



A Neurobiological Approach to Trauma Stabilisation and Family Therapy

Families affected by traumatic events can often break down as each family member struggles in their own way to come to terms with what has happened. Understanding distress reactions and their effect on family dynamics can help the family to cope better. If family members don't understand each other's experience, then misunderstandings, communication breakdowns and other problems can result. This is often because unresolved traumatic symptoms fuel behavioural and emotional problems and family conflict, and/ or the family interactions can maintain or exacerbate the pain of traumatic memories.

Most practitioners have by now heard the message that trauma treatment must begin with an emphasis on safety and stabilisation, otherwise "working through" will be re-traumatising. Yet it is often very difficult to know exactly how to begin to help the trauma client stabilise. As practitioners, we can easily get so caught up in the roller coaster ride of crises, suicide attempts, hospitalisations, addiction relapses, and self-destructive acting-out that we ourselves start to feel out of control! This workshop integrates a neurobiologically informed understanding of trauma, dissociation, and attachment within framework of family therapy. As with any teaching paradigm, the practitioner needs educational models and tools. For trauma stabilisation work, the most important tools are: psychoeducation, therapist modeling of attention to safety, skill-building, and empowering the client by teaching them how to take charge of the therapeutic process.

Weaving a range of unique interventions adapted from a number of cutting-edge therapeutic approaches, including sensorimotor psychotherapy, family systems, mindfulness-based therapies, and EFT. This workshop provides a practical approach to trauma treatment in family systems, communicated in straightforward language accessible to both clients and practitioners. Participants will leave with a solid grasp of therapeutic approaches to trauma stabilisation, working with dissociative symptoms, integrating brain-based treatment methods, and much more. Most of all, they will come away with tools for helping clients create an internal sense of safety and compassion.



Presented by: Dr Kate Owen and Dr Leonie White from the Queensland Institute of Family Therapy. Leonie and Kate Owen have worked in collaboration since 2012. They share a passion for Family Therapy, and supporting the development of those interested in extending their practice in the helping profession. Leonie and Kate have worked together in the Master of Mental Health (Family Therapy) degree previously offered at The University of Queensland. They have also worked together in providing professional development workshops through their private practices.