



# Enacting Distress: Clarifying and Working with Trauma Expressions

## Addressing the clinical interface between complex trauma and dissociation.

It is well known that trauma is re-enacted but the re-enactment of trauma poses many clinical challenges. This is partly because unresolved trauma is often dissociated and non-verbal, expressed in domains other than spoken language.

While the basic trauma response of 'fight/flight/freeze' is now familiar, less attention has been paid to the third of these and to dissociative responses in which what cannot be expressed in words is interpersonalised and enacted including in the therapy room.

Many clinicians recognize that trauma is enacted in the lives of their clients but are less attuned to how it plays out *within the therapy relationship itself*. This is especially when the trauma is complex.

This seminar addresses the interface between complex trauma and dissociation, which is interpersonalised in the form of enactments which occur *within* - as well as outside - the therapy room, and which can derail the therapy unless identified and addressed. While this task falls to the therapist, the role of unconscious dynamics and intersubjectivity pose ongoing challenges to effective trauma therapy.

The seminar explains why enactments (*'the interpersonalisation of dissociation'*) are frequent

and inevitable in therapy for complex trauma, how to identify them, and how to address the clinical challenges which arise when they occur.

Via initial focus on the nature and process of dissociation, we will explore how this process becomes enacted and interpersonalised in the therapy room, and how the attempt of the client to self-protect can tangle with our own unconscious processes. This will assist in navigation of crises and 'stuckness' which are common in clinical work of various types. It will also enhance confidence in addressing the many therapeutic challenges involved.

### Learning objectives of this training:

1. Understand the relationship between complex trauma and dissociation.
2. Recognise how dissociated experience is enacted in the therapy room.
3. Identify ways in which the therapist, in interaction with the client, participates in enactments.
4. Assist the client to tolerate previously overwhelming experience via our own ability to navigate enactments in the therapy room.



**Pam Stavropoulos PhD** is an educator, consultant and therapist, with a particular interest in the politics of trauma and depression. A member of the Advisory Board of the Scientific Committee of the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD) she is co-author of the nationally and internationally endorsed *Practice Guidelines for Clinical Treatment of Complex Trauma* (2019). A former Fulbright scholar, Pam has held lectureships at Macquarie University and the University of New England, and is a former Program Director at the Jansen Newman Institute where she also taught in the Master's program. She is the author of *Living under Liberalism: The Politics of Depression in Western Democracies* (Florida: Universal, 2008) has written research reports in the community health sector, and is also a clinical supervisor.

**This training may qualify for Focussed Psychological Strategies (FPS) CPD. Please refer to the Dept. of Health <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/mental-ba-focus#cpd> for more information.**

**MELBOURNE: 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2020**  
MANTRA ON RUSSELL

**SYDNEY: 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020**  
UTS SHORT COURSE ROOMS

Our continuing professional development events meet the quality standard recognised by many relevant professional associations including psychology, social work, occupational therapy, mental health nursing, community work, counselling, psychotherapy and more.

*We recommend checking with your association for the correct calculation of points for this event.*

A certificate of attendance for 7 hours of face-to-face training is issued in the week following attendance at this event.

### Morning Session

includes a short morning tea break

Confirming the principles of effective trauma therapy

Focus on dissociation: why so important and why still overlooked?

Enactment: the interpersonalisation of dissociation and how it impacts therapy

### Afternoon Session

includes a short afternoon tea break

Recognising enactments in the therapy room.

Identifying our role as therapists in 'in session' enactments with our clients.

Responding to the clinical challenges of dissociative enactment in complex trauma therapy.

Evaluation and closing.

***"Enactments are frequent within as well as outside the therapy room but provide ongoing opportunities for effective trauma therapy!"*** Pam Stavropoulos.

### How will you benefit from attending this training?

- A new framework for understanding crises and 'feeling stuck' with complex trauma clients
- Ways to work with dissociation and enactments which occur in therapy
- Increased confidence to use own responses to assist the client who is self-protecting from overwhelm

### Registration details:

Registration fee: **\$298**

A current PDP 'Student and New Graduate' discount code may be applied to this standard registration fee. (Apply online)

This seminar provides 7 hours for CPD points.

Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea included.

We accept payment by Visa, Mastercard, Amex PayPal, cheque and EFT.

**Register at [www.PDPseminars.com.au](http://www.PDPseminars.com.au) or call us on 1300 887 622**

**This seminar has been designed to extend the clinical knowledge and applied skill of Psychologists, Counsellors, Psychotherapists, Coaches, Social Workers and Psychiatrists with little knowledge of Existential theory and practice.**

Many clinicians are aware of trauma but less aware of trauma-related dissociation, particularly in relation to complex presentations. For this reason, prior knowledge is not assumed and practitioners with diverse qualifications and skill levels will benefit. Therapists already attuned to complex trauma and dissociation will also benefit from the direct focus on clinical challenges posed by enactments in the therapy room and how to address them.

### Feedback from Pam's recent presentations of this workshop:

*"Great seminar! Pam is exceptional! She has great knowledge, she cares that we learn and can apply what she imparts and the day was so beneficial for me."*

*"Pam, thank you for your presentation which was thoughtful and well-prepared and along with your clinical expertise was an incredible day of learning for me. I feel so much more prepared and skilled for my work now."*

*"Presenter was excellent, demonstrated high level of interest and experience in the area. Excellent presentation skills"*

*"Content was comprehensive and very well evidence-based. Thank you for your wisdom, examples of practice and discussions."*

*"As a student this course was extremely helpful in giving me a solid foundation on a difficult topic."*

*"Content of the seminar was really helpful to me. The presenter clearly has lots of experience and knowledge and conveyed it clearly."*

*"This was the best training I have ever been on and would recommend any I meet to do this training. It's a wonderful training. Thank you."*

*"The trainer's knowledge was amazing." "Well presented course that raised many points relevant to my current clinical practice."*

*"I thoroughly enjoyed the course and will definitely attend more PDP courses and in particular with Pam."*

*"A most informative and valuable resource for my ability to improve my understanding of the role of non-verbal experience and the body. Many rich resources supplied. Thank you Pam."*

*"I was really impressed by the facilitation of the topic by Pam and the professionalism of your representative. The venue choice is compatible, and the refreshments provided were excellent and more than enough."*