



Professional Training Program | Level I

The Complexities of Complex Trauma Part II

Curriculum for 2022

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Intended Participants: Licensed mental health professionals (psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers, mental health counselors, accredited psychotherapists, etc.) who are interested in developing their skills in treating clients with complex trauma related disorders. For Part I of the course, there is no need to have a client with a complex trauma-related disorder.

Course Format: Twelve, two and a half hour sessions of literature discussion, lecture, discussion of a “teaching case” and discussion of participant cases.

Course Materials: Required textbooks are listed below and must be purchased by the participant. Additional materials including journal articles and handouts will be provided at no cost via the online course portal. Access to the course portal is provided upon registration.

Recommendation: We recommend that you join ISSTD. Membership in ISSTD gives you free access to every past issue of the *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation* and a wealth of clinical articles and discussions from past issues of ISSTD News.

Required Texts

1. Courtois, CA, and Ford, JD (2013) *Treatment of Complex Trauma: A Sequenced, Relationship-Based Approach*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press.
2. Courtois, CA, and Ford, JD, eds. (2020) *Treating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders in Adults, second edition*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press.
3. Herman, JL (2015) *Trauma and Recovery: The aftermath of violence – from domestic abuse to political terror*. NY, NY: Basic Books.

Required Articles (Provided via Course Portal Upon Registration):

Alessi E.J., Martin J.I. (2017) Intersection of Trauma and Identity. In: Eckstrand K., Potter J. (eds) *Trauma, Resilience, and Health Promotion in LGBT Patients*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-54509-7_1

Bryant-Davis, T. (2019). The cultural context of trauma recovery: Considering the posttraumatic stress disorder practice guideline and intersectionality. *Psychotherapy*, 56(3), 400–408.

Gold, SN (2008) Benefits of a Contextual Approach to Understanding and Treating Complex Trauma, *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 9:2, 269-292

Keating, L & Muller, R.T. (2020) LGBTQ+ based discrimination is associated with PTSD symptoms, dissociation, emotion dysregulation, and attachment insecurity among LGBTQ+ adults who have experienced Trauma, *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 21:1, 124-141, DOI: [10.1080/15299732.2019.1675222](https://doi.org/10.1080/15299732.2019.1675222)

O'Neill, L., Fraser, T., Kitchenham, A. et al. (2018) Hidden Burdens: a Review of Intergenerational, Historical and Complex Trauma, Implications for Indigenous Families. *Journ Child Adol Trauma* 11, 173–186.

Scheer, J.R & Antebi-Gruszka, N. (2019) A Psychosocial Risk Model of Potentially Traumatic Events And Sexual Risk Behavior Among LGBTQ Individuals, *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 20:5, 603-618, DOI: [10.1080/15299732.2019.1597815](https://doi.org/10.1080/15299732.2019.1597815)

Williams, M.T., Osman, M., Gran-Ruaz, S. et al. (2021) Intersection of Racism and PTSD: Assessment and Treatment of Racial Stress and Trauma. *Current Treatment Options in Psychiatry* 8, 167-185 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40501-021-00250-2>

The Complexities of Complex Trauma Part II

Session One: Best Practices and the Therapeutic Relationship: Transference, Countertransference and Enactments

Content Level: Beginning and Intermediate

Abstract: Due to the complexities of complex trauma, treatment needs to be carefully planned and trauma informed. This session discusses the best practices with complex trauma and dissociative clients including assessment, evidence-based practice and guidelines of 30 best practice principles will be outlined and explored. The complexities and possible pitfalls within the therapeutic relationship with complex trauma and dissociative clients, including issues related to transference, countertransference and enactments, will be discussed in relation to attunement, reenactment and attachment. Time will be given to discuss case material as it relates to the readings.

Objectives:

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Discuss the complexities of treatment of clients with complex trauma
- Discuss the principals of best practice with adult clients with complex trauma
- Describe and discuss the complications in the therapeutic relationship that are encountered when treating clients with complex trauma, including transference, countertransference and enactments

Readings

1. Courtois, CA, Ford, JD, Cloitre, M, Schnyder, U (2020) *Best Practices in Psychotherapy for Adults*, (pp. 62-98) in CA Courtois and JD Ford, eds. *Treating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders in Adults, second edition*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press
2. Courtois, CA, and Ford, JD (2013) *Treatment of Complex Trauma: A Sequenced, Relationship-Based Approach*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press. pp. 269 – 297 (Chapter 9)
3. Courtois, CA, and Ford, JD (2013) *Treatment of Complex Trauma: A Sequenced, Relationship-Based Approach*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press. pp. 298 – 327 (Chapter 10)

Timed outline:

20 minutes: Discussion of Reading 1 - complexities of trauma treatment for adults

20 minutes: Discussion of Reading 1 - principals of best practices for treatment of adults with complex trauma

- 30 minutes: Discussion of Reading 2 - therapeutic relationship complications with complex trauma clients
- 30 minutes: Discussion of Reading 3 - the impact of transference, countertransference and enactments on therapy with complex trauma clients
- 50 minutes: Discussion of case materials applying the above readings to disguised cases

Session Two: Applications of Theoretical Models to the Treatment of Complex Trauma
Content Level: Beginning and Intermediate

Abstract: There are numerous therapies geared to the treatment of complex trauma. In this session we will examine a variety of theories including: Brief Eclectic Therapy, Eye Movement Desensitizing and Reprocessing (EMDR), Emotion-focused Therapy, and Contextual Therapy. We will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each of these four therapies. From these therapies, we will explore how these models can be used individually or together and drawn on in therapy. Time will be given to discuss case material as it relates to the readings.

