

# **Attachment and Affect Regulation Theory: Clinical Applications**

**Six Saturdays, January 5 - Feb 23, 2019**

*(no class on February 16)*

**9:30am-12:00pm**

Each session begins with presentation/discussion and is followed by small clinical group supervision. The 7-8 member supervision groups are facilitated to create a safe space to present and explore case material from the perspectives discussed in the course.

**Credits:** 15 CEs; or 9 CEs and 6 Group Supervision hours (for those pursuing LCSW licensure)

**Tuition:** \$330 (*\$300 for current PSCSW members*) - *Fee is payable upon registration*

## **MISSION**

“The therapist’s role is analogous to that of a mother who provides her child with a secure base from which to explore the world.”--Bowlby

Attachment Theory provides an overarching framework from which to understand our clients’ distress and their attempts to cope with that distress, as well the reparative potential of the therapy relationship. Increasingly attachment theory is being understood as a regulation theory. We will consider how our early experiences with caregivers shape the ways we regulate our affect. We will discuss implicit memory systems, discussing how early information from our relational environment is processed nonconsciously and shapes the neural structures that we then use to process subsequent information.

Characteristics of attachment security and patterns of attachment insecurity will be discussed, including how attachment insecurity underlies personality organization, symptoms of anxiety and depression, anger expression and relationship dynamics. Our knowledge of attachment theory will be applied to our clinical work by taking a view of the therapeutic relationship as an attachment relationship with goals of promoting self integration, affect regulation, reflectiveness, and the capacity for healthy dependency in our clients. The role of nonverbal, unconscious communication is emphasized. Mentalization, or reflective functioning, is explicated and understood as a mechanism for cultivating attachment security. Additionally, the therapist’s attachment style and how it affects the treatment process is explored. To maintain a cohesive cohort, participants are expected to commit to attendance at all sessions.

## **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

Participants in this program will:

- Discuss the role of attachment in early development, including its central role in affect regulation and the construction of the self.
- Identify the characteristics of: secure attachment, insecure attachment and disorganized attachment.
- Compare and contrast the Main and Crittenden models of attachment strategies.
- Critique attachment theory’s applicability across culture, class, race, ethnicity and gender.

- Discuss the importance of working with the nonverbal in psychotherapy and methods for doing so.
- Describe how to foster therapy relationships that serve as reparative attachment relationships for our dismissing, preoccupied and disorganized clients.
- Discuss anxiety, depression and personality organization using an attachment theory lens and indicate how this understanding influences treatment approaches.
- Discuss how attachment theory is useful in conceptualizing psychosocial and relational struggles throughout the lifespan.
- Identify ones own attachment patterns and reflect on how these affect one's work with clients.

### **FACULTY**

**Toni Mandelbaum, PhD, LCSW**, is in private practice in Center City Philadelphia and works with individuals and couples utilizing an attachment framework. She received her MSW from Columbia University and later, completed a three-year training program with The Family Institute of Philadelphia. Additionally, she is a certified coder for the Adult Attachment Interview. She co-authored two chapters as well as journal articles on attachment theory and family therapy. Recently, Toni completed her doctorate at Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research. Her dissertation research focused on an empirically-based study of the relationship between attachment strategies and grit.

**Leda Sportolari, MSW, LCSW**, is in private practice in Bala Cynwyd, working with children, adolescents, adults, couples and families. She has a particular interest in working with young children and their families, using an attachment-based perspective to understand and treat social-emotional-behavioral problems. Leda is past-president of the Pennsylvania Society for Clinical Social Work and is an adjunct faculty member at the Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research. She is a therapist and consultation group leader with *A Home Within*, a nonprofit organization that offers pro-bono ongoing therapy to children and youth who are in or have been in foster care. She offers sliding scale clinical supervision to MSWs pursuing LCSW licensure.

### **CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS**

Nine (9) continuing education credits are available to students who apply the 6 group supervision hours toward their LCSW supervision requirements\*. Those students who do not plan to use the group supervision hours toward LCSW requirements are eligible to receive 15 continuing education credits for the program (2.5/session). Total continuing education credits earned will be emailed following the completion of the program.

### **\*GROUP SUPERVISION REGULATIONS**

*State board regulations stipulate that group supervision be done simultaneously with individual supervision. Since the maximum number of supervision hours per week is two, one of those hours must be individual.*