

COMPASSION
FOCUSED THERAPY
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

6-9
OCTOBER
2025



Pre Conference
Workshop Abstracts

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The Nine Domains of Integration and the Cultivation of Compassion

Dr Dan Siegel



In this immersive exploration of how integration—the linking of differentiated parts—serves as the foundation for cultivating compassion, we will dive deeply into the Nine Domains of Integration, drawing from the framework of Interpersonal Neurobiology (IPNB) to illuminate how relational and neural integration supports the emergence of a compassionate mind. Throughout our time together, we will engage in reflective discussions and scientifically grounded practices that offer both a conceptual and embodied understanding of compassion as an emergent property of integration.

Session 1: The Mind as an Emergent, Embodied, and Relational Process

We begin by exploring the nature of the mind, defining it as an embodied and relational emergent process that regulates the flow of energy and information. We will examine the

science of integration—how differentiation and linkage create harmony—and discuss how compassion arises from a freely integrating system.

- What is compassion from a neurobiological perspective?
- Role of neural integration in fostering empathy, kindness, and attunement
- The Window of Tolerance and the regulation of fear, shame, and reactivity in compassion-based practices

Session 2: The Nine Domains of Integration as a Pathway to Compassion

We now turn to the Nine Domains of Integration, exploring how each is a pathway to deepening our capacity for compassion—toward our inner lives and the lives of other individuals.

1. Integration of Consciousness – Differentiating and linking the knowns from each other and the process of knowing itself. Becoming aware of our internal experience with presence and openness.
2. Horizontal or Bilateral Integration – Linking the left and right hemispheres to balance the various functions of these differentiated sources of energy and information flow, including a narrow focus of attention and linguistic processing on the left, with the broader focus of attention and bodily and autobiographical processes of the right.
3. Vertical Integration – Connecting internal body sensations and cortical brain processes involved in awareness facilitating the internal state simulation of embodied compassion.
4. Memory Integration – Connecting implicit memory engrams with the explicit forms of factual and autobiographical memory to shape patterns of reactivity and self-judgment.
5. Narrative Integration – Cultivating inner-compassion through meaning-making and coherence of how we make sense of our lives and the world around us.
6. State Integration – Honoring different the wide range of self-states of mind while maintaining inner balance to link these together into a coherent whole.
7. Interpersonal Integration – Developing resonance circuits for deep attunement with others and the capacity to hold the differentiated state of another with our own resonating internal states to enable the experience of “feeling felt” to arise.
8. Temporal Integration – Expanding time-awareness to cultivate patience and perspective across a wide range of existential issues including the nature of time and timelessness; transience and a longing for permanence; mortality and a longing for immortality.

9. Identity Integration – Going beyond the solo-self of the individual seen as the sole source of identity to a wider state of realizing not only interconnectedness but the integrative state of intraconnection—being and belonging as a whole system of living beings. This can be remembered with the term, MWe (Me plus We).

Each domain offers an opportunity to free ourselves from rigidity and chaos, allowing compassion to naturally emerge as an integrated state of being.

Session 3: Applying the Science of Integration in Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT)

Here, we bridge IPNB and its domains of integration with Compassion-Focused Therapy, exploring how integration-based practices enhance CFT interventions by:

- Strengthening the three-circle model (threat, drive, and soothing)
- Using mindful awareness to facilitate integration in therapeutic relationships
- Supporting clients' inner critics with memory, narrative, and state integration

Through guided exercises including the integrative movement series, we will embody the principles of integration, experiencing how compassion emerges naturally from a coherent, integrated system.

Session 4: Cultivating a Personal and Collective Practice of Compassion

In our final session, we focus on how to sustain integration-based compassion in our personal lives, therapeutic work, and communities. We'll dive into an intraconnected identity as me plus we, honoring our individual nature and also our relational selves as a "MWe." We will explore:

- Daily practices that reinforce the nine domains of integration
- The role of relational resonance in cultivating interpersonal compassion
- How integration expands beyond the self into social and cultural transformation

We close by reviewing our reflective integration exercise, helping us embody and apply these insights in a lasting way. Compassion is not merely an emotional state—it is an integrative way of being. By deepening our understanding of how neural integration shapes compassionate presence in our interpersonal and our intra-nature relationships, we open new possibilities for healing, connection, and transformation. Let's embark on this journey together linking our inner and relational selves toward a more integrated and compassionate world.

