

Is That Mine or Yours? Recognizing and Bringing to Consciousness the Client's Untold Story

January 22, 2021 | 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM EST

Presenter: D Michael Coy, MA, LICSW



Presenter Biography: D. Michael Coy, MA, LICSW, is a Seattle-based therapist whose focus in the integrative treatment of persons who have struggled with the effects of pre-verbal and attachment trauma, addictions/compulsions, and complex trauma and dissociative disorders. Michael is an EMDRIA Approved Consultant, has intermediate training in clinical hypnosis through ASCH, and is Level I trained in Sensorimotor Psychotherapy. He served on the Standards & Training committee of the EMDR International Association from 2014 to 2017. From 2017 to 2020, Michael co-chaired the ISSTD EMDR Therapy Training Task Group, which produced ISSTD's newly EMDRIA-accredited EMDR therapy basic training, which he also co-trains. In 2020, he was appointed to the EMDR Council of Scholars Future of EMDR Therapy Project, Clinical Practice Working Group. Since 2016, Michael has collaborated with Jennifer Madere and Multidimensional Inventory of Dissociation developer Paul F. Dell, PhD, to make the MID more accessible to clinicians, and is co-author of the Interpretive Manual for the Multidimensional Inventory of Dissociation Analysis, 3rd Edition. Additionally, he manages the MID Analysis, which is the calculation program that generates MID results and is currently in version 5.0, and the MID website. Michael currently serves as Treasurer, and in 2019 was named a Fellow, of the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD).

Content Level: Intermediate

Potential to Distress: No

Abstract: It has been established that attachment relationships, most notably between parents and children, include somatosensory communication via mirror neurons. This phenomenon, which can also manifest in the therapeutic relationship, is variously described as radical empathy, resonance, and a form of projective identification. Regardless of its name, empathic attunement to somatosensory information coming from the client can serve as a powerful conduit for information needed to help them work through dissociated memory material. Information about the client's experience may present itself to the therapist in ways that the client may not yet recognize in themselves, and which may not be immediately obvious to the therapist without some kind of framework for recognizing, stepping back from, and contextualizing it for the client. This presentation will draw upon the available clinical and scientific literatures to explore empathic attunement as it manifests between the client and therapist. First, existing, psychodynamic, attachment, and dissociation-aware conceptualizations will be touched upon to contextualize this phenomenon; next, the evolution of scientific research that has lent support to these theories will be summarized; then, a practical, integrative technique for recognizing, framing, and bringing to consciousness dissociated material will be described and illustrated, via case examples. Finally, a discussion of the toll that this level of ongoing, deeply-experienced empathic resonance can have upon the therapist, as well as strategies for emotional cleansing, will be offered.

Objectives

Upon Completion of this webinar, participants will be able to:

- Name two ways of contextualizing non-verbal, empathic attunement
- Name at least two studies supporting the existing of mirror neuron function at the emotional level
- Identify three manifestations of empathic attunement in the psychotherapy relationship
- Name the elements of a technique for recognizing, framing, and bringing to consciousness dissociated material to resolve it

- Identify three strategies that can enhance one's capacity for attunement

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References

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