



Margot Schiemann

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V. J. Difficult Therapeutic Relationships

This is an exciting and challenging workshop. Why do we find some clients more difficult to 'be with' than others? Every therapist struggles with this problem and even the most experienced occasionally find themselves at an impasse. In these situations, we may need to examine the relationship in some depth, including our expectations, our theoretical approach, the therapeutic contract or the organisational context.

Certain clients may have deep-seated resistances, histories of trauma and abuse, or underlying borderline personality disorders which challenge the way we work. Strong feelings are evoked and our capacity to maintain a therapeutic stance is tested. Boundary issues, ethical dilemmas, and hostile or erotic transferences pose particular problems, and working with projective identification is especially complex. We may feel helpless, frustrated and deskilled: uncertain how best to engage clients, or how to understand what is happening in the room. We want to find meaning in enactments.

The day will be interactive and dynamic and consists of theoretical presentations and experiential exercises. We will discuss what makes a therapeutic relationship problematic, and explore as a group our personal experiences of becoming enmeshed in difficult therapeutic relationships. The various perspectives from the group may throw new light on to our clinical work. In addition, we hope you will leave the day feeling encouraged and supported by others who have experienced similar situations. This workshop is suitable for therapists working from a psychodynamic perspective.

V. J. Background:

Margot Schiemann has worked for over thirty years in different mental health settings, including the NHS and Social Services. She has been in private practice since 1986 and works with individuals, couples, groups and staff teams. She is a psychotherapist, Training Group Analyst and member of the IGA (Institute of Group Analysis) and of BAPPS (British Association of Psychoanalytic and Psychodynamic Supervision). She has taught in many training organisations, including the IGA, the Westminster Pastoral Foundation and a number of integrative training organisations. She has provided many professional development courses.