Leader Name/s: Bessel van der Kolk & Licia Sky

Workshop Title: Trauma, Memory and the Restoration of One’s Self

Workshop Description:
The function of our brains is to take care of us and to be in sync with the body’s systems. Trauma changes the way the brain processes information and the body engages with the world. Trauma makes people afraid to know what they know and feel what they feel. This is expressed in heartbreak, and the state of being out of sync with oneself and one’s surroundings. This course explores how, because of altered biological systems, traumatized people continue to be trapped by their history and react to current experience in a myriad of ways as a replay of the past, and shows ways to break the cycles of re-enactment and suffering. This workshop explores ways of representing and befriending our inner experience.

Therapies that work all start from a basic sense of calm and safety. The calmer we are, the more we can allow ourselves to know what we know, and to feel what we feel. We will study and experience the capacity of EMDR, yoga, Internal Family Systems, sensorimotor practices, theater work, and neurofeedback to help people overcome a traumatic past and regain the capacity to be fully alive in the present.

Recommended reading: van der Kolk, The Body Keeps the Score.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Learn how physical mastery, memory processing, affect regulation, sensory integration and other techniques can help people from moving from being trapped in their traumatic past into living in the present.

2. Discuss what brain science teaches us about how trauma is remembered and changes the processing of subsequent experience.

3. Learn about mastery of rhythms and sensate experience, like yoga and sensorimotor processing, to heal from trauma.

4. Learn how theater, role playing and other forms of physical action can help overcome trauma, learn how neuro-feedback can rewire the fear-driven brain.

COURSE OUTLINE

The Body Keeps the Score: Trauma, Attachment and Neuroscience

Renowned trauma expert Bessel van der Kolk has spent over three decades working with survivors. Join him in this transformational conference, and leave with a new understanding of traumatic stress. Learn how trauma can literally rearrange the brain’s wiring — specifically areas dedicated to pleasure, engagement, control, and trust. This workshop will show how trauma affects the developing mind and brain, and teach how trauma affects self-awareness and self-regulation. We will focus on the fundamental difference between trauma de-sensitization vs. integration and growth, and look at the
difference between disrupted attachment and traumatic stress. We will examine the role of interpersonal rhythms and attunement in establishing a sense of self and community. This workshop will discuss and demonstrate affect regulation techniques, examine ways to deal with fragmented self-experience, and teach the benefits of yoga, EMDR, meditation, neurofeedback, music and theater. Based on Dr. van der Kolk’s own research and that of other leading specialists, this workshop will give you proven alternatives to drugs and talk therapy— and a way to reclaim lives.

Trauma changes development of mind, brain and self. Its treatment requires a spectrum of interventions: finding words to describe and communicate what is going on, learning to regulate one’s emotions, learning to trust other human beings with shameful and horrific details of one's life, processing traumatic memories, learning to be fully alive in the present.

Outline:
Neuroscience & Brain Development
How children learn to regulate their arousal systems
How the brain regulates itself
Developmental psychopathology: The derailment of developmental processes & brain development due to trauma, abuse and neglect:
How the brain responds to threat, and how
Early Life Trauma
Interpersonal neurobiology
Adaptations to trauma early in the life cycle
Loss of affect regulation
Chronic destructive relationships towards self and others;
Dissociation and amnesia
Somatization
Self-blame, guilt and shame
Chronic distrust and identification with the aggressor
Attachment, Trauma, and Psychopathology
The breakdown of information processing in trauma
Mirror neuron systems and brain development
How to overcome the destabilization and disintegration
The compulsion to repeat—origins and solutions.
Difference between disorganized attachment and traumatic stress

COURSE CONTENT CITATIONS
This course meets the qualifications for 26 hours of continuing education credit for LMFTs, LCSWs, LPCCs, and/or LEPs as required by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences; Psychology and RNs as required by the California BRN. Esalen is an approved provider of continuing education by the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, the APA, and the CA BRN.

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