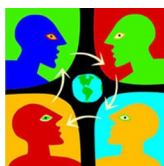


The Communication Mentors' Network . . .



. . .supporting effective communication & fuller lives through Assistive Technology & Augmentative / Alternative Communication. . .



The Communication Mentors' Course™

- ★ Develop increased expertise in Assistive Technology (AT) & Augmentative/Alternative Communication (AAC)!
- ★ Help people 'find their voice', increase choice/control!
- ★ Shift attitudes, help others hear the 'native language' in everyone!
- ★ Build your confidence & skills...
...YOU can make a difference!

Continuing education credits available for Social Work and Developmental Disabilities Nursing (DDNA).

Now also available in hybrid & fully online versions!



www.communicationmentors.org

A project of Networks for Training and Development, Inc. in collaboration with Arcadia University



"An eye opener to
notice what I notice"

The "A-Ha!" moments!

"... this changed my
life..."

"... I've found my voice
as I've helped others be
heard..."

"It was a life
changing experience in
so many ways."

"... really opened more
doors of opportunities
for me..."

"This information is so
helpful and rich."

"Looking forward to
continue to teach what I
learn, share the experiences
of everything..."

"It opened my eyes and
ears!"

Table of Contents

Why a Communication Mentors' Course?	1
Who is this Course for...?	
Who are Communication Mentors?	2
What are the Course Schedule & Topics?	3
What type of commitment do I need to make?	4
How can I get involved?	5
Some of our outcomes to-date!	6



Why a Communication Mentors' Course?

The lack of recognized communication to express even basic wants and needs is a well-known issue plaguing far too many people with severe and multiple disabilities and the human service systems supporting them. Also well-known and well-documented are the ramifications this has on the healthcare, rate of abuse / neglect, services provided, and general "self-determination" of these vulnerable people.



The Communication Mentors' Course™ was developed to "build capacity" in a local area by gradually addressing this issue by helping others see how people are already communicating, assisting them to find or expand their voice through often simple accommodations as well as other Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems. By designing an almost year-long course of study in how to support communication with people who have not been typically considered for traditional speech therapy, our goal is to help establish a network of Communication Mentors within service provider agencies and within the general locale who will, over time, become available to assist others to find and use more effective means of communication as well as other tools for increased independence, choice, and control.



Who is this Course for...?

Those who:

1. have experience supporting at least 1 person directly who has difficulty communicating,
2. a.) have the desire and necessary support to develop a role as a Communication Mentor within their organization or
b.) have the desire and necessary support to be available to other organizations and people as a Communication Mentor or,
3. have other experiences and 'fire in the belly' to assist others to be better heard.



Who are Communication Mentors?



- | | |
|---|--|
| Direct supporters/Staff
Supervisors/Managers
Directors | Supports Coordinators/Social
Workers
Family members |
| College/University Professors
Administrative Staff
Residential/Home Staff | Speech & Language Therapists/
Pathologists
Teachers/School Personnel |
| Vocational/Employment Staff
Early Intervention Staff
Life Sharing Members | Nurses/Healthcare Professionals
Training/Staff Development
Staff |
| Senior Services Staff
Independent Living Staff
CIE Staff | Counselors
Advocates
Users of AT |
| Behavior Therapists/
Psychologists | Graduate Students
Interested Citizens & Friends |

What are the Course schedule and topics?

We are thrilled to now offer this very popular & informative Course in several formats for attendance: Traditional, Online, & Hybrid! However you decide to participate, the following topics will guide you through an incredible journey of learning, experience, and change.

*Continuing education credits available for Social Work and
Developmental Disabilities Nursing (DDNA).*

Class #	Class Title / (Guest Presenter)
<u>Class 1</u>	Starting at the Beginning: of Us, Our Course, Our Work, AT, & AAC!
<u>Class 2</u>	Choice & Control: The Real Deal in Helping People to Find a Voice!
<u>Class 3</u>	Seeing Many Possibilities: Systems / Modes of AAC, Positioning, Accommodations, Devices, Materials, & How to Decide What for Whom!
<u>Class 4</u>	Steps Along the Way: Helping a Person & Their Supporters Get Started, Build Skills, Create Goals, Document Their Journey, & Build Portfolios of Success!
<u>Class 5</u> (2 Days)	The Autism Spectrum (Bill Stillman)
<u>Class 6</u>	Building Support for Communication Development (Martha Leary)
<u>Class 7</u>	Finding Independence: Pushing Others to Strive for Independence in Communication, in Work / Home / Social Areas, & Away From Our Support!
<u>Class 8</u>	Moving On: Being a Mentor, Training Strategies, Professional Standards, & Helping to Build Ongoing Change!