Learning Objectives

1. Define integration and its role in the emergence of compassion. Participants will understand how differentiation and linkage across neural, relational, and systemic levels create a foundation for compassionate presence.
2. Explore the Nine Domains of Integration as pathways to well-being. Participants will examine how each domain of integration (e.g., consciousness, memory, narrative, and interpersonal) contributes to the cultivation of inner-compassion and inter-compassion.
3. Apply neurobiological principles to Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT). Participants will learn how IPNB principles complement CFT, enhancing interventions by supporting self-regulation, emotional balance, and a compassionate mindset.
4. Engage in experiential practices to cultivate integration and compassion. Through guided exercises, reflective dialogues, and mindful awareness practices, participants will embody the science of integration and deepen their own compassionate capacities.
5. Enhance therapeutic presence and resonance through interpersonal integration. Participants will develop skills to attune to clients' nervous systems, fostering secure relationships that facilitate healing and transformation.
6. Apply integration-based practices to personal and professional settings. Participants will create practical strategies to sustain integration-driven compassion in clinical work, relationships, and daily life, expanding beyond the self toward collective well-being.

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Workshop Leader

Dr Daniel J Siegel is a clinical professor of psychiatry and the executive director of the Mindsight Institute and founding co-director of the Mindful Awareness Research Center at UCLA, where he was also principal co-investigator of the Center for Culture, Brain and Development and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the School of Medicine.

An award-winning educator, Dan is the author of five *New York Times* bestsellers and over fifteen other books which have been translated into over forty languages. As the founding editor of the Norton Professional Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology (“IPNB”), Dan has overseen the publication of over one hundred books in the transdisciplinary IPNB framework which focuses on the mind and mental health.

A graduate of Harvard Medical School, Dan completed his postgraduate training at UCLA specializing in pediatrics, and adult, adolescent, and child psychiatry. He was trained in attachment research and narrative analysis through a National Institute of Mental Health research training fellowship focusing on how relationships shape our autobiographical ways of making sense of our lives and influence our development across the lifespan.

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The Compassionate Mind Approach to Working with Trauma & Complex PTSD

Dr Deborah Lee



This workshop will present a treatment programme to work with Complex PTSD using a compassion focused approach to enhance evidence-based practice. Those who have been repeatedly traumatised at the hands of others have many challenges to face as they discover how to live a life without trauma and learn how to live in a mind that can flourish. Predominant issues of self-blame, self-loathing, lack of trust, interpersonal difficulties, struggles to regulate threat-based emotions, flashbacks, avoidance and disconnection are prevalent issues to be addressed in therapy. These difficulties are often described as Complex PTSD.

Recent expert consensus (published by the UK Psychological Trauma Society, 2019) recommends Compassion Focused Therapy as part of a phased treatment approach for Complex PTSD and this workshop will explore how to use CFT to develop compassionate resilience as part of this phased based approach. Compassionate resilience can enhance the capacity to self-soothe in those who feel deeply shamed about who they are

and what they have been through. Being able to access caring compassionate mind states can enhance engagement and provide a safe framework to work directly with trauma narratives and flashbacks. This workshop will explore how to develop compassionate capacities in those who struggle with shame and self-blame, then how to develop a compassionate narrative and update shame-based trauma memories, within a CFT framework treatment programme.

Learning Objectives

To learn how to develop compassionate resilience using CFT theory and practice.

To learn ways to work directly with shame-based trauma memories using the compassionate soothing system.

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Workshop Leader

Dr Deborah Lee is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist at Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and an Honorary Associate Professor with the Sub-Department of Clinical Health Psychology, University College London (UCL). She is Head of Op Courage Services in the Southeast of England and the Berkshire Traumatic Stress Service, which specialises in treating Complex PTSD.

