

Studio III,
Minerva Mill Innovation Centre,
Station Road, Alcester, Warwickshire, B49 5ET
Email: training@studio3.org

Studio 3 Training Systems – Trainers Scheme Managing Signs of Distress Training

1. Introduction

Studio 3 is an independent organisation which provides a range of clinical and coaching services for individuals and organisations. Founded in the 1990s, Studio 3 promotes the ideals, philosophies and benefits of positive psychology and Low Arousal Approaches.

Studio 3 are the originators of the Low Arousal Approach. Low Arousal Approaches are non-aversive strategies to managing distress, which encourage stress reduction and de-escalation, with a focus on the behaviour of supporters. Whilst we specialise in coaching professionals and families to best support individuals with autism, intellectual disabilities and a range of other conditions, we also provide training in a number of areas. These include training and coaching for teachers in educational environments, for residential and foster carers, as well as mental health and well-being services such as diagnostic assessments and one-to-one therapy for individuals.

Behavioural signs of stress and distress, previously termed ‘challenging behaviour’ or ‘behaviours of concern,’ are often the cause of carer stress and can represent a significant challenge to service providers. In turn, this can lead to placement breakdowns and injuries to the supported individual, their carers, and peers.

Research has shown that many instances of behavioural signs of distress can be managed by well-trained and experienced supporters. Research has also shown us that confident, well-trained supporters know when to intervene or withdraw, and this can often quickly defuse an escalating situation before it becomes critical. Additionally the use of person-centred, non-aversive approaches often leads to a reduction in incidents involving physical and verbal aggression over a longer period of time. This is the cornerstone of Studio 3’s Low Arousal ethos.

2. The Trainer Scheme

High Quality Trainers

Many of our competitors use cascade training approaches to train people to be trainers

in less than five working days, some in only three. Once “trained,” many of these trainers are ill-equipped to support or lead colleagues/staff in embedding the principles of training into practice.

At Studio 3 we decided that our philosophy is to train high quality trainers who are capable of delivering both behaviour management training and providing up to date knowledge about the development of specialised stress management plans. When we first piloted a trainer scheme, over half of those who entered did not successfully complete the programme. In order for our programme to be sustainable, it is important for us to educate potential trainers to the highest standard in all aspects of Studio 3's philosophy, theory, and practice. It is our belief that Studio 3 trainers must be able to demonstrate both the ability to deliver training and to relate theoretical knowledge to everyday work settings. As such, our programme is much longer than our competitors (being a minimum of 15 working days). Attendees will need to book 3 x 5-day commitments to complete their training.

Coaching and Mentorship

There are two elements of ongoing coaching and mentorship for trainees:

Mentorship

For trainees attending the course where their organisation is already affiliated with Studio 3 training and has fully qualified Trainers in situ, mentorship will be sought from within the Affiliate Organisation.

After completion of the 5-day induction, they will assist an existing (fully qualified) Studio 3 Associate Trainer in their organisation, who will act as their mentor to support delivery of the core Managing Signs of Distress three-day course. We suggest that the trainee is given the opportunity to assist in the delivery of agreed elements of at least two full courses, under the supervision of their appointed mentor.

On the first course, trainees will be expected to prepare for and deliver either three or four pre-selected elements of the course. Over time, and after assisting, trainees will be expected to achieve competency in delivering all aspects of the course to the point where by the second phase (Week 2) of the Train the Trainer course, they can begin to be formally assessed.

Where the trainee is a new Associate Trainer from a new Affiliate Organisation, mentorship will be sought externally from Studio 3 and/or other local Affiliate Organisations under Peer Review Support Systems. It is recommended that new Affiliate Organisations put forward a minimum of two new trainers from their organisation when learning to deliver the 3-day course. There are many reasons for this:

1. We recommend that novice trainers are supported by each other during delivery for the first two years, especially on the physical days (2 & 3)
2. A second trainer **is required** in order to deliver day 3 for safety reasons. Studio 3 can provide this support at an additional fee for our trainer's time and expenses.
3. Having a second trainer protects an organisation's investment in the training and its philosophies. In the event that one Trained Trainer leaves, there is still some capacity to deliver the course whilst another trainer completes their training. The

inability to deliver courses may affect the delivery of service if staff training is put on hold.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The second component of the scheme requires trainees to attend a minimum of two Studio 3 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) events per annum to maintain their status as a trainer, and to keep up to date with the most recent developments in theory and practice. These are normally one-day workshops which address periodical updates in the teaching of the various elements of the course, as well as other topics that will contribute to a broader knowledge base in supporting distressed individuals.

