

Dr Lea Crisante

Creating “Good Enough” Relationships: Dealing with Trauma in Couple and Family Relationships

20 November 2020 | Online via Zoom



Workshop Overview

This workshop provides an introduction to couple and family therapy for therapists wanting to enhance their skills in working with the complexity of managing multiple relationships in the therapy space. It will explore the impact of overt and covert trauma on relationship functioning and how to respond therapeutically in a relational way to the emotional pain that arises from such experiences.

Participants will learn from examples from practice ways of assessing and responding to such relational difficulties in the context of conducting couple and family therapy. The workshop focuses on practice and participants will be provided with ideas for managing common issues occurring in therapy including dealing with therapeutic boundaries and high affective expression in sessions when multiple parties are engaged in therapy. Strategies for intervening in couple and family conflicts will be discussed, as well as ways to recognise therapy pitfalls that relate to slippage from one therapeutic modality to another, for example, moving from individual to couple work or inadvertent ruptures to the therapy process. Clinical cases demonstrating the impact on couples and families of COVID 19 as an activator of past relational trauma will be discussed. The workshop draws a range of theoretical perspectives, including the work of John Gottman, Stan Tatkin, Dan Siegel and Joan Haliburn.

Learning Objectives

- A framework for therapeutic work with couples and families that promotes ethical and culturally appropriate practice that is sensitive to trauma
- An integrative perspective to understand interpersonal process and relationship health
- How to develop strategies to promote connection and to manage relationship conflict, particularly when it is related to trauma experiences
- The significance of empathic responding in relationship functioning and how to teach this skill
- A framework for dealing with trauma and its impact on relationships, eg., affairs, intergenerational trauma
- How to understand relational processes from a family systems perspective
- The application of a structured framework for dealing with families, especially when working with adult family members
- How to set an agenda to conduct therapy with a family
- Ways to be responsive to overt and covert, unrecognised traumatic experiences
- About the impact of the COVID pandemic on relationships by activating past histories of enforced restrictions and separations

Workshop Outline

Opening Session

- Working with couples and families in current therapeutic contexts
- How trauma affects relational process

Morning Session: Couple Therapy

- Understanding couple dynamics from an integrative perspective that encompasses neurobiology, attachment theory and psychodynamic processes
- Managing closeness and distance in relationships: Balancing the need for attachment and the management of conflict and how this balance is affected by trauma
- The relevance of John Gottman 's work for couple interventions: The Four Horseman and their management

Afternoon Session

- Relationship rupture and hurts of the past: Dealing with trauma in relationships
- Family systems theory and application to therapy with families
- Setting up the therapeutic frame in family interventions: Structure and setting the agenda
- Impact of COVID on relational issues: Discussion of relevant cases throughout the day

Closing Session

- Skill development and supervision

About Dr Lea Crisante

Lea is a Clinical Psychologist who has been a therapist, lecturer and supervisor for many years. She currently teaches in the Master of Science in Medicine (Trauma-Informed Psychotherapy) conducted by the University of Sydney and has a private practice with a focus on couple therapy. Lea has worked in community and hospital-based mental health services, community mental health prevention programs, psychotherapy education for psychiatry trainees, as well as the non-government sector. Her clinical experience has involved children, adolescents, adults, couples and families.

Lea has completed extensive training and taught in a range of areas including couple and family therapy and parenting interventions. She worked as a senior staff member at RANSW for 10 years during which time she coordinated the Graduate Program in Couple Therapy, as well as taught in the Masters of Couple and Family Therapy at UNSW. She has completed training with John and Julie Gottman and had regular supervision from the Gottman Institute in Seattle. Her PhD was on the topic of parenting in multicultural contexts as part of her work with the Triple P Parenting Program which included training more than 700 practitioners in this program in Australia and overseas.

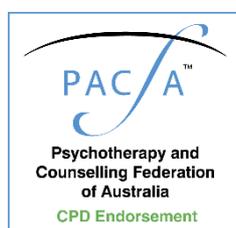
Lea's clinical area of expertise lies in the domain of the interpersonal from an integrative perspective including neurobiology, attachment and psychodynamic and systems theory. She has a particular interest in working with couples in the child-birth year, as well as dealing with relationship issues relating to hurts of the past including affairs, experiences of abandonment and relationship impasses that such situations involve. Working with the goal of "good enough" relationships, Lea has assisted people in diverse circumstances, including using videoconferencing with couples and families with partners and family members who live overseas.

CPD Endorsements

6 CPD hours



Endorsed CPD



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Registration Details

20 November 2020 | 9.30am-5pm

Online via Zoom

Standard: \$295

Concession: \$249

Register at: www.startts.org.au

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About STARTTS

STARTTS is a specialist, non-profit organisation that for more than 30 years has provided culturally relevant psychological treatment and support, and community interventions, to help people and communities heal the scars of torture and refugee trauma and rebuild their lives in Australia. STARTTS also fosters a positive recovery environment through the provision of training to services and educational institutions, advocacy and policy work.

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