WHAT IS NARM™?

The NeuroAffective Relational Model™ (NARM™) is a non-regressive theoretical approach and clinical model that addresses the complexities of attachment, relational, and developmental trauma. NARM™ is informed by somatically-based and psychodynamic techniques that integrate physiology and psychology - helping clients establish a healthy connection between body and mind.

Many traditional models of psychology are regressive. They focus on the past by bringing awareness to the client’s disorganized and dysfunctional characteristics. The NeuroAffective Relational Model™ (NARM™) is non-regressive and focuses on the present parts of self that are organized, functional, and coherent. The ultimate aim of NARM™ therapy is to improve the client’s emotional self-regulation while strengthening interpersonal connections.

In recent years, the notion of self-regulation has become an integral part of psychological thinking. The NeuroAffective Relational Model™ (NARM™) places self-regulation at the core of its clinical practice. The best way to heal developmental trauma is to give clients the ability to respond to the ongoing demands of everyday interactions by using a range of emotions that are both socially acceptable and emotionally sustainable.

NARM™ a complete theoretical approach & clinical model for treating complex trauma.
HEALING DEVELOPMENTAL TRAUMA

In his book, Healing Developmental Trauma: How Early Trauma Affects Self-Regulation, Self-Image, and the Capacity for Relationship, Dr. Laurence Heller lays out the core principles of the NeuroAffective Relational Model™ (NARM™). He focuses on the importance of integrating biological and psychological development.

CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE NARM™ MODEL:

• Integrate relational orientation with nervous system-based therapy
• Use somatic mindfulness to anchor self-regulation in the nervous system.
• Acknowledge psychological effects on the body by accessing the body’s self-regulatory capacities - retrain nervous system responses.
• Inquire into deep identifications and counter-identifications that we understand as our identity.

NARM™ APPROACH

Dr. Heller goes on to outline the way that the NARM™ approach uses physiology and psychology to treat individuals who have experienced developmental trauma. Treatment acknowledges the interaction between self-identification and an individual's capacity for connection and emotional self-regulation.

PRIMARY ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES OF NARM™ MODEL:

• Emotional connection and functional organization
• Exploring identity
• Focusing on the present
• Nervous system regulation
FIVE ORGANIZING DEVELOPMENTAL THEMES

NARM™ lays out five developmental life themes that are necessary for healthy emotional self-regulation. These themes affect our ability to be present to ourselves and to others.

1 CONNECTION:
In order to feel a sense of connection and belonging in the world, we must be in touch with our bodies and emotions. This strengthens connection with others.

2 ATTUNEMENT:
Knowing, understanding, and recognizing our needs is necessary in order to accept the abundance that life offers.

3 TRUST:
We must develop an inherent trust in ourselves and in others. This paves the way for a healthy, interdependent relationships.

4 AUTONOMY:
It is important to establish healthy boundaries for ourselves and for those around us. We must be able to say no when necessary. Learn to be honest without guilt or fear.

5 LOVE & SEXUALITY:
In order to foster healthy relationships our hearts must be open. Only then will we be able to truly integrate a loving relationship with a vital sexuality.

In order to experience emotional self-regulation and connection, these developmental themes must be met. Healing developmental trauma means fostering feelings of safety and trust in one’s environment, as well as establishing healthy internal and external connections. Healthy emotional self-regulation and growth must be nurtured.

When the aforementioned developmental themes are not met, people develop survival styles in an effort to manage disconnection and dysregulation. If this type of behavior goes unchecked, a Developmental Trauma Disorder or PTSD can emerge.
DEVELOPMENTAL TRAUMA DISORDER

Developmental Trauma Disorder occurs with exposure to chronic, multiple traumas in early life. It can happen from neglect, abuse, an accident, the death of a parent, etc. The cumulative effects of these traumatic experiences leave emotional scars on the psyche of the afflicted. When this happens, mental health issues such as Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can occur.

