Course: working with attachment style in psychotherapy

Address: https://asadis.net/en/course/working-with-attachment-style-in-psychotherapy/

Duration: 2h

Type of course: Continuing education

Location: Online course

Individual price: $80.00

Overview:
Attachment looks intuitive until it enters the consulting room. The same patient can present as fiercely independent one week and desperately seeking proximity the next, and what reads as resistance may in fact be a deactivating strategy with deep developmental roots. Attachment theory offers a precise framework for these shifts, yet its clinical application requires careful assessment, cultural sensitivity, and sustained self-reflection from the therapist.

This training brings together the empirical foundations of attachment research and the practical demands of psychotherapy. Drawing on Bowlby, Ainsworth, Main, and contemporary developmental science, the course examines how internal working models shape adult relational patterns. It also addresses how those patterns manifest in the therapeutic alliance itself.

You will learn to elicit attachment history through structured clinical interviewing, exploring both childhood caregiving and current relational dynamics. The training clarifies how to differentiate dismissive, preoccupied, and disorganized presentations using validated tools such as the AAI and ECR-R.

Throughout the course, the focus shifts to clinical application:

• Identify deactivating and hyperactivating strategies in session
• Differentiate secure base from safe haven functions
• Implement goal-corrected empathic attunement

Recognize cultural variation without pathologizing difference

You will also examine how your own attachment orientation influences countertransference, alliance ruptures, and therapeutic stance. The framework extends to intergenerational transmission, parenting work, and the developmental origins of psychopathology across the lifespan.

The skills acquired translate directly into sharper case formulation, more responsive interventions, and a therapeutic relationship capable of fostering earned security. Attachment-informed practice becomes a working compass for navigating complex relational presentations with greater clinical precision.

Learning objectives:

1. Learn the principles of attachment theory, as it applies across the life cycle
2. Elicit information on history to establish the predominant attachment style of their patient
3. Know their own attachment style and recognize how that might affect session process
4. Use their knowledge of attachment to intervene in therapy to optimize outcomes

Learning material:

A theoretical course illustrated with clinical examples. This course is composed of videos of 5 to 15 minutes each. The PowerPoint of the course to download.

Audience: This course is intended for mental health professionals.

The expert

Gail Myhr, MD, CM, MSc, FRCPC, is Associate Professor of Psychiatry at McGill University and staff psychiatrist at the McGill University Health Centre. A cognitive-behavioural therapist with extensive clinical experience, she is a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, a Diplomate of the Academy of Cognitive Therapy, and a Founding Member of the Canadian Association of Cognitive and Behavioural Therapies.

In 2021, Dr. Myhr was named Fellow of the Canadian Association of Cognitive and Behavioural Therapies, recognizing her distinguished contributions to CBT science, practice, training, and advocacy in Canada. Her clinical and research interests include patient suitability for short-term CBT, attachment-informed interventions in CBT, evidence-based CBT supervision, and CBT for psychosis, including Avatar Therapy.

Syllabus

PowerPoint
Introduction
Foundations of Attachment Theory
What Is Your Attachment Style
What Is Attachment
Principles of Attachment Theory
Measuring Attachment in Infants and Children
Attachment Measurement in Adults

Attachment Over the Life Span
Clinical Application and Case WorkRecognizing your patient's attachment style
Recognizing your patient's attachment style
Attachment & Psychotherapy
Working with Attachment
Case Example- Dismissive Avoidant Patient
Case Example- Preoccupied Patient
Working with Disorganized Patient
Therapy Outcome & Patient Attachment Style
Therapist Attachment Style- Part 1
Therapist Attachment Style- Part 2
Conclusion

Evaluation:
To validate the achievement of the learning objectives, a final evaluation in the form of true/false questions is required. It must be completed in order to obtain the certificate of completion.
In addition, an optional self-assessment is offered at the beginning and end of the course, allowing you to measure your progress on the targeted skills.
These evaluations are not graded and are intended primarily to support your professional reflection.

Access timeline: Once registration is confirmed, you (or the learner) may start the training at any time, independently and at your own pace. You can access the training for as long as Asadis as the legal right to diffuse it (typically 10 years).

Questions? Feel free to contact us at *contact@asadis.net*