

2023 ISEFT Conference June 29-30, 2023

**FINAL
PROGRAM**

Changing Emotions in a Changing World



Porto - Portugal



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Preface

Message from the Scientific Committee

The scientific committee warmly welcomes you to the 4th bi-annual meeting of the International Society for Emotion-Focused Therapy. It has been four years since we last met in Glasgow. We are very excited to be able to meet in-person, to continue the very important work of growing Emotion-Focused Therapy. Much has happened in the world since our last meeting, and we look forward to discussing how Emotion-Focused Therapy has grown and changed in response. We have had much expansion, and the program is reflective of many of these developments. We have spread our umbrella even wider now and have multiple applications of the EFT approach to psychotherapy with individuals, couples, families, and youth. In addition, EFT is being practiced across different populations, that are featured in the program. There are a variety of presentations that will inform us of new research applications in EFT. As is always the case in the EFT tradition, we very much look forward to the fertile conversations in which we ask refined and differentiated questions to push our understanding forward, share experiences that enrich us, explore new developments that help us grow, and exchange ideas through dialogue.

Rhonda Goldman, Serine Warwar and Carla Cunha
Scientific Committee of the 2023 ISEFT Conference



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Preface

Message from the Local Organizing Committee

Welcome to Porto!

On behalf of the organizing committee, it is with great pleasure and excitement that we extend our warmest welcome to the 2023 ISEFT Conference, hosted in the beautiful city of Porto, Portugal. Known for its rich history, Porto sets the stage for an unforgettable gathering of minds and exploration of emotions. We are honored to host this prestigious event at the *Congress Centre Alfândega do Porto*, nestled within the UNESCO World Heritage site. This remarkable location perfectly embodies the spirit of our theme: "Changing Emotions in a Changing World." As we navigate the complexities of our modern era, understanding and adapting to evolving emotions becomes ever more crucial. This conference aims to foster insightful discussions, share innovative research, and promote collaborative efforts to navigate the challenges we face. With an esteemed lineup of keynote speakers, engaging workshops, and enlightening sessions, the 2023 Conference promises to be an enriching experience for all participants. It is our belief that by coming together, we can inspire transformative change and deepen our understanding of Emotion-Focused Therapy.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all the contributors, attendees, and supporters who have made this event possible. Your dedication to the field and commitment to advancing Emotion-Focused Therapy are truly commendable. We also hope you take the time to explore the wonders of Porto, its vibrant culture, and its warm-hearted people. May this conference provide not only a platform for academic and professional growth but also an opportunity to forge new connections, foster friendships, and create lasting memories.

João Salgado

President of the Local Organizing Committee

Members of the Local Organizing Committee:

João Salgado, Eunice Silva, Marina Monteiro, Susana Almeida, Carla Cunha, Carla Branco, João Leal da Silva, Maria da Luz Melo, Daniela Nogueira, Catarina Almeida, Pedro Lourenço



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Our venue

ALFÂNDEGA DO PORTO CONGRESS CENTRE



Address

ALFÂNDEGA DO PORTO CONGRESS CENTRE
 [Centro de Congressos da Alfândega do Porto]
 RUA NOVA DA ALFÂNDEGA - EDIFÍCIO DA ALFÂNDEGA
 4050-430 PORTO

📞 (+351) 223 403 000/24

📶 WIFI: isEFTConference; Password [case sensitive]: isEFT2023Porto

Please check our website (<https://www.iseftconference.com/venue>) for recommendations on how to arrive at the Alfândega Porto Congress Centre [Centro de Congressos da Alfândega do Porto].



After you arrive at the main building, go through the main entrance and find the stairs or lift at your right. Go through them to arrive at the second floor. Our conference will take place at the right side of the building, in the rooms displayed (in the figure above).



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Program Overview – DAY 1

2023 ISEFT Conference - June 29, 2023

ROOM		Sala Infante				
9:00 - 9:15	OPENING & WELCOME - ROOM: Sala Infante					
9:15 - 10:30	OPENING PLENARY	Invited Symposium: <i>Emotional Processing in Emotion-Focused Therapy and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy</i>				
10:30 - 11:00	COFFEE BREAK 1 & POSTER SESSION 1 [ROOMS: Sala Arrábida, Sala Porto & Hall]					
ROOMS		Infante	D. Luís	D. Maria	Miragaia	S. João
11:00 - 12:15	Parallel Sessions	Symposium 1 Organizer: Ladislav Timulak	Mini workshop 1 Organizer: Anne Hilde Hagen	Brief Paper session 1 Moderator: Robert Elliott	Mini workshop 2 Organizer: Marit Nilsen Albertsen	Brief Paper session 2 Moderator: Eran Bar-Kalifa
12:15 - 13:30	LUNCH [ROOMS: Sala Arrábida & Sala Porto]					
ROOM		SALA INFANTE				
13:30 - 14:20	KEYNOTE 1	LES GREENBERG: <i>Changing emotion with emotion</i>				
ROOMS		Infante	D. Luís	D. Maria	Miragaia	S. João
14:25 - 15:40	Parallel Sessions	Symposium 2 Organizer: Jan Reidar Stiegler	Brief Paper session 3 Moderator: Jason Sharbanee	Structured Discussion 1 Moderator: Laura Girz	Mini workshop 3 Organizer: Catalina Woldarsky	Mini workshop 4 Organizer: Aksel Inge Sinding
15:45 - 16:15	COFFEE BREAK 2 [ROOMS: Sala Arrábida & Sala Porto]					
ROOMS		Infante	D. Luís	D. Maria	Miragaia	S. João
16:15 - 17:30	Parallel sessions	Symposium 3 Organizer: Carla Cunha	Mini workshop 5 Organizer: Serine Warwar	Mini workshop 6 Organizer: Rhonda Goldman	Brief Paper session 4 Moderator: Anna Robinson	
17:35 - 17:45	Closing Day 1	Information for the Banquet [ROOM: Sala Infante]				



Program Overview – DAY 2

2023 ISEFT Conference - June 30, 2023

ROOM		SALA INFANTE				
9:00 - 9:50	KEYNOTE 2	JEANNE WATSON: <i>The Responsive Psychotherapist: Attuning to Clients in the Moment</i>				
9:50 - 10:20	COFFEE BREAK 1 & POSTER SESSION 2 [ROOMS: Sala Arrábida, Sala Porto & Hall]					
	ROOMS	Infante	D. Luís	D. Maria	Miragaia	S. João
10:20 - 11:35	Parallel sessions	Symposium 4 Organizer: Joanne Dolhanty	Mini workshop 7 Organizer: Ben Shahar	Mini workshop 8 Organizer: Lou Cooper	Mini workshop 9 Organizer: Sarah Thompson	Symposium 5 Organizer: João Salgado
	ROOMS	Infante	D. Luís	D. Maria	Miragaia	S. João
11:40 - 12:55	Parallel sessions	Symposium 6 Organizer: Rhonda Goldman	Mini workshop 10 Organizer: Shari Geller	Mini workshop 11 Organizer: Nia Pryde	Brief Paper session 5 Moderator: Christina Michael	Brief Paper session 6 Moderator: Júlia Halamová
12:55 - 14:10	LUNCH [ROOMS: Sala Arrábida & Sala Porto]					
	ROOMS	Infante	D. Luís	D. Maria	Miragaia	S. João
14:10 - 15:25	Parallel sessions	Structured Discussion 2 Organizer: Carla Cunha	Symposium 7 Organizer: Mirisse Foroughe	Mini workshop 12 Organizer: Nele Stinckens	Brief Paper session 7 Moderator: João Leal	Mini workshop 13 Organizer: Jaran De Los Santos Olsen
	ROOMS	Infante	D. Luís	D. Maria	Miragaia	S. João
15:30 - 16:45	Parallel sessions	Symposium 8 Organizer: Tiago Ferreira	Mini workshop 14 Organizer: Ciro Caro	Brief Paper session 8 Moderator: Daniela Nogueira	Symposium 9 Organizer: Carla Cunha	Symposium 10 Organizer: Linda Severinsen
16:45 - 17:15	COFFEE BREAK 2 [ROOMS: Sala Arrábida & Sala Porto]					
17:15 - 18:30	CLOSING PLENARY	R. Goldman, S. Warwar and C. Cunha: <i>How has EFT grown and changed, remaining true to its roots?</i>				



2023 ISEFT Conference - June 29, 2023

DAY 1

Opening Plenary
Infante
9:15

Invited Symposium: Emotional Processing in Emotion-Focused Therapy and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy

Presentation 1: A comparison of emotion-focused therapy and cognitive-behavioural therapy in the treatment of generalised anxiety disorder.

Presenter: Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College, Ireland)

Presentation 2: Comparing outcome, processes and experiences in CBT and EFT for depression: experiences from the Bergen Psychotherapy Change Lab.

Presenter: Jan Reidar Stiegler (The Norwegian Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy - NIEFT; Norway)

Presentation 3: Emotional processing as a predictor of change: A longitudinal study of CBT and EFT for depression.

Presenter: João Salgado (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto, Portugal)

Discussant: Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde - Scotland; United States of America)

Poster session 1
Hall
10:30

Poster 1: Study of the impact of a brief Focusing intervention: A protocol for a randomized clinical trial.

Presenter: Clara Aguiar (University of Maia; Portugal)

Poster 2: Therapeutic presence: Creating an observational measure for clinical practice and research.

Presenter: Cristina Azevedo (University of Maia; Portugal)

Poster 3: The Effects of Emotion Regulation on Mental Health Outcomes: A Study of Emotion Focused Therapy Groups (EFT-G) with University Students.

Presenter: Meena Rangan (Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada)



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Poster 4: Listening to the silenced body: Movement groups applied to the context of Biopsychosocial Rehabilitation.

Presenter: Ricardo Lisboa (University of Maia; Portugal)

Poster 5: Emotion Focused Therapy for Fear of Cancer Recurrence: A first rational-empirical model.

Presenter: Susana Almeida (University of Maia; Portugal)

Poster 6: The use of the Classification of Affective-Meaning States (CAMS): A review of the literature.

Presenter: Vinicius Contin Carabolante (University of Maia; Portugal)

**Symposium 1
Infante
11:00**

Efficacy of emotion-focused therapy for depression, anxiety and related difficulties

Organizer: Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College; Ireland)

Presentation 1: Transdiagnostic Emotion-Focused Therapy for depression, anxiety and related difficulties.

Presenters: Daragh Keogh and Sonja Schmitt (Trinity College; Ireland)

Presentation 2: Emotion-focused therapy as a transdiagnostic treatment for depression and anxiety and related disorders: An initial randomised control trial.

Presenter: Daragh Keogh (Trinity College; Ireland)

Presentation 3: Efficacy of Transdiagnostic Emotion-Focused Therapy for Couples (EFT-C-T) for relational difficulties with comorbid depression, anxiety and related difficulties.

Presenter: Jessica Dailey (Trinity College; Ireland)

Discussant: Carla Cunha (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto, Portugal)



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Mini workshop 1
D. Luis
11:00

Angry Kids, Angry Parents - A New APA Video Demonstrating Emotion Focused Skills Training for Parents

Organizer: Anne Hilde Vassbø Hagen (The Norwegian Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy; Norway)

Brief Paper session 1
D. Maria
11:00

Advancing EFT theory

Moderator: Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde - Scotland; United States of America)

Presentation 1: Motivational Splits: Working with Ambivalence in EFT.

Presenter: Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde - Scotland; United States of America)

Presentation 2: Differentiating approach versus avoid tendencies in the motivation for safety/protection: A rational model for the emotional processing of fear.

Presenter: Narayan Singh (Singh Psychology, PLLC; United States of America)

Presentation 3: Daily-Life Emotion Transformation and Depressive Symptoms: A Showcase of how EFT Theories May Advance Emotion Process Research.

Presenter: Tak Tsun (Edmund) Lo (Behavioural Science Institute, Radboud University; Netherlands)

Mini workshop 2
Miragaia
11:00

Emotion focused training for therapists working with patients with eating disorder

Organizer: Marit Nilsen Albertsen (Institute for Psychological Counselling - IPR, Bergen; Norway)



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Brief Paper session 2
S. João
11:00

EFT for Couples

Moderator: Eran Bar-Kalifa (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva; Israel)

Paper 1: The development of a brief session-level process measure for emotion-focused couple therapy (EFT-C).

Presenter: Eran Bar-Kalifa (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva; Israel)

Paper 2: Embracing diversity in emotion: How intercultural couples deal with cultural differences in emotion.

Presenter: Michael Boiger (University of Amsterdam; Netherlands)

Paper 3: The effect of therapists' enactment interventions in promoting vulnerability sharing in emotion focused couple therapy.

Presenter: Ofra Kula (Ben Gurion University of the Negev; Israel)

Paper 4: Rupture and repair in couple therapy: Preliminary findings from a study on EFT couple therapy.

Presenter: Eran Bar-Kalifa (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva; Israel)

Keynote 1
Infante
13:30

Keynote Address 1:

Changing emotion with emotion.

Presenter: Leslie S. Greenberg (York University; Canada)



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Symposium 2
Infante
14:25

Comparing the therapeutic efficacy and change processes in Emotion-Focused Therapy and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for depression

Organizer: Jan Reidar Stiegler (The Norwegian Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy - NIEFT, Norway)

Paper 1: Presentation of preliminary results from a randomized clinical trial comparing outcome of CBT and EFT for depression.

Presenter: Hanna Aardal (NIEFT, Norway)

Paper 2: A qualitative investigation and comparison of clients' experience of CBT and EFT.

Presenter: Aslak Hjeltnes (University of Bergen, Norway)

Paper 3: A presentation of collected data from a randomized clinical trial and a discussion of how to best utilize these data.

Presenter: Jan Reidar Stiegler (NIEFT; Norway)

Discussant: Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College; Ireland)

Brief Paper session 3
D. Luis
14:25

Research in EFT

Moderator: Jason Sharbanee (Curtin University; Australia)

Paper 1: Meta-analysis of Outcomes of Emotion Focused Therapy with Individuals.

Presenter: Jason Sharbanee (Curtin University; Australia)

Paper 2: Update on the ongoing developments within the Swiss/German Practitioner-Researcher Network Study on Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT).

Presenter: Catalina Woldarsky (Private practice; Switzerland)



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Paper 3: Effectiveness of Emotion-Focused Therapy for resolving past emotional injuries.

Presenter: Shigeru Iwakabe (Department of Psychology, Ritsumeikan University; Japan)

Structured Discussion 1
D. Maria
14:25

Advancements in EFT group therapy: Transforming shame and aloneness through shared vulnerability

Organizer: Laura Girz (Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada)

Discussants: Laura Girz (Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada); Sarah Thompson (Transforming Emotions private practice and Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada); James McElvaney (St. Patrick's Mental Health Services; Ireland); & Dylan Moore (St. Patrick's Mental Health Services; Ireland)

Mini workshop 3
Miragaia
14:25

Learning lessons on ""poor outcome"" cases in EFT-C - A clinic workshop based on case studies

Organizer: Catalina Woldarsky (Private Practice; Switzerland)

Mini workshop 4
S. João
14:25

How to write about EFT for the public?

Organizer: Aksel Inge Sinding (Institutt for Psykologisk Rådgivning Oslo; Norway)

Symposium 3
Infante
16:15

Recent advances in Emotion Focused Therapy Training in Europe

Organizer: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)



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Presentation 1: Updates on the EmpoweringEFT@EU project: Advancing supervision and training in EFT.

Presenter: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Presentation 2: A brief presentation of a training program in EFT-supervision skills: The Norwegian experience.

Presenter: Jan Stiegler (Institute for Psychological Counseling & Norwegian Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy; Norway)

Presentation 3: Person-Centred & Experiential Psychotherapy Scale - Emotion-Focused Therapy Scale (PCEPS-EFT-9): A Tool for assessing Therapist Competence in Research, Supervision and Clinical Practice.

Presenter: Marina Monteiro (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Discussant: Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde, Scotland; United States of America)

Mini workshop 5
D. Luis
16:15

Use of Homework and Mapping EFT Interventions to Strengthen and Advance In-Session Work

Organizer: Serine Warwar (Centre for Psychology and Emotional Health; Greenberg Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy; York University Emotion-Focused Therapy Clinic; Canada)

Mini workshop 6
D. Maria
16:15

Updates in Deliberate Practice Training for Emotion-focused therapy: Highlights from a new APA Video production

Organizer: Rhonda Goldman (The Chicago School of Professional Psychology & Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute; USA)



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Brief Paper session 4
S. João
16:15

Growth edges of EFT

Moderator: Anna Robinson (University of Strathclyde; United Kingdom)

Paper 1: Experiences of Interpersonal Process Recall in Emotion-Focused Therapy-group for Clients with Autistic Process.

Presenter: Anna Robinson (University of Strathclyde; United Kingdom)

Paper 2: Emotion Focused Therapy and Forgiveness in the Older Population: Protocol for an upcoming feasibility randomized controlled trial.

Presenter: Bernardo Corrêa D'almeida (University of Maia; Portugal)

Paper 3: Specialist Psychotherapy with Emotion for Anorexia in Kent and Sussex.

Presenter: Anna Oldershaw (Emotion Focused Therapy Institute England; Salomons Institute for Applied Psychology; United Kingdom)

Paper 4: A free emotion focused learning tool for children and their adults.

Presenter: Anne-Hilde Lystad (Livet & Sann, Alesund; Norway)



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2023 ISEFT Conference - June 30, 2023

DAY 2

**Keynote 2
Infante
9:00**

Keynote Address 2:

The Responsive Psychotherapist: Attuning to Clients in the Moment.

