

Working with Trauma and Dissociation

Three Day Workshop Led by Dr Val Wosket

Friday 5th, Saturday 6th, Sunday 7th March 2010

10.00 – 4.30

Registration from 9.30

Three day workshop on working with trauma and dissociation

This is the second workshop on the theme of understanding and working with clients who experience dissociation. It is suitable for qualified practitioners who have undertaken workshop 1 on ‘**dissociative process and the therapeutic use of self**’ or who have good understanding, experience and/or training in the phase-oriented approach to working with trauma and dissociation, including the psychophysiology of trauma and phase one approaches for client stabilization and symptom reduction. The workshop is *not* suitable for pre-qualification trainees or practitioners who have no prior training or theoretical understanding and experience of the range of dissociative presentations and the use of grounding and safety techniques.

The workshop will focus on stage two of the phase-oriented approach to working with trauma and dissociation, namely working directly and in depth with traumatic memories once stabilization and symptom reduction have been established. Attention will also be given to the third stage of therapy: integration and rehabilitation. This workshop will provide qualified practitioners with the opportunity to explore and practise strategies for enabling clients to work safely through experiences of trauma and dissociation. The central theme of the workshop will be working with clients at the interface between the therapeutic relationship and strategies for safe and effective memory work. Participants will be introduced to a number of frameworks and strategies for helping clients process trauma memories and integrate previously dissociated aspects of experience. We will explore, for example, how Peter Levine's S.I.B.A.M. model relates to and enriches an integrative approach to working with trauma.

An optional one hour group session for discussion of case work, facilitated by the trainer, will be offered after the end of the first day's workshop, from **4.30 to 5.30** p.m..

About the Trainer:

Formerly senior lecturer in counselling at York St John University, Dr Val Wosket works in private practice at the York Clinic for Complementary Medicine. Her publications include: *Egan's Skilled Helper Model: Developments and Applications in Counselling*; *The Therapeutic Use of Self: Counselling Practice, Research and Supervision* and *Supervising the Counsellor: A Cyclical Model* (with Steve Page). Val is a BACP Senior Accredited counsellor/psychotherapist, supervisor and trainer. As a psychotherapist, she has particular interest and experience in working with complex trauma and dissociation and is a member of the teaching faculty of ISSTD and ESTD (the International and European Societies for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation).

Workshop objectives: Completion of the workshop will enable participants to:

- Understand and be able to recognise different degrees of trauma and dissociation
- Make an informed judgement about whether a client would benefit from a formal assessment for complex dissociative disorders, including dissociative identity disorder (DID)
- Understand the importance of establishing and maintaining an effective therapeutic frame
- Explore boundary issues and understand the importance of maintaining appropriate therapeutic boundaries with trauma clients
- Recognise patterns of secure and insecure attachment central to the client's experience
- Identify and respond appropriately to commonly experienced transference and counter-transference experiences, including the use and mis-use of self-disclosure
- Explore how to respond appropriately to issues of touch, holding and sexual material when working with dissociative and trauma clients
- Facilitate negotiation and communication between split off parts of the person (including alter personality states)
- Gain knowledge and understanding of how to effectively pace trauma narratives
- Gain a working knowledge of the SIBAM model of integrating traumatic memories
- Have some understanding of when the client may have sufficient experience of integration and/or co-operative communication with split off parts of the self to move towards the third phase of therapy.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of their current arrangements for supervision, self-care and further training and think proactively about enhancing these where necessary.

Outline of workshop content:

- Locating the process of working in depth with trauma memories within the stage oriented framework for working with trauma and dissociation
- Types and degrees of trauma and dissociation presented by clients
- Matching therapeutic approaches to severity of client trauma and dissociation. Identifying limits to competence and knowing when to refer on
- Identifying where the client may benefit from a formal assessment and diagnosis of complex dissociative disorder (e.g. DID)
- Contracting and maintenance of a secure therapeutic frame for trauma work
- Negotiating firm and flexible boundaries with clients
- Patterns of attachment and their relationship to dissociation
- Commonly experienced transference and counter-transference phenomena in working with trauma clients and how to manage these
- The use and misuse of self-disclosure: managing the creative balance between the therapist making themselves known to the client in ways that build safety and trust and not being drawn into over disclosing in ways that may sabotage the process

- Touch, holding and working with sexual feelings in the therapeutic relationship
- Communicating and working with split off and alter parts of the client's personality
- Safely pacing and managing the emergence and working through of traumatic material
- Understanding and practise of Peter Levine's SIBAM model of dissociation which combines cognitive, emotional and somatic components within a body orientated approach
- Moving on: gaining awareness of when clients are ready to move to stage three (integration and rehabilitation) of the phase-oriented process
- Supervision, self-care and professional development issues for the therapist