

Relational Challenges in Therapy of Complex Trauma-related Disorders

Presenters: *Kathy Steele & Suzette Boon*

Time: *23.1. / 20.2. / 27.3. / 24.4. / 15.5. / 12.6. / 21.8. / 11.9. / 16.10. / 6.11. / 4.12.2025*
(4:00 PM – 6:00 PM)

Price: *€100 + 25.5% VAT / individual webinars*
€900 + 25,5% VAT / full series

Group discount: *-10% (for groups of 3-10 people)*
(Invoiced in installments prior to each day)

Registration: *For the full series, please register by 10 January 2025, and for individual webinars, at least two weeks before each session.*

Participants will receive a Zoom link via email shortly before the training, allowing them to join the session.

This webinar series will offer an in-depth look at relational difficulties in the therapeutic relationship with clients who have complex trauma-related disorders, ranging from Complex PTSD to OSDD to DID. An initial overview of these disorders and their treatment will be offered as a foundation for the remainder of the course. We will explore how to manage extreme avoidance and defenses, particularly that which manifests as protections against the therapeutic relationship. A perspective on trauma-related phobias will be shared, with emphasis on how to overcome these phobias, particularly the phobia of attachment and of attachment loss. A unique perspective on ways clients use relational strategies that emerge from other innate motivational systems besides attachment will be discussed. Both transference and countertransference issues will be explored. These include not only devaluation, rage, shame, and disappointment, but also idealization and positive emotions that can potentially interfere with effective therapy.

While safe attachment is always emphasized as being important in therapy, we will explore the types of boundaries and limits that are essential and what kind of relational strategies are helpful, as well as ways to manage dependency compassionately and effectively on the therapist. In addition, we will explore how to effectively and safely work with self-harm and suicidality, and how to understand somatic symptoms such as dissociative communications. Finally, we will explore important aspects of self-care for therapists, including how to recognize and resolve vicarious traumatization and burnout.

Objectives

Participants will be able to:

1. Name the major criteria and differences between the complex trauma-related disorders
2. Name the three major phases of treatment for complex trauma and dissociation

3. List the major trauma-related phobias and their basic treatment
4. List and discuss the implications of motivational systems in working with relational challenges in complex trauma and dissociation
5. Employ at least four interventions to work with relational defenses
6. Discuss implications of both positive and negative transference and countertransference in the treatment of complex trauma and dissociation.
7. Identify specific boundaries and limits that are important in treatment and discuss when and when not to flex these.
8. Employ effective strategies to identify and work with maladaptive dependency in the therapeutic relationship
9. Assess self-harm and suicidality in clients with complex trauma and employ at least five interventions to improve safety and regulation.
10. Identify symptoms of dissociative distancing, amnesia, and other types of non-realization and employ strategies to improve clients' ability to accept and integrate their past and present experiences.
11. Analyze somatic and functional systems that may have dissociative communications and explain how to work with these effectively

Program:

23.1.2025	Introduction to complex trauma-related disorders (complex PTSD, dissociative disorders) / Kathy Steele
20.2.2025	Phobic avoidance / Kathy Steele
27.3.2025	Motivational systems and relational strategies in trauma / Kathy Steele
24.4.2025	Relational Defenses / Kathy Steele
15.5.2025	Transference and countertransference / Suzette Boon
12.6.2025	Boundaries / Suzette Boon
21.8.2025	Dependency / Kathy Steele
11.9.2025	Behavioral challenges 1 / Suzette Boon
16.10.2025	Behavioral challenges 2 / Suzette Boon
6.11.2025	Behavioral challenges 3 / Suzette Boon
4.12.2025	Therapist self care / Kathy Steele ja Suzette Boon

Registrations for the entire series must be completed by January 10, 2025.

For individual webinars, registration must be done at least **two weeks prior to the training date**

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Kathy Steele, MN, CS has been in private practice in Atlanta, Georgia since 1985. She is also an Adjunct Faculty at Emory University. Kathy is a Fellow and a past President of the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD). She is the recipient of several awards for her clinical and published works, including the 2010 Lifetime Achievement Award. She received a Distinguished Alumni Award from Emory University in 2006. She has authored numerous publications in the field of trauma and dissociation, including three books, and many book chapters and peer-reviewed journal articles. She is sought as a consultant and supervisor, and as an international lecturer on topics related to trauma, dissociation, attachment, and psychotherapy.



Suzette A. Boon PhD, 1949, is a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist specialized in the treatment of chronic traumatization and dissociative disorders. She translated and validated the Dutch version of the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV Dissociative Disorders (SCID-D) and received a PhD for her thesis “Multiple Personality Disorder in the Netherlands” in 1993. She has published several books, book chapters and many articles both on diagnosis as well as treatment of dissociative disorders. She has developed a skills training manual for patients with a complex dissociative disorder: *Coping with Trauma-Related Dissociation* (Boon, Steele, & Van der Hart, 2011). She is co-author of the book “*Treating Trauma-Related Dissociation, A Practical, Integrative Approach*” (Steele, Boon & Van derHart, 2017) that won the Pierre Janet writing award of ISSTD in 2017. She has developed a new semi structured interview for complex dissociative disorders and trauma related symptoms: the “*Trauma and Dissociation Symptoms Interview (TADS-I)* “. A new book, *Assessing Trauma-Related Dissociation, with the TADS-I*, including this diagnostic interview, has just been published (Boon, 2023). She is currently working working in private practice. She is a trainer and supervisor and teaches in many different countries.



Suzette is co-founder of the European Society for Trauma and Dissociation (ESTD) and was the first president of this Society. The International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD) granted her the David Caul Memorial Award in 1993, the Morton Prince Award in 1994 and the President’s Award of distinction and the status of fellow in 1995 for her contributions to diagnosis, treatment, research and education in the field of dissociative disorders. In 2009 She received the LifeTime Achievement Award and in 2011 the Pierre Janet Writing Award for the book *Coping with trauma-related Dissociation a skills training for patients and their therapists*. In 2017 she received the Pierre Janet Writing Award as second author of the book *Treating Trauma-related Dissociation. A practical integrative approach*.

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