Presenter: Jeanne Watson (University of Toronto; Canada)

**Poster session 2
Hall
9:50**

Poster 1: Evaluation of Emotional Transformation in Bereavement using CAMS: A case study.

Presenter: Ana Catarina Silva Do Nascimento (University of Maia; Portugal)

Poster 2: Emotion-Focused Group Therapy for Young adults: A novel group programme in a Psychiatric population.

Presenter: Georgina Heffernan (Saint Patrick's Mental Health Hospital; Ireland)

Poster 3: Therapeutic presence in online sessions during the COVID-19 pandemic: A Portuguese experience.

Presenter: Rita Costa (University of Maia; Portugal)

Poster 4: Emotional processing difficulties scale-revised: Preliminary psychometric study.

Presenter: Bruno Faustino (Universidade Lusófona - Centro Universitário de Lisboa; Portugal)



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Poster 5: Collaborative Case Formulation Work in Emotion Focused Therapy: An Exploratory Task Analytic Study.

Presenter: Iulia Manastireanu (Scottish Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy; United Kingdom)

Symposium 4
Infante
10:20

Emotion-Focused Skills Training for parents: Latest updates on research, textbook and video illustration

Organizer: Joanne Dolhanty (Emotion Training Institute; Canada)

Presentation 1: Textbook in Emotion-Focused Skills Training: A guide for clinicians.

Presenter: Anne Hilde Vassbø Hagen (The Norwegian Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy - NIEFT; Norway)

Presentation 2: Latest research updates on Emotion-Focused Skills Training.

Presenter: Nadia Ansar @ NIEFT- The Norwegian Institute for Emotion-focused Therapy, Norway

Presentation 3: Video illustration of how EFST can be used in practice.

Presenter: Joanne Dolhanty (Emotion Training Institute; Canada)

Discussant: Shigeru Iwakabe (Department of Psychology, Ritsumeikan University University; Japan)

Mini workshop 7
D. Luis
10:20

Emotion-Focused Therapy for Social Anxiety Disorder

Organizer: Ben Shahar (Hebrew University, Jerusalem; Israel)



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Mini workshop 8
D. Maria
10:20

A Transdiagnostic Emotion Focused Approach to Working with Transgender and Gender Diverse Clients

Organizer: Lou Cooper (Australian Institute of Emotion Focused Therapy; Australia)

Mini workshop 9
Miragaia
10:20

Lessons from Clinical Practice in EFT for Trauma: Managing Flashback Memory, Window of Tolerance, Client Uncertainty, and Therapist Well-Being in a Changing World

Organizer: Sarah Thompson (Transforming Emotions - Private practice and Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada)

Symposium 5
S. João
10:20

Modulating emotional processing: Moving EFT beyond mental health disorders

Organizer: João Salgado (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto, Portugal)

Paper 1: Empty Chair Task for Interpersonal Emotional Injury: Randomized Pilot Study of a Brief Online Group Intervention.

Presenter: Alexandra Paiva (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Paper 2: Two-chair task aimed at self-criticism: Pilot study of a Brief Online Group Intervention.

Presenter: Bárbara Santos (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)



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Paper 3: Focusing with Cancer Patients: A Pilot Study of a Brief Online Group Intervention.

Presenter: Marta Gomes (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto, Portugal)

Discussant: Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College; Ireland)

Symposium 6
Infante
11:40

'To task or not to task?' Moment-by-moment clinical decision making in a case of a transgender, Brazilian client

Organizer: Rhonda Goldman (The Chicago School of Professional Psychology & Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute; USA)

Paper 1: To Task or Not to Task: Clinical Decision Making in EFT case formulation.

Presenter: Rhonda Goldman (The Chicago School of Professional Psychology & Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute; USA)

Paper 2: To Task or not to Task in EFT sessions with a Transgender, Brazilian client.

Presenter: Marco Aurelio Mendes (The Brazilian Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy; Brazil)

Discussant: Aimee Ruscio (Private Practice, Washington, DC & Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute; USA)

Mini workshop 10
D. Luis
11:40

Being and Working with Grief and Loss: Therapeutic Presence in Emotion Focused Therapy

Organizer: Shari Geller (York University and Centre for MindBody Health; Canada)



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Mini workshop 11
D. Maria
11:40

Addressing Sexual Intimacy in Working with Couples

Organizer: Nia Pryde (Centre for the Advancement of Emotion-Focused Therapy, London; United Kingdom)

Brief Paper session 5
Miragaia
11:40

Training in EFT

Moderator: Christina Michael (Cyprus Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy; Cyprus)

Paper 1: Confronting the Jargon Barrier in EFT: Challenges and Opportunities.

Presenter: Christina Michael (Cyprus Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy; Cyprus)

Paper 2: Therapists' perceptions of the impact of Emotion-Focused Therapy on Emotion Regulation Processes: A Pilot Study.

Presenter: Joseph Mathew (Glasgow Caledonian University; United Kingdom)

Paper 3: What matters in psychotherapy: Trained therapists' perspectives. A study using Q Methodology.

Presenter: Catalin Nedelcea (Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science, University of Bucharest; Romania)

Paper 4: Stress level and satisfaction of psychologists in the pre- and early stages of their professional practice.

Presenter: Rafael Jódar (Universidad Pontificia Comillas; Spain)



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Brief Paper session 6
S. João
11:40

EFT and beyond

Moderator: Júlia Halamová (Institute of Applied Psychology, Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences, Comenius University; Slovakia)

Paper 1: The efficacy of the two novel mobile apps based on Emotion-focused Therapy.

Presenter: Júlia Halamová (Institute of Applied Psychology, Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences, Comenius University; Slovakia)

Paper 2: Exploring the Potential of Emotion-focused Therapy in Psychedelic Integration.

Presenter: Ana Botelho Ribeiro (Universidade Fernando Pessoa; Portugal)

Paper 3: Ruptures resolution in the therapeutic alliance in different therapeutic modalities: The therapist perception.

Presenter: Ana Bela Couto (University of Maia - UMAIA & Center for Psychology at University of Porto - CPUP; Portugal)

Structured Discussion 2
Infante
14:10

Research in Emotion Focused Therapy: The growth edge

Organizer: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Discussants: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College Dublin; Ireland); Jason Sharbanee (Curtin School of Population Health; Curtin University; Australia); Ben Shahr (The Paul Baerwald School of Social Work and Social Welfare, Hebrew University; Israel) and Eran Bar-Kalifa (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; Israel)

Symposium 7
D. Luis
14:10

Engaging Youth and Their Caregivers in Emotion Focused Therapies

Organizer: Mirisse Foroughe (Family Psychology Centre; Canada)



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Paper 1: Emotion Focused Therapy for Youth: Clinical Applications and Outcomes of a Randomized Case Series.

Presenter: Mirisse Foroughe (Family Psychology Centre; Canada)

Paper 2: Emotion Focused Family Therapy (EFFT): A 12-month Follow-up Study of Dyadic Change.

Presenter: Dillon T. Browne (University of Waterloo; Canada)

Paper 3: Caregiver Maltreatment History and Treatment Response Following an Intensive Emotion Focused Family Therapy Workshop.

Presenter: Kristina Cordeiro (York University; Canada)

Discussant: Krzysztof (Chris) Błażejowski (InRelatio Family Space; Poland)

Mini workshop 12
D. Maria
14:10

Blended Emotion-Focused Therapy: Combining online self-help with regular psychotherapy

Organizer: Nele Stinckens (QIT - Quality In Treatment; Belgium)

Brief Paper session 7
Miragaia
14:10

EFT for Trauma

Moderator: João Leal (SPTFE; Portugal)

Paper 1: Emotion-Focused Therapy and Stages of Change: A Theoretical Framework to Help Clients Victimized by Intimate Partners.

Presenter: João Leal (SPTFE; Portugal)

Paper 2: Emotion Focused Couple Therapy in Refugees.

Presenter: Esra Canpolat (Psychotherapy Institute; Turkey)

Paper 3: EFT in Pre- and Perinatal Trauma therapy.

Presenter: Max Peschek (Praxis für Körperpsychotherapie; Germany)



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Paper 4: Removing Emotional Wrecking After the Earthquake Trauma.

Presenter: Habibe Aykan (Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute of Turkey; Turkey)

Mini workshop 13
S. João
14:10

Connecting with the Transcendental Core of Self through Emotion-Focused Mindfulness

Organizer: Jaran De Los Santos Olsen (IPR Oslo; Norway)

Symposium 8
Infante
15:30

Exploring the Potential of Complex Psychological Networks for Emotion-Focused Therapy: Understanding Treatment Mechanisms, Therapeutic Relationship, and Patients' Meaning Systems

Organizer: Tiago Ferreira (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto)

Presentation 1: Decentering: A Common Mechanism of Therapeutic Change in Cognitive-Behavioral and Emotion-Focused Therapies.

Presenter: Filipa Ferreira (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto, Portugal)

Presentation 2: Untangling the Mechanisms of Psychological Treatments: An Exploration of the Differential Impact of EFT and CBT on Psychological Distress.

Presenter: Daniel Castro (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Presentation 3: Exploration of the semantic dynamical processes between therapist and client during psychotherapy.



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Presenter: Rita Rodrigues (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto, Portugal)

Presentation 4: An exploration of the changes that occur in the structure and dynamics of clients' semantic network during psychotherapy.

Presenter: Sofia Araújo (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Mini workshop 14
D. Luis
15:30

Dialogues with the body: Working with somatization and unexplained medical symptoms

Organizer: Ciro Caro (Universidad Pontificia Comillas; Spain)

Brief Paper session 8
D. Maria
15:30

Transforming Emotions with Grief and Compassion

Moderator: Daniela Nogueira (UMAIA - University of Maia; Portugal)

Paper 1: The grief pandemic and how EFT can address it: the development of training manuals for the promotion of a more compassionate emotional community.

Presenter: Daniela Nogueira (UMAIA - University of Maia; Portugal)

Paper 2: Existential Need Processing Model in complicated grief and empty chair for unfinished business.

Presenter: José Gamoneda (Unidad Clínica de Psicología - UNINPSI; Universidad Pontificia Comillas; Spain)

Paper 3: Emotion-Focused Mindfulness Self-Compassion Meditation - The practice of RAIN.

Presenter: Niels Bagge (Institut for Emotionsfokuseret Terapi; Denmark)



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Symposium 9
Miragaia
15:30

Supervision in Emotion Focused Therapy under Research: Learning from Expert Supervisors and Supervisees' perspectives.

Organizer: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto, Portugal)

Paper 1: Clinical Supervision in Humanistic, Existential, Experiential Therapies and Emotion Focused Therapy: A Systematic Review of the Empirical Literature.

Presenter: Ana Rodrigues (Universidade da Maia; Portugal)

Paper 2: Listening to the Experts: Preliminary Results from First- and Second-Generation EFT Experts Interviewed during the EmpoweringEFT@EU Project.

Presenter: Pedro Lopes (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Paper 3: "How was your path and experience in this clinical supervision process?" Exploring the Perspective of Supervisees undergoing Supervision in Emotion Focused Therapy.

Presenter: Ana Rodrigues (Universidade da Maia, Portugal)

Paper 4: Using therapy session videos in EFT Supervision: Resources and Challenges in the Spanish Community.

Presenter: Alejandro de la Traba (Universidad de Comillas, Madrid, Spain)



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Symposium 10
S. João
15:30

Emotion Focused Skills Training (EFST) for parents of children in specialized mental health care in Norway: Clinical experience and current research.

Organizer: Linda Severinsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)

Paper 1: Clinical Experience working with Emotion Focused Skills Training (EFST) in specialized mental Health care.

Presenter: Linda Severinsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)

Paper 2: Emotion-Focused Skills Training (EFST) for Parents with Anxious Children: A Pilot Study.

Presenter: Rune Zahl-Olsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)

Paper 3: Effectiveness of Emotion Focused Skills Training for Parents: Presenting a Randomized Controlled Trial in Specialist Mental Health Care.

Presenter: Linda Severinsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)

Paper 4: The mechanisms of change: How does Emotion Focused Skills Training (EFST) cause change?

Presenter: Yngve Kolltveit (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)

Closing Plenary
Infante
17:15

How has EFT grown and changed, remaining true to its roots?

Presenters: Rhonda Goldman (The Chicago School of Professional Psychology & Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute; USA); Serine Warwar (Centre for Psychology and Emotional Health; Greenberg Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy; York University Emotion-Focused Therapy Clinic; Canada); and Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)



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2023 ISEFT Conference June 29-30, 2023

**BOOK OF
ABSTRACTS**

Changing Emotions in a Changing World



Porto - Portugal

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS – DAY 1

2023 ISEFT Conference - June 29, 2023

Invited Symposium: Emotional Processing in Emotion-Focused Therapy and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy.

Abstract: Emotional processing has been shown to be a reliable predictor of improvement in clinical symptoms following psychotherapy. This invited symposium gathers contributions from several teams exploring emotional processing in the contrast between Emotion-focused Therapy (EFT) and Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT). These studies involve randomized clinical trials where EFT and CBT have been applied for the treatment of generalized anxiety disorder (paper 1) or depression (papers 2 and 3), in Ireland (paper 1), Norway (paper 2) and Portugal (paper 3).

Presentation 1: A comparison of emotion-focused therapy and cognitive-behavioural therapy in the treatment of generalised anxiety disorder.

Presenter: Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College; Ireland)

Authors: Ladislav Timulak, Daragh Keogh, Craig Chigwedere, Charlotte Wilson, Fiona Ward, David Hevey, Patrick Griffin, Louise Jacobs, Suzanne Hughes, Christina Vaughan, Kea Beckham and Shona Mahon

Abstract: Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is a chronic mental health difficulty typically present in primary care settings. Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is the psychological intervention with the best evidence for its efficacy for GAD. The development of other psychological interventions can increase client choice. This feasibility trial examined an initial assessment of efficacy of EFT in comparison to CBT in the treatment of GAD in the context of an Irish public health service. The trial provided information on recruitment, therapist training/adherence, and client retention relevant for a potential non-inferiority trial. A randomized controlled trial compared the efficacy of EFT vs. CBT for GAD. Both therapies were offered in a 16-20 sessions format. Therapists (n=8) were trained in both conditions and offered both therapies. Clients were randomly assigned to the two therapies EFT (n=29) and CBT (n=29). Outcomes were assessed using several measures, with the Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7) being the primary outcome. Clients were assessed at baseline, week 16, end of therapy, and at 6 months follow-up. Therapists were able to learn the two models after a short training and showed moderate levels of adherence. Although not statistically significant, the drop out from treatment was 10% for EFT and 27% for CBT. The two therapies showed large pre-post change and similar outcomes across



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all measures, with these benefits retained at 6-months follow-up. Results suggest that EFT is a potentially promising treatment for GAD. Further investigation is indicated to establish its potential to expand the available psychological therapies for GAD.

Presentation 2: Comparing outcome, processes and experiences in CBT and EFT for depression: experiences from the Bergen Psychotherapy Change Lab.

Presenter: Jan Reidar Stiegler (The Norwegian Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy - NIEFT; Norway)

Authors: Jan Reidar Stiegler (The Norwegian Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy - NIEFT; Norway) & The Norwegian Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy team and The Bergen Psychotherapy Change Lab at the University of Bergen, Norway

Abstract: In this paper we will present an ongoing research project where the main focus is to compare outcome, processes and clients' experiences of Emotion-Focused Therapy and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. The project is a collaboration between The Norwegian Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy and The Bergen Psychotherapy Change Lab at the University of Bergen, Norway. A total of 365 patients have been assessed and 111 have been randomized to one of the two treatment conditions. In both conditions the patients received 14-18 sessions of individual therapy from therapists well trained in either EFT or CBT. All sessions have been video recorded for later analysis, and 15 participants from each condition have been subjected to qualitative interviews post treatment. The following process and outcome measures has been administered: BDI, BAI, IIP, AAQ, SCS, QoL, REP-EAT-Q, WAI, EAC. Preliminary results from the RCT will be presented along with planned articles and possible utilization of collected data.

Presentation 3: Emotional processing as a predictor of change: A longitudinal study of CBT and EFT for depression.

Presenter: João Salgado (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto, Portugal)

Authors: João Salgado, Patrícia Pinheiro, Miguel M. Gonçalves, and Inês Sousa, Inês

Abstract: Emotional processing has been shown to be a reliable predictor of improvement in depression following therapy. However, it is not clear how emotional processing relates to symptom alleviation over time. In order to better understand this relationship, we examined the effect of emotional processing on (1) pre- to post-therapy changes in depressive symptoms (final outcome) and (2) symptom intensity across therapy sessions (session-by-session outcome). Our study included 50 clients with depression who underwent either cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) or emotion-focused therapy (EFT). Emotional processing was measured using the Experiencing Scale during Emotion Episodes in five therapy sessions. We found that increased emotional processing during therapy predicted greater improvement in depressive symptoms from pre- to post-therapy. Moreover, higher levels of emotional processing were associated with lower symptom intensity in the following therapy session. Interestingly, we also found that the



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intensity of symptoms in the previous session was related to subsequent levels of emotional processing achieved. Our results indicate that emotional processing is an important factor in predicting therapeutic change in depression. Not only does emotional processing facilitate symptom improvement, but symptom intensity can also influence emotional processing. These findings shed light on the dynamic interplay between emotional processing and symptom intensity in depression treatment.

Discussant: Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde, Scotland; United States of America)

Symposium 1:

Efficacy of emotion-focused therapy for depression, anxiety and related difficulties.