When a person develops C-PTSD or a similar developmental health disorder, it becomes the lens through which they experience their world. Everyday interactions and occurrences can lead to episodic symptoms related to their disorder. Because of this, the afflicted often create unhealthy barriers, such as the development of unhealthy emotional self-regulation disconnected interpersonal relationships.

Over time, the vicious cycle of trauma and dysfunction leads to a developmental trauma disorder that requires the intervention of trained mental health professionals to be corrected. In recent years, new modes of therapies (such as NARM™) have risen that are proving to be superior to the old methods of treating various types of trauma.

Over time, the vicious cycle of trauma experienced during childhood leads to a developmental trauma disorder that requires the intervention of trained mental health professionals to be corrected. This concept is called Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and it stemmed from an in-depth study that demonstrated the correlation between early childhood trauma and health and social problems as an adult.

In recent years, new treatment philosophies (such as trauma-informed care) and new modes of therapy (such as NARM™) have proven to be superior methods of treating addiction and mental health disorders. They address the source of the problem, not the symptom.
TYPES OF TRAUMA

Trauma can occur in many ways. People often suffer through traumatic events unbeknownst to those around them. These events can cause great emotional pain if left untreated. The following list was compiled by SAMHSA. It contains the variety traumatizing events that can negatively impact the behavioral health of individuals, families, and communities.

- Sexual Abuse or Assault
- Physical Abuse or Assault
- Emotional Abuse
- Early Childhood Trauma
- Neglect
- Serious Accident, Illness, or Medical Procedure
- Victim or Witness to Domestic Violence
- Victim or Witness to Community Violence
- Historical Trauma
- Intergenerational Trauma
- School Violence and/or Bullying
- Natural or Manmade Disasters
- Forced Displacement
- War, Terrorism, or Political Violence
- Military Trauma
- Victim/Witness to Extreme Personal Violence or Interpersonal Violence
- Traumatic Grief or Separation
- System-Induced Trauma and Retraumatization
- Social & Cultural Trauma

When people experience various types of trauma (especially at an early age), they can develop unhealthy barriers and coping mechanisms that, if left untreated, can permanently wound healthy emotional self-regulation. Furthermore, it can make it difficult to have positive interactions and relationships with others.

The NeuroAffective Relational Model™ (NARM™) is a revolutionary therapeutic approach that specifically addresses the complexities of attachment, relational, and developmental trauma. By integrating the mental, emotional, and physical responses to trauma in the here-and-now, NARM™ therapy can help clients live fuller and more connected lives.
THEORETICAL APPROACH:
FAMILY FIRST ADOLESCENT SERVICES

Family First Adolescent Services is one of the country’s leading authorities on treating adolescents for mental health disorders, early childhood trauma, PTSD, and substance abuse. Our theoretical approach to healing developmental trauma in young people relies heavily on the NeuroAffective Relational Model™ (NARM™).

Part of our job as a leading treatment center for teens is to stay educated on current behavioral health practices and techniques so that we can provide first rate mental health services. Our clients and their families deserve the best possible treatment.

Our clinical model makes regular use of the NeuroAffective Relational Model™ (NARM™) when treating adolescents and their families. The reviews speak for themselves. It's a privilege to see the positive impact that NARM™ therapy can have on those who struggle with mental health and substance abuse disorders. It teaches the necessary tools for setting healthy emotional boundaries and self-regulation on a daily basis. The value of mental health treatment isn't in probing the past to figure out where it all went wrong. The true value lies in learning how to find fulfillment in the present, and therefore, creating a better future.

Integrating the NeuroAffective Relational Model™ (NARM™) into our theoretical approach to mental health treatment has shown amazing results. For this reason, Family First Adolescent Services (Palm Beach Gardens, FL) is partnering with Brad Kammer of the NARM™ Training Institute to offer NARM™ Training Sessions and other workshops and events that introduce the NARM™ approach to healing complex trauma.

Breakthroughs in the treatment of developmental trauma have helped us treat patients with a greater level of care and success. Download our free whitepaper to begin revolutionizing your approach to trauma and addiction.