

Hypnosis for the Treatment of Developmental Trauma Disorders

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Many clients treated for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder have Complex Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (CPTSD). CPTSD is associated with histories of prolonged trauma, abuse, and neglect and is considered a form of developmental trauma. Such Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders include disturbances of self-organization that overlap with attachment deficits and pathologies requiring specialized interventions to modify.

Prolonged neglect and abuse are associated with attachment anomalies, strong egosyntonic negative beliefs, and dissociation that are not readily changed with CBT or cognitive hypnotic interventions. These underlying aspects of developmental trauma involve the implicit memory system and early learning that psychoanalysts call the unrepressed unconscious.

This workshop will delineate the role of implicit memory in trauma-related disorders and address strategies for modifying implicit memories not accessible through cognitive methods (Normative Implicit Clinical Hypnosis). Hypnotic and biobehavioral techniques for polyvagal-based interventions, attachment repair, and memory reconsolidation update will be integrated into a phase-oriented treatment model. Participants will learn how to establish the neurophysiological substrate for neuroception of safety and equip patients with the prerequisite skills necessary for mastery of traumatic and wounding experiences. Application of exploratory techniques combined with memory reconsolidation update strategies to modify negative egosyntonic beliefs and transform traumatic memories will be delineated. Once adequate stabilization is attained and sufficient memory integration established, treatment can focus on self-development and solidifying the sense of self.

The workshop will provide sufficient information for participants new to the advanced hypnosis workshops and more senior practitioners looking for specialized training in trauma, complex trauma, and attachment disorder applications. A comprehensive hypnotic approach, including relevant non-hypnotic components, will be outlined and taught through didactic presentation, demonstration, and dyadic and small group practice.

Educational Objectives:

Participants will be able to delineate and apply the following:

1. The three components of the phase-oriented trauma treatment approach and specific hypnotic strategies for each.
2. Normative Implicit Clinical Hypnosis.
3. The Polyvagal Theory, its relevance to establishing a neurophysiological substrate for trauma processing and attachment repair, and three strategies for generating neuroception of safety.
4. Explain the importance of prioritizing neglect repair.
5. Three hypnotic implicit memory modification strategies.
6. Three strategies for accessing remote experiences associated with ego-syntonic negative beliefs and symptoms.
7. Three strategies for memory reconsolidation updating specific traumatic memories.

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