Organizer: Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College; Ireland)

This panel will present three studies focused primarily on measuring outcomes of emotion-focused therapy. The first presentation will present a transdiagnostic adaptation of Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT-T), which combines modular (targeting specific clusters of symptoms) and shared mechanisms (targeting underlying vulnerability) approaches to the treatment of depression, anxiety and related disorders such as obsessive-compulsive and trauma/stressor related disorders. The second paper will present the current status of a still ongoing project in which transdiagnostic emotion-focused therapy for depression, anxiety and related difficulties (e.g., OCD, PTSD) is compared to a wait-list. Finally, the third paper will present the design of a recently started project measuring the efficacy of transdiagnostic emotion-focused therapy for couples who experience relational distress and at least one of the partners suffers from depression, anxiety and/or related difficulties.

Presentation 1: Transdiagnostic Emotion-Focused Therapy for depression, anxiety and related difficulties.

Presenters: Daragh Keogh and Sonja Schmitt (Trinity College; Ireland)

Authors: Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College Dublin; Ireland), Daragh Keogh (Trinity College Dublin; Ireland), Sonja Schmitt (Trinity College Dublin; Ireland)

Abstract: This paper will present a transdiagnostic adaptation of Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT-T), which combines modular (targeting specific clusters of symptoms) and shared mechanisms (targeting underlying vulnerability) approaches to the treatment of depression, anxiety and related disorders such as obsessive-compulsive and trauma/stressor related disorders. The workshop will illustrate how EFT-T addresses problematic symptoms but primarily focuses on transforming emotion vulnerability, or Core Pain, by activating adaptive emotional responses, such as compassion and protective anger, to embedded unmet needs. Case vignettes of clients meeting various diagnostic criteria will be presented to illustrate the nature of work with symptomatic distress and underlying core emotional vulnerabilities.



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Presentation 2: Emotion-focused therapy as a transdiagnostic treatment for depression and anxiety and related disorders: An initial randomised control trial.

Presenter: Daragh Keogh (Trinity College; Ireland)

Authors: Ladislav Timulak, Daragh Keogh, Sonja Schmitt, James McElvaney, Katarina Timulakova, Orla McLoughlin, Natalie Hession, Ciaran Jennings

Abstract: This paper will report on a randomised controlled study that aims to establish the efficacy of Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT) vs. wait-list control in the treatment of depression, anxiety and related disorders. Up to forty clients presenting in a psychology/counselling service are randomly assigned to two conditions: EFT (n=20) and wait-list control (n=20). Clients assigned to wait-list control are offered a delayed intervention (EFT). Outcomes are assessed using several measures. Primary measures will be the Overall Anxiety Severity and Impairment Symptoms and the Overall Depression Severity and Impairment Symptoms. Other measures are used to assess the main symptomatology of respective primary diagnoses. Clients are assessed prior to therapy, at week 16 and at end of therapy, as well as at 6 months follow-up. The paper presents a report on recruitment, client presentations, client retention rates, etc.

Presentation 3: Efficacy of Transdiagnostic Emotion-Focused Therapy for Couples (EFT-C-T) for relational difficulties with comorbid depression, anxiety and related difficulties.

Presenter: Jessica Dailey (Trinity College; Ireland)

Authors: Ladislav Timulak, Jessica Dailey, Ronan O'Malley, Jessica McKnight, Jessica Lunn, Leonard Hayes, Suzanne Byers, Simone Poppelton, Katarina Timulakova, Les Greenberg

Abstract: This project aims to examine the efficacy of Emotion-Focused Couples Therapy (EFT-C) as a treatment for relationship distress within a couple as well as co-treatment for co-morbid depression, anxiety or similar difficulties (e.g., trauma-related or obsessive-compulsive difficulties). The project is a prospective, non-randomised, baseline, pre-post and follow-up intervention study of 20 couples. Participation requires referral by the participant's general practitioner (GP). Clients are assessed on a range of measures at baseline (week 0), pre-therapy (week 4), post-therapy (week 16) and 3-months follow-up (week 28), and client interviews will be qualitatively analysed in terms of client experiences of change and helpful/unhelpful aspects of therapy (post-therapy). All sessions will be video/audio recorded for future process, process-outcome, qualitative and case study research, nested within the design of the main study. This is common practice in psychotherapy research projects such as the proposed study, as while it is important to demonstrate that a particular intervention is effective, it is equally important to also explore how, why and in what contexts it may be effective. It is anticipated that while some of this process, process-outcome, qualitative and case study research will be carried out concurrent with the main study, some research will be carried out subsequent to the main study (up to 20 years post-study). The paper presents a report on recruitment, client presentations, client retention rates, etc.

Discussant: Carla Cunha (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto, Portugal)



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Poster Session 1

Poster 1: Study of the impact of a brief Focusing intervention: A protocol for a randomized clinical trial.

Presenter: Clara Aguiar (University of Maia; Portugal)

Authors: Clara Aguiar (University of Maia; Portugal), João Salgado (University of Maia; Portugal)

Abstract: Specific strategies and techniques can be used to help people manage their emotions effectively. Focusing is a therapeutic technique that can be beneficial when a person feels overwhelmed or has difficulty understanding and connecting with their emotions, especially regarding significant issues. Focusing can help people gain clarity and insight into their emotions by paying attention to bodily sensations, which can lead to a sense of relief from painful emotions. Despite the potential benefits of Focusing as a therapeutic technique, it remains uncertain how effective it is in non-therapeutic contexts and among people with mild to moderate psychological symptoms. To address this knowledge gap, we are conducting a randomized clinical trial to investigate the effectiveness of a brief Focusing intervention delivered in an online and group format. A randomized clinical trial comparing an intervention group with a control group will be carried out, and mixed analysis methods will be used. The protocol of this clinical trial will be presented here.

Poster 2: Therapeutic presence: Creating an observational measure for clinical practice and research.

Presenter: Cristina Azevedo (University of Maia; Portugal)

Authors: Cristina Azevedo (University of Maia; Portugal), Francisca Lima (University of Maia; Portugal), Rita Costa (University of Maia; Portugal), Eunice Barbosa (University of Maia; Portugal), Daniela Nogueira (University of Maia; Portugal)

Abstract: Therapeutic presence has been described as the ability to be with the client on a physical, emotional, cognitive, spiritual and relational level. This allows clients to perceive the therapeutic context as a safe place to explore pain. In this sense, therapeutic presence is crucial in experiential approaches, such as in EFT, as it facilitates exploratory work and deepening the experience inherent in different therapeutic tasks. Several authors emphasize the need to create an observational measure to help in the training of judges and to elucidate the type of behavior that the therapist adopts that demonstrates therapeutic presence, or lack thereof. Thus, the present study aims to create an observational measure of therapeutic presence and the construction of the respective application manual. To this end, the judges read and discussed relevant prior studies about therapeutic presence, as well as the quantitative measure of the Therapeutic Presence Inventory in order to transform this measure into an observational measure. Then, they carried out an exhaustive study of possible observational indicators that would help in this transformation. The new items were discussed through reflection with specialists in psychotherapy, and visualization of the video of the American Psychological Association Series I - Systems of Psychotherapy: Presence in Psychotherapy, with the author of the scale, Shari M.



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Geller. Data were collected through the observation of 20 psychotherapy videos available on free access websites dedicated to the study and pedagogy of psychotherapy. Sessions of 20 therapists with different theoretical approaches were then analyzed, namely person-centered approach, Gestalt therapy, transactional analysis, self-realization, multimodal therapy, rational emotive therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy. The importance of an observational measure is further reinforced by the fact that the behavioral examples detailed in the manual allow judges to easily identify when the therapist is present, thus improving data triangulation in RCTs (randomized clinical trials).

Poster 3: The Effects of Emotion Regulation on Mental Health Outcomes: A Study of Emotion Focused Therapy Groups (EFT-G) with University Students.

Presenter: Meena Rangan (Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada)

Authors: Meena Rangan (Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada), Laura Girz (Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada), Sarah Thompson (Transforming Emotions; Canada)

Abstract: EFT groups are an emerging treatment modality and have shown promising outcomes. EFT-G has a unique benefit with regard to shared experiencing, empathic resonance, and healing pain together. As a result of accessing deep pain with others, receiving compassion, and experiencing deep care for others, clients develop better capacity to approach and regulate their own painful emotions. This type of communal healing may be particularly powerful and relevant for clients who feel alone in their pain or have been isolated due to the pandemic or other world events. Despite emerging evidence that EFT groups are effective, little is known about mechanisms of change and trajectories of change for different clients. It has been speculated that there are two broad patterns of change in EFT groups, with some clients initially focusing on accessing, tolerating and regulating emotion and others being more immediately able to deeply access, experience, and work on transforming core painful emotions. Therefore, we hypothesize that initial emotion regulation as well as changes in emotion regulation will predict magnitude of change in anxiety and depression scores over both Round 1 and Round 2 of EFT groups. Data will be analyzed from EFT groups conducted through the Counseling Centre at Toronto Metropolitan University between 2014-2019 for university students aged 18-25. Participants were asked to commit to one round of group, in which each participant had one opportunity to engage in a chair work session in front of the group. Then, participants could elect to participate in a second round of chair work in group, or to discontinue. Emotion regulation was measured using the DERS, and mental health outcomes were assessed in terms of anxiety (BAI), depression (BDI) and general well-being (MHC-SF). Analyses will be run using multiple regression analysis over both Round 1 and Round 2 of the EFT groups.

Poster 4: Listening to the silenced body: Movement groups applied to the context of Biopsychosocial Rehabilitation.

Presenter: Ricardo Lisboa (University of Maia; Portugal)

Authors: Ricardo Lisboa (Universidade da Maia; Portugal), Ana Catarina Nascimento (Universidade da Maia; Portugal), Sérgio Fabela (CRPG; Portugal), Maria Araújo (Universidade



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Portugalense; Portugal), Ana Conde (Universidade Portucalense; Portugal), Raquel Rocha (CRPG; Portugal), Nuno Antunes (CRPG; Portugal)

Abstract: The Movement Group has become a general concept, covering all body techniques that can complement body psychotherapy. Thus, this concept is imbued with a permeable and evolutionary character depending on emerging advances in the theoretical body of Body Psychotherapies. The goal is to lead the participant through a process of bodily sensitization and awareness, in order to improve their perception of themselves, literally intending to increase awareness of the unconscious. This study aims to evaluate changes in interoceptive awareness, depressive and anxious symptomatology, and control/inhibition of negative affective responses after implementing a movement group. The sample for this study was 32 participants who were undergoing Biopsychosocial Rehabilitation at a Professional Rehabilitation Center. For this, we used the MAIA questionnaire, which evaluates interoceptive awareness through a multidimensional assessment; the HADS, which assesses both anxious and depressive symptomatology through two subscales; the CEC, which measures control/inhibition of negative affective responses, and a sociodemographic questionnaire. As expected, the results allowed us to observe statistically significant changes in the variables "Depression" and "Self-Regulation," with a significant decrease in depressive symptomatology and a significant increase in the ability for self-regulation. In this sense, we can hypothesize that the intervention of the movement group, by intentionally inducing a modification of motor behavior and increasing the potential for modification of proprioception and interoception, seems to contribute to the increase of self-regulation mechanisms, causing changes in the emotional and affective states of the participants.

Poster 5: Emotion Focused Therapy for Fear of Cancer Recurrence: A first rational-empirical model.

Presenter: Susana Almeida (University of Maia; Portugal)

Authors: Susana N. Almeida (University of Maia - ISMAI, Maia; Portugal), Robert Elliott (Counselling Unit, School of Psychological Sciences and Health, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow; UK), Eunice R. Silva (Psychology Service, Portuguese Institute of Oncology of Porto Francisco Gentil, E.P.E., Porto; Portugal), Celia M. D. Sales (Portugal Faculty of Psychology and Education Science at the University of Porto (FPCEUP), Center for Psychology at the University of Porto (CPUP), University of Porto, Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: Fear of Cancer Recurrence (FCR) is a common experience in people surviving a cancer diagnosis and is frequently identified as a major concern and unmet need. Described by survivors as a complex, intense and multi-dimensional experience, FCR might extend along a continuum of adaptive and maladaptive responses. Different psychological interventions have been developed for helping people presenting with significant FCR-related distress, mainly within the cognitive-behavioral paradigm. Emotion Focused Therapy (EFT) has been proposed as an effective alternative to help people with cancer dealing with cancer-related issues, including FCR. In this poster, we present a first rational-empirical model of EFT for FCR, based in a discovery-phase task analysis on a successful case from a larger exploratory study. We found that, in general, EFT- FCR follows the usual structure of an EFT intervention, with four distinct phases. Nevertheless, we identified some specific secondary processes (e.g., hypervigilance and



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catastrophising) and clarified the nature of the core pain in this presentation as existential (e.g., fear of dying).

Poster 6: The use of the Classification of Affective-Meaning States (CAMS): A review of the literature.

Presenter: Vinicius Contin Carabolante (University of Maia; Portugal)

Authors: Vinicius Contin Carabolante (University of Maia; Portugal), Ana Catarina Silva do Nascimento (University of Maia; Portugal), Gabriela da Silva Valente (University of Maia; Portugal), Tânia Sofia da Silva Magalhães (University of Maia; Portugal), Daniela Nogueira (University of Maia; Portugal), José Gamoneda (Universidad de Comillas; Madrid, Spain), Alejandro de la Traba López (University of Comillas; Spain), Rafael Jódar (Universidad de Comillas; Madrid, Spain)

Abstract: The Classification of Affective-Meaning States (CAMS) is a measure developed by Pascual-Leone and Greenberg (2005) to encode events of emotional arousal, engagement and involvement of clients throughout Emotion Focused Therapy. This therapeutic approach assumes the centrality of emotions in the psychic organization, and therefore understands this classification as valuable for the research context. The main aim of this study is to contribute to a better understanding of the use of the CAMS in the literature over the last decade by identifying the main studies that have used the CAMS as a methodological resource. In particular, the aim is to understand the usefulness of the CAMS in the basis of EFT interventions. A comprehensive literature review was conducted in the databases PsycInfo, PUBMED and Web of Science using the descriptors "Classification of Affective Meaning States", "Psychotherapy" and "Emotion Focused Therapy". The results were carefully analyzed and screened, including productions from the past decade using the CAMS method. The preliminary results identified a total of 88 articles. 55 were duplicates and another 11 did not include the CAMS in their method. The final selection was 22 articles from the years 2014-2022. Overall, the studies focused on psychotherapeutic interventions and their contribution to clients' emotional change. Others sought to understand the role of specific emotions in therapy, such as assertive anger and global distress. Preliminary results suggest that emotional expressiveness is important in the emotional transformation process and CAMS is a good measure of the effectiveness of EFT interventions. Further analysis is expected and required.

Mini workshop 1:

Angry Kids, Angry Parents - A New APA Video Demonstrating Emotion Focused Skills Training for Parents.

Organizer: Anne Hilde Vassbø Hagen (The Norwegian Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy, Norway)

Authors: Joanne Dolhanty (Emotion Training Institute; Canada), Anne Hilde Vassbø Hagen (The Norwegian Institute of Emotion Focused Therapy; Norway)

Abstract: What does a furious and threatening child need? How can the most war-weary parent regain trust in their ability to handle their child's anger? And how can clinicians work with parents



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to successfully face their angry kids in a way that is good for the child's development and the parent's sanity? This workshop gives you a brief introduction to Emotion Focused Skills Training for Parents (EFST) and highlights from the brand-new APA video demonstrating chair-work with the mom of a 6-year-old powerhouse. The goal is to introduce participants to EFST chair-work - working with the parent to heal the child. You'll see chair-work on validation, boundaries and competing motivation in the parent. Our goal is for the workshop to leave you more interested in working with parents when children are suffering emotionally. If you're already an EFST-Therapist we hope the video will give you the skills and assertiveness you need to take on angry, and aggressive families. In Joanne Dolhanty and Anne Hilde Vassbø Hagen's upcoming book, *Angry Kids, Angry Parents - Understanding and Working With Anger in Your Family* (released in June) they give an in-depth journey into understanding anger and aggression. Being angry can help us to stand up for ourselves. But anger can also show up as rage, sharp criticism, screaming, biting, punching, and kicking. It is exhausting for parents to deal with constant blow-ups. Even clinicians can become frustrated, scared, or slip into hopelessness in the face of anger and aggression in families. The urge to give advice, and help the parent try to change their children's behavior run high. But instead, we suggest understanding that emotions are in the driver seat of every tantrum and boundary gone bad. If we work with the emotions in the parent, we end up changing the behavior in the child.

Brief Paper session 1: Advancing EFT theory

Moderator: Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde - Scotland; United States of America)

Presentation 1: Motivational Splits: Working with Ambivalence in EFT.

Presenter: Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde - Scotland; United States of America)

Authors: Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde - Scotland; United States of America)

Abstract: EFT can be used with clients who are struggling with unhealthy or self-damaging activities, including substance misuse, eating difficulties, failing to follow health directives (e.g. to exercise), or generally not taking good care of self. Usually, people are ambivalent about these things - torn between wanting to do the healthy thing, and not feeling able to stop themselves from doing the unhealthy thing. This also applies to approaching vs avoiding painful emotions, obviously an important issue for EFT. In this brief presentation I provide an overview of this rarely discussed symptomatic conflict in EFT. I compare EFT to Motivational Interviewing (MI) for motivational conflicts, touching on the strengths and limitations of each. From an MI perspective, it is important to support client motivation for change (including approaching painful emotions). From an EFT perspective, it is important to help clients to move past the symptomatic conflict between the part that engages in the self-damaging activity and the nagging, critical voice that tries to stop the self-damaging activity but generally triggers it instead. Key to the work is helping clients to intensify their emotions and access the different forms of emotional pain involved in the conflict, including the bodily ache that registers the organismic cost of the self-damaging activity and the pain of the unmet growth-oriented needs behind the self-damaging activity. The



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presentation concludes with a brief video excerpt of EFT work around avoidance of emotional pain.

