

Fragmented Minds; Understanding and Working with Dissociation and Complex Trauma

With Christiane Sanderson

Saturday, 16th November 2019, 1000-1630
St George's Centre, 206 Andover Road, Newbury RG14 6NU

The repeated and systematic brutalisation and distortion of reality seen in childhood sexual or physical abuse can lead to chronic dissociation which often persists into adulthood. While dissociation is normal and in essence an adaptive response to complex trauma, it can lead to a range of dissociative disorders in adulthood, including depersonalisation, derealisation and Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID). This training day will examine the nature of dissociation and how it manifests in practice, and how it differs from psychosis and schizophrenia, in order to understand differential diagnosis and treatment. It will highlight the need for accurate assessment and formulation, and how best to work with survivors of complex trauma suffering from dissociation or DID.

You will learn a trauma-focused model that emphasises stabilisation, boundaries, pacing, processing the trauma, and working with different parts of the personality to aid integration. We will also discuss the challenges facing practitioners. This model is enhanced when supported by a relational approach in which mutuality and genuine connection are prioritised to create a collaborative and non-hierarchical, therapeutic relationship. This reduces the replication of power and control dynamics and shame that are axiomatic in complex trauma. It promotes 'being with' rather than 'doing to' which best aids survivors of complex trauma to recover and enter post traumatic growth.

Topics covered include:

- What is dissociation and its link to childhood abuse and complex trauma
- The difference between complex trauma and single event trauma
- Assessment and formulation for dissociation and complex trauma
- The role of dissociation in Complex Trauma and PTSD
- The continuum of dissociation from everyday dissociation to DID
- How dissociation differs from psychosis or schizophrenia
- How traumatic bonding impacts sense of self and relational worth
- The symptoms of dissociation in depersonalisation, derealisation, dissociative fugue and DID
- The triggers to dissociation and its impact on functioning
- The role of grounding, stabilisation and integration
- Best practice and the challenges faced by practitioners when working with this client group



Christiane Sanderson BSc MSc is a senior lecturer in Psychology at the University of Roehampton. With 28 years' experience working in child sexual abuse, interpersonal trauma and domestic abuse, she has run consultancy and training for parents, teachers, social workers, nurses, therapists, counsellors, solicitors, the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Committee, the Methodist Church, the Metropolitan Police Service, the NSPCC and the Refugee Council. She is the author of many books on trauma, shame, childhood sexual abuse, and dissociation, including *Counselling Skills for Working with Trauma* (JKP 2013).

This event will be open to psychological therapists (including trainees) from all modalities and healthcare professionals.

Early bird price before 16th October 2019: £90, or after £99

Includes parking & refreshments but not lunch. CPD certificates will be supplied

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