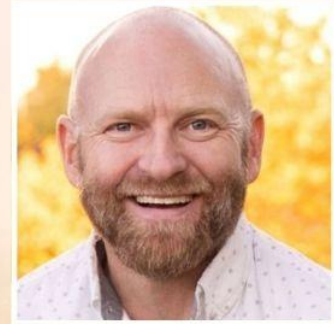
Dr Lee is an expert in the field of trauma, PTSD and veterans' mental health and has worked in this field for 33 years, providing training, clinical innovation and research. Dr Lee's clinical services have a national and international reputation, and she has pioneered the development of Compassion Focused Therapy for shame-based trauma and Complex PTSD. She is the author of a bestselling self-help book, *The Compassionate Mind Approach to Recovering from Trauma*. Dr Lee has also developed a Compassionate & Inclusive Leadership Programme within Berkshire Healthcare Trust, now considered an exemplary model of culture change to meet NHSE long term plan

and contributed to the CQC awarding Berkshire Healthcare Trust, Outstanding in Leadership. Dr Lee contributed to a podcast series as part of the Leadership Academy Series, Kings Fund. Dr Lee's leadership and clinical practice work is internationally renowned and has been disseminated worldwide.

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Innovations in Compassion Focused Group Psychotherapy - An Experiential Approach



Clinical Prof Derek Griner
Clinical Prof Davey Erikson

We (Derek Griner and Davey Erikson) are clinical professors who lead multiple CFT psychotherapy groups each year and teach undergraduate college courses on compassionate focused living (applied CFT). We love the work we do and have always learned best by doing (we have found that our clients and students learn best by doing as well). We want to provide an opportunity for those attending this workshop to learn through experience. If you enjoy loads of PowerPoints and didactic training, then this workshop may not be for you (imagine this being said with a playful tone; anyone is welcome to join). In this workshop, we seek to offer a unique experience of compassion focused group work by running it as an experiential group. That is, you will get an opportunity to participate in a group as a member. Though not therapy, those who attend this workshop will likely feel much of how it is to be a participant in a process-oriented CFT group. Our hope is that you will leave with an experience of how a group can co-create a sense of social safeness. We will have some didactic portions where we discuss

innovative ways to approach CFT group therapy, but the majority of our time together will be spent “in session” learning with and from one another. Between “sessions,” we will also talk about interventions being used. We hope that this experiential format will allow for both cognitive and emotional learning. We will cap the number of attendees to 20 and are very excited to get to spend time with whomever joins this workshop.

References

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- Cattani, K., Griner, D., Erikson, D. M., Burlingame, G. M., Beecher, M. E., & Alldredge, C. T. (2021). [*Compassion Focused Group Therapy for University Counseling Centers: A Clinician's Guide*](#). Routledge.
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Workshop Leaders

Clinical Prof Derek Griner is a clinical professor at Brigham Young University in Utah. He is a board certified (ABPP) psychologist who also meets the internationally accepted criteria of education, training, and experience to be endorsed as a certified group psychotherapist (CGP). He has worked in several clinical settings and currently engages in individual, group, and couples psychotherapy, teaching, research, and program development at Brigham Young University. He also serves as the associate training director. Derek spent the summer of 2024 on sabbatical at the Compassionate Mind Foundation in Derby, England, where he worked directly with Professor Paul Gilbert. Here he did clinical work and research focused on CFT in group psychotherapy. While on this sabbatical, Paul and Derek modified a CFT group guide and, with weekly supervision provided by Paul, Derek co-led a psychotherapy group for individuals with longer-standing mental health concerns who were on the Derbyshire Trust waitlist. Derek focuses his research, teaching, and clinical work on Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT). He is also committed to diversity issues and has conducted award winning research in this domain.

Clinical Prof Davey Erikson is an Associate Clinical Professor at Brigham Young University and board certified by the American Board of Professional Psychology in Counseling Psychology. He earned a Master of Arts in psychology in education from Teachers College, Columbia University, and completed his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at BYU. He is an active practitioner, doing individual, couples, and group therapy. He also engages in research focused on psychotherapy process and outcomes, university

student mental health, and Compassion Focused Therapy. In addition to clinical practice and research, he developed a course with colleagues applying Compassionate Mind Training to student life and enjoys teaching this course each semester. He recently returned from a sabbatical at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden, where he focused on Compassion Focused Therapy in groups.