Presentation 2: Differentiating approach versus avoid tendencies in the motivation for safety/protection: A rational model for the emotional processing of fear.

Presenter: Narayan Singh (Singh Psychology, PLLC; United States of America)

Authors: Narayan Singh (Singh Psychology, PLLC; USA), Jason Sharbanee (Curtin University - School of Population Health; Australia)

Abstract: Emotion focused therapy for individuals (EFT; Elliott et al., 2004; Greenberg, 2002) aims to help transform clients' primary maladaptive emotions by facilitating new experiences in which clients meet previously unmet psychological needs. EFT scholars (Greenberg, 2021; Timulak, 2015) have suggested that clients seen in clinical settings are primarily organized around three central needs and associated affective states: attachment/relatedness (sadness/loneliness), identity/self-esteem (shame), and safety/protection (fear). Much research and theory in EFT has centered around the former two needs for attachment/relatedness and identity/self-esteem (Greenberg & Goldman, 2008; Greenberg & Paivio, 1997). For instance, Sharbanee and colleagues (2019) observed EFT sessions and proposed a model in which client's needs for either attachment or identity were categorized into tendencies of approaching a desired emotional state versus avoiding an undesired state. This categorization parallels concepts in behavioral systems theory (BST; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012), that when a particular psychological need is unmet, the organism tends to resort to secondary strategies of hyperactivation or deactivation of the system in attempt to increase efforts satisfy the need or reduce efforts and cope with the distress on one's own. The present paper attempts to expand upon Sharbanee and colleagues' work to include the motivation of safety/protection. Building on emotion processing theory (Pascual-Leone & Greenberg, 2007; Greenberg & Paivio, 1997), and BST, we propose a rational model for the emotional processing of primary maldadaptive fear. This model will inform future task analysis work.

Presentation 3: Daily-Life Emotion Transformation and Depressive Symptoms: A Showcase of how EFT Theories May Advance Emotion Process Research.

Presenter: Tak Tsun (Edmund) Lo (Behavioural Science Institute, Radboud University, Netherlands)

Authors: Tak Tsun Lo (Behavioural Science Institute, Radboud University, Nijmegen, the Netherlands); Yuen Wah Elsie Lamb (Counseling Centre; Hong Kong); Tin Nok Cheng (Hospital Authority; Hong Kong)

Abstract: Emotion transformation has been identified as a key therapeutic process in emotion-focused therapy (EFT) in three decades of development of EFT. In recent years, there has been an increasing interest among the broader research community towards the investigation of emotion processes. However, criticisms have emerged, suggesting that such studies may only contribute limited value in the prediction of well-being. We argue that this view was due to the lack of theory in formulating measures and hypotheses. In particular, how emotions change in



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relation to one another, which is critical in quantifying emotion transformation, was seldom studied in basic research. As a way forward, the theoretical framework of emotion-focused therapy (EFT) may offer client- and therapist-informed perspectives and hypotheses in advancing the study of emotion processes. We formalize emotion transformation as switching from a presenting maladaptive emotion to one or more distress-relevant emotions. To illustrate, there are four switchings between distinct emotions in the following hypothetical case: a client who is verbally aggressive to his partner exhibits secondary anger, discovers powerlessness with focusing, connects with the core pain of fear of abandonment during chair work, and experiences self-compassion after acknowledging and expressing the need for connectedness. We showcase a method to detect emotion transformation with within-person repeated measurements (experiencing sampling data) and present indicative evidence in testing how the presence of emotion transformation in daily life is negatively associated with depressive symptoms. This result is a proof-of-concept in bridging EFT theories to basic research. We propose other EFT-informed hypotheses that can be tested in the future. Putting EFT theories to basic research may advance research in emotion processes and, at the same time, offer quantifiable markers of psychopathology and therapeutic progress that strengthen EFT as an evidence-based therapeutic approach.

Mini workshop 2:

Emotion focused training for therapists working with patients with eating disorder.

Organizer: Marit Nilsen Albertsen (Institute for Psychological Counselling - IPR, Bergen, Norway)

Authors: Marit Nilsen Albertsen (Psychotherapist at Institute for Psychological Counselling (IPR Bergen), PhD-candidate at the University of Bergen; Norway), Bente Austbø (Psychologist, Specialist in Clinical Children's Psychology at Institute for Psychological Counselling (IPR Bergen); Norway), Hanna Aardal (Psychologist, Specialist in Clinical Psychology and PhD-candidate at Institute for Psychological Counselling (IPR Bergen); Norway)

Abstract: There has been an increase of eating disorders during the COVID-19 pandemic, worldwide. In line with increased understanding of how people with eating disorders have challenges with emotional processing, regulation, contact and expression, Emotion focused therapy (EFT) has been proven useful in treating eating disorders. Emotion focused skill training for parents of patients with eating disorders, has been evolving for many years, and has shown promising results. Eating disordered behaviour can be seen as a solution to avoid unwanted negative affect. Starving numbs, throwing up, overexercising, or taking laxatives feels cleansing and provides relief, bingeing soothes. Avoiding emotions is a self-reinforcing vicious circle. As emotions and self are inseparable, the patients with eating disorders loses contact with the authentic self, and a false self is built around body, food and weight, where body-hate increases proportionally with the pain from the unprocessed emotions. EFT and EFST (Emotion Focused Skills Training) offer effective ways to work with this vicious circle. To meet the post-pandemic increasing demand for treatment for eating disorders, we as EFT-therapists and EFST-therapists, have developed a two-day emotion focused training for therapists working with patients with eating disorders, or with family-based therapy in this field. This training is based on our experiences with including well-established interventions from EFT in the treatment for eating disorders, and experiences with



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EFST when working with parents of patients with eating disorders, as well as the existing literature in this field. In this workshop we will share and demonstrate how we integrate EFT in the treatment of patients with anorexia, bulimia and binge eating disorder, as well as what we especially emphasize from EFST working with parents of patients with eating disorders. The structure is based on the two-day training we offer for therapists, and we will also share experiences from these trainings.

Brief Paper session 2: EFT for Couples

Moderator: Eran Bar-Kalifa, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel

Paper 1: The development of a brief session-level process measure for emotion-focused couple therapy (EFT-C)

Presenter: Eran Bar-Kalifa (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel)

Authors: Shanny Talmor (Ben-Gurion University; Israel); Ben Shahar (The Hebrew University; Israel), David Sbarra (University of Arizona; United States), Eran Bar-Kalifa (Ben-Gurion University; Israel)

Abstract: Since the inception of Emotion-focused therapy for couples (EFT-C), there has been great interest in identifying the underlying mechanisms of change (Kazdin, 2001). Most process research in EFT-C relied on observational methods, which are high in their internal validity and provide micro-level information regarding partners' behaviors and experiences (Dalglish et al., 2015). However, there is a need to complement these labor-intensive methods with a brief questionnaire that can be easily administered to track changes in partners' processes as they unfold throughout the treatment. The purpose of the present study is to examine the EFT Couples Process Measure (ECPM), a short, easily administered, eight-item questionnaire that couples complete at the end of each therapy session. This questionnaire considers multiple perspectives and is designed to be administered during the entire course of treatment. Data from 30 couples undergoing EFT-C with 6 different therapists were analyzed using Hierarchical Linear Modeling. Findings show that ECPM components capture distinct constructs of the therapy process. Moreover, the aspects that are theorized to involve the critical processes of change (Johnson, 2004) - negative cycle understanding and vulnerability-responsiveness expression- were consistently associated with session quality, above and beyond alliance ratings, one of the most researched processes in psychotherapy (Friedlander et al., 2018). This instrument shows high potential to provide important insights for both clinicians and researchers and has the potential to be beneficial for many couple therapy approaches in addition to EFT-C.

Paper 2: Embracing diversity in emotion: How intercultural couples deal with cultural differences in emotion

Presenter: Michael Boiger (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands)

Authors: Michael Boiger (University of Amsterdam; The Netherlands), Anna Schouten (University of Leuven; Belgium), Bertjan Doosje (University of Amsterdam; The Netherlands)



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Abstract: In intercultural relationships, different ideas about how, why, or when to feel or experience certain emotions meet, which can lead to challenges for the relationship. Although we know that there are cultural differences in couples' emotions and that emotions play a central role for intimate relationships, emotions have hardly received any attention in research with intercultural couples. This makes it difficult to formulate empirically based recommendations for working with intercultural couples. In the present study, we followed intercultural and monocultural couples for two weeks to establish (1) how differences in emotion impact their relationship satisfaction and (2) what helps them in dealing with potential differences. $N=55$ East-West intercultural couples and $N=73$ Belgian monocultural couples completed daily diaries on their conflicts, emotions, and relationship satisfaction for 14 days; they also completed a new measure of coping with cultural differences in emotion. We found that intercultural couples reported lower relationship satisfaction than monocultural couples, which could be explained by them experiencing different emotions in their daily lives. However, when couples approached their differences with cultural empathy (i.e., an openness and curiosity to the cultural dimension of their emotions), the negative impact of these differences was mitigated. Interestingly, communicating openly about differences aggravated the situation when these differences were large. The current findings highlight the importance of paying attention to the cultural dimension of partners' emotions in EFT-C, for example, when exploring vulnerabilities in their cultural context, when providing psychoeducation around culture and emotion, or when working with blocks due to cultural display rules. By facilitating empathy and compassion for each other's backgrounds, EFT-C therapists may help couples build a shared framework that transcends their respective cultures of origin.

Paper 3: The effect of therapists' enactment interventions in promoting vulnerability sharing in emotion focused couple therapy

Presenter: Ofra Kula, Ben Gurion (University of the Negev; Israel)

Authors: Ofra Kula (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; Israel), Reut Machluf (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; Israel), Ben Shahrar (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Israel), Eran Bar-Kalifa (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; Israel)

Abstract: The primary purported change process in emotion-focused couples therapy (EFT-C) involves partners accessing and revealing their underlying vulnerable emotions and responding empathically when their partners disclose their own vulnerable emotions. One primary intervention EFT-C therapists utilize to facilitate vulnerability-responsiveness restructuring events is enactment - i.e., when therapists direct partners to directly interact with each other to modify maladaptive transactions. However, in many instances, therapists find it challenging to use enactments, and thus, despite its central role in EFT-C, many therapists avoid utilizing the enactment intervention. Our study aimed to clarify interventions therapists can use to help partners share vulnerability in the context of enactment. The primary hypothesis of this study was that promoting these tasks would predict greater levels of vulnerability expression by the revealing partner during enactments. To this end, 105 vulnerability enactment events were identified from therapy sessions of 33 couples dealing with a significant emotional injury who received 12 sessions of EFT-C. Multilevel regression models showed that two tasks were significantly associated with levels of expressed vulnerability. Specifically, setting a meaningful



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systemic context and preparing the revealing partner for enactment were positively associated with observed levels of expressed vulnerability. It appears that successful vulnerability sharing requires specific preparatory therapist interventions.

Paper 4: Rupture and repair in couple therapy: Preliminary findings from a study on EFT couple therapy

Presenter: Eran Bar-Kalifa (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva; Israel)

Authors: Prof. Eran Bar Kalifa (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; Israel), Avital Levin (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; Israel)

Abstract: The therapeutic alliance is central to the psychotherapy process and serves as a robust predictor of therapeutic outcomes, in individual (Flückiger et al., 2018), couple, and family therapy (Friedlander et al., 2018). Recently, research has focused on specific aspects of the therapeutic alliance, such as the rule of alliance ruptures and their repair. A fairly strong association has been demonstrated between rupture-repair events and better outcomes in individual therapy (Eubanks et al., 2018). However, little is known about the rupture-repair process in couple therapy. Alliance in couple therapy is a more complex, multi-layered process, including the alliance between the therapist and each partner ("between") and the alliance between partners ("within"). Ruptures may occur at each of these levels and the relative balance of alliances must be considered. The present study aims to examine the prevalence of ruptures and repairs in couples therapy and their role in therapy outcomes. Thirty-eight couples participated in this study, receiving approximately 12 sessions of EFT couple therapy. For each session, partners filled out the short version of the Couple Therapy Alliance Scale (CTASr-sf; Pincus et al., 2008), Session Evaluation Measure (SEM; McKinnon et al., 2013), and Couples Satisfaction Index (Funk & Rogge, 2007). Preliminary analyses indicated that there were ruptures and repairs in both "between" and "within" alliance systems. Men reported greater between-system ruptures and women reported greater within-system ruptures. Notably, within-system ruptures were more predictive of session quality evaluation and couples' satisfaction.

Keynote Address: Changing emotion with emotion

Presenter: Leslie S. Greenberg (York University; Canada)

Abstract: I will suggest that the aim of therapy is to correct emotional processing difficulties and that when people are able to process their emotions successfully, they won't have disorders. This suggests a trans-diagnostic treatment applicable across all disorders. I will argue that work on transforming the underlying emotional cause of psychological dis-ease is important for enduring change and show how this differs from modification of symptoms and provision of coping skills. Both acceptance and change of emotions are important in cure of emotional disorder. I will propose changing emotion with emotion as a basic principle of emotional change and that one of the best ways to transform amygdala-based fear, sadness and shame is with another adaptive motion.



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Symposium 2:
**Comparing the therapeutic efficacy and change processes in Emotion-Focused Therapy
 and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for depression.**

Organizer: Jan Reidar Stiegler (The Norwegian Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy - NIEFT; Norway)

Abstract: The National Institute for Health and Care excellence typically refers to CBT as the recommended treatment for depression as it has strongest empirical support. Emotion-Focused Therapy has promising and comparable empirical support, but has been far less studied. We are currently running a randomized clinical trial, comparing Emotion-Focused therapy and Cognitive behavioral therapy for moderate to severe depression. We would like to present preliminary results of: 1. Outcomes on BDI and IIP, and 2. Qualitative interviews comparing the two conditions. In addition, we would like to present an overview of collected data and discuss how to best utilize the collected process and outcome data from the research project.

Paper 1: Presentation of preliminary results from a randomized clinical trial comparing outcome of CBT and EFT for depression.

Presenter: Hanna Aardal (NIEFT; Norway)

Authors: Hanna Aardal (NIEFT; Norway)

Abstract: In the context of a randomised clinical trial, a total of 365 patients were assessed and 111 were randomized to either CBT or EFT. Inclusion criteria were moderate to severe depression as measured by the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS). In both conditions the patients received 14-18 sessions of individual therapy. We are currently running analysis of the preliminary results (pre-, mid- and post-measures) for about 90 patients and would like to present preliminary results from these analysis.

Paper 2: A qualitative investigation and comparison of clients' experience of CBT and EFT.

Presenter: Aslak Hjeltnes (University of Bergen; Norway)

Authors: Aslak Hjeltnes (University of Bergen; Norway)

Abstract: In the context of a randomized clinical trial, we have conducted qualitative interviews of 30 clients who have received either EFT or CBT. 15 clients in each condition have been interviewed using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. Our research questions are: 1. What do patients in both conditions describe as helpful and unhelpful aspects of treatment?; and 2. How do patients in both conditions describe their own change or lack of change after treatment? We would like to present preliminary results from our thematic analysis of these interviews.

Paper 3: A presentation of collected data from a randomized clinical trial and a discussion of how to best utilize these data.



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Presenter: Jan Reidar Stiegler (NIEFT; Norway)

Authors: Jan Reidar Stiegler (NIEFT; Norway)

Abstract: We have collected a large amount of data for this project, using both self-report (BDI, BAI, IIP, AAQ, SCS, QoL, REP-EAT-Q, WAI, EAC), video recordings of each session, and qualitative interviews. We would like to present an overview of collected data, get input on, and discuss, how to best utilize the collected data from this research project.

Discussant: Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College; Ireland)

Brief Paper session 3: Research in EFT

Moderator: Jason Sharbanee, Curtin University, Australia

Paper 1: Meta-analysis of Outcomes of Emotion Focused Therapy with Individuals.

Presenter: Jason Sharbanee (Curtin University; Australia)

Authors: Jason Sharbanee (Curtin University; Australia), Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde & University of Toledo; Scotland/USA), Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College Dublin; Ireland), Simone Treasure (Curtin University; Australia), Jun Wei Mitch Yong (Curtin University; Australia)

Abstract: Aim: We aimed to synthesize all available outcome literature for individual Emotion Focused therapy. We searched PsychInfo, MEDLINE and COCHRANE Libraries, for outcome studies of emotion focused therapy. We aimed at the broadest possible review of the literature, and hence included open trials, controlled studies, and comparative studies. Methods: Two independent raters reviewed the search results, resulting in 28 eligible studies. All studies were coded, and then audited by an independent reviewer to ensure adequate coding. In addition, for 17 of the previous studies, we were able to assess the reliability of the calculated effect sizes by comparing to calculations from previous meta-analyses. Results: These results are currently preliminary. The results showed large pre-post changes across all time periods. In controlled studies, there were similarly large effects relative to the control conditions. EFT also outperformed comparison treatments in comparative studies. The presentation will report subsample analyses, broken down by client population and by comparison condition.

