpen Learning Strategies. I wish their Fair Chance Forward training was around when I was a corporate H.R. director.

**-Lewis Maltby, President / National Workrights Institute |  
Former Vice President of Human Resources /  
Drexelbrook Controls Inc.**



*Anyone we bring into [the organization], we treat them for who they are, not who they were.*

**Employee in Fair Chance Forward Pilot**





# Signature Initiatives

## Empowered Career Development Coaching Cadre



The Empowered Career Development (ECD) program is designed specifically for justice-minded emerging change agents seeking to build fulfilling and impactful careers. **Despite educational programs intended to break barriers for first generation and BIPOC leaders, the social impact field continues to see lack of representation and high burnout.** ECD addresses these systemic issues through a strategic framework that goes well beyond the resume and cover letter. Our curated program pairs students with members of a cadre of mid- and senior-level professionals with directly relevant experience. Together, they follow a flexible roadmap that ensures students embark on their ongoing career development journey with clarity and intentionality.

### Who Is This For?

Groups of undergraduate and graduate students, alumni and early career professionals pursuing social impact careers. Offered in partnership with Career Services Offices, Fellowships, and Philanthropic Funders.

### Our Holistic Framework Empowers a Sustainable Career Development Journey

- **Setting Direction:** Individualized priorities, values clarification, personal branding
- **Widening Social Capital:** Differentiated networks, informational interviews, strategic social media
- **Narrowing Focus:** Ideal employers, automating job alerts, accessing the hidden job market
- **Sharpening Tools:** What matters for resumes and cover letters, virtual portfolio, leveraging AI
- **Securing Support:** Personal board of directors, peer communities, proofreading and mock interviews
- **Knowing Worth:** Labor market research, negotiation confidence



*I received a lot of professional advice throughout my years of undergrad but I think I was just too inexperienced to truly understand it all. Working with [my MindOpen coach] after already being in the 'professional world' helped me with my understanding of how to market myself and what to look for as I began my shift of careers. It was truly helpful to have her input!*

**-Graduate Student, Social Justice Practitioner**



# Signature Initiatives

## Curriculum Development MasterMind

Organizations on the frontlines of social change are doing incredible work to undo the harms of inequality and to promote healing, yet often operate with the least resources. This prevents innovative grassroots organizations from developing the resources for professional development and dissemination of promising practices.

The Curriculum Development MasterMind was formed to respond to this challenge. This is a peer coaching cohort designed to enhance individual projects while sharing expertise and feedback, and building on the experience and expertise of folks in similar roles.

This cohort series provides a framework for applying the art and science of adult learning to curriculum development, and is designed to jump-start projects to codify innovative practices and to prepare organizations for replication and fee-for-service offerings.

**Over a cycle of monthly sessions with between-session coaching and support, participants will:**

- Understand instructional design project cycle, and frequently used methods for scaffolding, building, and finalizing curricula (e.g. ADDIE, rapid prototyping, etc.)
- Gain practical templates and tools for inclusive curricular design that is responsive to instructional goals and diverse learning styles
- Scope out their particular curricular project including components and timeframe, and make meaningful progress on at least one design piece
- Leverage and contribute to a collaborative group of ambitious professional peers, including accountability partners and pilot audience

The program includes guest speakers, a curated resource drive and google group, individual coaching, accountability partners and (optional) culminating stakeholder presentation.

“

*I'm at a time in my career when I'm more aware of my working habits and how they can get in the way of what I want to accomplish-- just being able to acknowledge these tensions and write things down in an organized way was really meaningful. I loved the concrete info, handouts, and project planning tools.*

**-Program Participant**

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[www.MindOpenLearning.com](http://www.MindOpenLearning.com)