

The Heart of Trauma: Healing Our Embodied Brains in the Context of Relationships

36-hour advanced training in the theory and practice of healing trauma through the lens of
Interpersonal Neurobiology

Facilitated by Karen Welch, LMFT and Heidi Struble, MFA

The training will be comprised of 2 3-day 18-hour training sessions, no partial credit.

Session 1:

Day 1: We will begin each session with a mindfulness practice to foster embodiment and nonjudgmental awareness as a foundation for cultivating greater presence with our clients. We will form Listening Partnerships for this course and then begin to discuss a new definition of trauma that is informed by interpersonal neurobiology. We will then talk about how potential traumas embed and form embodied implicit memories that continue to affect the daily lives of our clients. We will discuss how experiential methods (sand tray, nondominant hand drawing, exploration of gestures) can provide disconfirming/reparative experiences for implicit memory healing for our clients.

Learning objectives:

- . List the steps in the mindfulness practice for embodiment and nonjudgmental awareness.
- . Discuss the definition of trauma suggested by interpersonal neurobiology.
- . Describe how this definition will in itself support healing for our clients.
- . Describe how traumas embed as implicit memories that can remain influential throughout life.
- . List two the ways that experiential methods can facilitate healing from trauma.

Day 2: After opening with the mindfulness practice, we will discuss in detail how the felt sense of embedded traumatic memories can change through provision of disconfirmation in the relationship with the therapist. Then we will describe how the embodied brain (skin, muscles, enteric nervous system and microbiome, heart brain, autonomic nervous system) are influenced by experiences of pain and fear that overwhelm our resources. To further embed the principles, we will use sand tray work and non-dominant hand drawing to explore the ways that these techniques facilitate healing.

Learning objectives:

- . List the two criteria for disconfirming/reparative experiences.
- . Describe how trauma can affect the enteric nervous system over the course of our clients' lives.
- . Discuss the three branches of the autonomic nervous system and how they are affected by traumatic experiences.
- . Explain how the microbiome influences the neurotransmitters that are available to the skull brain.

. Identify two ways that the experience of sand tray and non-dominant hand drawing make implicit memories more available.

Day 3: After beginning the day with the mindfulness practice, we will revisit our sand trays and non-dominant hand drawings to discuss what may have integrated overnight as a way to better understand our clients' experiences with these methods. This will be followed by group discussion to further of the process. We will discuss the process of leading, following, and responding to provide maximum safety for our clients. We will explain in detail how this healing path unfolds in the therapy room. We will return to the sand tray experience to further demonstrate the efficacy of these experiential methods with our clients. We will conclude the day with review of the principles we have discussed during our first weekend together.

Learning objectives:

- . Discuss how sand tray and non-dominant hand drawing can regulate the nervous system.
- . Describe the process of leading, following, and responding, emphasizing its capacity to create safety for our clients.
- . Apply the principles of leading, following, and responding to experiences with current clients.
- . List two necessary conditions for healing embedded traumas we have discussed during this three-day training.

Session 2:

Day 1: Review the mindfulness practice for embodiment and nonjudgmental presence. Discuss how the information and experiences from the first gathering are being applied with clients. We will explain how inner community members are formed in the process of embedding traumas, focusing particularly on mirror neurons and resonance circuitry. We will further demonstrate how inner communities are formed by having the group embody the process, taking on different roles. We will then extensively explain and discuss how the embodied brain is affected by these internalizations. We will return to sand tray and non-dominant hand drawing to further demonstrate how this process can support healing traumatized clients. We will begin the sand tray process with a nourishing pair to demonstrate how this anchors the work with a resource. In preparation for our work tomorrow, we will conclude the day with group discussion about how protectors are formed and how they function.

Learning objectives:

- . List two ways you are applying the principles from the first gathering with your clients.
- . Describe how mirror neurons and resonance circuitry are central to the development of inner community members.
- . Discuss how nourishing pairs become permanent resources of the inner community.
- . Explain the development of protectors as part of our response to embedding traumas.

Day 2: After doing our morning practice and discussing any questions from the previous day, describe how yesterday's tray may have integrated overnight. We will further discuss the nature and value of protectors to expand our capacity to be with these aspects of our clients, emphasizing how they were adaptive then and continue to be adaptive now. We will then explain approaches to working with the imported person in the pair (the person who harmed us) as a potent resource for healing trauma. We will describe the importance of radical inclusiveness of all parts as the key to establishing and maintaining safety and widening the joined windows of tolerance. To further demonstrate the usefulness of sand tray and non-dominant hand drawing, we will return to this work with the emphasis on healing the imported person in the dyad.

Learning objectives:

- . Discuss the process of radical inclusion of protectors and its importance for our clients' safety.
- . List two ways that protectors are essential for the well-being of our clients' daily life.
- . Explain how protectors are not only adaptive at the time they emerge, but continue to be adaptive now.
- . Explain how it is possible for the imported person who wounded us to be healed.

Day 3: After beginning with our morning practice to continue to deepen our capacity for nonjudgmental awareness, we will discuss what changes participants have seen with their clients since beginning this practice, particularly in regard to safety. We will further demonstrate the efficacy of these methods by sitting with yesterday's trays and pictures to experience what integration may have occurred. We will apply these teachings to how we can support our clients in healing deeply embedded traumatic experiences. We will review the process of internalization, with the emphasis on internalization of the therapist. We will conclude this second weekend with discussion of how and open the group to discussing particular clients with whom they are currently working. We will conclude with a mindfulness practice of parting.

Learning objectives:

- . Discuss how the practice of nonjudgmental awareness supports safety for our clients.
- . Discuss how the process of internalizing those who have caused us pain and fear insures that we can resolve traumas that might otherwise go unhealed.
- . Discuss the process and value of internalizing the therapist.
- . List two ways we can support our clients in internalizing us as a permanent resource.