We believe that it is also important for Studio 3 trainers to independently strive to continually develop and update their knowledge in order to become a valuable in-house resource, not only to deliver training but in supporting staff with other aspects of supporting distressed individuals and Low Arousal Approaches implementation.

Details of these events are posted on the Studio 3 Trainer's 'Back Office' area, accessible online.

What Kind of People Make Good Trainers?

Based on our experience, professional qualifications are not in themselves prerequisites for successful outcomes as trainers. Successful candidates have included: clinical psychologists, qualified and unqualified nursing staff, service managers, staff from residential children's homes, teachers, teaching assistants, occupational therapists and care assistants. Studio 3 also recognises the importance of supporting individuals with lived experience and wider neuro-diverse backgrounds to become trainers, and the rich value and perspectives these groups can bring to the training room.

The following represents a non-exhaustive person specification which outlines some of the key attributes we believe makes a good candidate for our Train the Trainer programme.

Essential Skills and Qualities

- Commitment to a non-aversive approach to supporting distressed individuals
- The ability to create and present roleplay scenarios as an assessment tool for putting learning into practice within a training/learning setting
- A minimum of five years of practical experience of working/living with/supporting distressed people
- Computer literacy
- Access to an individual email account (preferably one held within their organisation) and access to the internet
- The ability to both respond to and provide constructive criticism
- The ability to present to a room full of people
- A commitment to completing the training (this can in some cases be up to 18 months in duration)
- Empathy and a sense of humour
- Honesty and integrity

Desirable Skills

- Background in training, including other similar training programmes
- New Trainers are required to complete and sign a Trainer's Consent Form committing to the trainer requirements described above
- Experience of 'bad' or out-dated behaviour management practices, and a desire to effect change

In addition to Studio 3's requirements for potential trainers, please note the [Restraint Reduction Network's \(RRN\) essential prerequisites for trainers](#) delivering physical interventions training.

Organisational Requirements

A more senior Associate Trainer (alternatively a training department/clinical team manager) must be responsible for the ongoing development of the trainer within their service. The training department should also regularly review the person's progress through the trainer's Back Office.

3. Course Aims

It's Not Just Training

Studio 3 is not the only organisation that provides training in the area of supporting distressed individuals, but we are leaders in the field of non-aversive approaches and restraint elimination. Our three-day course creates strong emotional reactions amongst course participants, and prospective trainers have to be able to manage this sensitively.

The trainer's role is to assist and facilitate changes in perception, perspective, and attitude as much as 'behaviour management' skills. Trainers often note that training is not just teaching; it's often about learning too. It's not just about reading a manual and regurgitating information. Our trainers must demonstrate that they are highly proficient in, and passionate about, their subject area. They must 'Walk the Walk.' It is also important to Studio 3 that trainers develop their own individual training style. There are many ways to deliver the course, because it is not just about what a person says. Many trainers with previous teaching experience have told us that it is not an easy course to teach. There are theoretical, practical, emotional, and physical elements to the training. However, once mastered, teaching the course is a fulfilling and rewarding experience. Accordingly, we accept people onto the scheme who genuinely believe in our philosophy of care and feel passionately about working within a non-aversive framework and promoting Low Arousal Approaches. Once trainees embark on the programme, our tutors will work with them and support them to meet all the criteria to become competent Studio 3 trainers.

What Types of Training are Trainers Expected to Deliver?

Successful trainers will be mandated to deliver the 3-Day Studio 3 Managing Signs of Distress training course within their own service.

Prior to the delivery of training, trainers will need to ensure a Training Needs Analysis Questionnaire (TNAQ) has been completed (or in some cases reviewed and updated).

The TNAQ is then used to create a training proposal and delivery is therefore made bespoke to the team as the trainer can then adapt their lesson plan to meet the course specific training needs of the organisation, the staff/carers, and the individual(s) they support. For example: trainers may find they are only delivering a 2-Day initial course to new staff because there are no physical skills components required to be taught, and then only delivering Day 3 physical skills to staff working with an individual where this element of training has been identified as a need. This allows us to only teach people the skills they need, and promotes the drive towards the elimination of restraint and seclusion.

