



## **International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation Professional Training Program**

### ***Curriculum for 2026***

This course syllabus and bibliography are the copyrighted property of the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD). Please do not copy or distribute without permission from the ISSTD.

**Intended Participants:** Licensed mental health professionals (psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers, mental health counselors) who are personally treating clients with Complex Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Dissociative Disorders and who have personally treated a significant number of such clients in a minimum of eight (8) years in clinical practice. In addition, the participants must have taken the ISSTD Advanced Topics in Complex Trauma and Dissociative Disorders course or its equivalent (to be assessed by the facilitator).

**Meeting Frequency:** Once monthly for nine (9) months

**Course Format:** Nine (9) two and a half hour (2.5 hrs) sessions of combined literature discussion/seminar and discussion of cases presented by participants.

**Course Materials:** Required textbooks are listed below and must be purchased by the participant. Additional materials including journal articles and Additional Materials will be provided at no cost via the online course portal. Access to the course portal is sent to registered participants two to three weeks in advance of the first class.

**About the Curriculum:** Faculty and participants in this seminar should be aware that this course is born out of the effort of Elizabeth Bowman, M.D. to provide a quality educational experience for colleagues in Indianapolis. In 2004-05, the Advanced Course was developed by Steve Frankel, Ph.D., J.D. It was piloted by Dr. Frankel in Davis, CA, and by Don Beere, Ph.D. in Cincinnati. *In 2006, the Master Class/Seminar was developed and continued by Joan A. Turkus, M.D.* The course you are about to take represents the collaborative suggestions of faculty, feedback from participants, and an effort to increase the relevance of the curriculum. We hope this improves a course, which during its years of existence has already received excellent reviews from nearly all participants.

### **Required Texts:**

- Lanius, R.A., Harricharan, S. Kearney, B., Pandev-Girard, B., (2025) *Sensory Pathways to Healing from Trauma: Harnessing the Brain's Capacity for Change*. The Guilford Press, New York, NY.
- Allen, Jon G., Ph.D., (2025) *Bringing Psychotherapy to Life Through Caring Connections*. American Psychiatric Association Publishing, Washington, DC.
- Herman, Judith L., M.D. (2023) *Truth and Repair: How Trauma Survivors Envision Justice*. Basic Books, London, UK.

**Required Articles:**

- Esteban-Serna, C., Loewenberger, A., Pick, S. & Cope, S.R. (2024). Psychological therapy for functional neurological disorder: Examining impact on dissociation, psychological distress and general functioning. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 25:4, 516-532. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2024.2356591
- Schimmenti, A., Santoro, G., Costanzo, A. & Musetti , A. (2025). Attachment trauma, dissociation, and addictive behaviors: A psychodynamic perspective. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 26:5, 697-714. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2025.2542127
- Hamer, R., Bestel, N. & Mackelprang, J.L. (2024). Dissociative symptoms in complex posttraumatic stress disorder: A systematic review. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 25:2, 232-247. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2023.2293785
- Selwyn, C.N., Lathan, E.C., Platt, T. & Minchew, L. (2023). How healthcare providers reconcile bad things happening to good patients: The role of just world beliefs in attitudes toward trauma-informed care. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 24:5, 640-654. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2023.2195404
- Brenner, I. (2025). Infusion or confusion: Psychodynamic currents in the treatment of severe early trauma. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 1-12. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2025.2589160
- Itzkowitz, S. (2025). Interpersonal and relational psychoanalytic contributions to the treatment of dissociative identity disorder. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 1-15. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2025.2583125

- Hohfeler III, R. (2025). Shame as affect regulation in dissociative identity disorder. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 26:2, 218-238. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2024.2448419
- Ayas, G., Sar, V., Senol, S.H., & Türk-Kurtça, T. (2025). The internal moderation questionnaire (IMQ): A novel measure of self-regulation. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 26:3, 331-346. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2025.2481030
- Sideli, L., Santoro, G., Fontana, A., Guglielmucci, F., Caretti, V. & Schimmenti, A. (2023). The relationship between obsessive-compulsive symptoms and dissociation: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 24:3, 362-379. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2023.2181477

**Course Goals:** The seminar is designed for the study of academic and clinical material at a Master Seminar level. At the completion of this seminar, participants will have reviewed and increased their diagnostic and treatment skills with clients who present with Complex Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Dissociative Disorders within a biopsychosocial context. This seminar is planned to update the participants knowledge base of the impact of trauma through the life cycle, from developmental trauma through adulthood. This approach will grow from a foundational level to include therapeutic and behavioral challenges, including sociocultural intersections. The seminar builds towards the development of supervision and consultation skills to develop both “good enough” therapists and supervisors.



