

TITLE

The Compassionate Mind Approach to Recovering from Complex PTSD *A workshop to explore therapeutic ways to work with the effects of interpersonal trauma and shame.*

Abstract

This workshop will present a treatment programme to work with Complex PTSD using a compassion focused approach to enhance evidence- based practice.

Those who have been repeatedly traumatised at the hands of others have many challenges to face as they discover how to live a life without trauma and learn how to live in a mind that can flourish. Predominant issues of self- blame, self- loathing, lack of trust, interpersonal difficulties, struggles to regulate threat-based emotions, flashbacks, avoidance and disconnection are prevalent issues to be addressed in therapy. These difficulties are often described as Complex PTSD.

Recent expert consensus (published by the UK Psychological Trauma Society, 2017) recommends Compassion Focused Therapy as part of a phased treatment approach for Complex PTSD and this workshop will explore how to use CFT to develop compassionate resilience as part of this phased based approach. Compassionate resilience can enhance the capacity to self soothe in those who feel deeply shamed about who they are and what they have been through. Being able to access caring compassionate mind states can enhance engagement and provide a safe framework to work directly with trauma narratives and flashbacks.

Compassion focused therapy was developed by Professor Paul Gilbert (2005,2009). The explicit goal is to develop, access and stimulate positive affect associated with self-soothing in the mind and body of the patient in order to promote an inner sense of psychological safeness (Gilbert, 2005).

Learning Objectives

- To learn how to develop compassionate resilience using CFT theory and practice.
- To learn ways to work directly with shame- based trauma memories using the compassionate soothing system.

Key references:

- Ashfield E., Chan, C & Lee, D.A., (submitted). Building “A Compassionate Armour”: The Journey to Develop Strength and Self-Compassion in a Group Treatment for Complex PTSD.
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