



Moaiku - somatic trauma workshops

in association with
the Chiron Association for Body Psychotherapists CABP
and the Chiron Centre for Body Psychotherapy

Building Bridges between Trauma and Personality 'Motoric Haiku' - Resource-oriented skill training in trauma work

With Merete Holm Brantbjerg

Traumatic and high stress situations, generate levels of intensity that exceed the coping mechanisms of the personality, pushing physiological and psychological functioning to the limit. Hence, the somatic organism resorts to strategies of survival. This manifests in a loss of 'ordinary' consciousness and a diminished capacity to feel and connect emotionally, leaving us with the challenge of how to 'return to the personality'. Building bridges between the personality, and our ability to survive, therefore becomes essential to working with trauma.

Over the course of three weekend workshops:

- I Trauma, safety and boundaries
- II Authority and trauma
- III Identity and trauma

Merete will teach a comprehensive range of resources, and coping strategies, to support both client and therapist in coping with states of high anxiety and arousal, which can be utilised as interventions in any therapeutic process. Merete's approach centers on 'specific psyche', 'soma functions' and practical skills to manage the impact of trauma, invaluable for therapists who work relationally. As therapists, working with trauma and shock, are often impacted by client's trauma states, by their own trauma history, and by the transference relationship.

Why focus on skill training?

There are specific skills that can be trained, which over time become automatic. In threatening or highly challenging situations, automatic skills are still accessible, when survival strategies take over. It therefore makes a difference in which skills a person has been trained prior to a trauma, i.e. in terms of the choices an individual has available when he/she is 'IN' the situation, and as importantly, 'landing' once the traumatic situation has passed.

Skills that highly support our capacity to manage high stress, and to 'land', are:

- centering, grounding, flexibility, boundaries, and regulating contact
- orienting in factual reality
- optimizing safety
- being in charge from within, in both directing and following roles in interaction
- regulating intensity - tracking shifts in the autonomic nervous system
- coping with transitions between high and low intensity

The therapist comes first

Foremost in this training is the support of the therapist's presence, safety and ability to skillfully maintain authority. Crucial to trauma work is the presence of the therapist in the here and now, and the skills to stay present when riding the waves of high activation. The therapist needs to be able to cope with their own states of hyper- and hypoarousal, in order to meet others in stress and states of trauma, and to support the opening of "windows of opportunity" for healing.

Trauma is contagious. High stress has a tendency to evoke similar states in others. A therapist's ability to retain a centered, grounded and attuned state when faced by intense trauma, can provide a 'container' and a 'landing platform' for everybody present.

Why choose a body-oriented method in working with stress and trauma?

Traumatic memory is characterized by dissociation, and therefore the locked patterns are often tied into a sensory, non-linear memory. These aspects of sensing, feeling and experience, with no conscious relation to a specific biographical event, often cannot be reached through words. A body-oriented method, offers an opportunity to reach behavioural patterns and defenses founded in implicit sensory based memory. Working with precisely 'dosed skills', implicit memory fragments from dissociated trauma can be accessed and invited into consciousness.

Merete Holm Brantbjerg is the creator of "Moaiku" - derived from "Motoric Haiku", a psychotherapeutic skill training that is focused on: simplicity, repetition, precise individual dosing, and a 'here and now' presence. She is also co-creator of Bodydynamic Analysis - a member of European Association of Body Psychotherapy (EABP) and Psykoterapeutforeningen. Merete specializes in resource-oriented skill training as a psychotherapeutic method - applying it to both personality development and trauma healing.

'Resource-oriented skill training' is originally based in a psychomotor teaching tradition from Denmark. The method was further developed in Denmark, through Bodydynamic Analysis - a body-oriented psychotherapy founded in the mid 1970s. Key to the Bodydynamic Approach, is an in depth knowledge of the psychomotor and the psychological functioning of muscles, in the development of an individual's resources and defense patterns. Also the knowledge of both hypo- and hyper-responsive (giving up and controlling) defense patterns represented in muscles. This creates opportunities to safely engage with trauma states but also utilise appropriate psychomotor resources, available to both therapist and client. Merete Holm Brantbjerg has further refined the training of these skills into a relational method of working with stress and trauma - focusing specifically on the dynamics of safety, authority, and identity. She currently leads trainings and workshops in Scandinavia, North America and London, and maintains a private practice for therapy and supervision in both Copenhagen and internationally.

London Workshops:

Trauma, safety and boundaries (i) - September 19-20 2009

This workshop will focus on training the skills that support and re-establish presence, safety and a contained personality state in the here and now. Basic skills, such as the ability to center, ground,

Bodydynamic • Brantbjerg Randersgade 46 forr. 2100 København Ø. Tel. 35263104 fax. 35432703

e-post: bodydynamic@brantbjerg.dk www.moaiku.dk

and establish boundaries are always impacted in traumatic situations. Our personal boundaries and integrity are set aside or "blown apart" when survival is the primary focus.

In the relationship between the therapist and the client, the knowledge of basic skills, to manage and regulate both hyper- and hypo- arousal and the shifts between them, becomes crucial. The ability to find and optimize safety is a major factor in handling current, as well as past experiences of trauma and high stress. We cannot "land" from high arousal until safety is established bodily, emotionally and territorially. For both therapist and client, focusing on body sensing and on sensing boundaries as a physical and energetic reality, helps this process. Remaining centered and grounded when facing and meeting challenge, optimizes our "landing platform".
(This is a repeat of a workshop held in February 2008)

Authority and trauma (ii)- March 6-7 2010

This workshop offers training to support both therapist and client. Authority issues often get triggered in trauma, leaving us with unresolved patterns in relation to outer authorities and our own inner authority. These issues can be re-enacted in the transference relationship between therapist and client i.e. locked into roles like victim, persecutor and rescuer.

The memory of an unreleased trauma stays in us - often in a defended dissociated form. The trauma memory can become an inner authority, related to in different ways as compliant or defiant or one-up or one-down. Healing trauma is about owning and releasing the energy of these locked authority positions, through the interrelation of the client and therapist. These interactions are challenging. As therapists we need skills and awareness to support us in staying present, capable of containing all the powerful inner states that circulate consciously and unconsciously in the relational field.

Identity and trauma (iii)- September 18-19 2010

Integrating our experience of a traumatic event, challenges both the psychological self and the bodily self. For both therapist and client, relating to trauma demands the expansion of: our capacity for understanding, our value system, our perception of reality and our identity. Healing and integrating trauma often involves an identity crisis. The focus of this workshop is to understand the changes our identity goes through after traumatic situations. Merete will be teaching the training skills, that support this transformational process. Typical phases in the identity process will also be presented.

Sign up and information

Price for one workshop: £ 220. £ 200 for each workshop if you sign up for 2. £ 180 for each workshop if you sign up for 3.

Schedule: 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. with a 1 ½ hour lunchbreak.

Place: London

To sign up please contact: **CABP, c/o Dianne Chipperfield, 32A Coppetts Road, London N101JY.**

Dianne's e-mail address is dianne.c@zen.co.uk - see attached sign up sheet.

For a full description of the workshops, and general information about Merete Holm Brantbjerg's work contact: www.moaiku.com - or <http://www.body-psychotherapy.org.uk/traumaworkshop.htm>