What type of commitment do I need to make?

Participating Communication Mentors must agree to the following:

- Full participation in all 8 classes:
- Those attending the **Traditional Course** must attend all classes in person. All 8 classes meet typically once per month, April - December at Arcadia University, Glenside, PA from 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Eastern Time). See current Course insert for more specifics.
- Those attending the **Online Course** must be available to join in via a web-based interactive link from 1 - 3 pm (Eastern Time) during each class. Additional class material & participation will be available online for participation for these attendees with a requirement that all classwork is completed within a specified timeframe. Contact Networks for technology requirements.
- Those attending the **Hybrid Course** must attend classes 1, 2, & 8 in person & otherwise fulfill the Online Course attendance (listed above for all other classes). Contact Networks for technology requirements.
- Participation in a minimum of 4 "clinical supervisions" to gain valuable first-hand experience (e.g. assist at a AT/AAC Clinic, assist in ongoing communication support appointments, assist another graduate Communication Mentor, assist in presentations / training sessions, etc.),
- Keep up with all readings, practical & online assignments, meetings, & appointments as scheduled. Complete a group project with other participants reflecting your learning & advancing your role as a Communication Mentor.
- Gradually begin to assist others explore & use AT/AAC.
- Regularly discuss with an Advisor the effects of your learning & growing practice as a Communication Mentor.
- Fulfill any other individually assigned activities, as suggested by the Course Leaders.
- Have fun, further fan your passion for assisting others, and find real ways to help everyone be heard!

How can I get involved?

Contact Networks for more information and to receive your Course Application! (See last page for contact info.)



The Communication Mentors' Course has been offered since 2003 in many locations with support from grants, government and local funding, private organizations, professional associations, and other collaborations. Since 2008, we have received support from Arcadia University and look to further our relationship with them and others!

Participation in this Course involves personal and organizational commitment for growth and change, including potential life and role changes for all involved! Registration is via an application process for the applicant as well as any involved supporting organizations. Course fee is \$1,000 per participant (unless a part of an established collaboration where fees may be offset).

Through Course participation, Communication Mentors have access to the following:

- a. All 8 classes of the Communication Mentors' Course.
- b. Two large-scale training workshops by internationally known experts, Martha Leary & William Stillman, with two guest passes for each.
- c. Assistance in attending or hosting 'Clinics' to assist others to explore AT/AAC.
- d. Help provide or assist with general training sessions to help others learn more about AT/AAC & the communications right of everyone.
- e. Help in accessing or gradually establishing local resource libraries of AT/AAC materials.
- f. Development of a local support network to provide ongoing work in that locale.
- g. Communication support to local citizens with little or no known communication systems and their supporters.
- h. Connections to other Communication Mentors via a dedicated website, online discussion board, ongoing education & training sessions, gatherings, & more!

Some of Our Outcomes-To-date...

- 👤 Hundreds of people have been assisted by the Communication Mentors' Network!
- 👤 Assistance to people with a variety of "life issues" - from birth through old age, accident, injury, illness, etc..
- 👤 Role changes for Communication Mentors:
 - Job changes to do more specific communication work
 - Assisted with AT/AAC training
 - Assisted in explorations & ongoing support
 - Returned to school for advanced degree/certification
- 👤 Agency / County changes:
 - Procedures developed re: Communication Support
 - Increased ongoing training re: AT/AAC
- 👤 Increased local partnerships across agencies, groups, & funding streams to work together to assist others collaboratively
- 👤 Changed attitudes & beliefs that **Everyone Communicates** & we can all better **Notice What We Notice** to hear one another!
- 👤 Development of policies, guidelines & practices re: communication rights of everyone





*For more information regarding the
Communication Mentors' Course™,
contact us!*

registrar@networksfortraining.org

Networks for Training and Development, Inc.

The Commons at Valley Forge
1220 Valley Forge Rd., # 17
P.O. Box 206
Valley Forge, PA 19481-0206
610.935.6624

119 Memorial Acres
Sunbury, PA 17801

1.866.683.3651 (toll-free)

www.communicationmentors.org



If you talk to a man in
a **language** he
understands, that goes
to his head. If you talk
to him in his language,
that goes to his **heart**.

• Nelson Mandela



Networks for Training and Development, Inc.
The Commons at Valley Forge
1220 Valley Forge Rd., # 17
Box 206
Valley Forge, PA 19481-0206