

Masterclass with Prof. Sandra Paivio

EFT for Trauma

This course is aimed at colleagues who already have experience with emotion-focused therapy (EFT) and are interested in using EFT in their work with people with trauma-related disorders. Participants will be introduced to emotion-focused trauma therapy (EFTT) through a mixture of theory, video demonstrations and exercises in small groups in the therapist and client roles under the supervision of the course instructor.

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When:	October 12th- 15th 2025
Where:	vfkv, Lindwurmstraße 83/3. Stock, 80337 München
Times:	9 AM until 5 PM
Costs:	1.094.- Euro
Requirements:	Completed EFT-Training
Language:	English

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Psychotherapy clients with histories of childhood abuse and neglect (complex trauma) are ubiquitous across diagnostic groups. Disrupted emotion and narrative processes are at the core of disturbances associated with these childhood experiences.

Successful therapy requires helping clients to access and explore painful feelings and memories to modify maladaptive emotions and construct more adaptive self-narratives and meaning. Emotion-focused therapy for trauma (EFTT) is an effective treatment based on an empirically verified model that identifies steps in the process of resolving past interpersonal trauma (unfinished business) and is supported by more than 25 years of process and outcome research.

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This four-day training is geared toward practicing professionals with a basic knowledge of EFT (Level 1 training or equivalent). It includes material on the nature of complex trauma and the central role of narrative and emotional processes in the development of disturbance, the EFTT treatment model and how EFTT addresses central features of disturbance. Training also includes numerous videotaped examples illustrating EFTT treatment principles, and supervised peer-skills practice. Practice will focus on the general principles of EFT specifically tailored to the needs of this client group over the phases of EFTT. This includes training in interventions for cultivating and maintaining a safe and empathic therapeutic relationship; evoking and processing trauma feelings and memories; reducing fear, avoidance, and shame; resolving attachment injuries with specific perpetrators through expressions of anger and sadness; and alternatives to chair-work for clients who are unable or unwilling to engage in these evocative procedures. This training also will introduce participants to yoga-based interventions that address client difficulties with emotion awareness, regulation, and reflection that interfere with engagement in EFTT procedures, emotional transformation, and change.

Training Schedule

Day One. The morning will focus on the nature of complex trauma and introduce the EFTT treatment model, specifying distinguishing features from other approaches to trauma therapy. The afternoon will focus on Early Phase processes, including cultivating the therapeutic alliance and collaborative case conceptualization. Participants will practice empathic responding to achieve these early phase treatment goals.

Day Two. The morning will focus on guidelines for conducting the Imaginal Confrontation (IC) procedure (i.e., empty-chair dialogue with perpetrators of abuse and neglect) for the first time and introduce Empathic Exploration (EE) as a less stressful alternative to IC that does not involve chair-work. Participants will practice introducing both the IC and EE procedures for evoking unfinished business with past perpetrators. The afternoon begins the focus on Middle Phase processes (i.e., reducing maladaptive fear and shame) with a specific focus on working with trauma memories (identifying markers, intervention guidelines). Participants will practice memory evocation and processing interventions, particularly geared toward transforming shame.

Day Three. The morning will focus on client difficulties with emotional experiencing (identifying different types of difficulties and interventions appropriate to each). Participants will practice strategies (e.g., focusing) to address these difficulties. The afternoon will focus on intra-personal conflicts related to self-criticism, anxiety, self-interruption, and self-doubt. Participants will practice interventions, with and without chair-work, to help clients resolve these conflicts.

Day Four. The morning will focus on reducing client experiential avoidance/over-control of emotional experience and strengthening self-soothing capacities. Participants will practice interventions to promote client self-soothing. The afternoon will focus on Late Phase processes, including letting go and forgiveness, termination and consolidating change. Participants will practice interventions to facilitate these processes. The training will conclude with presenting a case example of EFTT with a challenging client over the course of therapy.

Biography Prof. Sandra Paivio

Sandra C. Paivio, PhD., is a Certified Psychologist, and maintains a private practice in Toronto, Canada, provides individual psychotherapy and clinical training at the York University Psychology Clinic, and is Professor Emeritus in the Psychology Department at the University of Windsor. She is one of the developers of emotion-focused therapy, particularly applied to complex trauma (EFTT), has conducted clinical trials evaluating the efficacy and processes of change in EFTT, and is author of numerous publications on trauma and psychotherapy. These include *Working with Emotion in Psychotherapy* (with Les Greenberg), *Emotion-Focused Therapy for Complex Trauma* (with Antonio Pascual-Leone), and *Narrative Processes in Emotion-focused Therapy for Trauma* (with Lynne Angus).

Dr. Paivio is featured in several DVDs published by the American Psychological Association, has presented numerous clinical training workshops internationally on EFTT, and received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Trauma Section of the Canadian Psychological Association (2014) for her contributions to research and training in treatment for complex trauma.