



Adagio House

Placement Description – *coming soon*

Intern or Field Placement Responsibilities/Opportunities

- *Coming soon*

Contact Information

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Read about students' experiences at this site below:

Charlotte Terrill - Fall 2023

“Adagio House exists to provide high-quality, trauma-informed, attachment-based services to all types of caregivers and their loved ones, regardless of their ability to pay.” That is the statement written on the website of Adagio House, and I feel it’s very accurate. The site aims to provide an attachment-based, trauma-informed space for caregivers, providing individual counseling, group therapy, occupational therapy, life coaching, respite, and summer programs. I have been able to work at the front desk for the Thursday evening massage therapist and during the day on Fridays, provide respite care, and attend staff meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at 11am. I help plan and run the Teen Expressive Arts therapy, or TEA, which started the



first week in September, and attend group observations every Tuesday at 1pm. I also help run caregiver morning out on one Saturday a month, and get to observe individual therapy sessions.

I had anticipated helping with respite care, observing and helping, if needed, at Teen Expressive Arts (TEA), observing group and individual therapy, helping with caregiver mornings, and helping out at the front desk. I was a little concerned with providing respite because I had never helped with something like that before, and I wanted to make sure everyone was happy and comfortable. I've enjoyed how welcoming and friendly the staff has been and how flexible they are with scheduling. They understand that the interns have other commitments and are very helpful in providing times to ensure you get the necessary hours. There's typically a good amount of free time to work on assignments and other work, and they trust you to be able to manage your time between work for the site and other work. I've really enjoyed observing individual therapy sessions, though the amount you observe greatly depends on the comfortability of each client. I was also able to help with the large fundraiser the site held in September, which was a very interesting experience. As a non-profit, the site requires fundraisers to continue operating, and I learned a lot about what goes into organizing such a large event. The only disadvantage is the limited number of individual therapy observations, but as I mentioned before, this is very variable to change because of each client's comfort levels with being observed.

I've learned much about providing respite during my time at Adagio House, and I had several goals for myself this semester in Field Placement. I wanted to have a semi-consistent schedule going throughout the semester if possible, and I wanted to be able to take notes, either physically or mentally, on how exactly the individual therapy sessions I will be observing go. I also hoped to learn how to be a better listener, as well as learn how to use my skills to complement the skills of others. I did not end up taking notes during my session observations, because most of the clients I observed were children that participated in play therapy, so I focused on observing and interacting with the clients during session instead. I did discuss each session with the therapist after though, which I feel provided me with good insight in absence of the notes. I was also able to have a consistent schedule going to my site after the first few weeks, when class and work schedules were set in place. I went to my site two or three times a week, depending on the need of the site. I feel as though I did improve my listening skills, and I was able to work better with others due to my skill set evolving to adapt with others.

I was unfamiliar with respite before coming to my site, but now I feel confident in providing it for clients. Respite is watching over a disabled client so their caregiver has a little time to themselves. The client can vary greatly, so the respite you provide may look very different depending on the person. I provided respite for a client every Thursday morning this semester, and we did crafts, walked outside, chatted, and played games. Providing respite was a learning curve for me, as my client did not want to participate in activities in the beginning, and



made me a bit uncomfortable. This resulted in a discussion with the client's therapist and my supervisor on how to remedy this, and the rest of the respite I provided for this client went much smoother.

My contribution project was made with my struggle with respite in mind. I updated a previous student's project, a respite activity ideas booklet. I updated the formatting to make it much more accessible and easier to edit, as it is supposed to be a living document, as well as adding my own activity ideas and tips. Most of the staff was unaware of this document previously, so I contacted the staff and spread it amongst them, and I was told it would be included in a new respite volunteer training starting next year. I'm hopeful for this, because I know this booklet and that training would have been very helpful for me when I started.

I feel that many psychology classes I've taken relate to this site. When observing and helping run therapy sessions, having a wide array of psychology knowledge is crucial to provide adequate care. Hearing the staff talk about case issues and questions during group supervision remind me of how knowledgeable you must be for this profession. Several times when working on other psychology homework, I could ask a question to a staff member nearby and they could answer it easily, even if it seemed unrelated to the work they do (such as a question on biopsychology or operant conditioning). All of the classes we take build upon each other, which seems obvious, but sometimes when taking required classes, I dismiss the need for certain knowledge because I don't plan on studying that specific field. But even knowledge from biopsychology can be useful in a cognitive behavioral therapy class, and vice versa, so this site has strengthened my resolve to put as much as I can into each class.

Overall, I've very much enjoyed my time at Adagio House. The people are all very kind, knowledgeable, and flexible, and I feel like I've learned a lot through my time there. I highly recommend it to anyone looking for a meaningful field placement site.

