



2019 Annual Conference
Changing Minds, Changing Lives:
Rethinking Treatment for People Living with Serious Mental Illness

Saturday, November 2nd, 2019 in Norwood, MA

Plenary Session

Another Way of Looking: Empathy, Community, and Ego Integrity Through the Window of Our Personal Experience (1.5CE)

Presented by Alan Bodnar, Ph.D.

Psychologist Emeritus, Worcester Recovery Center and Hospital

In this presentation, psychologist Alan Bodnar will describe how reflecting on our experiences in our personal lives and our work as mental health professionals can help us build bridges of empathy to our patients and all with whom we come into contact. Applying Harry Stack Sullivan's premise that "we are all much more simply human than otherwise" to the concepts of community and ego integrity, Doctor Bodnar will show how our empathic connections can deepen our knowledge of the ideas that guide our understanding of mental health and illness.

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify at least one area of similarity between their own life experience and that of people hospitalized for the treatment of severe and persistent mental illness.
2. Discuss how Erik Erikson's concept of integrity applies to the life of people living with severe and persistent mental illness.
3. Give at least one example of communities that support them and one example of communities that support people hospitalized for the treatment of mental illness and to discuss the similarities between them.

Alan Bodnar, Ph.D. is a clinical psychologist with more than forty years of experience working in DMH clinics and hospitals with people living with serious mental illness. Throughout his career, he has been deeply involved in the training of doctoral students in psychology, having served as the co-director of the APA accredited internship at Westborough State Hospital and, most recently, as the co-director of psychology training at the Worcester Recovery Center and Hospital. Doctor Bodnar's "In Person" column has appeared in Massachusetts Psychologist and New England Psychologist since 1993. He is the author of *Simply Human: Reflections on the Life We Share* (2018). Doctor Bodnar earned his Bachelor's degree at Villanova University and his doctorate in clinical psychology at Boston University.