

# The Fennell Four-Phase Model

The **Fennell Four-Phase Model (FFPM)** is a framework for explaining how people who are experiencing chronic illness or trauma can adapt to the changes in their lives. It outlines four phases that people commonly pass through as they learn to incorporate their altered physical abilities or psychological outlook into their personality and lifestyle.

It was developed by Patricia Fennell, MSW, LCSW-R, in 1992; first published in 1993 in *The CFIDS Chronicle*; subjected to validation research several times in the 1990s and 2000s; and fully presented in Fennell's 2003 book, *Managing Chronic Illness: The Four Phase Approach*.

The Fennell Four Phases are: **Crisis**, **Stabilization**, **Resolution**, and **Integration**. Within each phase, FFPM addresses three domains: the physical/behavioral, the psychological, and the social/interactive.

- In **Phase 1 Crisis**, the individual moves from onset of the condition to an emergency period when he or she knows that something is seriously wrong. Onset may be specifically detectable, such as a serious and disabling automobile accident, or may happen gradually, as in the case of multiple sclerosis, where a period of symptoms precedes diagnosis. The task of the individual, caregivers, and clinicians during this phase is to cope with and contain urgency and trauma.
- In **Phase 2 Stabilization**, the individual discovers that he or she fails, sometimes repeatedly, to return to normal, regardless of interventions or behavior. The task in this phase is to initiate stabilization and life restructuring.
- In **Phase 3 Resolution**, the individual recognizes deeply that his or her old life will never return. Early in this phase, many experience significant grief and loss. The task of this phase is to begin establishing an authentic new self and start developing a supportive, meaningful philosophy.
- In **Phase 4 Integration**, the individual defines a new self in which illness may be an important factor, but it is not the only or even the primary one in his or her life. Integration of the illness into a meaningful life is the goal the individual seeks.

The experience of chronic illness or trauma does not remain the same over time. The physical, emotional, and social needs of an individual in the early stages of the chronic experience can be considerably different from the needs of an individual who has been ill for several years.

Additionally, unlike other phase- or stage-based models, such as the Kübler-Ross theory of death and dying, FFPM does not assume that individuals move through the FFPM phases in a linear fashion. Rather, physical or emotional setbacks can precipitate a temporary move back to a previous phase.



## **Patricia A. Fennell**

Expert in Chronic Illness, Trauma and Recovery

### **Biography**

**Patricia A. Fennell, MSW, LCSW-R**, is a researcher and clinician specializing in chronic illnesses, trauma, forensics, and hospice care. She is President and CEO of Albany Health Management Associates, Inc., a clinical and research practice which treats and examines health concerns through clinical care, consulting, and professional education utilizing the Fennell Four Phase Treatment (FFPT™) approach.

Ms. Fennell developed the Fennell Four-Phase Model in the late 1980s upon recognizing the similarities and differences between the hospice patients she was treating, using Kübler-Ross' five stages of death and dying, and the chronic illness patients she was seeing. Fennell outlined, and subsequently validated through research, four phases that people facing chronic illnesses and physical or emotional traumas frequently experience: Crisis, Stabilization, Integration, and Resolution. The Fennell Four-Phase Model, the Fennell Four-Phase Treatment approach, and the Fennell Phase Inventory have all been published in peer-reviewed journals.

Ms. Fennell is regularly invited to lecture throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe and to consult with organizations including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Fortune 150 organizations, and patient/survivor advocacy groups on chronic illness and criminal justice.

She presents frequently with David Kaczynski, brother of the Unabomber, Ted Kaczynski, on issues related to the criminal justice system, particularly the critical need to address trauma that results from crime and punishment.

Ms. Fennell has worked for the Commission of Quality of Care doing investigations and training Boards of Visitors and helped start the St. Anne's sexual abuse program, where she worked with perpetrators of violence. She has used the Four Phase Model as a trauma training platform for staff at Office of Mental Health facilities, forensic clinicians working with women convicted of capital crimes, and line law enforcement officers. She also offered certification in the Four Phase Model for the American Association of Association of Community Justice Professionals/The Advocate Program.