Managing Signs of Distress Course Aims

The defined objectives of the course are:

- To increase staff confidence in the management of behavioural signs of stress and distress that a person may present with
- To instil in staff the principles, ethos, and benefits of creating, maintaining and working within a non-aversive, Human Rights-based framework
- To demonstrate to staff the importance of understanding how their own behaviours and attitude can affect others
- To provide staff with the skills to defuse and de-escalate challenging situations with the aim of negating the need for physical intervention
- To provide staff with an understanding of some of the causes of distress leading to changes in behaviour, with the aim of viewing service users in a more positive and empathetic way
- To make staff aware of the importance of working within the framework of the law, and following policies and procedures
- To emphasise the importance of post-incident emotional de-briefing and other supports that promote the well-being of the organisation, staff/carers, and supported individuals after incidents
- To provide staff with a range of gentle physical intervention skills which are safe and acceptable to both staff and service users alike, only where identified as necessary in the TNAQ
- To help staff understand the difference between managing and changing behaviour, and when it is appropriate to address difficult behaviours
- To help staff understand the importance of well-being both for themselves and the people they support
- To provide an understanding of factors that may impact staff tolerances, perceptions and assumptions around behaviours

Core 1 - 2 Day Refresher Course Aims

Refresher days, or follow-up days, are delivered annually once an attendee has completed their initial full course. The aim of these days is to refresh - and sometimes update - core content and skills to ensure that delivery of the course is up to date.

Refresher days do not compress the full course into 1 or 2 days to be redelivered. A TNAQ is used and reviewed to inform a course proposal for the delivery of refresher days. The TNAQ may indicate that a staff team may need 2 days to refresh content due to challenges supporting a complex person, or when changes have arisen which require more training than one day can provide. A trainer/manager may also identify that a team requires more to refresh core components of the course. Occasionally a trainer/manager may identify that there have been significant changes or issues around the support needs of a supported individual(s) that require a full 2–3-day course may need to be delivered again.

4. Course Delivery

The training process occurs over 3 x 5 consecutive day teaching phases.

Phase 1: Introduction to the programme

This is a full 5-day induction workshop which covers all elements of teaching content and delivery. Candidates are provided with a framework to deliver the programme.

At the end of this course, trainees are allocated specific components that they must deliver later in phase 1 and on phase 2 of the programme. Constructive peer and Senior Trainer feedback is provided to each trainer after they have presented, and each has the opportunity to debrief on how they felt their delivery went.

Topics in this phase include:

- Curriculum content (Managing Signs of Distress 3-Day Course) theory
- Applying methods of teaching
- Use of audio-visual materials
- Evaluating health and safety issues
- Understanding Low Arousal Approaches
- Undertaking risk assessment

Phase 2: Training rehearsal

In the second 5-day phase of training, participants practice delivering elements of the course to their peers in real time. The first two days of the Managing Signs of Distress course are practiced in this manner by trainees. There is a strong emphasis in this phase about training staff to competently and knowledgeably debate and discuss issues pertaining to Low Arousal Approaches and de-escalation. In addition to the theoretical content of the course, physical intervention skills and movement exercises are taught to the group, who will then go on to deliver these skills to their fellow participants. Participants will also engage in and design roleplay scenarios to use in their delivery. As in phase 1, feedback is provided throughout as well as opportunities to debrief and reflect after delivering teaching elements. After this, each candidate is allocated teaching goals to be delivered in phase 3.

Phase 3: Training teaching assessments

At this stage, candidates will be assessed in terms of their competency. Candidates are expected to present the key elements of the course and are assessed on their ability to deliver different elements of the course. Constructive peer and Senior Trainer feedback is provided to each trainer after they have presented and each has the opportunity to debrief about how they felt their delivery went.

Participants will receive feedback from Studio 3 trainers after completing each session. Trainees will be advised in writing at the end of phase 3, and will receive one of four grades:

- 1) Pass: they have satisfied the trainer that they can successfully deliver the programme.
- 2) Pass with areas of support: in this situation pairs of candidates will be deemed passed but, with specific areas of minor improvement which they will have to provide evidence they these are remediate.
- 3) Remedial work required: A candidate may have to repeat phase 3.
- 4) Fail. Depending on the reason for failure, there may be an opportunity to discuss options with the candidate and their organisation.

Assessment Process

The assessment process will be based on the candidates' individual abilities to demonstrate their competency to deliver different elements of the course. Delivery will be demonstrated to the group of trainees and Studio 3 Principal Trainers. Typically, this is done in a face-to-face setting, though where necessary theory-based delivery can be delivered virtually (movement skills must be assessed face-to-face).

Coaching and support

Each newly qualified candidate may request post-training coaching at any time for up to one day. In these instances, an assessor will shadow the trainer delivering a course to staff in situ. The cost of this will be available upon request - please note that this is heavily discounted during the first year following qualification.