Madeline Cason – Fall 2023

Adagio House is a place of unconditional support and acceptance. It is a non-profit organization that provides therapy to caregivers of loved ones with developmental and intellectual disabilities, and these loved ones, regardless of their ability to pay. April Hepler established Adagio House in June 2018 as an attachment-based, trauma-informed space focused on caregivers, and the organization has continued to grow exponentially. Throughout my time at Adagio House, I gained experience through my involvement with group counseling sessions, individual counseling sessions, and respite care.

During my first month, I was focused on our annual fundraising event, "The Great Valley Baking Challenge," where local bakers competed to make the best cake. My role was to check guests in as they arrived and to accept monetary donations. In preparation for this event, I



attended staff planning meetings, promoted the event through local businesses, and assembled “swag bags.” I learned so much about the business side of being able to provide important services for the Adagio House community. I used what I’ve learned from my general business minor classes, which will help me well into my future as I work towards my goal of financing and operating my own counseling center.

Additionally, for the first eight weeks at Adagio House, I helped lead a group counseling session called Teen Expressive Arts (TEA). This group focused on providing a safe, supportive space for teenagers with anxiety, ADHD, and/or neurodiversity with a chance to engage in expressive art forms. Every Tuesday, we focused on a different topic and explored different mediums of art. This was a chance for these individuals to have a space to be creative, express their hopes and fears, and potentially build peer relationships.

Once TEA ended, I observed individual therapy sessions with Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) and their clients, when permitted by the client. I learned to always approach sessions with a curious perspective and an open mind.

I also participated in group supervision. Group supervision occurs once a week, and it’s a time for LPCs, residents in counseling, graduate interns, and others to receive feedback on how to approach certain situations with clients, learn more about the Code of Ethics, and other important topics. I looked forward to group supervision each week because I got to witness firsthand how different counselors approach therapy. I was able to ask questions, write notes, and intentionally listen.

On the first Saturday of every month, Adagio House holds a respite care morning called “Caregiver Morning Out.” From 9 am to 12 pm, caregivers can drop their loved ones, so they are able to have a morning to do what they need to do. During this time, we cater to the needs of each individual child by providing consistent observation of that child, interacting with them through games, toys, movies, and more. This was a great opportunity for me to learn how to connect with each individual child as each child was unique and required varying levels of care, assistance, and observation.

My first impression of this site was extremely positive. From interviewing with April, to meeting my initial supervisor, Lara, I knew I was going to be extremely comfortable in this setting. What I liked most about working at Adagio House was the real-world experience I gained from participating in group supervision and observing group and individual therapy sessions. I learned from different perspectives of counselors, which calmed my anxieties as it showed me there is no one specific way to approach counseling. Additionally, I learned how these counselors approached individual therapy sessions; however, there were not many clients that felt comfortable with an undergraduate intern observing their session (a limitation), so I only observed individual sessions with two clients.



My direct supervisor also changed while I was there. I had to adapt to working with a new supervisor, which was an unanticipated change. This showed me that the real-world is always changing and people are always switching positions or leaving, so I need to learn to take every change as a new opportunity. Fortunately, I absolutely loved my new supervisor, Hannah. She has a strong and warm presence at Adagio House. I instantly connected with her and felt very comfortable talking to her about my ideas, thoughts, and concerns.

Overall, my placement at this site was very positive. I purposely planned my semester schedule in a way that allowed me to attend group supervision and therapy sessions, so I actively tried to maximize my experience. A suggestion for future interns at Adagio House would be to plan your schedule around these opportunities.

From my social psychology class, I learned that the key to forming deep relationships with other people is vulnerability. Being vulnerable allows others to be vulnerable with you. Through this shared vulnerability, there is an opportunity for that connection to go beyond the surface. At my site, I witnessed this shared vulnerability through my time with TEA. Once one person was vulnerable with the group, then it was like a domino effect. Over the course of that therapy group, once individuals started to open up more, their peers did too. Additionally, from my personality psychology class, I learned about specific personality traits and how those may present in individuals. From my experience with attending Caregiver Morning Out, I realized that we must adapt to the individual personalities in attendance and then identify ways to adapt to the needs and wants of the individual.

My contribution project was inspired from my study abroad trip to Scotland. During this trip, we learned about the benefits of connecting deeply with nature, how nature can inspire us personally, academically, and professionally, as well as how nature can benefit our emotional, physical, and psychological well-being. With this, I proposed an outline for a therapy group for caregivers interested in exploring mindfulness-based practices, increasing their overall well-being, and particularly value nature and what it has to offer. For the additional materials portion of this assignment, I created a flier to promote the 6-week therapy group to be used on social media platforms and substantial ideas that they can implement through this program.