She has served on numerous boards of directors, including the International Association for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/ME, FibroAware, and the National Fibromyalgia Association. She has also been a spokesperson for the CDC's national awareness campaign on chronic fatigue syndrome.

Ms. Fennell has authored numerous scientific and lay press publications, including the books *The Chronic Illness Workbook*, *Managing Chronic Illness Using the Four-Phase Treatment Approach*, and *The Handbook of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome*. She is frequently sought by the media as an expert on chronic illness and trauma.



## David Kaczynski

Expert in the Death Penalty, Violence, and Healing

## Biography

David Kaczynski is executive director of [New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty](#) (NYADP) and the brother of Theodore Kaczynski – the so-called Unabomber – who was arrested in 1996 after David and his wife Linda Patrik approached the FBI with their suspicions that Theodore might be involved in a series of bombings that caused three deaths and numerous injuries over 17 years.

Despite his diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia, Theodore was charged capitally and only avoided the death penalty after his family waged a two-year campaign to convince the U.S. Justice Department that Theodore's delusions had precipitated his violent behavior. Under pressure from the media and advocacy groups including the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, the Justice Department offered a plea bargain that spared Theodore's life, but it never publicly acknowledged that Theodore's mental illness was a mitigating factor.

In 1998, David and Linda received a one million dollar reward from the Justice Department for their role in the Unabom investigation, which they subsequently dedicated – minus attorney's fees and taxes – to the victims and their families. With help from the Community Foundation for the Capital Region, they set up the Unabom Survivors Fund, which distributed \$680,000 to victims of the assaults.

Prior to joining NYADP, David was assistant director of the Equinox shelter for runaway and homeless youth in Albany, where he counseled and advocated for troubled, neglected and abused youth in the Capital District. As director of NYADP and as a board member of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, he is currently focused on a campaign to ban the death penalty for people with serious mental illnesses.

Through his life and his work, David has sought solutions to human problems through understanding and compassion as opposed to violence and coercion. His story touches on the things we must learn and the balances we must achieve to keep our sense of humanity alive through adversity and crisis.

David speaks frequently on the subjects of violence and healing with Gary Wright, who was seriously injured by one of Theodore Kaczynski's bombs in 1987.

# Fennell Four Phase Model Certification Program

**David Kaczynski  
and Patricia Fennell  
are available to train  
your group.**

**For further information,  
to obtain scheduled  
training dates, or to  
schedule a training in  
your community, please  
contact Albany Health  
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Anyone involved in a crime is at high risk for long-term and often traumatizing mental and physical health effects that can be difficult to overcome. While the causes of these effects for victims and their families are apparent, as a result of harm being done to them, it is important to also recognize and treat the effects of trauma and incarceration on offenders and their children, partners, and families. Without appropriate interventions, rehabilitation and recovery are very difficult to attain, and further harm can occur.

The Fennell Four-Phase Model is a highly practical, internationally utilized, and empirically validated model that recognizes the influences of cultural, psychosocial, and physical factors in both assessment and treatment of trauma resulting from crime, chronic syndromes, and other adverse experiences. It is a multi-phased approach that provides a narrative framework and cognitive map for understanding the long-term adaptations that occur in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The Fennell Four-Phase Treatment (FFPT™) Certification Program: Tier 1 will offer individuals who work with trauma survivors a step-by-step approach grounded in clinical practice to help them solve problems and create positive change.

The Fennell Four-Phase Treatment (FFPT™) Certification Program: Tier 2 will build upon Tier 1 concepts, advancing the skills of professionals in assessment and treatment. Tier 2 focus will include special emphasis on functional areas, case-specific matching intervention to Phase, issues with addiction, and utilization of chronic care case management. In addition, training will incorporate a problem-solving clinic with opportunities for review, discussion, and troubleshooting of participants' complex cases.

Specific populations discussed include: crime victims (including victims of domestic violence), incarcerated populations, victims of terrorism and war, treatment providers, and individuals with chronic illnesses and syndromes.

This training program offers certification in the Fennell Four-Phase Model. The presenters are also available to speak to groups and organizations not seeking certification.