

Embodied Presence and the Observing Self

Regulating Affect, Processing Experience and Enhancing Inner Attunement

Based on practices used with patients derived from the published work of
psychotherapists informed by interpersonal neurobiology

Presented by John Bristow

Date: Friday 17th May 2019
Times: 10am arrival for 10:30am start, 5pm finish
Cost: ACAT Member £110 (online) / £125 (invoice/cheque) | Non-member £125 (online) / £140 (invoice or cheque)
Location: Board Room, Institute of Biomedical Science, 12 Coldbath Square, London, EC1R 5HL

The aim of this seminar is to become more aware of how the neurosciences can inform and deepen our practice of psychotherapy *within the CAT model*: co-regulating affect, practising dual awareness (observing while accessing and sensing implicit, state-specific emotional memories), facilitating both inner attunement with parts of the self and felt corrective, reparative experiences, that together lead to a more connected, stabilised sense of self and a greater sense of resilience.

The key learning outcomes of the day will be to use practices grounded in neuroscience to:

- Deepen the use of our embodied presence in being with our patients or clients so that *together* we can regulate arousal, bring together the experiencing and observing parts of self, and create and return to a more complete and full awareness of what is being experienced so as not to be lost in it or overwhelmed by it.
- Become familiar with basic methods of equipping and resourcing people for this, so as to feel safe and grounded enough to sense, observe and make sense of traumatic memories and unmanageable feelings, to see them in context and a new light and then reorganize and integrate these experiences and parts of the self at their own pace without re-traumatising. This includes using transference enactments for this.
- Improve our ability to prepare and guide them in this in line with the dysregulation of their nervous system and its interconnectivity, their acquired capacities to date, any impairments, and their zone of proximal development.
- Adapt principles and methods to patients so as to help them practice what they can on their own between sessions, and feel more confident in continuing to do so.
- Be able to use everyday language to inform patients about the human mind and nervous system, grounded in established neuroscience, so as to normalize and understand better what they have been experiencing, and why, and how to regulate and process it. In CAT terms this can further enrich the process of reformulating and make clear that this was the best adaptive response available at the time.
- Relate all this to the process of therapeutic change, progressive differentiation and integration and the maintenance of the flow of personal development.

I will be introducing activities to practice and review in the group. These are drawn from the work of Dan Siegel, Allan Schore, Janina Fisher, Richard Lane, Pat Ogden, Stephen Porges, Lisa Schwarz and others. I will give examples of how I have practiced these with my own clients, how they described their experiences and how this helped them. I will supply some summary handouts on key concepts and information, and send out afterwards a few slides that I will use for discussion. There will also be an opportunity to discuss how all this can be applied to the current patients or clients of those participating.

This is relevant to the following groups: CAT trainees, practitioners, supervisors and trainers.

Presenter

John Bristow, CAT psychotherapist, supervisor and trainer. Since March 2016 I have updated my knowledge of neurobiology applied to psychotherapy, through reading, training and supervised practice. Since its formation in March 2016, I have been an active member of the ACAT special interest group (SIG) on CAT and the neurosciences; CAT and the Embodied Mind, which has merged with the CAT, Trauma and EMDR group. We run seminars or learning groups and share learning resources within ACAT.

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