International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation
Professional Training Program:
From Complex Trauma to Dissociative Disorders: Theory and Practice, Part I

Curriculum for 2020
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Course Chairs and Directors:
Professional Training Program Chair: Sandra Bouabjian, MA
Email: sbouabjiam@hotmail.com
Professional Training Program Past Chair: Su Baker, MEd
Email: subaker@videotron.ca
Professional Training Program Chair-elect: TBD
Email:

Complexities of Complex Trauma: Theory and Practice director:
Su Baker, MEd
Email: subaker@videotron.ca

From Complex Trauma to Dissociative Disorders: Theory and Practice directors:
Su Baker, MEd
Email: subaker@videotron.ca
Joan A. Turkus, MD
Email: joan.turkus@verizon.net

Advanced Topics in Complex Trauma and Dissociative Disorders directors:
Su Baker, MEd
Email: subaker@videotron.ca
Master Seminar Director: Joan A. Turkus, MD
Email: joan.turkus@verizon.net
International Course Director: Sandra Baita, MS
Email: sbaita@fibertel.com
Child & Adolescent Course Director: Frances S. Waters, DCSW, LMSW, LMFT
Email: fswaters@aol.com

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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 and dissociative disorders. For **Part 1** of the course, there is no need to have a client with a dissociative disorder.

**Meeting Frequency:** Once monthly for 8 months. This course can also be taught as double sessions (2 sessions in one day for 4 months).

**Course Format:** 2.5-hour sessions of literature review and discussion, lecture, exploration of a “teaching case” (case of Harold) and discussion of student cases (if applicable).

**Evaluation Forms:** After each session evaluation forms will be emailed to each participant who has purchased continuing education credits. At the end of the course a course evaluation will be emailed to all participants.

**History:** This course was originally created by Elizabeth Bowman, MD for the teaching of assessment and treatment of dissociative disorders to psychiatric residents. After it was donated to the ISSTD, it was revised by Richard Chefetz, MD. It has since undergone further revisions by Elizabeth Howell, PhD and Shielagh Schuster-Hochberg, PhD. We are grateful for all their contributions.

**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 *The ISSTD Newsletter* as well as many other benefits.

**Preamble to Part 1**
This course necessitates an understanding of psychodynamic psychotherapy, as it provides the framework for the treatment of complex trauma and dissociative disorders. If the student has not had either a course in psychodynamic psychotherapy, or training as a psychodynamic therapist, it is highly recommended that the following book be read before embarking on the course, From Complex Trauma to Dissociative Disorders: Theory and Practice, Part 1.

Course objectives:
Upon completion of Part 1, students will have:

- Reviewed the ISSTD guidelines for treatment of Dissociative Identity Disorder in Adults
- Discussed the history of the understanding of dissociation and its antecedents
- Explored the interplay of dissociation, trauma and multiplicity within the dynamic unconscious
- Explained the role of attachment in the development of dissociative disorders
- Explored the effects of chronic trauma and victimization
- Described developmental trauma in children
- Defined and described dissociation and its phenomena
- Defined “index of suspicion” and described subtle clues that may indicate a dissociative process.
- Explored various assessment tools for dissociative disorders
- Discussed the use of structured interviews in assessing dissociative disorders
- Outlined the different forms of memory (implicit, explicit, declarative, autobiographical, etc.)
- Discussed the effect of dissociation on memory
- Defined phase-oriented treatment of complex trauma and dissociative disorders
- Discussed the rationale for phase-oriented treatment of dissociative disorders
- Outlined the issues in developing self-care in patients with dissociative disorders
- Discussed the role of safety in the first stage of treatment in patients with dissociative disorders
- Described the need for and use of containment in treating dissociative disorder patients
- Discussed the relational dilemmas in treating complex trauma and dissociative disorders
- Explored the outcomes of chronic disempowerment as they are played out in therapy with dissociative disorder and complex trauma patients
- Described and discussed the need for good boundaries in treating dissociative disorder patients.
- Outlined some of the special features of treating DID patients
- Identified some of the controversies and future direction in the treatment of dissociative disorder patients.
- Applied the above theories to clinical practice utilizing the case of Harold
Required Texts:


Recommended texts:

Putnam, FW, (1989) *Diagnosis and treatment of Multiple Personality Disorder*. NY, NY: Guilford Press. – **Highly recommended** – while terminology might be out-of-date and some ideas and techniques are no longer, it remains one of the best general text on dissociative disorders, especially DID (formerly called MPD) – it is generally available second hand from places such as abebooks.com


Herman, JL (1997) *Trauma and Recovery: The aftermath of violence – from domestic abuse to political terror*. NY, NY: Basic Books

