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Certified Practitioner Standards

1. EDUCATION

A. A master's degree from an accredited university in a field relevant to the applicant's areas of practice. Note: Individuals certified by the Board are expected to practice and/or train only within their areas of competence.

B. Applicants must document undergraduate and/or graduate training /education in the following areas: human growth and development, theories of personality, abnormal behavior (psychopathology), methods of psychotherapy, and social systems. Applicants who are master's level licensed mental health professionals or applicants who have master's level mental health degrees are assumed to have these competencies and are not required to document the training and education. Examples of these master level mental health degrees include Master's level degrees in Counseling or Clinical Psychology, Social Work, Mental Health Counseling or Pastoral Counseling, Expressive Arts Therapies, Art Therapy, Dance/ Movement Therapy, Drama Therapy, Music Therapy and Psychodrama.

2. TRAINING

A. A minimum of 780 hours of face-to-face training in psychodrama, sociometry, and group psychotherapy from Trainers, Educators, and Practitioners (TEPs) certified by the Board , except for the exemptions listed below (B,C,D, and E).

B. A maximum of 100 hours of the required 780 training hours may be waived if the applicant is either a master's level licensed mental health professional, or certified or registered from the following professional associations: American Art Therapy Association, American Dance Therapy Association, American Music Therapy Association, and North American Drama Therapy Association.

C. A maximum 160 hours of the required 780 training hours may be from individuals certified as practitioners and formally admitted as a Practitioner Applicant for Trainer (PAT) or certified trainer/educator/practitioners (TEPs) by Board of Examiners from other countries that have established formal reciprocity agreements with the Board.

D. A maximum of 100 hours of the required 780 hours may be obtained from individuals other than TEPs and PATs provided that the training occurred at local, regional, and national conferences sponsored by the American Society of Group Psychodrama and Psychodrama,

The American Group Psychotherapy Association, the North American Drama Therapy Association, The Taiwan Association for Psychodrama, or the International Group Psychotherapy and Group Processes Association.

E. A maximum of 120 hours of distance learning training hours from approved distance learning activities may be credited by the primary trainer toward the required 780 training hours. All distance learning activities must be designed, implemented, and authorized by an ABE certified Trainer, Educator and Practitioner (TEP).

3. PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

A. Fifty-two weeks of supervised experience in the practice of psychodrama, sociometry and group psychotherapy is required. The supervised experience practice must be concurrent with the application for certification. The supervised experience must be completed within four years from the date of application for certification.

B. The fifty-two weeks of supervised experience can only begin after a minimum of 80 hours of training has been completed and the primary trainer approves the supervised field experience.

C. The fifty-two weeks of supervised experience is to be comprised of 80 psychodrama sessions, each a minimum of 60 minutes in length. The population served by these sessions may be individuals, couples, families and groups. All the sessions may be group sessions, but if they are not, a majority of these sessions (41 or more) must be group sessions. The format for all these psychodrama sessions must use action based experiential methods that may include but are not limited to psychodrama, sociodrama, action sociometry, behavioral rehearsal, social skill training, bibliodrama, and play-back theater. All the sessions may be psychodrama sessions, but if they are not, a majority (41 or more) must be psychodrama sessions. The supervised experience may take place over a time period of not less than one year and not more than four years.

4. SUPERVISION

A. At least 40 supervision sessions of at least fifty minutes each must be obtained for the 80 psychodrama sessions that make up the field experience.

B. One half of these supervision sessions (20) must be provided by a TEP, while the remaining half (20) may be provided by any clinical supervisor who has been approved by the primary trainer as qualified to supervise sessions in psychodrama, sociometry and group psychotherapy.

5. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Appropriate professional memberships, activities and/or publications which demonstrate the applicant's participation in the fields of psychodrama, sociometry and group psychotherapy.

6. ENDORSEMENTS OF COMPETENCY

A. Following successful completion of the above minimum requirements for professional training, supervision and practice candidates are required to obtain three endorsements of professional competency.

B. Two of the three endorsements must be made from a primary trainer (TEP) and a secondary trainer (TEP) who attest to the applicant's professional competence and readiness to take and successfully complete the examination process. The third endorsement may be from any professional in the applicant's area of practice who attests to the applicant's professional competence.

C. Each endorser must have witnessed a candidate direct a psychodrama session on at least two occasions within the past three years and must be willing to endorse the applicant for certification. Endorsements of competency cannot be obtained from family members, personal friends, professional colleagues who are financial or business partners, and colleagues who were on-going group members in the applicant's training groups.

The Examination Process

Individuals who are formally admitted to the examination process are candidates for certification.

1. COMPREHENSIVE WRITTEN EXAMINATION

Candidates must successfully complete a comprehensive written examination in the knowledge, skills, and abilities to conduct group sessions in the fields of psychodrama, sociometry and group psychotherapy.

The comprehensive written examination assesses candidates on seven areas: History, Philosophy, Methodology, Sociometry, Ethics, Research/Evaluation and Related Fields.

2. ON-SITE EXAMINATION

A Board examiner will be appointed to assess the session using a standardized evaluation form. The on-site examination assesses a candidate's ability to conduct a group psychodrama session which includes a warm-up, action structures, closure and sharing. The on-site examination also assesses the ability of the candidate to process the session with the examiner after the group session is completed, and the group members are no longer present.

Time Deadlines

There is no expiration deadline for training hours, but the supervised professional practice and supervision must be completed within four years of the application for certification.