



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
School of Social Work
Vancouver Campus



Continuing Education and Certificate Programs

An Introduction to Virginia Satir's Systemic, Family-Centered Therapy

Dates: May 9, 2025

Time: 9:00 am to 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

CEU: 6 hours

Location: Virtual*

Cost: \$180

[Registration Link](#)

**Zoom link will be provided 72 hours before the course start*

Target Audience:

This workshop is ideal for therapists, social workers, and mental health practitioners seeking to enhance their systemic family-centered skills through attending to and incorporating experiential elements relating to the body, mind and life energy as a practitioner. Students are also welcome.

Description:

Virginia Satir's approach is focused on the whole person, affirming that there is no separation of body, mind and spirit or life energy, as they work in unity. Her approach is founded on the belief that change is always possible and that people have their own resources to draw upon. It was her life's work as a therapist to help people get in touch with their resources as a grounded, centered partner in the healing relationship. She believed that as helping professionals connect with their own life energy, clients are more enabled to connect with theirs and can become a more active participant in the change process toward growth and transformation. Satir's attention and inclusion of the body, energy and spirituality of all persons was very much ahead of her peers, during her lifetime as a trainer and practitioner. This aspect of her approach is in line with current bodymind approaches in therapy.

This program will demonstrate the importance of attending to the body and energy in achieving change and transformation through highlighting attention to being fully present and congruent

in words, gestures and interactions within oneself and for others. Tools to focus on the internal and external aspects of the self, and a variety of coping styles, will be highlighted to enhance skills in assessment and intervention with both individuals and families from a body-oriented and family-centered perspective.

These skills will be applicable to practice with a diverse range of client populations and clinical practice settings, as they speak to fundamental, albeit often neglected aspects of the human experience and universally accessible ways of holistic healing.

Learning Objectives:

- To demonstrate foundational skills for working with individuals and families in the application of Satir Therapy in a variety of clinical practice contexts.
- Articulate the necessity of practicing self-care and being fully present in clinical practice.
- Develop skills for attuning to and monitoring experiential aspects of therapy including the client's and practitioner's responses (words, actions and energy).

Learning Activities:

- Introducing skills relating to Satir's systemic approach.
- Demonstrations and processing using dyads and group feedback.
- Exercises to support greater consciousness and incorporation of an energy/body/mind focus.

Facilitators:



Mary Leslie, MSW

Mary has 24 years of experience as a student and practitioner of Satir's model. She recently edited the book: *Virginia Satir's Evolving Legacy: Transformative Therapy with a Body/Mind Connection* (May 2024).

Mary taught the MSW Social Work Practice with Groups course at the UBC School of Social Work (2008-2013) and a UBC Continuing Education Program (10 hours) on Integrating Spirituality in Professional Practice (Dec 2010). Mary has given several webinars for both the CASW and BCASW, and numerous conference presentations. Mary has published "Widening Our Lens, Deepening Our Practice: An

Exploration of Energy Within the Teachings of Virginia Satir", an article published in *The Satir*

International Journal (Dec 2016) and reprinted in *The Satir Model in Action*, edited by Dr John Banmen (2021).

Mary had the privilege on two occasions of watching Virginia Satir working with a family in two teaching settings. In each she was profoundly moved and inspired, resulting in her decision to work with families and couples as a career, in healthcare (over 30 years) and private practice (21 years, at times overlapping). She retired in October 2022 when her RCSW status was retired.



Wendy Lum MA, RCC

Wendy was a trainer for the Satir Institute of the Pacific, is a co-coordinator of the Vancouver Island Satir Network and has over 25 years of ongoing training and practice in Satir's model.

Wendy has given a number of conference presentations on Satir's model, including for the International Family Therapy Conference in Vancouver. She has published writing on Satir practice, including: "Therapists' Experience Using Satir's Personal Iceberg Metaphor" in *The Satir International Journal* and "The Use of Self of the Therapist" in *Satir Transformational Systemic Therapy*, edited by Dr. John Banmen (2008).

Wendy is a counsellor with The University of Victoria Student Wellness Centre: Counselling and has coordinated their practicum program and supervised clinical psychology and counselling students. Wendy has a private practice in Victoria BC using Satir's model.