Articles and chapters (provided):


Liotti, G (2017) Conflicts between motivational systems related to attachment trauma: Key to understanding the intra-family relationship between abused children and their abusers, Journal of Trauma & Dissociation, 18:3, 304-318


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**Handouts**

ISSTD Guidelines for Treating Dissociative Identity Disorder in Adults, Third Revision
Memory Slides - O'Neil (with permission)
Memory-Traumatic memory – Turkus (with permission)
PCL-M for DSM-IV (11/1/94) Weathers, Litz, Huska, & Keane National Center for PTSD - Behavioral Science Division (public domain)
The Dissociative Experiences Scale (DES-II), Bernstein, E and Putnam, F – public domain
DES-Taxon (Excel spreadsheet to be emailed to students)

**FOR INSTRUCTORS ONLY**

Instructor’s manual

**Case (provided):**
The case of Harold (includes 4 parts, Harold’s sleep diary) – to be distributed by the instructor before classes 3, 4, 6, 8
From Complex Trauma to Dissociative Disorders: Theory and Practice, Part I

Session One
The International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD) Guidelines for treating DID in adults
A history of trauma and dissociation
Attachment and dissociation

Objectives:
1. Review the ISSTD Guidelines for treating DID in adults
2. Discuss the history of the understanding of dissociation and its antecedents
3. Explore the interplay of dissociation, trauma and multiplicity within the dynamic unconscious
4. Explain the role of attachment in the development of dissociative disorders

Readings:

Handout:
ISSTD Guidelines for Treating Dissociative Identity Disorder in Adults, Third Revision (2011)

Session Two
From complex trauma to dissociation

Objectives:
1. Explore the effects of chronic trauma and victimization
2. Describe developmental trauma in children
3. Define and describe dissociation and its phenomena

Readings:
• http://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/PTSD-overview/dsm5_criteria_ptsd.asp

**Handouts:**

**Session Three**

*Assessment and diagnosis of Dissociative Identity Disorder (and OSDD-1)*
*Integrating theory into clinical work (Part 1a)*

**Objectives:**
1. Define “index of suspicion” and describe subtle clues that may indicate a dissociative process, including hearing voices
2. Explore various assessment tools for dissociative disorders
3. Discuss the use of structured interviews in assessing dissociative disorders.
4. Apply theory from previous sessions to cases of Harold

**Readings:**

**Handouts:**
Dissociative Experiences Scale II (DES-II) (DES-T Excel file sent as attachment for scoring)
PTSD Checklist – Civilian version (PCL-C)

The case of Harold: Part 1a and Harold’s sleep diary

**Session Four**  
*Trauma, dissociation and memory*  
*Integrating theory into clinical work (Part 1b)*

Objectives  
1. Outline the different forms of memory (implicit, explicit, declarative, autobiographical, etc.)  
2. Discuss the effect of dissociation on memory.  
3. Apply theory from previous sessions to the cases of Harold

Readings:  

Handouts:  
Turkus PowerPoint on memory  
O’Neil PowerPoint on memory  
The case of Harold: Part 1b

**Session Five**  
*Beginning therapy and its vicissitudes*

Objectives:  
1. Define phase-oriented treatment of complex trauma and dissociative disorders  
2. Discuss the rationale for phase-oriented treatment of dissociative disorders  
3. Outline the issues in developing self-care in patients with dissociative disorders

Readings:  

Handouts:

Session Six
Beginning therapy and it vicissitudes (continued)
Integrating theory into clinical work (Part 2)

Objectives:
1. Discuss the role of safety in the first stage of treatment in patients with dissociative disorders
2. Describe the need for and use of containment in treating dissociative disorder patients
3. Apply theory from previous sessions to the cases of Harold

Readings:

Handouts:
The case of Harold, Part 2

Session Seven
The treatment frame and beyond

Objectives:
1. Discuss the relational dilemmas in treating complex trauma and dissociative disorders
2. Explore the outcomes of chronic disempowerment as they are played out in therapy with dissociative disorder and complex trauma patients
3. Describe and discuss the need for good boundaries in treating dissociative disorder patients.

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Readings:

Handouts:

**Session Eight**
*Treating Dissociative Identity Disorder*
*Integrating theory with clinical work (Part 3)*
*Future directions in trauma and dissociation (intro to Level 2 course, part 2)*

Objectives:
1. Outline some of the special features of treating DID patients
2. Identify some of the controversies and future direction in the treatment of dissociative disorder patients.
3. Apply theory from previous sessions to the cases of Harold

Readings:

Handouts:
The case of Harold, Part 3