

## Schema Therapy at the Coalface – Sydney – 24<sup>th</sup> April (2020)

### List of Confirmed Presentations

<https://schematherapysydney.com.au/coalface2020/>

1. **Andrew Phipps – “Am I Understanding You?”: Building Emotion Recognition Skills to Enhance Schema Attunement and Interpersonal Connection.** The ability to accurately recognise the emotions of others is fundamental to successful psychotherapy. Despite this widely held assumption, very little investigation has been conducted to evaluate clinician’s ability to accurately recognise emotions in others. Similarly, training in this fundamental skill seems almost non-existent across university and other professional training settings. It seems that we merely assume that we inherently have this capacity. From the limited research available, it actually appears that we vary greatly in our ability to accurately recognise the emotional state of others in the therapy context. This paper aims to briefly review the literature on this topic. Training techniques to enhance our capacity in this domain are demonstrated and practiced. Application to schema and mode attunement is highlighted. Therapist schemas, which have been shown to influence the appraisal of emotions in others, are also reviewed.
2. **Ruth Holt – From Chaos to Connection: An Introduction to Schema Couples Therapy.** Couples Schema Therapy brings together powerful Schema Therapy interventions with couple-specific approaches to help couples with complex and chronic issues. Ruth will discuss how to formulate and work with couples, providing an introduction to mode clash cycles and imagery work in this context. She will be describing her work with Jan\* and Jeff\* (Pseudonyms), a couple who presented with a high level of conflict and a background of complex trauma, with one partner presenting with issues with alcohol and an affair. This session will be helpful for those who work with couples and those wanting to assist individual clients to improve their relationship dynamic.
3. **Sharon Stern – The Punitive Parent Mode: Friend or Foe? Creative Ways to Work with the Punitive Parent Mode.** Chairwork with the punitive parent traditionally supports the client to ‘banish’ the critical, punitive part of themselves, thus allowing them to connect with their vulnerability. Whilst this works well for some clients, others seem wedded to their punitive, shaming parent modes, so that banishing this part of themselves seems more threatening than anything else. This workshop will present creative ways to dialogue with the punitive parent mode, helping clients to understand its role in helping them survive thus far. You will learn ways to help elucidate for the client why their punitive parent mode seems so intractable, and to form an alliance with it, allowing it to become flexible, relevant, and ultimately more ‘friend’ than ‘foe’.
4. **Lynda Parry – Schema Therapy with Dreams: Accessing the Vulnerable Child Mode.** Dreams can reveal modes and schemas that may not have yet emerged in sessions. Working with dreams gives the practitioner access to these, particularly the vulnerable child mode. Research has revealed that dreams play a significant role in memory consolidation. They link present experience with similar experiences from the past in a way that can change both. Hence ST interventions, particularly, limited reparenting, get consolidated into long term memory. Dream can provide an indicator of the effectiveness of treatment. A one-session focus a dream can be effective or sometimes a particular dream can guide the course of

therapy. A brief case study of how one dream was worked with from the middle phase of therapy to the end of treatment will be presented.

5. **Lucie Swaffield – “You just get paid to be here...” Application of Schema Therapy in a Forensic Context.** Many people who criminally offend and cause harm to the community do want help to change their life patterns. Yet the treatment available to these clients is vastly limited. Client and therapist behaviours too often interfere with engagement and outcomes, presenting another barrier for receiving help to change. We found ourselves turning to Schema Therapy when other modalities were often not effective. This presentation will examine outcomes in one forensic treatment context, as well as the utility of Schema Therapy for forensic problems in general.
6. **Xi Liu – When the Vulnerable Child is a different gender – Adapting Emotional Focused interventions in Gender Dysphoria for Transgender and Gender Non-confirming clients.** Transgender and gender non-confirming (TGNC) individuals have a great need for affirmation of their gender identity from family and peer groups, particularly during early childhood where gender dysphoria is often first experienced. However, due to the significant level of societal stigma and discrimination, a large proportion of TGNC individuals experience verbal, physical and psychological violence by their family and peers due to their gender expression. Given this, it is expected that early maladaptive schemas are highly prevalent in this group, particularly in the disconnection/rejection domain. Limited Reparenting with this population must include an affirmation of the client’s gender identity (which is incongruent with their sex assigned at birth) in order to provide a corrective emotional experience. A case presentation will be used to explore some of the ways Schema Therapy can be respectfully adapted and how a strong therapeutic alliance can be formed.
7. **Gemma Gladstone – Working with Complicated Grief in Schema Therapy.** Many clients presenting for therapy carry some degree of unprocessed loss, whether in the form of specific bereavements or as integral components of other difficult life experiences (eg, early abandonments / trauma). This presentation will provide an overview of the factors which often contribute towards complicated bereavements and the experiential interventions therapists can use to address them. A clinical case example will be used to illustrate the role that early losses and abandonments play in the development of complicated adjustments to grief later in life. Treatments involving imagery to heal the grieving/abandoned child and chairwork role-plays will be discussed as creative and powerful methods to work through painful emotions.
8. **Evelyn Smith – Schema Therapy for Eating Disorders: Results of a Multisite Trial of Group Schema Therapy for Eating Disorders.** Evelyn is presenting these final results for the first time and will discuss clinical implications and key learnings from the trial.
9. **Robert Brockman – Innovations, Research, and Frontiers of Schema Therapy Practice – 2020 and Beyond**
10. **Adele Stavropoulos – Brief Research Presentation: Imagery Rescripting for Intrusive Memories in Depression.** Adele is running a single case experimental series for her Phd and will share case material and insights learned from the trial.