Paper 2: Update on the ongoing developments within the Swiss/German Practitioner-Researcher Network Study on Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT).

Presenter: Catalina Woldarsky (Private practice; Switzerland)

Authors: José Luis Blanco (Machinea University of Lausanne), Ines Culina (University of Lausanne), Catalina Woldarsky Meneses (Private practice; Switzerland), Marielle Sutter (Swiss Institute for EFT), Lars Auszra, Martin grosse Holtforth, Julian Rubel, Ueli Kramer.



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Abstract: This presentation aims to provide an overview of a large research study whose aim is to demonstrate the clinical effectiveness of EFT in a naturalistic setting. A Practitioner-Researcher Network (PRN; Castonguay et al., 2013) is underway in Switzerland and Germany. Participants are individuals and couples seeking EFT. Currently, N = 69 participants and N = 25 therapists have been included, N = 40 participants have completed the assessment and recruitment is still ongoing; the study treatment comprises of 20 sessions. The initial results will be discussed. These include a significant decrease in BDI-II scores in pre-post effects. The authors conclude with a discussion on how the study's naturalistic design provides an opportunity to identify new central processes explaining therapeutic change, and helps promote the advancement of EFT.

Paper 3: Effectiveness of Emotion-Focused Therapy for resolving past emotional injuries.

Presenter: Shigeru Iwakabe (Department of Psychology, Ritsumeikan University; Japan)

Authors: Shigeru Iwakabe (Ritsumeikan University; Japan), Kaori Nakamura (Ochanomizu University; Japan), Jessica Chu, Meiji (Gakuin University; Japan)

Abstract: Objective: Recently, there has been an increasing interest on a transdiagnostic perspective that seeks to delineate common roots of psychological dysfunction and the mechanisms of change shared across different, yet related psychological disorders. We propose that emotional injury can serve such a transdiagnostic concept that represents a common root of emotional problems. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of EFT on adults with emotional injuries quantitatively. Method: 27 adult clients living in Japan with past emotional injuries were treated in a 16-session individual EFT. Nine therapists with at least level two EFT training participated. Clients responded to a variety of measures at pre and post-treatment as well as a 6-month follow-up, including Target Complaints, Inventory of Interpersonal Personal Problems, Self-Compassion, etc. The present study analyzed data from 20 clients whose data were available at all three-time points.

Results: Pre-treatment to post-treatment effect size (d) exceeded 0.80 on eight scales, including subjective rating of emotional injury. The proportion of clients who achieved clinically significant change varied from 30.0% to 80.0% of clients depending on scales. A repeated analysis of variance showed that the differences in means between post-treatment and follow-up for all 20 clients were not significant for all ten scales, indicating that the treatment effect was maintained for six months after termination. Discussion: These results support previous findings from outcome studies on EFT that it has a large post-treatment effect for a variety of outcome indexes covering from symptoms, subjective distress, to interpersonal problems. This study adds to these past findings in that it showed that clients improved on positive psychological functioning such as self-compassion and well-being. The study is one of the first outcome studies on EFT in Asian countries and demonstrates that EFT may be a viable treatment option for this population.

Structured Discussion 1:

Advancements in EFT group therapy: Transforming shame and aloneness through shared vulnerability.

Organizer: Laura Girz (Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada)



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Discussants: Laura Girz (Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada); Sarah Thompson (Transforming Emotions private practice and Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada), James McElvaney (St. Patrick's Mental Health Services; Ireland), Dylan Moore (St. Patrick's Mental Health Services; Ireland)

Abstract: There is emerging interest in EFT group therapy as a pathway to address core shame and aloneness and foster healthy vulnerability and connection. This is particularly important in light of increasing loneliness and disconnection reported in recent years and the links to increased distress and poor mental health. The pandemic and other significant world stressors have only increased the need for spaces to hold pain and heal together. EFT group therapy takes the power of individual EFT to transform core painful emotions and adds the additional power of witnessing and responding to others' pain. We see experiences of deep resonance, compassion for others, anger on their behalf, and an increasing ability to see oneself as similar to others and similarly deserving of compassion and self-protective boundaries. This provides multiple pathways for the transformation of core maladaptive emotions. Research results show that EFT group therapy effectively produces change, with statistically and clinically significant decreases in symptoms of anxiety and depression and improvements in emotion regulation over the course of group therapy. Clinicians from a variety of countries, including Canada, Iran, Ireland, Australia, and Norway have begun running EFT groups with promising results. We propose a discussion panel to bring together learnings from various countries and various settings, including hospital-based care, university-based outpatient clinics, and private practice settings. The focus of discussion will include common themes, successes (qualitative and quantitative), and emergent variations in group structure and focus across different populations. We hope to make space to learn from one another as EFT groups continue to evolve as a promising intervention. Presenters will include group facilitators from various countries followed by space for a structured discussion of themes and emerging questions.

Mini workshop 3:

Learning lessons on "poor outcome" cases in EFT-C - A clinic workshop based on case studies.

Organizer: Catalina Woldarsky (Private Practice; Switzerland)

Authors: Catalina Woldarsky (Private Practice; Switzerland)

Abstract: This clinical workshop is intended for therapists who work with couples and have some background with Emotion Focused Therapy for couples - EFT-C (Greenberg & Goldman, 2008). The focus will be on exploring the complexity of defining what it is we strive for in our work with couples and how to determine when a therapeutic outcome is considered to be "poor". The author will present two couples that ended their relationship during the course of therapy, and discuss what was actually positive in terms of the therapeutic process. The author will elaborate on the implications of her experience and highlight what therapists should be attentive to when working with influence-based interactive cycles featuring dominance/submission.



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Mini workshop 4: How to write about EFT for the public?

Organizer: Aksel Inge Sinding (Institutt for Psykologisk Rådgivning Oslo; Norway)

Authors: Aksel Inge Sinding (Institutt for Psykologisk Rådgivning Oslo; Norway), Catrin Sagen (Institutt for Psykologisk Rådgivning Oslo; Norway)

Abstract: As professionals and therapists, we know a lot about emotions, what people tend to struggle with, and what they may need to work on, but it can be challenging to transfer this knowledge into a language that is comprehensible, captivating, and useful for a recipient you are not facing. In this workshop, we will discuss upon how to write about EFT for laypeople in an engaging manner. The main topics in this workshop include how to write in a way that captivates, resonates with, and facilitates experiential processes in the reader. The session will consist of teaching, discussion, and a writing exercise that everyone must participate in. Public education is a useful way to make EFT more accessible and attractive, while also helping people who do not have access to therapy. After the workshop, the participants will have what they need to start their next writing project. The workshop is hosted by Aksel Inge Sinding and Catrin Sagen, who has written several columns, articles, and bestselling self-help books based on EFT, in Norway.

Symposium 3: Recent advances in Emotion Focused Therapy Training in Europe.

Organizer: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Authors: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Jan Stiegler (Institute for Psychological Counseling & Norwegian Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy; Norway), Marina Monteiro (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde; Scotland)

Abstract: Recently, as Emotion Focused Therapy (EFT) disseminates across countries and continents beyond the original foundational research and training sites, several organizations and teams have been developing efforts to advance training and supervision in this modality, responding to challenges in developing EFT training in other native languages and adjusting to national/international qualification and certification requirements. In this symposium, we will present several efforts in the European context. Paper 1 provides an updated overview on the EmpoweringEFT@EU project as a Strategic Partnership to support dissemination, training and supervision in EFT. With a European focus, this partnership involves a collaborative effort to foster training, clinical supervision and research on EFT, and has proposed several outputs to foster EFT training, supervision and trans-national research on the effectiveness of EFT practice and supervision. Paper 2 presents the Norwegian proposal for training EFT Supervisors, depicting a training focused on the attitudes, perceptual skills and facilitative skills needed to implement effective clinical supervision in EFT. Paper 3 highlights the Person-Centred & Experiential Psychotherapy Scale - Emotion-Focused Therapy Scale - Adherence and Competence Observer Rating (PCEPS-EFT-9), as a general system for assessing therapist adherence and therapist



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competence in delivering EFT, originally developed and refined in Scotland. It allows an analysis of continuous and growing improvement of therapist performance towards mastery in the implementation of the model; therefore, it can be used to enhance EFT training, supervision and research. The discussion upon these proposals will highlight its contributions for future EFT practice, supervision and training.

Presentation 1: Updates on the EmpoweringEFT@EU project: Advancing supervision and training in EFT.

Presenter: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Authors: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Robert Elliott; (University of Strathclyde; Scotland), Lars Auzsra (Institut für Emotionsfokussierte Therapie; Germany), Imke Hermann (Institut für Emotionsfokussierte Therapie; Germany), Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland), Rafael Jodar-Anchia (Universidad de Comillas, Madrid; Spain), João Salgado (SPTFE & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal & the EmpoweringEFT@EU team University of Maia; Portugal)

Abstract: We will briefly overview the main outputs of the EmpoweringEFT@EU project, funded by the Erasmus+ Agency (N.º 2020-1-PT01-KA202-078724; website: <https://emotionfocusedtherapy.eu>), now on its last months. Having started in 2020, the EmpoweringEFT@EU project involved European researchers, supervisors, trainers and training institutes in Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT), all collaborating with the aim to develop training in this modality and advance research in clinical supervision, EFT training and EFT practice. In this presentation, we will summarize the several project outputs, namely: the Competency Frameworks for EFT practice (1), for Clinical Supervision (2), and for Training in EFT (3), developed first. Then, the team developed an e-platform (4) to support training, supervision and EFT practice and gather training resources to support training, supervision and practice in this modality. A specific feature of this platform is designed to collect trans-national data on the outcome of routine psychotherapy practice and clinical supervision in EFT. Finally, during the pilot phase of this project (last year), several training and supervision activities are being implemented in Portugal and Spain, in local native languages, and being assessed through process variables (for example, participants' qualitative feedback through interviews). This led to the development of the last project outputs: a Good Practice Guide for EFT Training (5) and for EFT Supervision (6). We hope that this project outputs will benefit the worldwide EFT community, encouraging training opportunities in other native languages and foster the trans-national collection of data upon the effectiveness of EFT practice and supervision in naturalistic settings.

Presentation 2: A brief presentation of a training program in EFT-supervision skills: The Norwegian experience.

Presenter: Jan Stiegler (Institute for Psychological Counseling & Norwegian Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy; Norway)

Authors: Jan Stiegler (Institute for Psychological Counseling & Norwegian Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy; Norway)



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Abstract: This training focuses on the attitudes, perceptual skills and facilitative skills needed as an EFT-supervisor. The training alternates between didactics, building perceptual skills by observing videos, and practicing supervision skills in groups. The supervisors in training bring their own recordings of therapy for use in the skill training groups. The training covers the following topics: 1. The supervisor role and the supervision alliance, 2. Core EFT-conditions (empathy, emotion focus, case formulation, etc.), 3. Client emotional processing qualities (experiencing, emotional arousal, CAMS) and 4. Supervision of specific interventions.

Presentation 3: Person-Centred & Experiential Psychotherapy Scale - Emotion-Focused Therapy Scale (PCEPS-EFT-9): A Tool for assessing Therapist Competence in Research, Supervision and Clinical Practice.

Presenter: Marina Monteiro (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Authors: Marina Monteiro (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Daniela Nogueira (University of Maia; Portugal), Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde; Scotland), João Salgado (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP, Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: The assessment of Treatment Integrity in Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT), as a guarantee of therapist adherence and competence to the model, goes beyond research and clinical trials and encompasses clinical practice, therapist training and supervision. Assessing EFT therapist skills through supervisory practice is assumed as an integrative element of the training process and has become critical to the qualification of EFT therapists. Therefore, the development of an adequate assessment measure, transversal to disorders and populations, becomes relevant and useful for EFT training and supervision, and to support qualified clinicians and researchers. In this presentation, we will describe the Person-Centred & Experiential Psychotherapy Scale - Emotion-Focused Therapy Scale - Adherence and Competence Observer Rating (PCEPS-EFT-9), as a general system for assessing therapist adherence but, mainly, therapist competence in delivering EFT. The assessment is made from a perspective that reflects a continuous and growing improvement of therapist performance towards mastery in the implementation of the model. Method: We will describe a 9-item observational measure comprising a range of illustrative therapist behavioral indicators based in scale assessing therapist's competence and adherence to EFT manuals (Elliott et al., 2004; Elliott & Greenberg, 2021) and its validation through the assessment of EFT therapist adherence and competence in a sample of 22 sessions (n=66 segments) with clients presenting social anxiety. Results and Discussion: This is a work-under-progress. The first findings will be presented at this meeting and discussed in their implications for use in future EFT practice and research and as an assessment tool for EFT training and supervision.

Discussant: Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde, Scotland; United States of America)



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Mini workshop 5: Use of Homework and Mapping EFT Interventions to Strengthen and Advance In-Session Work.

Organizer: Serine Warwar (Centre for Psychology and Emotional Health, Greenberg Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy, York University Emotion-Focused Therapy Clinic, Canada)

Abstract: This workshop will demonstrate the use of: homework between sessions, and experiential teaching such as mapping out EFT chair interventions to integrate, strengthen, and carrying forward in-session interventions with clients (Greenberg & Warwar, 2006; Warwar & Ellison, 2019; Warwar, in press). Homework and experiential teaching are used alongside each other in EFT to integrate, strengthen, and advance in-session work into the daily lives of clients. Homework and experiential teaching are facilitated from a developmental, experiential, and emotion coaching framework, in collaboration with, and attuned to the client's in-session emotional processing. This workshop will be didactic and use therapy videos of co-creating homework and mapping out interventions with clients. Participants in this mini-workshop will be able to integrate, strengthen, and carry forward in-session work in EFT by learning how to: a) Map out chair work interventions; b) Propose and co-create different types of homework; c) Facilitate the ideal conditions for successful homework, d) Use experiential teaching, such as offering rationales, and psychoeducation.

Mini workshop 6: Updates in Deliberate Practice Training for Emotion-focused therapy: Highlights from a new APA Video production.

Organizer: Rhonda Goldman, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology & Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute, USA

Abstract: This workshop will focus on the latest developments in Deliberate Practice (DP) training in EFT. A new APA-produced video will be presented that demonstrates how DP can be used in EFT training. In the video, excerpts will be shown where Rhonda Goldman guides students through deliberate practice exercises for EFT 'Empathic Affirmation responses' and 'Addressing Rupture and Repair.' Next, exploratory research will be presented that a) examines which EFT skills therapists struggle with most, and b) evaluates the effectiveness of EFT/DP training. Finally, new growth edges of DP for EFT will be presented including the production of video prompts to aid in the DP Training process, and DP for EFT tasks. Finally, we will do some EFT/DP practice of the "Providing a Rationale for EFT" skill.

Brief Paper session 4: Growth edges of EFT

Moderator: Anna Robinson, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

Paper 1: Experiences of Interpersonal Process Recall in Emotion-Focused Therapy-group for Clients with Autistic Process.



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Presenter: Anna Robinson (University of Strathclyde; United Kingdom)

Authors: Dr Anna Robinson (University of Strathclyde, Glasgow; Scotland), Prof Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde, Glasgow; Scotland)

Abstract: Lower levels of experiential processing are associated with poorer therapeutic outcomes. Clients with autistic process are reported to experience difficulties in emotion and experiential processing. These processing differences in affective empathy for self (emotion-regulation) and other (empathy) and cognitive empathy for self (self-reflection) and other (mental representation) often result in emotional injuries and trauma-related experiences. In this brief paper, we explore the experiences of clients with autistic process with the use of Interpersonal Process Recall (IPR) as a therapeutic task used to deepen self-experience and self-other empathy within group psychotherapy. We draw from the experiences of twelve clients who undertook a 9-week Emotion-Focused Therapy-group treatment. Qualitative data is presented through a thematic analysis of client experiences of IPR. We triangulate this with quantitative data as well as qualitative illustrations drawn from change interview data. The small number of participants in the study mean that the findings have limited generalizability. However, we propose Interpersonal Process Recall (IPR) as a helpful therapeutic task for clients with autistic process which helps to deepen emotion and experiential processing.

Paper 2: Emotion Focused Therapy and Forgiveness in the Older Population: Protocol for an upcoming feasibility randomized controlled trial.

Presenter: Bernardo Corrêa D'almeida (University of Maia; Portugal)

Authors: Bernardo Corrêa D'almeida (University of Maia; Portugal), Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: Interventions focused on forgiveness have revealed different positive impacts on people's well-being. The elderly population has increased significantly as well their interest in forgiveness and letting go of emotional injuries. With only a few studies focused on forgiveness with this population, Emotion-focused therapy (EFT) seems a promising form of treatment for this population. EFT has revealed positive results in several emotional problems, but it has not yet been tested as a treatment for emotional injuries caused by interpersonal offenses, experienced by people over 65. Method: Our main goal is describe a protocol for a future randomized-controlled pilot study of emotion-focused therapy as a treatment for emotional injuries in people over 65. We propose a sample of 50 participants, and a comparison between an intervention condition and a wait-list condition. The intervention group will immediately receive Emotion-focused therapy for individuals for twelve weekly sessions while a control group, on a waiting list, receives the intervention protocol 12 weeks later. We aim to assess the acceptability of the intervention, the feasibility of recruitment and adherence to the intervention, as well as the outcomes and effects of treatment. Qualitative and quantitative data will be collected at the beginning, middle, and the end of the intervention, and in two planned follow-ups (two and six months latter). Discussion: The investigation will establish the acceptability and feasibility of the proposed intervention regarding the psychological well-being of people aged 65 years and over. The achievement of the goals of this study will be an important opportunity for future intervention



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research and will serve as the basis for other future studies on the efficacy of EFT with the elderly population.