### **Session One – Content Level: Advanced**

Master Topic: Introduction to the Relationship Between Sensory Information and the Brain

Abstract: This session will focus on an introduction to the senses, the corresponding sections of the brain, and how sensory information travels through the brain. This will be followed by a diverging roads of sensory experience and understanding the difference between feeling safe and under threat. There will be an opportunity to present case reports.

Objectives:

1. Summarize the relationship of sensory information and areas of the brain
2. Distinguish between the sensory experience of feeling safe or under threat
3. Prepare and present case reports and process therapeutic interventions

Readings:

- Lanius, R.A., Harricharan, S., Kearney, B., Pandev-Girard, B.. (2025). *Sensory Pathways to Healing from Trauma: Harnessing the Brain's Capacity for Change*. The Guilford Press, New York, NY., Introduction & Chapters 1-3 (pp. 1-47)
- Esteban-Serna, C., Loewenberger, A., Pick, S. & Cope, S.R. (2024). Psychological therapy for functional neurological disorder: Examining impact on dissociation, psychological distress and general functioning. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 25:4, 516-532. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2024.2356591

Timed Outline:

1 hour and 15 minutes: Book Chapter(s)

15 minutes: Journal Article

1 hour: Case presentations

### **Session Two – Content Level: Advanced**

Master Topic: Defense Cascade and the War Within

Abstract: The session will focus on the defense cascade and how sensory experience informs the line of defense. There will be further discussion about the vestibular system and visceral sensations after trauma. There will be an opportunity to present case reports.



Objectives:

1. Summarize the defense cascade
2. Describe the vestibular system
3. Prepare and present case reports and process therapeutic interventions

Readings:

- Lanius, R.A., Harricharan, S., Kearney, B., Pandev-Girard, B., (2025). *Sensory Pathways to Healing from Trauma: Harnessing the Brain's Capacity for Change*. The Guilford Press, New York, NY., Chapters 4-6 (pp. 48-106).
- Schimmenti, A., Santoro, G., Costanzo, A. & Musetti, A. (2025). Attachment trauma, dissociation, and addictive behaviors: A psychodynamic perspective. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 26:5, 697-714. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2025.2542127

Timed Outline:

1 hour and 15 minutes: Book Chapter(s)

15 minutes: Journal Article

1 hour: Case presentations

**Session Three – Content Level: Advanced**

Master Topic: The Shattered Universe after Trauma and the Highjacked Self

Abstract: There will be a discussion of feeling the world through the senses and overcoming the compulsion to repeat the trauma. This will be followed by understanding the process of synchronizing mind, brain, and body to become whole. There will be an opportunity to present case reports.

Objectives:

1. Synthesize the relationship between the senses post trauma
2. Interpret the process of healing the mind, brain, and body
3. Prepare and present case reports and process therapeutic interventions

Readings:

- Lanius, R.A., Harricharan, S., Kearney, B., Pandev-Girard, B., (2025). *Sensory Pathways to Healing from Trauma: Harnessing the Brain's Capacity for Change*. The Guilford Press, New York, NY., Chapters 7-9 (pp. 107-160).
- Hamer, R., Bestel, N. & Mackelprang, J.L. (2024). Dissociative symptoms in complex posttraumatic stress disorder: A systematic



review. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 25:2, 232-247. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2023.2293785

Timed Outline

1 hour and 15 minutes: Book Chapter(s)

15 minutes: Journal Article

1 hour: Case presentations

**Session Four – Content Level: Advanced**

Master Topic: Psychotherapy and the Human Experience

Abstract: Perspectives on human life and the contribution of psychotherapy.

Making sense of experience. There will be an opportunity to present case reports.

Objectives:

1. Discuss the principles of change as a middle ground between theoretical orientations
2. Discuss the balance between the alleviation of suffering and fostering development
3. Prepare and present case reports and process therapeutic interventions

Readings:

- Allen, Jon G., Ph.D., (2025). *Bringing Psychotherapy to Life Through Caring Connections*. American Psychiatric Association Publishing, Washington, DC. Introduction & Chapters 1-3 (pp. 1-114).
- Selwyn, C.N., Lathan, E.C., Platt, T. & Minchew, L. (2023). How healthcare providers reconcile bad things happening to good patients: The role of just world beliefs in attitudes toward trauma-informed care. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 24:5, 640-654. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2023.2195404

Timed Outline:

1 hour and 15 minutes: Book Chapter(s)

15 minutes: Journal Article

1 hour: Case presentations



## **Session Five – Content Level: Advanced**

Master Topic: Ethical Reflection Required to do Moral Work

Abstract: The session will focus on the importance of moral work requiring ethical reflection. Questions will be raised about the distinctions between morality and ethics. There will be an opportunity to present case reports.