Objectives:

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe various models of verbal therapy as related to the treatment of chronic trauma, including: Brief Eclectic Therapy; Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy; Emotion-focused Therapy; and Contextual Therapy
- Discuss strengths and weaknesses of each of these theories
- Discuss utilization of combinations of these models in therapy with complex-trauma clients

Readings

1. Gersons, B, Nijdam, MJ, Smit, GE, and Schnyder, U (2020) *Brief Eclectic Therapy*, (pp. 267-285) in CA Courtois and JD Ford, eds. *Treating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders in Adults, second edition*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press.
2. Korn, DL and Shapiro, F (2020) *Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing*, (pp. 286-308) in CA Courtois and JD Ford, eds. *Treating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders in Adults, second edition*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press.
3. Paivio, SC and Angus, LE (2020) *Emotion-focused Therapy*, (pp. 332-349) in CA Courtois and JD Ford, eds. *Treating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders in Adults, second edition*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press.

4. Gold, SN (2008) Benefits of a Contextual Approach to Understanding and Treating Complex Trauma, *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 9:2, 269-292.

Timed outline:

- 15 minutes: Discussion of Reading 1 - brief, eclectic therapy, strengths and weaknesses
- 15 minutes: Discussion of Reading 2 - EMDR, strengths and weaknesses
- 15 minutes: Discussion of Reading 3 - emotion-focused therapy, strengths and weaknesses
- 15 minutes: Discussion of Reading 4 - contextual therapy, strengths and weaknesses
- 30 minutes: Discussion of utilization of models, including in combination in the therapy of those with complex trauma.
- 60 minutes: Discussion of case materials applying the above readings to disguised cases

Session Three: Non-Verbal Treatments of Trauma and Other Modalities of Treatment (Individual, Couple, Group, Family)

Content Level: Beginning and Intermediate

Abstract: For some clients, more traditional individual talk therapies are not sufficient. Given that trauma is also experienced in the body, non-verbal therapies have been developed over the past few decades. In this session, we will explore Sensorimotor Therapy, one of the more researched “body-based” therapies for clients with complex trauma. In addition, couple and family therapies and group treatments for those with complex trauma, including the benefits and possible contraindications will be discussed. Time will be given to discuss case material as it relates to the readings.

Objectives:

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe Sensorimotor therapy and its utilization
- Discuss the use of family and couple therapy with complex trauma clients
- Discuss the benefits of group treatment

Readings

1. Ogden, P (2020) *Sensorimotor Psychotherapy (pp. 509-532)* in CA Courtois and JD Ford, eds. *Treating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders in Adults, second edition*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press.

2. Herman, JL (2015) *Trauma and Recovery: The aftermath of violence – from domestic abuse to political terror*. NY, NY: Basic Books pp. 214 – 236 (Chapter 11)
3. Courtois, CA, and Ford, JD (2013) *Treatment of Complex Trauma: A Sequenced, Relationship-Based Approach*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press. pp. 190 – 231 (Chapter 7)

Timed outline:

40 minutes: Discussion of Reading 1 - sensorimotor psychotherapy

30 minutes: Discussion of Reading 3 - couple and family therapy approaches

30 minutes: Discussion of Reading 2 and 3 - group treatment

50 minutes: Discussion of case materials applying the above readings to disguised cases

Session Four: Cultural Humility and the Impact of Racism and Colonization in Complex Trauma

Content Level: Beginning and Intermediate

Abstract: Complex trauma occurs within a context, including the family, the community and larger society and its impact is strongly influenced by inequalities, racism, bigotry, and other stigmatizing and dehumanizing influences. In this session, the impact of racism, including systemic racism, and colonialization will be discussed. The concept of “cultural humility” will be explored in general and how the therapist needs to take these into account both culturally and spiritually will be discussed. Specific areas such as the need to develop treatment guidelines which include the understanding the intersection of trauma and racism and the impact of colonization on indigenous peoples will be explored. Time will be given to discuss case material as it relates to the readings.

Objectives:

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Define and discuss cultural humility and spiritual awareness
- Explain the impact of the intersectionality of trauma and racism/colonial oppression
- Discuss the need to consider the impact of racism and colonial oppression when developing guidelines for trauma treatment

Readings

1. Brown, L.S. (2020) *Cultural Humility and Spiritual Awareness (pp. 168-188)* in CA Courtois and JD Ford, eds. *Treating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders in Adults, second edition*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press.
2. Bryant-Davis, T. (2019). The cultural context of trauma recovery: Considering the posttraumatic stress disorder practice guideline and intersectionality. *Psychotherapy, 56*(3), 400–408.
3. Williams, M.T., Osman, M., Gran-Ruaz, S. et al. (2021) Intersection of Racism and PTSD: Assessment and Treatment of Racial Stress and Trauma. *Current Treatment Options in Psychiatry 8*, 167-185 (2021).
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40501-021-00250-2>
4. O'Neill, L., Fraser, T., Kitchenham, A. et al. (2018) Hidden Burdens: a Review of Intergenerational, Historical and Complex Trauma, Implications for Indigenous Families. *Journ Child Adol Trauma 11*, 173–186.

