Working with Traumatised Teens:

Power, Identity & Connection in the Hardest Years

with Dr Matt Slavin (UK/NZ)

Adolescence is never easy but when trauma is part of the story, the challenges become more complex, more intense, and often more misunderstood.

This emotionally grounded, strategy-rich workshop explores how trauma disrupts the core developmental tasks of adolescence: identity formation, emotional regulation, safety, boundaries, and connection. Professionals will gain tools to work directly with teens to help them make sense of their reactions, regulate their nervous systems, and build trust, while also learning how to guide the parents, carers, and systems around them to stay steady and supportive.

Drawing on neurodevelopmental theory, attachment models, and lived case examples, Dr Slavin explores how professionals can work with teenagers who push connection away and how to guide the systems around them to stay regulated, compassionate, and consistent.

In this one-day workshop, you will develop a grounded understanding of what adolescence is for, how trauma can complicate or intensify this stage, and why many young people struggle most at the point where demands increase but regulation and thinking systems are still developing.

Key Learning Areas:

- Understand how trauma affects adolescent development, and how to explain this clearly to teens, carers, and professionals
- Strengthen your confidence in staying connected and thinking clearly during high-stress moments
- Identify survival behaviours (e.g. withdrawal, shutdown, defiance, over-compliance) as adaptive strategies
- Build and apply practical regulation strategies (emotional, sensory, somatic, and relational)
- Build confidence in recognising and responding to risk (including self-harm) in ways that reduce shame and support safety
- Strengthen adults' ability to hold clear boundaries with empathy, and to respond to relational ruptures in a way that maintains connection

You'll leave with an integrated, trauma-informed toolkit for supporting both traumatised teens and the adults around them, with the insight, strategies, and language to promote safety, trust, and emotional growth, even in the most turbulent moments.

Who should attend: This workshop is ideal for youth workers, social workers, psychologists, counsellors, foster care teams, educators, and all professionals supporting traumatised adolescents through direct work and by supporting the systems that hold them.



Meet the Trainer: Matt is a UK-trained Clinical Psychologist (DClinPsych, MSc, BA Hons) who has worked with individuals, families, and systems across health, social care, and education. His work sits at the intersection of mental health, trauma, systemic practice and performance psychology. Matt integrates clinical depth (trauma, attachment, EMDR, neuropsychology) with an understanding of how ancient brains operate in modern environments. Organised around four core areas of human functioning - Mind, Connection, Nature, and Purpose - his approach provides professionals with a clear, practical framework for understanding behaviour, supporting regulation, strengthening relationships, and creating environments where people can thrive. You can learn more about Matt's work at www.drmattslavin.com

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Details:

HAMILTON: 8 March 2027 I Novotel Tainui, 7 Alma Street, Hamilton Central

NEW PLYMOUTH: 9 March 2027 I 390 Devon Street East, Strandon, New Plymouth

PALMERSTON NORTH: 11 March 2027 I Distinction Hotel, 175 Cuba Street, Palmerston North

HASTINGS: 12 March 2027 I Toitoi Events Centre, 101 Hastings Street South, Hastings

9:00am - 4.00pm (7 hours)

$345 (inc GST). Inc full catering, printed notes, attendance certificate, live Compass bookstore

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