



Ski Spectacular Instructor Academy

**Hosted by The Hartford Ski Spectacular
December 4-8, 2022
Clinic Summary Notes**

Clinic Topic: Neurocognitive Diagnoses: Deeper Insights for Snowsports Instructors – MaryEllen Whitney

1. Gain an understanding of foundational information about those with Neurocognitive Disorders needed for working in this population. Gain insight into how each diagnosis may have combinations of physical/cognitive/behavioral characteristics for your approach in lesson planning.
2. Consider the wide range of symptoms, skills, and levels of functioning that not only each diagnosis carries, but each individual within that diagnosis. Every lesson and every student will be different, and at various stages of degeneration within the disorder.
3. Often the chronological age of students may be above 60. Understand best practices to appropriately engage students in this category to teach without compromising dignity.
4. Relate evidence-based practices for teaching students with neurocognitive diagnoses who have behavioral component to the diagnosis, by application of simple behavior management strategies.
5. Relate all the physical considerations for working with an aging population of skiers who may also have a neurocognitive diagnosis and know when to add physical prompts and aids.
6. The severity of each diagnosis can vary greatly from one person to the next, and can include complications such as seizures and degeneration, which must be addressed; therefore, your lesson planning may be altered from week to week or year to year to affect the daily functioning of the individual.
7. Relate evidence-based practices for teaching students with neurocognitive diagnosis in a supportive environment that includes emotional, informational, or companionship; tangible or intangible supports.
8. Make Environments more predictable; Prepare long in advance, for transitions or change particularly for students with stress related PTSD symptoms.
9. Arm yourself with knowledge about the student's topics of interest, former career, and family life to build successful communication into the lesson.

Resources: There are lots of videos /articles online about each diagnosis. Some are below:

Teepa Snow at www.teepasnow.com is a resource with many educational videos. Take the E-learning course from PSIA-E on Aging and the Senior Skier <https://www.psia-e.org/ed/online-courses/> to start your learning journey!

Brain injury and sport: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNR7lghM2z0>

PTSD defined: <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/ptsd-trauma/ptsd-symptoms-self-help-treatment.htm>

Physical supports – www.cads.com; Apex MC2 boots; Adaptive equipment as needed.