Currently, Adagio House is busy working on a new Community Center, which will open in January 2024. At this site, there will be many opportunities for all ages to come together and build community through art classes, book clubs, after-school activities, and more. Hannah mentioned that she is going to lead a "Morning Mindfulness" group on Tuesday mornings at the Community Center. In discussing my vision with her, she said that she would really like to use my flier to promote her group and may even change the purpose of the group to connect it to the ideas that I have presented.

Post-graduation, I plan to attend graduate school to become a Licensed Professional Counselor. With this, I hope to spend my days helping others and one day achieve my long-term



career goal of opening my own counseling center. My time at Adagio House helped me see that I am on the right path and that, without a doubt, I want to spend my days creating supportive environments where people can be vulnerable, feel supported, and heal.

Fall 2022 - Emma Mason

Adagio House was the site placement of my dreams, with a perfect blend of hands-on and behind the scenes experiences. I was drawn to Adagio house not only for the people like my supervisor April Hepler, but to their values and mission. The principles in which the Adagio House was born are to help and care for all who need it. They are a Nonprofit which seeks to holistically care for those no matter the status, who they identify as, or their abilities. Their services include offering counseling, advocacy, respite/ attendant care, and psychoeducation. They have another focus of aiding and providing care for caregivers. Caring for those with chronic conditions can be draining whether you are taking care of a parent, one of your own children, or simply acting as a health professional. Ms. Hepler is a kind and compassionate human who actively listens and will help you to achieve your goals in field placement to the best of her abilities. I was able to organize and work with client case files and notes, expanding my experience with confidentiality and obtaining a firsthand view of everyday counseling practices. Part of working with the private practice is there are a lot of behind-the-scenes projects and tasks that I have come to appreciate. I helped with things from data entry to organizing a fundraiser which gave me an amazing perspective on how private practice operates, especially if I want to open my own one day. One of the more amazing opportunities I have had was being able to do hands-on work as an attendant or respite care provider for those in the community. Working intimately with clients has been an invaluable experience and I feel like I have made a positive impact for those around me. Taking care of individuals in a therapeutic setting has absolutely bolstered my goal of becoming a licensed professional counselor. Interacting with the wonderful counselors at the office during days of more behind the scenes work helped me get a more accurate picture of the everyday lives of the profession I want to be in. The Adagio house has the advantage of being an extremely diverse and adaptable site that allows you to have a wide range of experiences and options, there is always something to do, and it changes with each day. There were a lot of opportunities to choose from for my field placement project since the Adagio House is a relatively new practice. Having been founded in June of 2018, a lot of ongoing projects and improvements are in the works that could use assistance. What I helped with was their proposed building plans. They are planning to do construction for new day programs including an outdoor garden area and I helped create a 3d model. This model will help with grant applications as well as give them a more realistic and feasible view of the plans so they can adjust it if needed. I feel as though my Psychology major helped me to consider multiple perspectives with my building plans, so that I could meet everyone's needs. Taking counseling psychology helped prepare me for confidentiality and working with clients responsibly. One of the advantages to this placement



is that the hours are very flexible. I was able to come into the counseling center on days that worked best for me and able to rearrange my schedule for certain weeks if need be. Ms. Hepler is an incredibly understanding and compassionate supervisor who cares about her colleagues and will make you feel like you fit right in. She is a wonderful supervisor who will give you experiences that will push you to be your best, while also making sure that none of it becomes overwhelming. She provides a friendly and warm environment that is perfect for growth and learning. She has absolutely inspired me to possibly go on and start my own private practice. Her general philosophy surrounding treatment and genuine care for the community has left me awe-struck. After I obtain my license to professionally counsel, I would love to take after her and build a practice that is as positive and uplifting to both colleagues and clients. I do not feel as though there are any disadvantages to this site, but if there were, they could be valuable times to learn and go outside of one's own comfort zone. I think the limits to this site would only be the ones you put on yourself. If you reach out and put your best work forward, you will walk away having learned practical skills and have made a difference. Everything from communication skills with peers and clients, to how to hold meaningful and successful events, are some of the skills you could walk away with. I believe future interns could work with outreach projects, expanding resources in positive psychology for the online for website for the Adagio House, and continuing with attendant care. These are only a few suggestions, but if you have a vision or ideas, Ms. Hepler will likely support you in every way she can. I will use the practical experience as well as vicarious learning through watching the other professionals excel at their job for years to come. Through graduate school I will be able to think back to how professionals I have seen in the past handle situations or what approach they may have used as good examples. Into my professional career I will remember what a collaborative and healthy work environment looks like and be able to think back to how that was achieved. If you are willing to learn and listen, that is how you will make the most of your time in field placement. Soak in as much as you can, since they will likely have amazing information to share that you weren't even aware you should know or look out for. If you are looking to pursue clinical mental health or any field community related, I would say the Adagio House is the perfect place to gain invaluable experience.