

What it Takes to Succeed With the “Therapeutic Approach” (the BBTIPC)

This is a piece intended to support educators who want to better inform their new hires about the commitment required by the Brain-Based Therapeutic Intervention Program for Children (the “Therapeutic Approach”). Many new staff members come into their roles with past experience in behavior programs they’ve worked with, or methods they’ve learned and applied elsewhere. According to experienced therapeutic staff, it’s not uncommon for new hires to express surprise at the demands of the program, such as the extra time spent on program planning meetings, reading explanatory articles, learning new strategies, reviewing summary notes from program development sessions, and creating/revising new interventions. This brief orientation is meant to provide full transparency about what it takes to work within a program that uses the BBTIPC approach.

The Brain-Based Therapeutic Intervention Program requires a significant commitment to learn and an even greater effort to apply. However, it offers many more effective tools for helping emotionally and developmentally impacted children than traditional behavior programs. While the more conventional programs are easier to learn and apply, they often don’t bring about the same level of success as the Therapeutic Approach.

The key to success is simple: if you commit to the work and put in the effort, you are much more likely to achieve high levels of success with emotionally and behaviorally impacted children by using the methods from the “Therapeutic Approach.” What is not simple is maintaining the stamina and commitment required to consistently apply the Therapeutic Approach, even though you know it gives you your best chance at positive outcomes. It’s similar to how we know what kind of food and exercise are good for our health, but we don’t always have the energy or discipline to follow through.

There are many therapeutic elements within the Therapeutic Approach (see [link to approach details](#)), and success depends on integrating several of these elements—rather than just applying one or two, and applying them in a proficient rather than casual manner. It doesn’t work well if only a few of the essential elements are used, or the elements are applied haphazardly, or only some of the time. Developing proficiency takes time and practice, and there is a process for measuring this proficiency (see [link to proficiency details](#)).

Using these elements therapeutically, rather than casually, requires stamina, resilience, teamwork, and mindfulness. To maintain a high level of fidelity to the program over time, you must stay fully committed. To be blunt, if you don't feel you have the stamina or resilience to stick with this approach, it may be better to use more traditional strategies, which are easier to learn and apply and can still yield decent results with some children, though they tend to be less effective overall.

When making this decision. . .

Be honest with yourself about:

- **Your interest in ongoing professional development**
- **Your resilience**—your ability to manage stress, setbacks, and compassion fatigue
- **Your willingness to engage in reading and learning new, research-based methods**

Ask yourself about:

- **Your work stamina**—how well can you sustain your effort over time?
- **Your ability to embrace new methods**—how open are you to trying new ways of doing things?
- **Your reactions to challenging behavior**—how triggered do you feel to discipline children when they are not behaving appropriately (this is the most prevalent reaction)?

Consider:

- **Your persistence**—how do you handle it when things don't go right the first time?
- **Your ability to manage frustration**—are you able to remain composed when things get tough?

- **Your flexibility**—how easily can you rethink or abandon old methods when they don't work?
- **Your emotional responses**—how anxious, stressed, or frustrated do you become in response to challenging behavior?

Reflect on:

- **Your comfort with teamwork**—how well do you collaborate with others (in problem solving and program building), take input, and provide guidance?
- **Your ability to stay present**—how well can you remain focused in the moment, even when things get difficult?

To become proficient and achieve success with the Therapeutic Approach, you'll need:

- Specific knowledge
- A specific, practiced skill set
- A particular mindset
- High levels of self-awareness, self-management, and self-control
- Resilience and patience
- A commitment to continuous professional growth

Changing the lives of emotionally impacted children has always been difficult and not always very promising. It's still very difficult, only now, with this approach, it is more promising, but it requires a great deal from you.