

Aberdeen Counselling Forum

‘Personality Disorder or Adaptation to Threat: Attachment, Relational Trauma and Enduring Personality Changes’

Led by Christiane Sanderson

Saturday 6th July 2024 (10am-4pm)

Venue:

Garden Lounge of Fountainhall Church of Scotland, Harcourt
Rd, Aberdeen, AB15 5NZ

About the workshop:

At this training workshop, which would be especially relevant for counsellors, psychotherapists and psychologists across all modalities, we will examine the factors that inhibit attachment such as traumatic bonding, fear of abandonment, shame, lack of attunement and mentalisation, and dissociation. In presenting relevant elements of attachment theory and research, we will look at the role of attachment, the range of attachment styles, including disorganised attachment, and how these link to personality disorders, in particular Borderline Personality Disorder (*aka Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder*), Narcissistic Personality Disorder and Anti-social Personality. We will explore how personality disorders present in the therapeutic space and how they impact on the therapeutic relationship.

Emphasis will be placed on understanding personality disorders as adaptations to relational threats and how to reframe these as enduring personality changes rather than a personality disorder. The training will evaluate the traditional psychiatric formulation of personality disorders and compare these to current conceptualisation of personality disorders in ICD-11 (2022) and the DSM-5-TR (2022) Alternative Model for Personality Disorders. This will be combined with clinical formulations that reframe personality disorders as **disorders of attachment and relational trauma** rather than a personality disorder. The focus will be on understanding *what happened to the person* rather than *what is the problem* and what they had to do to survive including enduring changes in their sense of self and personality.

This reformulation of personality disorders enables us, as therapists, to work in a more compassionate, non-judgemental and non-shaming way. It humanises those who have been labelled with a personality disorder and enables them to make contact and facilitate connection.

With our understanding of *personality disorders* as manifestations of deep emotional suffering in response to traumatic attachments, we are able to transform the therapeutic process for our clients to create a sustained positive impact on their lives and relationship patterns.

About the presenter:

Christiane Sanderson is a former senior lecturer in Psychology at the University of Roehampton, of London with 35 years of experience working in the field of childhood sexual abuse, sexual violence and complex trauma. She has delivered advice and training for parents, teachers, social workers, nurses, therapists, counsellors, the police and faith communities. Her research interests span trauma informed therapeutic practice, PTSD, Complex Trauma, CSA, domestic abuse and Narcissism. She is the author of *Working with Survivors of Sibling Sexual Abuse: A Guide to Therapeutic Support and Protection for Children and Adults*; *Counselling Skills for Working with Shame*, *Counselling Skills for Working with Trauma: Healing from Child Sexual Abuse, Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse*, *Counselling Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse*, 3rd edition, *Counselling Survivors of Domestic Abuse*, *The Seduction of Children: Empowering Parents and Teachers to Protect Children from Child Sexual Abuse*, and *Introduction to Counselling Survivors of Interpersonal Trauma*, all published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers. She has also written *The Warrior Within: A One in Four Handbook to Aid Recovery from Sexual Violence*; *The Spirit Within: A One in Four Handbook to Aid Recovery from Religious Sexual Abuse Across All Faiths* and *Responding to Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse: A pocket guide for professionals, partners, families and friends* for the charity *One in Four* for whom she is a trustee.

Contact person for enquiries and booking:

Elena Laguarda

Email: contact@thecounsellingforum.co.uk

ACF Booking Form for Workshop Friday 06.07.24

PARTICIPANT NAME:

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