Objectives:

1. Explain the importance for psychotherapists to cultivate ethical thinking
2. Describe how adopting a transparent moral-ethical stance in psychotherapy requires reflective thinking and humility
3. Prepare and present case reports and process therapeutic interventions

Readings:

- Allen, Jon G., Ph.D., (2025). *Bringing Psychotherapy to Life Through Caring Connections*. American Psychiatric Association Publishing, Washington, DC., Chapter 4 (pp. 115-142).
- Brenner, I. (2025). Infusion or confusion: Psychodynamic currents in the treatment of severe early trauma. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 1-12. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2025.2589160

Timed Outline:

1 hour and 15 minutes: Book Chapter(s)

15 minutes: Journal Article

1 hour: Case presentations

## **Session Six – Content Level: Advanced**

Master Topic: Creating Caring Connections

Abstract: The session will focus on giving and receiving care as well as a capacity to care. This will be followed by a discussion of connections and disconnections in attachment relationships. There will be an opportunity to present case reports.

Objectives:

1. Formulate the importance of giving and receiving care in relationship.
2. Illustrate factors important in the development of the capacity to care.
3. Prepare and present case reports and process therapeutic interventions.



#### Readings:

- Allen, Jon G., Ph.D., (2025). *Bringing Psychotherapy to Life Through Caring Connections*. American Psychiatric Association Publishing, Washington, DC. Chapters 5-9 (pp. 143-252).
- Itzkowitz, S. (2025). Interpersonal and relational psychoanalytic contributions to the treatment of dissociative identity disorder. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 1-15. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2025.2583125

#### Timed Outline:

1 hour and 15 minutes: Book Chapter(s)

15 minutes: Journal Article

1 hour: Case presentations

#### **Session Seven** – Content Level: Advanced

Master Topic: The Rules: Tyranny, Equality, Patriarchy

Abstract: The session will focus on society's rules as damaging to trauma survivors. Of the rules discussed, the most widespread and enduring form of tyranny is patriarchy. There will be an opportunity to present case reports.

#### Objectives:

1. Demonstrate ways in which society's power rules discriminate against victims
2. Explain why patriarchy is the most damaging
3. Prepare and present case reports and process therapeutic options

#### Readings:

- Herman, Judith L., M.D. (2023). *Truth and Repair: How Trauma Survivors Envision Justice*. Basic Books, London, UK., Introduction & Chapters 1-3 (pp. 1-76).
- Hohfeler III, R. (2025). Shame as affect regulation in dissociative identity disorder. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 26:2, 218-238. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2024.2448419

#### Timed Outline:

1 hour and 15 minutes: Book Chapter(s)

15 minutes: Journal Article

1 hour: Case presentations



## **Session Eight – Content Level: Advanced**

Master Topic: Divisions of Justice

Abstract: This session will cover divisions of justice by trauma survivors. They include acknowledgement, apology, and accountability. There will be an opportunity to present case reports.

Objectives:

1. Compare and contrast divisions of justice
2. Discuss how these may or may not lead to repair of the harm done to survivors
3. Prepare and present case reports and process therapeutic options

Readings:

- Herman, Judith L., M.D. (2023). *Truth and Repair: How Trauma Survivors Envision Justice*. Basic Books, London, UK., Chapters 4-6 (pp. 77-144).
- Ayas, G., Sar, V., Senol, S.H., & Türk-Kurtça, T. (2025). The internal moderation questionnaire (IMQ): A novel measure of self-regulation. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 26:3, 331-346. DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2025.2481030

Timed Outline:

1 hour and 15 minutes: Book Chapter(s)

15 minutes: Journal Article

1 hour: Case presentations

## **Session Nine – Content Level: Advanced**

Master Topic: The Factors of Healing for Trauma Survivors

Abstract: The session will discuss restitution, rehabilitation, and prevention as factors in healing. There will also be a discussion of “the longest revolution.” There will be an opportunity to present case reports.

Objectives:

1. Hypothesize the relationship between healing and the justice system
2. Discuss the importance of prevention and the difficulties in attaining it
3. Prepare and present case reports and process therapeutic options



Readings:

- Herman, Judith L., M.D. (2023). *Truth and Repair: How Trauma Survivors Envision Justice*. Basic Books, London, UK., Chapters 7-9 & Conclusion (pp. 143-232).
- Sideli, L., Santoro, G., Fontana, A., Guglielmucci, F., Caretti, V. & Schimmenti, A. (2023). The relationship between obsessive-compulsive symptoms and dissociation: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 24:3, 362-379.  
DOI: 10.1080/15299732.2023.2181477

Timed Outline:

1 hour and 15 minutes: Book Chapter(s)

15 minutes: Journal Article

1 hour: Case presentations