Paper 3: Specialist Psychotherapy with Emotion for Anorexia in Kent and Sussex

Presenter: Anna Oldershaw (Emotion Focused Therapy Institute; England, Salomons Institute for Applied Psychology; United Kingdom)

Authors: Anna Oldershaw (Emotion Focused Therapy Institute; England, Salomons Institute for Applied Psychology; United Kingdom)

Abstract: Anorexia nervosa (AN) is a severe mental health condition associated with high mortality rates and significantly impaired quality of life. National UK guidelines outline psychotherapeutic interventions as treatments of choice for adults with AN, but outcomes are limited and therapy drop-out is high, resulting in calls for new innovative treatments. The Specialist Psychotherapy with Emotion for Anorexia in Kent and Sussex (SPEAKS) research programme began in 2016 and sought to develop an emotion-focused intervention for adults with AN (SPEAKS therapy) avoiding some difficulties inherent in the development of earlier interventions, such as unclear hypotheses about change processes. Through research drawing on lived experience, the SPEAKS program developed a clear proposed model of psychotherapeutic change for people with AN, utilising and integrating theory and research from the field of emotion, social neuroscience and Emotion Focused Therapy.

The SPEAKS research program culminated in a two year feasibility trial which ran from 2020 to 2022. The feasibility trial employed a multisite, single-arm, within-group, mixed-methods design. Thirty-four participants meeting inclusion criteria completed the SPEAKS intervention weekly for 9 to 12 months instead of treatment-as-usual (TAU). All other clinical input remained in line with TAU. This trial aimed to provide an initial test of SPEAKS and inform design of a full randomised controlled trial protocol.

In keeping with a feasibility trial design, the main aims were to establish Acceptability, Reach and Recruitment, Therapy Adherence, and Sample Size Estimation. Initial indication of effectiveness was determined using a primary outcome measure of eating disorder symptoms. Intervention and change process specific measures were also included. This presentation will provide a brief overview of the SPEAKS therapy model for adults with anorexia and the key outcomes from the feasibility trial.

Paper 4: A free emotion focused learning tool for children and their adults

Presenter: Anne-Hilde Lystad (Livet & Sann, Alesund, Norway)

Authors: Kristin Valderhaug Martinsen (Livet&Sann Alesund; Norway), Alice Kristin Farstad (Livet&Sann Alesund; Norway)

Abstract: Livet&Sann (Life&Such) is a public health project making free material for educating children in life mastery skills. The material is available at <https://www.livetogsann.no/> and are being used in schools and kindergartens in several municipalities in Norway.

When developing this program, we knew we wanted to emphasise and focus on emotions. We believe that knowledge about how emotions work is helpful to obtain and maintain a good mental



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health. Similar programs in Norway tend to have a more cognitive underpinning. We are happy to see a turn towards more focus on feelings and emotions where mental health topics are discussed. In spite of this, we find that there is a substantial lack of knowledge in the population about what emotions are, why they appear in us, and what needs they communicate.

We wanted to do something about that. And to reach as many as possible, we developed this free and easily available tool that adults at home, in kindergartens and schools can use together with children to learn about feelings: <https://www.livetogsann.no/barnehage/med-barna/folelsar/> This tool is a result of interdisciplinary cooperation with psychologists, a children's pedagogue, and an illustrator. Together we created an introduction for a range of basic feelings, including age suitable visual and conversation based educational material. Furthermore, written material customized for teachers and parents are also included. We have emphasized the importance of the basic function of feelings, the information and need that they communicate, and how we can best meet and make use of our feelings. There is already action taken to translate this tool to other Nordic languages. We are open to share this resource with other countries because we experience that it meets some internationally common needs.



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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS – DAY 2

2023 ISEFT Conference - June 30, 2023

Keynote Address 2: The Responsive Psychotherapist: Attuning to Clients in the Moment

Presenter: Jeanne Watson (Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development, University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada)

Abstract: Responsiveness has been identified as a ubiquitous and necessary condition for relationships in general and for psychotherapy in particular. Responsiveness requires a sensitive attention to the moment and a capacity to adapt to support and foster change. This type of moment to moment attunement is the hallmark of Emotion Focused and experiential approaches. What guides therapist responsiveness? In this presentation, I will present an overview of some of the markers or signals that therapists from different orientations use to guide themselves in the session. The implications for research, practice and training will be discussed.

Poster session 2

Poster 1: Evaluation of Emotional Transformation in Bereavement using CAMS: A case study.

Presenter: Ana Catarina Silva Do Nascimento (University of Maia; Portugal)

Authors: Gabriela da Silva Valente (University of Maia; Portugal), Tânia Sofia da Silva Magalhães (University of Maia; Portugal), Vinicius Contin Carabolante (University of Maia; Portugal), Daniela Alves Nogueira (University of Maia; Portugal), José Gamoneda (Universidad de Comillas, Madrid; Spain), Alejandro de la Traba López, (University of Comillas; Spain), Rafael Jódar (Universidad de Comillas, Madrid; Spain)

Abstract: Grief is a developmental transition following death and loss, in which narrative processes and reconstruction of meaning play an important role in the healing process. The adaptive nature of grief involves integrating the good aspects of the relationship in order to carry the love for the other person after the loss (Elliott & Greenberg, 2021). Emotion Focused Therapy (EFT) is an empirically validated humanistic treatment that emphasizes the central role of emotions in individual functioning. Emotions play a key role in the grief response, allowing the person to access their needs, express themselves and communicate with those around them. In doing so, they build more adaptive responses and consequently develop a symbolic meaning of the loss.



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Despite this adaptive but painful experience, a complicated grief response can emerge from the disrupted sadness and pain. In order to move on, they often need to learn to express unresolved anger or guilt. There may also be a need to develop a stronger sense of self so that they believe they can do without the other person (Greenberg, 2009). In this sense, it is crucial to understand the emotional process and its changes throughout the process in clients with prolonged grief reactions. The purpose of this process study is to analyse a therapy session in which an empty chair work was used from a previous pilot study with bereaved clients (Gamoneda, 2023). We will use an observational measure - the Classification of Affective-Meaning States (CAMS) -, that allows the sequential monitoring of the flow of emotions throughout the therapy session, helping to identify the process of emotion transformation and their important role in a good outcome case.

Poster 2: Emotion-Focused Group Therapy for Young adults: A novel group programme in a Psychiatric population.

Presenter: Georgina Heffernan (Saint Patrick's Mental Health Hospital; Ireland)

Authors: James McElvaney, Dylan Moore & Georgina Heffernan

Abstract: Objective: Emotion-focused therapy (EFT) is well established as an evidence-based treatment for depression and anxiety related difficulties. Group EFT (EFT-G) is a recent development that utilizes individual emotion-focused techniques in a group setting to evoke and transform painful emotions. Currently, there is little research on the effectiveness of EFT-G delivered in an adult psychiatric setting. This study aims to explore the process of developing, delivering, and evaluating a pilot transdiagnostic EFT-G for young adults. It also aims to report on the feasibility and acceptability to clients of this format. Method: 19 service users, all outpatients, participated in a 14-week EFT group programme. Participants age range was 18 and 25 years. Using a subset of therapeutic factors, the programme explored areas of central importance in EFT groups including instillation of hope, universality, and a combination of development of socializing techniques and interpersonal learning. Results: Qualitative and quantitative outcome data will be shared. The results also provide an overview of participant outcomes and feedback. Conclusion: Initial data suggests that EFT-G was a beneficial intervention for young adults with mental health difficulties.

Poster 3: Therapeutic presence in online sessions during the COVID-19 pandemic: A Portuguese experience.

Presenter: Rita Costa (University of Maia; Portugal)

Authors: Rita Costa (University of Maia; Portugal), Cristina Azevedo (University of Maia; Portugal), Francisca Lima (University of Maia; Portugal), Eunice Barbosa (University of Maia; Portugal), Daniela Nogueira (University of Maia; Portugal)

Abstract: Therapeutic presence is a process that occurs between the therapist and the client and is related to the moment-to-moment availability and openness of the therapist, connecting with the client's experience and with their own experience. During the pandemic crisis, online therapeutic sessions were one of the most used resources by therapists. Cultivating therapeutic presence in these conditions is a demanding process for them, requiring self-care and well-being.



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This study explores how isolation, as a measure to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, was experienced by therapists and how online sessions impacted therapeutic presence. In this study, 101 clinical therapists working in Portugal participated. Data collection took place from August to September of 2021 through an online platform with the following instruments: the Therapeutic Presence Inventory to measure therapeutic presence, the GAD-7 to measure anxiety symptoms and the PHQ-9 to measure depressive symptoms. The main results showed that most participants had no previous experience of conducting online sessions. Levels of therapeutic presence were higher for therapists with previous experience in conducting online therapy and for those with a degree of specialization in psychotherapy. Therapists' mental health was impacted, with 36.6% participants reporting anxiety and 28.7% depression. Of note, higher levels of anxiety and depression were also associated with lower levels of therapeutic presence. These results suggest that the working conditions during the pandemic brought emotional distress to therapists, making it difficult to practice therapeutic presence. Experience and specialization in psychotherapy can act as protective factors for the therapeutic presence in online sessions.

Poster 4: Emotional processing difficulties scale-revised: Preliminary psychometric study.

Presenter: Bruno Faustino (Universidade Lusófona - Centro Universitário de Lisboa; Portugal)

Authors: Bruno Faustino (ULHT-EPCV; Portugal), Ana Nunes da Silva (FPUL; Portugal)

Abstract: Emotional Processing Difficulties are a core construct from Emotion-Focused Therapy and a clinical target for differentiated psychotherapeutic tasks. The identification of these emotional difficulties is largely based on observation and clinical judgment. This study describes the first psychometric analysis of the Emotional Processing Difficulties Scale-Revised (EPDS-R). Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), reliability, and validity procedures were conducted in a sample of 260 participants. EPDS-R matched adequate EFA criteria ($KMO = .89$; Bartlett's sphericity test $p < .001$), suggesting a five-dimensional structure. Cronbach Alphas ranged from .87 to .70. Convergent validity was found between EPDS-R and difficulties in emotional regulation (DERS), and concurrent validity was found in two sub-samples based on > 1.7 clinical criteria from the Brief Symptom Index (BSI). According to this preliminary psychometric study, EPDS-R may be a valid tool to assess emotional processing difficulties in the general population.

Poster 5: Collaborative Case Formulation Work in Emotion Focused Therapy: An Exploratory Task Analytic Study.

Presenter: Iulia Manastireanu (Scottish Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy; United Kingdom)

Abstract: Collaborative case formulation work is central to EFT. While supported by EFT theory, there is surprisingly little research on the actual in-session process of EFT collaborative case formulation. In this presentation I report on research in progress studying actual client-therapist case formulation sequences in EFT. Aims: I will be presenting preliminary results on what EFT collaborative case formulation looks like in sessions. Method: This study is based on recordings from the APA video archive of EFT practice, represented by four different eminent EFT therapists. I am extracting examples of case formulation work by client and therapist, using a descriptive-inductive process to identify the defining characteristics of EFT collaborative case formulation work, what the different types of EFT collaborative case formulation work there are, and what



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therapist response modes facilitate the unfolding of in-session collaborative case formulation work. The goal is to model the sequence of client and therapist case formulation work in order to capture its unfolding nature. A task analytic method will be used for this purpose, going through the initial discovery-oriented phase, focusing on intensive observation and rational-empirical model building. Expected results: My hope is that, after studying the data embedded in these therapy sessions, we will have one or more of the following: a research-based definition of collaborative case formulation work; a taxonomy and/or a model of the process; and perhaps also a measure of EFT case formulation work. Implications: This study can be used to develop collaborative case formulation as a meta-task and to enhance EFT training.

Symposium 4:

Emotion-Focused Skills Training for parents: Latest updates on research, textbook and video illustration.

Organizer: Joanne Dolhanty (Emotion Training Institute; Canada)

Authors: Joanne Dolhanty (Emotion Training Institute; Canada), Anne Hilde Vassbø Hagen (NIEFT- The Norwegian Institute for Emotion-focused Therapy; Norway), Nadia Ansar (NIEFT- The Norwegian Institute for Emotion-focused Therapy; Norway)

Recent research indicates that how parents deal with their own emotional issues plays a crucial role in the development of emotional difficulties in their children. There is a growing consensus in a range of parental interventions, emphasizing the importance of emotion regulation difficulties, emotional avoidance, and unprocessed emotions in explaining the root of mental health difficulties in children. Emotion-Focused Skills Training (EFST) for parents is a recently developed, manualized, intensive, transdiagnostic program rooted in Emotion-Focused Therapy and humanistic- experiential psychotherapy. EFST is based on two basic premises. The first is that parents are in a particularly good position to emotionally guide their children through the relational bond that is already there. As such, they can be the most important agents to help their children through their emotional or behavioral difficulties. The second is that all parents are motivated to help their child because of the strength of their relationship bond, but sometimes they can experience emotional hindrances that can prevent them from using their inherent care skills. As such, targeting parents' ability to deal with and be guided by their own emotions is key to reduce the risk of symptomatology in children and adolescents. EFST explicitly conveys that parents are both powerful and critical in their child's healthy adjustment to their environment. In a developmental framework targeting the parent-child relationship, the program aims to increase parents' capacity to respond adaptively to their children's emotions as well as working with parents' own emotional understanding and expression. In this symposium, latest research updates on EFST will be given. Also, the latest textbook on EFST that describes the methodological basis will be presented, together with a video illustration that describes how this method can be used in practice.

Presentation 1: Textbook in Emotion-Focused Skills Training: A guide for clinicians.

Presenter: Anne Hilde Vassbø Hagen (The Norwegian Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy - NIEFT; Norway)



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Authors: Anne Hilde Vassbø Hagen (NIEFT- The Norwegian Institute for Emotion-focused Therapy; Norway)

Abstract: Dolhanty and her colleagues have recently published a textbook in EFST that describes the methodology of the 2-day group training program, which consists of training in four core parenting skills. Validation of emotion: Parents are given psychoeducation about the working of emotions and different emotional states, where one emotion (for instance, anger) might be helpful (primary adaptive), with regards to past trauma (primary maladaptive) or serve a protective function (secondary). Enhancing motivation: Involves working with the problematic emotions of the parents that can disrupt the parent-child interaction (i.e., rejecting anger, fear of aggravating the situation or for the child's future, or shame/ self-blame for their child's difficulties). The goal is to alleviate problematic emotions and help the parent into a healthier emotional state, enhance their emotion-processing capacity and increase their motivation to meet their child's emotional needs. Resolving interpersonal injuries: Here, the goal is to help parents repair past relationship ruptures, thus liberating the child from emotional entanglement or feelings of being responsible, rejected, or dismissed by the parent. This is done by providing a genuine apology by (a) expressing their regret and attending to the child's vulnerable feelings; (b) validating their child's reactions; (c) taking radical responsibility and ownership for the situation; and (d) expressing heartfelt apology and committing to doing things differently henceforth. Boundaries: The fourth skill focuses on strengthening new learning and increasing parental capacity to guide their child by setting sound and flexible boundaries. By accessing adaptive emotions, such as self-affirmation, assertiveness, and increased understanding of parents' own boundaries, the goal was to enhance the understanding of parents on their unique position to guide their child, and on the simple principle that changing their own boundaries could change their child's behavior. In this symposium, the latest textbook describing the model will be presented briefly.

Presentation 2: Latest research updates on Emotion-Focused Skills Training.

Presenter: Nadia Ansar (NIEFT - The Norwegian Institute for Emotion-focused Therapy; Norway)

Authors: Nadia Ansar (NIEFT - The Norwegian Institute for Emotion-focused Therapy; Norway)

Abstract: Objective: Norway recently conducted a randomized clinical dismantling study on Emotion-Focused Skills Training, where two versions of the program - one experiential involving evocative techniques and two-chair dialogues, and one psychoeducational, involving didactic teaching of skills -, were compared to investigate the efficacy of the program on children's externalizing and internalizing symptoms, on parental mental health, parental emotion regulation and parental self-efficacy. Further, this research project investigated whether improvements in parent outcomes mediated the effects on children's mental health, and/or vice versa.

Method: A total of 313 parents (Mage=40.5,75% mothers) of 236 primary school children (ages 6-13,60.6% boys) and 113 teachers (N=113,82% female) were involved in the study. Outcomes were parent- and teacher-reported symptoms at baseline, posttreatment, and 4-, 8-, and 12-month follow-up. Analyses were conducted using multilevel growth curve modeling, cross-lagged panel models and Bayesian post hoc analysis.

Results: Based on parent reports, EFST showed efficacy in reducing children's symptoms, improving parental mental health, emotion regulation and self-efficacy with large effects on all outcomes. Based on teacher-reports, significant differences were found on children's



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externalizing, but not internalizing symptoms. The outcomes were maintained over 12 months for both conditions. Significant differences were found on parent gender, in favor of fathers, on emotion regulation and self-efficacy. Also, significant differences were found between the conditions on parental mental health and self-efficacy, in favor of the experiential condition, but not on children's mental health symptoms. Additionally, bidirectional associations were observed between children's mental health symptoms and parental self-efficacy, based on both teacher and parent-reports. The study provides support for the effect of EFST on both children and parent outcomes and the reciprocal relationship between the mental health of children's and their parents. In this symposium, the latest updates from this research project will be presented.

