EAST MEETS WEST
IN PSYCHOTHERAPY

Intermediate to Advanced Clinical Training for Mental
and Behavorial Health Professionals

Welcome!

The webinar will begin shortly...

Note: Your microphone is muted, and your camera is turned off.
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sound level.

Treating Risky and Compulsive Behavior in Trauma Survivors

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Distress reduction behaviors (DRBs) often seen in clinical populations

- Self-injury
- Bingeing and purging
- Compulsive sexual behavior
- "Impulsive" suicidality
- Compulsive gambling, shoplifting, and buying
- Hair pulling and skin picking
- Reactive aggression

Why risky behaviors

- Borderline personality disorder

- Impulse control disorders

- Behavioral addictions

- New empirically-based attachment/emotional regulation models

  - *Reactive Avoidance model (RAm)*

Reactive Avoidance model

- Early childhood maltreatment or disattunement →

- painful implicit memories and attachment disturbance →

- reduced emotional regulation skills

Emotional dysregulation + triggers →

DRBs, dissociation, substance abuse)

Functions of DRBs

- Soothing
- Distraction
- Communication
- To reduce dissociation
  - Hebb's optimal arousal curve
- Relief from guilt and shame through self-punishment
- Distress-incompatible states

Safety, stabilization, and harm reduction

- Use <u>therapeutic relationship</u> to stabilize
- Increase <u>emotional regulation skills</u>
  - Grounding, relaxation, breath training, mindfulness training
  - Steps of ReGAIN
  - Emotional detective work
  - Metacognitive awareness of triggered states

Trigger management

- Harm reduction
  - Delay as long as possible
  - Do as little as possible
  - Replacing versus distracting
- Psychoeducation on triggers
- Identification: Direct and indirect
- Urge/emotion "surfing"
  - You can't stop a wave, but you can learn to surf (Kabat-Zinn)
  - Half-life of triggered distress

Trigger management

- Brief version of ReGAIN/deescalation
  - **Re**cognize that you've been triggered into countertransference
  - **G**round, self-talk
  - **A**llow responses without out acting on them
  - **I**nvestigate (where is this coming from?)
  - **N**onidentify
    - Metacognitive awareness of thoughts/feelings/memories as "just" that, not data on current reality

Suggested readings

Briere, J. (2019). *Treating risky and compulsive behavior in trauma survivors.* NY: Guilford.

Briere, J., & Eadie, E. (2016). Compensatory self-injury in the general population: Adverse events, posttraumatic stress, and the mediating role of dissociation. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, and Practice, 8,* 618-625.

Briere, J., Hodges, M., & Godbout, N. (2010). Traumatic stress, affect dysregulation, and dysfunctional avoidance: A structural equation model. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 23,* 767–774.

Briere, J., & Scott, C. (2014). *Principles of trauma therapy: A guide to symptoms, evaluation, and treatment,   2nd edition, DSM-5 update.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.