Attendance at Mandatory CPD Workshops

Qualified trainers must attend 2 mandatory Studio 3 CPD Days per year. These will be posted on the Trainer's Backoffice area, and trainers are responsible for ensuring that they meet annual CPD requirements by signing up to a minimum of 2 courses. There are a number of mandatory online and in-person workshops available throughout the year which will cover topics such as:

- An understanding of the law as it applies to the caring environment
- Introduction to physical skills training
- Use of roleplay scenarios in training
- Advanced movement skills
- The role of psychopharmacology

- Care staff perceptions
- Dual Diagnosis
- The principles of Reactive Planning

Monitoring of Trainers

Each trainer who has successfully completed the assessment process must maintain a personal CPD log in the password protected Trainer's Backoffice. Access to this and a personal log-in will be generated upon qualification. The trainer's senior manager or training supervisor and senior Studio 3 Trainers use this system to monitor and aid the trainer's progress on the system.

5. Cost of the Scheme

Cost will include all three teaching phases including the following:

- a) Mandatory CPD workshops for 12 months following successful assessment. Light refreshments throughout the day are provided. (Please note that the cost of any accommodation or travel required at these events is not included. Evening meals are not normally included.)
- b) All training materials and administrative support.
- c) Access to a Senior Studio 3 Trainer for on-going support.

This will also include an Annual CPD fee payable 12 months after successful completion of the scheme, as well as a three yearly re-accreditation fee to cover reassessment. For an up-to-date estimate of total cost, please contact our office at 01225 334 111 or email training@studio3.org

Please note that for UK-based organisations there is an additional BILD ACT Affiliate Organisation Fee. This is a requirement for UK organisations in order to deliver recognised and accredited physical skills training. Whilst Studio 3 collects this on behalf of BILD ACT and transfers this fee to them, Studio 3 does not charge any administration fees for doing this; all fees invoiced for and collected are provided in total to BILD ACT.

6. Additional Resources

All prospective trainers should familiarise themselves with the following publications, some of which can be accessed online for free. Studio 3 resources can be obtained from our website:

- BILD Code of Practice for Trainers in the use of Physical Interventions (ISBN 1 902519 78 7)
- [Training Standards – Restraint Reduction Network](#)
- [The Reflective Journey: A Practitioner's Guide to the Low Arousal Approach | Studio 3](#)
- [RRN Free Resources on Reducing Restrictive Practices within Services](#)
- Physical Interventions - A Policy Framework (ISBN 1 873791 32 1)
- Physical Interventions and the Law (ISBN 1 904082 74 4)
- [Restrictive Practices Review Tool](#)

Most of these can be obtained from Book Source (Telephone 08702 402 182). Trainers

should also refer to the [Department for Education and Department of Health joint Guidance for Restrictive Physical Interventions](#). See also guidance for the [Use of Reasonable Force in Schools](#).

7. Licensing of Successful Trainers

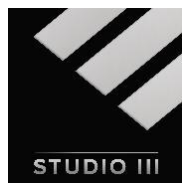
Upon completion of training, trainers are licensed to teach the 3-Day Managing Signs of Distress Course plus annual refresher days within their service, provided they continue to meet the following criteria.

To maintain their status as qualified Studio 3 Trainers, trainers must:

- a) Teach courses only to staff working within the service the trainer is employed by.
- b) Be re-assessed within a 36-month cycle (it is the trainer's responsibility to arrange for this to occur).
- c) Be Peer Reviewed by and provide Peer Reviews to other trainers – internally and/or externally.
- d) Observe a senior Studio 3 trainer deliver the 3-day course at least once every 2 years.
- e) Actively use and support other trainers on the Studio 3 Backoffice.
- f) Use the Back office to maintain accurate contact details, keep an up-to-date and on-going CPD log, register all upcoming courses, record course reports and document participant lists.
- g) Not adapt any of the Studio 3 training materials without prior approval of Studio 3.
- h) Attend a minimum of two Studio 3 CPD events annually.

All services with an associate trainer and organisations becoming a Studio 3 affiliate will need to sign a Training Services Agreement. Full details are available upon request. The license is granted to the service through which the trainer has qualified and is employed by and may not be transferred to any other organisation or future employer.

Studio 3 reserves the right to monitor standards of any of its trainers who are delivering training using its name and may withdraw an in-house trainers accreditation at any time due to poor practice.



www.studio3.org

To book an upcoming course or for more information,
email training@studio3.org

Studio III Training Systems
Registered in England
No. 02777193