Timed outline:

45 minutes: Discussion of Reading 1 - cultural humility and spiritual awareness

30 minutes: Discussion of Reading 2 and 3 - intersectionality of trauma practice guidelines and racism

30 minutes: Discussion of Reading 4 - trauma and indigenous peoples

45 minutes: Discussion of case materials applying the above readings to disguised cases

Session Five: LGBTQ+ Issues in Complex Trauma

Content Level: Beginning and Intermediate

Abstract: Despite the growing acceptance of LGBTQ+ people and the societal demands for their rights, members of the LGBTQ+ community are especially likely to be targets of physical, emotional, sexual and psychological violence. This often starts in childhood, and includes, for many, an internalized self-hatred, that impacts their psychological development, making them even more likely to be impacted by trauma. In this class we will examine the intersectionality of identity and trauma and the impact of discrimination toward the LGBTQ+ community and its members, in developing post-traumatic problems. An exploration of a risk-model of possible traumatizing events based on discrimination, for sexual high-risk behaviours will be discussed. How discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community impacts trauma, dissociation and attachment will also be explored. Time will be given to discuss case material as it relates to the readings.

Objectives:

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the intersection of trauma and identity
- Discuss a psycho-social risk-model of trauma and high risk sexual behavior among LGBTQ+ clients
- Explain the effects of discrimination against LGBTQ+ people on trauma, dissociation, affect regulation and attachment

Readings

1. Alessi, E. J., & Martin, J. I. (2017). Intersection of trauma and identity. In *Trauma, Resilience, and Health Promotion in LGBT Patients: What Every Healthcare Provider Should Know* (pp. 3-14). Springer International Publishing.
2. Scheer, J.R & Antebi-Gruszka, N. (2019) A Psychosocial Risk Model of Potentially Traumatic Events And Sexual Risk Behavior Among LGBTQ ., *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 20:5, 603-618.
3. Keating, L & Muller, R.T. (2020) LGBTQ+ based discrimination is associated with ptsd symptoms, dissociation, emotion dysregulation, and attachment insecurity among LGBTQ+ adults who have experienced Trauma, *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 21:1, 124-141.

Timed outline:

- 45 minutes: Discussion of Reading 1 - intersection of trauma and identity
- 30 minutes: Discussion of Reading 2 - a psycho-social risk model based on discrimination against LGBTQ+ people on potentially traumatizing and/or high-risk sexual behaviours,
- 30 minutes: Discussion of Reading 3 - anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination and trauma, dissociation and attachment
- 45 minutes: Discussion of case materials applying the above readings to disguised cases

Session Six: The Unconscious Impact of Trauma on the Therapist and How Trauma-Informed Therapy Makes a Difference

Content Level: Beginning and Intermediate

Abstract: Trauma therapy has an impact not only on survivors, but on their therapist as well. Within the therapeutic relationship, the therapist may unconsciously introject the emotional material of the trauma, from the client. We will explore this area by reading the research and considering the impact from a clinical perspective. In true fashion to

trauma treatment, we will also discuss ways to work through the residual effects of client's trauma in the therapist. We will conclude with a comprehensive and cohesive understanding of the development and trauma-focused, phase-oriented treatment of complex trauma and some future directions in research and treatment. Time will be given to discuss case material as it relates to the readings.

Objectives:

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Discuss the unconscious impacts of trauma therapy within the therapeutic
- Discuss ways to work through the residual effects of client's trauma in the therapist
- Discuss the impact of understanding underlying complex trauma for therapeutic success with trauma survivors

Readings:

1. Pearlman, LA, Caringi, J, and Trautman, AR (2020) *New Perspectives on Vicarious Traumatization and Complex Trauma*, (pp. 189-204) in CA Courtois and JD Ford, eds. *Treating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders in Adults, second edition*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press.
2. Herman, JL (2015) *Trauma and Recovery: The aftermath of violence – from domestic abuse to political terror*. NY, NY: Basic Books pp. 237 – 247 (Afterword)
3. Ford, JD and Courtois, CA (2020) *Overview and Future Directions in Treatment for Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders*, (pp. 591-602) in CA Courtois and JD Ford, eds. *Treating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders in Adults, second edition*. NY, NY: The Guilford Press.

Timed outline:

- 45 minutes: Discussion of Reading 1 - how trauma is unconsciously communicated to therapists
- 45 minutes: Discussion of Reading 2 - understanding and ameliorating the unconscious impact of trauma within the therapeutic relationship
- 30 minutes: Discussion of Reading 3 - success of trauma-informed therapy
- 30 minutes: Discussion of Reading 2 - becoming a trauma-informed therapist and the next stages



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