Presentation 3: Video illustration of how EFST can be used in practice.

Presenter: Joanne Dolhanty (Emotion Training Institute; Canada)

Authors: Joanne Dolhanty (Emotion Training Institute; Canada)

Abstract: Experiential techniques, such as two-chair dialogues, are considered essential in Emotion-Focused therapy, and research suggests that such techniques aid emotional processing and add to the effectiveness of psychotherapy. Such techniques are assumed to afford a new sense of mastery or self-efficacy over emotional experience. Although the EFST format is not designed to work with the processing of emotions at a deeper level, getting in touch with previously avoided emotions can be experienced as quite painful. Parents can feel hopelessness and distress (secondary emotions), blame themselves or their child for their children's difficulties (rejecting anger), and be afraid of aggravating their children's situation (maladaptive shame or fear), or sometimes their old pain can get in the way of dealing with their children's current needs (self-interrupting processes). By processing secondary emotions, the goal is to aid parents to reconnect with their inherently built care system (adaptive guilt or adaptive shame) so that they can feel love and compassion towards their children and do what is needed. Although the sequential 3-step model in EFT cannot be directly transferred to EFST, it is assumed that attending towards old wounds can lead to a reversal of emotion-avoidant family dynamics an increase the family's self-efficacy when managing emotional distress. In this symposium, Dr. Joanne Dolhanty, the founder of Emotion-Focused Skills Training, will present a video illustration to demonstrate how the experiential techniques, such as evocative empathy and the two-chair dialogues, can be used in EFST for the facilitation of experience, supporting parents in practicing scenarios that have been the most difficult in the past, and processing of emotion in the empathic presence of the clinician.

Discussant: Shigeru Iwakabe (Department of Psychology, Ritsumeikan University University; Japan)

Mini workshop 7: Emotion-Focused Therapy for Social Anxiety Disorder

Organizer: Ben Shahar (Hebrew University, Jerusalem; Israel)

Authors: Ben Shahar (Hebrew University, Jerusalem; Israel)



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Abstract: Social anxiety disorder is a highly prevalent, complex, and debilitating anxiety disorder. Social anxiety, like other anxiety disorders, is almost exclusively researched using cognitive-behavioral lenses. In this workshop I will present an EFT case formulation of social anxiety, focusing on shame, self-criticism, self-interruption, and traumatic experiences. Practical skills designed to transform shame will be presented.

Mini workshop 8: A Transdiagnostic Emotion Focused Approach to Working with Transgender and Gender Diverse Client.

Organizer: Lou Cooper (Australian Institute of Emotion Focused Therapy; Australia)

Authors: Lou Cooper (Australian Institute of Emotion Focused Therapy; Australia)

Abstract: Transgender and gender diverse (TGD) people experience significantly higher rates of mental health difficulties (depression, anxiety and attempted suicide) than their cis gender counterparts and a corresponding need exists for more TGD affirmative therapists. Emotion Focused Therapy has been documented as an effective approach to meet the therapeutic needs of TGD clients (Westmacott & Edmonstone, 2020). Their publication, 'Working with transgender and gender diverse clients in emotion-focused therapy: targeting minority stress' was the first to outline the use of EFT with TGD clients and provided validation for other EFT therapists working with TGD clients as well as a model to guide other EFT practitioners new to, or considering, this work. This workshop draws on Westmacott & Edmonstone (2020) and over a decade of practice with TGD clients in Melbourne, Australia to present a case for a transdiagnostic framework for working with TGD clients referencing Timulak (2021). The workshop will outline the context for EFT tasks effective in changing maladaptive shame and fear based emotion schemes underlying internalised transphobia, gender dysphoria and other minority stress related experiences into more adaptive expressions of primary anger, sadness and self-compassion in TGD clients. Brief case studies and an audio recording of a transgender woman speaking about the experience of being an EFT client will be presented. Participants will leave this workshop with an appreciation of the nature of TGD affirmative practice and the suitability of a transdiagnostic emotion focused approach to this work. It is hoped that this might inspire interest in further training, research and practice. The presenter, Lou Cooper, has worked in the TGD space since 2011 with child and adult TGD clients and their families at the community organisation, Queerspace, as well as in private practice in inner city Melbourne.

Mini workshop 9:

Lessons from Clinical Practice in EFT for Trauma: Managing Flashback Memory, Window of Tolerance, Client Uncertainty, and Therapist Well-Being in a Changing World.

Organizer: Sarah Thompson (Transforming Emotions - Private practice and Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada)

Authors: Sarah Thompson (Transforming Emotions (private practice) and Toronto Metropolitan University; Canada), Eunice Silva (Portuguese Oncology Institute of Porto (IPO Porto); Portugal)



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Abstract: The past three years have involved extraordinary changes around the globe, much of it informed by experiences of fear, uncertainty, and loss during the pandemic, regional political instability, and escalating climate-related events. As emotion focused, trauma-informed therapists, it has perhaps never been more important to identify and respect client capacities for working within their window of tolerance in the context of their lived experience, and to acknowledge both the understandable challenges in tolerating escalating uncertainty and the unique impacts upon therapists who are often living and working within the same destabilizing broader circumstances as their clients. In this mini workshop, three presenters will share specific skills for assisting in monitoring window of tolerance and regulating affect in their EFT-focused approach to trauma treatment, working with shifts in existential meaning following trauma, and assisting therapists in holding space and self-awareness during trauma-focused sessions. In terms of learning goals, participants will: 1. Learn experientially to augment their EFT practice with principles drawn from embodiment approaches, somatic experiencing, and Polyvagal Theory, to closely monitor client and therapist nervous system regulation, moment by moment, accurately assessing client window of tolerance, possible triggers, levels of grounding and presence, and need for affect regulation. 2. Be able to articulate a sequence of steps in working with flashback memory using principles of imaginal re-entry to first prime self-compassion and assertive anger before progressively increasing exposure to underlying fear and shame for the purpose of transforming stuck underlying emotion schemes. 3. Learn how to apply principles of EFT to health-related trauma with a focus on working with existential concerns, creation of new meaning, and with attention to therapist needs in holding space. Principles will be illustrated through segments of recorded sessions drawn from work with clients who have experienced cancer diagnoses and treatment.

Symposium 5:

Modulating emotional processing: Moving EFT beyond mental health disorders.

Organizer: João Salgado (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto, Portugal)

Authors: João Salgado (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: Can EFT tasks serve as a strong foundation for mental health promotion programs? To explore this question, we have developed a research program called "Modulating Emotional Processing." Our program seeks to investigate the effectiveness and change processes of various EFT tasks in the general population. Drawing inspiration from Kwatra et al.'s workbook (2022), in this panel we present the initial stages of this research program. Our focus is to design, evaluate, and enhance various intervention modules that address diverse emotional processing skills in the general population. These modules of intervention mainly rely on EFT tasks and have been adapted for brief group and online interventions. This symposium will commence with an overview of the research program. Following that, we will present three pilot studies of brief group online interventions. Each of these interventions will target a unique emotional processing difficulty, such as unclear felt sense, negative self-treatment, and interpersonal emotional injuries (unfinished business).



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Paper 1: Empty Chair Task for Interpersonal Emotional Injury: Randomized Pilot Study of a Brief Online Group Intervention.

Presenter: Alexandra Paiva (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Authors: Alexandra Paiva (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Marina Monteiro (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), João Salgado (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: This study aimed to compare the effectiveness of the Empty Chair Task, as used in Emotion-Focused Therapy, for resolving unfinished business with a significant other in individuals without severe clinical mental health symptoms. The study included 11 participants who were randomly assigned to either an experimental or control group (wait-list). The objectives were to understand the effects of the task on unfinished business resolution, the participant's affects towards the significant other, mental health symptoms, and psychological well-being, and to obtain participants' feedback about the intervention. The Unfinished Business Resolution Scale (UFBR), Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), General Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7), Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9), Psychological Well-being Scale, Clinical Outcome Routine Evaluation - 10 (CORE-10), Clinical Outcome Routine Evaluation - Outcome Measure (CORE-OM), and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale were used for evaluation. The effects of the intervention were compared at various evaluation points from the beginning of the intervention to a follow-up moment. The results of the study were consistent with previous research, suggesting that this brief, online group modality of the Empty Chair Task can be effective in mitigating unfinished business with a significant other and reducing anxiety symptoms.

Paper 2: Two-chair task aimed at self-criticism: Pilot study of a Brief Online Group Intervention.

Presenter: Bárbara Santos (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Authors: Bárbara Santos (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Beatriz Massa (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Marina Monteiro (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Estefanía Mónaco (Universidad de Valencia; Spain); João Salgado (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: Self-criticism is often associated with perfectionistic tendencies and self-judgmental attitudes. It involves an exaggerated focus on mistakes made, as well as feelings of shame and inferiority. The Two Chair Dialogue Task is a potential intervention for softening self-criticism. The present study aims to verify the feasibility and adequacy of a group online intervention based on the Two Chair Dialogue Task for better coping with self-criticism in individuals without severe emotional disorders. This intervention is inspired by the workbook developed by Kwatra et al. (2022). To assess the intervention's effectiveness and effect size, several assessment measures



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were used, including the FSCRS measure to assess the sub-dimensions of self-criticism; PHQ-9, GAD-7, and CORE-OM to assess clinical symptoms; and the Self-Esteem Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale. We also collected feedback from the participants, later analysed through thematic analysis. The sample comprised eight participants aged between 24 and 57. Overall, the results support the effectiveness of the intervention in reducing levels of self-criticism and clinical symptoms.

Paper 3: Focusing with Cancer Patients: A Pilot Study of a Brief Online Group Intervention.

Presenter: Marta Gomes (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Authors: Marta Gomes (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Eunice Silva (Portuguese Institute of Oncology of Porto FG, EPE, Porto; Portugal), João Salgado (University of Maia and Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: Focusing-Oriented Psychotherapy has had a long history and influence on the field of psychotherapy, and emotion-focused therapy is one of the psychotherapeutic approaches that integrates it as a specific therapeutic task. By "Clearing a space" and "Focusing," individuals can enhance their emotional awareness and improve their ability to self-regulate. These tasks are particularly relevant in the context of Psycho-Oncology, although the research on their potential benefits for cancer patients is limited. Furthermore, the application of these tasks in a group or online setting has not been thoroughly explored. This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of a two-session online intervention based on Focusing for cancer-diagnosed participants and its impact on their mental health and well-being. The study involved three participants with a diagnosis of colorectal cancer who were undergoing palliative treatment. We used both qualitative and quantitative methods. PFC-2 was used to assess participants' accomplishment of the task; FMS was used to assess the change in the focusing attitude, while CORE-OM, HADS, and EPEP were used as clinical outcome measures and psychological well-being; participant feedback was collected through questionnaires and a semi-structured interview. The results suggest that the tasks led to greater self-awareness, heightened self-reflection, and a sense of relief for the participants. These findings suggest that the group intervention protocol based on online Focusing sessions is potentially useful for broader application.

Discussant: Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College; Ireland)

Symposium 6:

'To task or not to task?' Moment-by-moment clinical decision making in a case of a transgender, Brazilian client

Organizer: Rhonda Goldman (The Chicago School of Professional Psychology & Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute; USA)

Authors: Rhonda Goldman (The Chicago School of Professional Psychology & Emotion-focused Therapy Institute), Marco Aurelio Mendes (The Brazilian Institute for Emotion-focused Therapy)



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Abstract: In the recent decade, case formulation has become a strong topic of interest for EFT clinicians and researchers. Case formulation has multiple functions in EFT. One important function is to guide moment by moment, process-diagnostic decision-making through the session. This includes, for example, such questions as whether to, stay in a relational, empathic mode or switch to initiating a marker-driven task, such as chair-work. Working with people from different backgrounds to our own, can be a struggle, and also an opportunity for growth for both clients and therapists, if addressed appropriately. This symposium will focus on a specific case of a black, transgendered client in a Brazilian context. We will begin with a brief discussion of case formulation, specifically as it applies to this particular case. We recognize that although we listen to poignant stories and narratives as all therapies do, we are also focused on client's microprocesses during sessions. Case formulation is an opportunity to create a map that helps therapists and clients throughout therapy, highlighting markers, tasks, core emotion schemes, as well as difficulties to access client's core emotional pain. And yet, this is all mediated through the therapeutic relationship. Excerpts of a therapy session with a Brazilian male-identified therapist and a black, transgendered, female-identified client will be presented. The presentation aims to examine how case formulation can help therapists in the clinical hour to a) determine what to do next, such as "to task or not to task" and, b) consider how important issues like race, gender, socioeconomic backgrounds need to be addressed.

Paper 1: To Task or Not to Task: Clinical Decision Making in EFT case formulation.

Presenter: Rhonda Goldman (The Chicago School of Professional Psychology & Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute; USA)

Author: Rhonda Goldman (The Chicago School of Professional Psychology & Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute; USA)

Abstract: This paper will focus on a specific case of a black, transgender client in a Brazilian context. In this first presentation, we will begin with a brief discussion of case formulation, specifically as it applies to this particular case. Case formulation is an opportunity to create a map that helps therapists and clients throughout therapy, highlighting markers, tasks, core emotion schemes, as well as difficulties to access client's core emotional pain. And yet, this is all mediated through the therapeutic relationship. Excerpts of a therapy session with a Brazilian male-identified therapist and a black, transgender, female-identified client will be presented. The presentation aims to examine how case formulation can help therapists in the clinical hour to a) determine what to do next, such as "to task or not to task" and, b) consider how important issues like race, gender, socioeconomic backgrounds need to be addressed.

Paper 2: To Task or not to Task in EFT sessions with a Transgender, Brazilian client.

Presenter: Marco Aurelio Mendes (The Brazilian Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy; Brazil)

Author: Marco Aurelio Mendes (The Brazilian Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy; Brazil)

Abstract: The second paper in this symposium will focus on the same specific case of a black, transgender client in a Brazilian context. In this second presentation, we will look at excerpts of a therapy session with this client. This presentation will examine how case formulation can help



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therapists to: a) determine what to do next, such as “to task or not to task” and, b) consider how important issues like race, gender, socioeconomic backgrounds need to be addressed.

Discussant: Aimee Ruscio (Private Practice, Washington, DC & Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute; USA)

**Mini Workshop 10:
Being and Working with Grief and Loss: Therapeutic Presence in Emotion Focused
Therapy.**

Organizer: Shari Geller (York University and Centre for MindBody Health; Canada)

Authors: Shari Geller (York University and Centre for MindBody Health; Canada)

Abstract: As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing war and conflict, and social inequality, there is no shortage of grief and loss. Unprocessed grief and trauma are of concern as social distancing in the pandemic prevented many people from fully grieving their losses with rituals and gatherings. Therapists and clients both share this universal experience of loss as they navigate the post-pandemic world. Being with grief with presence helps therapists to meet the depth of clients’ pain, while also working with their own grief as it arises. Therapeutic presence is foundational to supporting a strong therapeutic relationship and allowing clients to process emotions surrounding major losses. It is a mindful relational stance integral to emotion focused therapy (EFT). Presence involves being engaged and receptively attuned in the moment to clients’ core pain, while meeting this pain with compassion. Presence helps therapists stay in contact with clients’ core pain and recognize markers related to grief work. It also helps therapists to attune and work with non-verbal cues that convey clients’ moment to moment experience in session, including when they shut down or feel overwhelmed. Presence helps therapists discern and work with their empathic resonance of clients’ grief as well as triggers of their own grief that may emerge in session. This workshop will offer (a) a didactic approach to understanding therapeutic presence, (b) experiential practices for therapists to cultivate presence with grief and (c) self-compassion exercises to work with therapists’ barriers to presence. An empirically validated model of therapeutic presence will be presented as a map to strengthen the skills of presence within self and with clients. There will also be an exploration of the neurophysiological principles to create safety with therapeutic presence, based on concepts such as co-regulation and neuroception of safety stemming from Polyvagal Theory (Geller & Porges, 2014).

**Mini Workshop 11:
Addressing Sexual Intimacy in Working with Couples.**

Organizer: Nia Pryde (Centre for the Advancement of Emotion-Focused Therapy, London; United Kingdom)

Presenter: Dr Nia Pryde (DClinPsy CPsychol) is a Certified EFT Trainer and Supervisor (isEFT), a Senior Psychologist Specialist in Psychotherapy (BPS), a Senior Accredited Sexual and Relationship Therapist and Supervisor (COSRT, UKCP), and a Sex Addiction Therapist and



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Supervisor (ATSAC). She has held positions in hospitals, universities and private practice in the UK and Asia over several decades.

Authors: Nia Pryde (Centre for the Advancement of Emotion-Focused Therapy, London; United Kingdom)

Abstract: This workshop is for EFT therapists who wish to develop their knowledge, skill and confidence in addressing sexual intimacy with couples and in determining their own best way of working with sexual issues. It also has application with individual clients. An Emotion-Focused Sex Therapy (EFSxT) paradigm will be presented that focuses on the couple cycles of emotional and sexual intimacy and their interplay. This integrative approach incorporates the principles of permission, limited information, specific suggestions and treatment interventions (PLISSIT) which allow the therapist to work at their own level of expertise, and to know when to refer. The workshop will provide an overview of sexuality models and diagnostic and therapeutic frames. It will enable participants to approach sexual topics with clients with more confidence and self-awareness; to recognise problems in sexual and relationship intimacy; to identify sexual and emotional intimacy cycles and their interaction; and to promote positive sexuality through intimacy tasks. Format: Didactic presentation, self-awareness tasks and case vignettes. Learning objectives: 1. To be able to talk about sexual issues with confidence and to recognise one's own blocks; 2. To be able to identify issues that are relationship-based and those that are not; 3. To be able to identify a couple's sexual intimacy cycle and how it relates to the emotional intimacy cycle; 4. To be able to provide limited information and specific suggestions for home tasks that promote the couple's intimate adjustment

Brief paper Session 5: Training in EFT.

