

## A Responsive Approach to Helping (RAH)

*The Responsive Approach to Helping has been developed by Stephen de Groot. It has evolved out of and represents a more refined and practical version of the Relationship Based Strengths Approach (RBSA) to helping.*

### ***Brief Description:***

A Responsive Approach to Helping (RAH) (de Groot, 2015, 2018) is an individualized, relations-oriented, values-driven and strengths-based approach for working with individuals and groups across and within all human services including, addictions, mental health, child welfare, youth justice, education, health, child and youth care, early education and homelessness.

RAH has evolved out of the Relationship Based Strengths Approach (RBSA) (de Groot, 2007, 2018) to helping. RAH represents a set of simple, practical and profoundly impactful strategies for cultivating and constructing meaningful pathways for healing, strengthening resiliencies, optimizing growth and sustaining positive behavior change.

RBSA and RAH have been proven the most effective and efficient approaches to helping individuals and groups rapidly approximate, attain and sustain a more satisfying and preferred way of being and relating to themselves, other people and the world around them.

Thousands of helpers across the human services sector and around the world, have utilized variations of the RAH model towards enhanced outcomes for the clients and communities they serve.

### ***Foundational Beliefs:***

#### *Safe, Significant, Situated*

Human beings are at their best when they experience being **safe** (physical, social, emotional, mental) **significant** (valued, valuable), **situated** (purpose, direction, goals).

#### *CORE<sup>4</sup>*

Humans do their best when they have **meaning** and experience **meaningful** within their relationships, environments, interactions and choices. The level of meaning and meaningful are driven by an individual's CORE<sup>4</sup>, source drivers of meaning and

motivation towards the *Great States* (safe, significant, situated). The CORE 4 are known as Needs, Values, Goals and Strengths.

Safety, Significance, Situation and Meaningful are absolute necessities for optimization and attainment of healthy relationships, growth, well-being, development and preferred changes/choices.

### ***Impediments to Optimal Functioning and Growth:***

When children, youth or adults are hurt and/or wounded intentionally and/or unintentionally in relationships they have, to varying degrees and in unique ways, their safety, sense of significance, situation compromised/damaged.

Due to various and complex situations and, a combination of negative experiences such as fear, hurt, guilt, shame, anxiety, confusion and anger, individuals become disconnected/dislocated from meaning and most meaningful (their CORE 4: needs, values, goals and strengths)

Being disconnected or dislocated from meaning (ful) refers to the experience that, individuals may be unsure and or unaware of their own needs, values, goals or strengths (Core 4) and/or for various reasons they are not having important needs met, values honored, important goals achieved or strengths identified/leveraged.

While there are many reasons and situations that negatively impact people, Fear is paramount. Fear (lack of trust) is the greatest mechanism for dislocating people from meaning (their Core 4) - when safety and significance are compromised, the dire need becomes safety, the greatest value is safety, the most important goal is safety at all costs and, over time (whether it be “healthy/unhealthy” or adaptive/“maladaptive”) the individual becomes exceptionally adept at keeping themselves safe (strengths).

Unfortunately, many people who have been hurt or wounded struggle with identifying, developing, receiving and/or maintaining positive and healthy relationships and: they are missing genuine and preferred meaning (meaningful) in their lives. While many of their choices can seem “unhealthy” or “maladaptive” it is important to note that they are pursuing safety, significance, and situation, in the ways that “they know” and in a manner “that works” for them.

### ***The Primary Objective of A Responsive Approach to Helping (RAH):***

The primary objective of RAH is to help people develop the greatest sense of safety, significance and situation within themselves, their relationships and their

environments so they may move towards preferred healing, growth, well-being, changes and choices.

*“We can’t leave a place unless, we first arrive”*

Moving people, we serve and support, to greater states of safety, significance and situation is only possible when we arrive at an accurate understanding of their CORE <sup>4</sup>. When we understand and respect unique needs, values, goals and strengths, then we are better able to respond to and leverage them towards preferred changes and a more satisfying life with greater meaning.

Therefore, we must approach helping with all efforts towards cultivating, strengthening and sustaining safety, significance, situation and most meaning as it relates to an individual’s understanding of self, relationships, environments and choices.

### ***The Four Pillars of a Responsive Approach to Helping.***

RAH focuses on 4 Key areas as priorities for helping:

- ▭ Relationships
- ▭ Meaning Making
- ▭ Operationalization of Values
- ▭ Strengths

#### **Relationships**

Healing, growth and development can only be realized and achieved in relationships wherein compassion, acceptance, understanding, trust, respect and unconditional positive regard are prioritized as foundational.

#### **Meaning Making**

Human beings feel better and do much better when their environments, relationships, interactions and choices are experienced as Most Meaningful; when needs are being When helpers understand, and respect unique needs, values, goals and strengths, they are better able to respond to and leverage these towards preferred ways of being and a more satisfying life with greater meaning.

## **Operationalization of Important Values**

Because values are just words until our actions give them meaning, it is critical that important values such as compassion, relationships, responsibility, supportiveness, empowerment and self-determination (among others) are purposefully and perpetually operationalized within every aspect of helping.

## **Strengths**

Personal development, success and resilience are achieved and maximized through the cultivation, identification, construction and leveraging of strengths.

## ***Alignment and “Fit” with ALL Formal Approaches to Helping:***

Because RAH takes an individualized and person-centered stance, choice/decisions to use formal interventions for helping must be made and aligned with the unique needs, values, goals and strengths (Core 4) of the individual(s) being helped.

Therefore, formal modalities of intervening (EFT, DBT, CBT, TI, AT, etc.) are identified and used as a supplement and/or adjunct to RAH. The choice and use are clear, and congruent with the identified Core 4 of the individual(s) being helped.

## ***Consistency with Responsive Leadership and a Responsive Culture:***

RAH is the only approach to helping that is totally aligned with Responsive Leadership and a Responsive Culture. The philosophical, theoretical and technical framework offer a seamless parallel process of integration and sustainability for both quality leadership and preferred culture; with little to no effort and at little to no additional cost.

RAH tools and strategies are applicable and operational at all levels of helping, from planning and policy through to direct service delivery, support interventions, supervision and management. The RAH tools can also be leveraged to enhance and strengthen HR practices and performance development towards improved outcomes for both employees and the clients they serve.