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Working with Fears of Compassion: A Motivational Interviewing Approach

Dr Stan Steindl



Are you ready to take your Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT) practice to the next level? Join us for an exciting, hands-on workshop that blends the science and artistry of Motivational Interviewing (MI) with the transformative power of CFT. Compassion isn't always easy—fears, blocks, and resistances can stop clients (and even therapists!) from embracing self-compassion and compassionate action. But what if there was a way to gently and strategically help clients explore these barriers and unlock their compassionate self?

In this workshop, you'll discover how MI—a proven approach for navigating ambivalence and fostering motivation—can be seamlessly integrated into CFT to create a powerful therapeutic synergy. Together, we'll:

- Unpack the inhibitors and facilitators of compassion motivation identified in CFT.

- Develop the spirit and core skills of MI to compassionately guide clients through their fears, blocks, and resistances.
- Practice practical, evidence-based strategies you can immediately apply in your sessions to enhance compassion motivation.

Expect a highly experiential day filled with interactive exercises, real-world examples, and inspiring discussions. Whether you're new to CFT or an experienced practitioner, this workshop will equip you with innovative tools to empower your clients and transform lives. Step into this dynamic space of learning, connection, and growth—and leave with fresh insights and confidence to help others embrace the life-changing potential of compassion.

References

Miller, W. R., & Rollnick S. (2023). [*Motivational Interviewing: Helping People Change and Grow \(Fourth Edition\)*](#). Guilford Press.

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Workshop Leader

Dr Stan Steindl is a clinical psychologist, author, researcher, and compassion advocate based in Brisbane, Australia. He is in private practice at Psychology Consultants Pty Ltd and serves as an Adjunct Professor at the School of Psychology, University of Queensland. As co-director of the UQ Compassionate Mind Research Group and convenor of the annual UQ Compassion Symposium, he is deeply involved in advancing the science and practice of compassion.

With over 25 years of experience as a therapist, supervisor, trainer, and researcher, Stan specialises in Motivational Interviewing (MI) and Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT). His PhD explored combat-related posttraumatic stress disorder and comorbid alcohol dependency, and he continues to work clinically in the areas of trauma, addiction, shame and self-criticism. His research focuses on motivation, behaviour change, and the role of compassion in addressing shame, trauma, and psychological distress.

Stan is also the creator and host of *Compassion in a T-Shirt*, a YouTube channel and podcast where he interviews leading experts on the science and application of compassion. His work makes complex psychological ideas accessible and practical for both professionals and the general public.

He is the author of four books and several book chapters and research publications, including *The Gifts of Compassion: How to Understand and Overcome Suffering*, with his writing focusing on cultivating self-compassion and navigating life's challenges with kindness.

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Embodied Compassion: Integrating CFT and Martial Arts



Dr Neil Clapton
Dr Syd Hiskey

Traditional Martial Arts practice(s) can be construed as forms of fully embodied Compassionate Mind Training (CMT). Integration of these body-mind systems can be a powerful means to cultivate and entrain important therapist competencies in compassionate engagement and action. Through such training and personal practice, compassion-focused therapists can develop and enhance their abilities to stimulate and access compassionate motivation at a deeply embodied level. Martial arts-informed CMT thus has the potential to afford therapists greater sensitivity, attunement, distress tolerance, courage and compassionate responsiveness, particularly in difficult therapeutic encounters such as alliance ruptures.

This experiential embodied enactive workshop will expose participants to martial arts-inspired skills and practices to integrate into your personal practice and bring to bear on CFT psychotherapeutic work.

References

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Compassion in a T-Shirt interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ffXWbln1qU4>

Workshop Leaders

Dr Neil Clapton is a Clinical Psychologist working in the NHS within secondary adult mental health services in Swindon and private practice. His clinical work involves providing Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT) to people experiencing complex trauma, personality and attachment difficulties. Neil spent much of his early-middle childhood and early adolescence practicing the martial art of Taekwondo, culminating in him being awarded a 1st-degree Black Belt at the age of 13. He is the co-founder of Fierce Compassion Martial Arts.

Dr Syd Hiskey is a consultant clinical psychologist in full-time independent practice. Syd is an experienced CFT practitioner with a long-standing academic and clinical interest in this field. He has practised a wide range of martial arts including Karate, Wing Chun Kung Fu, hybrid defence and more recently Urban Combatives. He is the co-founder of Fierce Compassion Martial Arts.

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