Moderator: Christina Michael (Cyprus Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy; Cyprus)

Paper 1: Confronting the Jargon Barrier in EFT: Challenges and Opportunities

Presenter: Christina Michael (Cyprus Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy; Cyprus)

Authors: Christina Michael (Cyprus Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy; Cyprus), Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde; Scotland)

Abstract: In this paper we highlight the invaluable contribution of Emotion Focused Therapy (EFT) to the vocabulary of psychotherapy in general, while raising issues that challenge us and our students in the process of communicating and learning EFT. Since its inception decades ago as an experiential approach, EFT has grown undoubtedly a detailed vocabulary that identifies a range of micro-processes and interventions in different episodes in psychotherapy (Elliott et al., 2004; Greenberg, 2015; Rice & Greenberg, 1984). The extensive research of psychotherapy processes, has resulted in a long list of EFT words (often referred to as "EFT jargon") related to moments in psychotherapy that involve emotion transformation. In recent years, in the EFT community, we have become concerned about how best to pass EFT learning to the next generation. Research in the field of learning, consistently indicates that reading comprehension



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plays a vital role in two main learning perspectives—knowledge acquisition and cognition aptitude cultivation (Perfetti & Stafura, 2014; Silva & Cain, 2015). In the education field, a fundamental aspect of reading comprehension is vocabulary acquisition (Cromley & Azevedo, 2007; Hoover & Gough, 1990). In this paper we argue that vocabulary acquisition is a vital component for the teaching, for the learning and for the application of EFT concepts and skills. Through our developing EFT Lexicon, we aim to explain EFT theoretical concepts, ideas and terms as described by the EFT pioneers and to raise issues which involve the EFT vocabulary, learning, application and research of EFT.

Paper 2: Therapists' perceptions of the impact of Emotion-Focused Therapy on Emotion Regulation Processes: A Pilot Study

Presenter: Joseph Mathew (Glasgow Caledonian University; United Kingdom)

Authors: Joseph Mathew (Glasgow Caledonian University; United Kingdom)

Abstract: Background: This research aims to examine the effect of Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT) on the emotion regulation process of clients with depression and low mood. Emotion regulation strategy plays an important role in an individual's emotional experience and expression. This study explores the effective measures and intermediary factors in EFT that can enhance the emotion regulation process in clients with depression and low mood in their recovery process. Emotion regulation processes are mainly explained with two emotion regulation strategies from Gross's Process Model, cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. Cognitive reappraisal is considered a better regulation strategy than expressive suppression in the impact of emotion regulation on mental health and well-being. This research explores EFT for an experiential process model of emotion regulation and its influences on the higher cognitive and emotional reappraisal levels. Aims: This research examines significant intermediary factors that enhance the emotion regulation process in one of the experiential therapy models, EFT. This will be explored with therapists' experiences and perceptions of changes in their clients' emotion regulation process during EFT. Methodology: The 7 EFT-accredited therapists will be recruited who have offered EFT to clients with depression and anxiety. Any comorbid psychiatric diagnoses with these symptoms will be excluded. This qualitative study uses a semi-structured interview. The qualitative research data will be analysed in the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). Findings: The therapists' experiences and perceptions will contribute to a deeper understanding of the intermediary factors of the clients' emotion regulation in the experiential process model. Conclusions: The findings will contribute to advancing the experiential process models for effective emotion regulation processes in therapeutic interventions.

Paper 3: What matters in psychotherapy: Trained therapists' perspectives. A study using Q Methodology.

Presenter: Catalin Nedelcea (Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science, University of Bucharest; Romania)

Authors: Claudiu Papasteri (Department Of Psychology and Cognitive Science, University of Bucharest; Romania), Ana Cosmoiu (Department Of Psychology and Cognitive Science, University



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of Bucharest & Institute of Experiential Emotion-Focused Therapy; Romania), Iulia Ciorbea (Institute of Experiential Emotion-Focused Therapy; Romania), Catalin Nedelcea (Department Of Psychology and Cognitive Science, University of Bucharest & Institute of Experiential Emotion-Focused Therapy; Romania)

Abstract: The question of what features of the psychotherapeutic process facilitate desired outcomes and promote change represents a longstanding debate in psychotherapy research and practice. One of the consequences of this debate relates to therapists' expectations as to what should be prioritized in therapy, ranging from processes and techniques specific to therapeutic approaches to common factors such as working alliance. In the current study, we used a mixed qualitative-quantitative methodology (Q methodology) to explore what is prioritized in psychotherapy based on the psychotherapeutic approach that therapists are trained in, as well as individual differences between therapists. To this end, we recruited 62 practicing therapists, with 40% primarily trained in humanistic therapies, 27% in cognitive-behavioral therapies, 18% in psychodynamic therapies, and 15% with an integrative training. More than 60% of the sample practiced psychotherapy for more than five years, with 35% having experience of over ten years. Apart from information relating to their professional training, participants also completed self-report measures and a Q-sorting task of hierarchizing 35 statements related to expectations of the active processes in therapy (working alliance and processes specific to symptomatology, functionality, or therapeutic approach). Q-factor analysis revealed a three-factor solution as the most parsimonious, with 33% of the sample adhering to the first metaperspective, 26% to the second, 23% to the third, and 18% presented divergent perspectives. In line with empirical research about common factors in psychotherapy, results revealed that all therapists, regardless of training, prioritize aspects pertaining to the working alliance. Results also highlighted that therapists trained in the humanistic approach tend to prioritize fostering clients' self-compassion, emotion regulation, and transforming the meaning of experiences more than other therapists. Humanistic therapists also differ from those trained in other approaches by deemphasizing emotional venting or cognitive and emotional control. Implications for research and psychotherapeutic practice are further discussed.

Paper 4: Stress level and satisfaction of psychologists in the pre- and early stages of their professional practice.

Presenter: Rafael Jódar (Universidad Pontificia Comillas; Spain)

Authors: Sergi Corbella (Ramon Llul University; Spain), Rafael Jódar (Comillas Pontifical University; Spain), Ana Martínez-Pampliega (University of Deusto; Spain), Olga Herrero (Ramon Llul University; Spain), Ignacio Gómez (University of Deusto; Spain)

Abstract: The professional practice of psychology dedicated to helping people who are suffering involves an emotional implication for each psychologist. The increase in mental health consultations in recent years has increased the workload for psychologists and highlights the importance of studying factors related to the level of stress and life satisfaction of psychologists as well as the use of self-care strategies by professionals. Two of the factors that have been associated with a higher risk of burnout/ dissatisfaction in psychologists are youth and less experience. Therefore, it is relevant to investigate personal variables (linked to stress and satisfaction) in psychologists who are in the preparatory/initial phase of their professional



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experience. This study presents indicators of stress and life satisfaction in psychologists who are pursuing a postgraduate or professional master's degree (general health psychologist and/or psychotherapy) in different universities in Spain, including the preferred therapeutic orientation (experiential humanistic psychotherapy, cognitive behavioral and systemic therapy, or integrative). The convenience of working on the therapist's personal style in training contexts as a protective factor against professional burnout, stress and dissatisfaction is also raised.

Brief Paper session 6: EFT and beyond

Moderator: Júlia Halamová (Institute of Applied Psychology, Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences, Comenius University; Slovakia)

Paper 1: The efficacy of the two novel mobile apps based on Emotion-focused Therapy.

Presenter: Júlia Halamová (Institute of Applied Psychology, Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences, Comenius University; Slovakia)

Authors: Jakub Mihaľo (Institute of Applied Psychology, Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences, Comenius University in Bratislava; Slovakia)

Abstract: As the COVID-19 pandemic has changed our everyday lives and constrained access to traditional psychological interventions such as psychotherapy, there has been an immediate and growing demand for accessible and scalable mental health solutions. Therefore, the two novel mobile apps were developed based on the newest research findings of Emotion-focused therapy and their effectiveness was tested. Participants using the mobile apps underwent a 14-day program aimed at reducing self-criticism while increasing self-compassion and self-protection in the first mobile app (Emotion-focused training for self-compassion and self-protection; EFT-SCP) or alternatively a 14-day program designed to increase emotion skills (Emotion-Focused Training for Emotional Coaching; EFT-EC). Pre- and post-measurements were collected. Both mobile apps EFT-SCP and EFT-EC significantly increased self-compassion and significantly decreased self-criticism. While only EFT-SCP increased also self-protection. The finding that a 14-day mobile apps were able to promote well-being in the form of self-compassion, self-protection, and self-criticism is promising. It indicates the potential for individuals to obtain help through the use of remote tools such as apps for a fraction of the usual cost, at their own pace, and without other restrictions.

Paper 2: Exploring the Potential of Emotion-focused Therapy in Psychedelic Integration.

Presenter: Ana Botelho Ribeiro (Universidade Fernando Pessoa; Portugal)

Authors: Nuno Pires (Instituto Superior de Serviço Social do Porto; Portugal), Sónia Pimentel Alves (Universidade Fernando Pessoa; Portugal)

Abstract: Psychedelic-assisted therapy has shown promising results for a variety of mental health conditions, including depression, anxiety, PTSD, eating disorders, and addiction. Psychedelics



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are a class of psychoactive substances that produce changes in perception, cognitive processes, and mood and act as nonspecific amplifiers that can provoke intense emotional experiences that can be difficult to process. Emotion-focused therapy (EFT) is an evidence-based therapeutic approach that focuses on exploring and processing emotions in a safe and supportive environment. By combining the insights and breakthroughs that can arise from a psychedelic experience with the support offered by EFT, individuals may be better able to make sense of their psychedelic experiences. We argue that this experiential transformation can be achieved by: 1) emotional deepening; 2) working with the dialectic between aspects of the person to spark new emotional experiences, and 3) changing emotions with emotions. We propose several concepts from EFT that can be applied to support individuals after a psychedelic experience. We will discuss the potential benefits of integrating emotion-focused therapy with psychedelic-assisted therapy, along with implications for future research and clinical practice.

Paper 3: Ruptures resolution in the therapeutic alliance in different therapeutic modalities: The therapist perception.

Presenter: Ana Bela Couto (University of Maia - UMAIA & Center for Psychology at University of Porto - CPUP; Portugal)

Authors: Ana Bela Couto (University of Maia - UMAIA & Center for Psychology at University of Porto - CPUP; Portugal), Hannah Young (Dundee & St Andrews Psychotherapy; Scotland), Catherine F. Eubanks (Yeshiva University; USA), Marlene Sousa (University of Maia - UMAIA & Center for Psychology at University of Porto - CPUP; Portugal), Isabel Basto (University of Maia - UMAIA & Center for Psychology at University of Porto - CPUP; Portugal), Robert Elliott (University of Strathclyde; Scotland), Carla Cunha (University of Maia - UMAIA & CPUP - Center for Psychology at University of Porto - CPUP; Portugal)

Abstract: Ruptures in the therapeutic alliance (i.e., dissonant experiences, tensions, or decrease in the collaborative relationship between the dyad) are unavoidable events that may occur at any time in the therapeutic process. It is consensual that the way these are perceived, worked through, and repaired plays a crucial role in the clinical change process of all theoretical orientations. Thus, if the therapist is not able to detect and deal with a rupture early on, that can lead to the poorest outcomes or even dropout. Conversely, when the attempt is successful, it could represent a booster opportunity for change, promoting further engagement in the therapeutic goals and process. Aims: Since 'rupture' is considered a transtheoretical concept, the present project aims to explore similarities and differences between three therapists (Les Greenberg, Nancy McWilliams and Judith Beck) of different therapeutic modalities (Emotion Focused Therapy, Psychodynamic Psychotherapy and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy) in terms of the occurrence of ruptures and resolution moments, as well as describe the subsequent perception of the therapist about these moments. Method: The Rupture Resolution Rating System was the process measure used to analyse three separate therapy sessions, one with each of the therapists, in the DVD Three Approaches to Psychotherapy with a Female Client: The Next Generation (APA, 2012), all with the same client (Chichi). This allows avoiding bias in the data, as the client variable is controlled across sessions of different modalities. Results and discussion: Results and conclusions will be presented and discussed during this meeting.



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Structured Discussion 2: Research in Emotion Focused Therapy: The growth edge.

Organizer: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Discussants: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Ladislav Timulak (Trinity College Dublin; Ireland); Jason Sharbanee (Curtin School of Population Health; Curtin University; Australia); Ben Shahr (The Paul Baerwald School of Social Work and Social Welfare, Hebrew University; Israel) and Eran Bar-Kalifa (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; Israel)

Abstract: Emotion Focused Therapy (EFT) has been now disseminated worldwide, as a humanistic and experiential evidence-based approach. It has process and outcome research in its DNA and we see research as critical to its endurance and its future. EFT training institutes have now spread worldwide, beyond the original Canadian research and training sites (listed as a total of 48 institutes in the isEFT website), and EFT research has been produced by several talented teams and protagonists, following the steps of its talented originators. In the present structured discussion, we hope to highlight critical issues and strategic paths to encourage the development of EFT research, actualizing its potential for future years. We will start by sharing the perspective of these presenters and hope to gather the perspectives of other talented researchers joining us in the audience. We will acknowledge EFT research landmarks and changes in psychotherapy research trends emerging in the last years, how the EFT community can face them and, hopefully, acknowledge the growth edge for EFT research, to provide further empirical base and expand the modality. We invite other talented EFT experts, researchers, and practitioners to join us in the audience and engage in this discussion, welcoming contributions from all generations of EFT therapists.

Symposium 7: Engaging Youth and Their Caregivers in Emotion Focused Therapies.

Organizer: Mirisse Foroughe (Family Psychology Centre; Canada)

Authors: Mirisse Foroughe (Family Psychology Centre; Canada), Dillon T. Browne (University of Waterloo; Canada), Kristina Cordeiro (York University; Canada), Serena Darking, BSc Hons (Family Psychology Centre; Canada), Prakash Thambipillai, BA Hons (York University; Canada), Cassandra Harmsen, MA (York University; Canada), Megan Oliver (University of Toronto; Canada), Robert T. Muller (York University; Canada)

Abstract: Youth mental health concerns are on the rise and are linked to numerous deleterious outcomes across the lifespan, including negative sequelae in a young person's familial, social, academic, and vocational life (e.g., Wickersham et al., 2021). From the perspective of Emotion Focused Therapy (EFT), emotion dysregulation and avoidance are key factors in mental illness, and symptoms are understood as maladaptive coping strategies aimed at diminishing strong negative emotions. It follows that emotion processing and transformation are fundamental to psychotherapeutic change. While there is strong evidence for the effectiveness of EFT in treating



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a range of mental health difficulties in adults, the implementation of emotion focused approaches with youth and their caregivers is comparatively new. Addressing this gap, the proposed symposium will offer a trauma-informed perspective on the adaptation of EFT for youth and caregivers. The first panelist will introduce Emotion Focused Therapy for Youth (EFT-Y), discussing its application with young people aged 9-17 in a randomized study that employed a start- and end-of-session measurement schedule to explore sudden gains within therapy sessions. The second panelist will report on Emotion Focused Family Therapy (EFFT), a transdiagnostic and lifespan family therapy model that coaches caregivers to assume a primary role in their child's mental health care (Lafrance et al., 2020). Results from a 12-month study of a brief and intensive EFFT group intervention will be presented, showcasing the relationship between improvements in caregiver and child functioning. Lastly, the third panelist will explore the impact of caregiver maltreatment history on EFFT treatment response. Moderation analyses indicated that EFFT is a robust intervention; caregivers with and without a history of childhood maltreatment showed mostly comparable gains. These three methodologically rigorous studies will be synthesized and integrated by an esteemed practitioner-scholar. Innovations, important considerations, and future directions in EFT-Y and EFFT will be explored.

Paper 1: Emotion Focused Therapy for Youth: Clinical Applications and Outcomes of a Randomized Case Series.

Presenter: Mirisse Foroughe (Family Psychology Centre; Canada)

Authors: Mirisse Foroughe (Family Psychology Centre; Canada), Serena Darking, BSc Hons (Family Psychology Centre; Canada)

Abstract: EFT-Y is a novel adaptation of EFT targeting maladaptive emotions contributing to common mental disorders amongst youth. While a large body of research supports the effectiveness of EFT, and there is recent evidence for the experience of rapid improvements or "sudden gains" associated with EFT in adult populations, there are no reports within the literature on EFT's application for youth under age 18. This study reports on the intervention strategies and clinical outcomes following 8 sessions of EFT for youth (EFT-Y). Outcomes from the treatment group (N = 22) were compared to a waitlist control group (N = 21) matched for age (9-17), following a randomized, case-series design. The Children's Depression Inventory (CDI-2), Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale, and Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire were used to collect data from participants at baseline and post-intervention. Pre- and post-session data was collected at sessions 2, 4, and 6 to monitor within-session changes in symptomatology. Compared to youth in the control group, the treatment group reported a significant decrease in their emotion dysregulation, depression, conduct, and overall difficulties from baseline to post-treatment. Most youth also experienced sudden gains within-session. Findings suggest that EFT-Y can serve as an alternative evidence-based treatment modality for youth and should be further studied. For youth demonstrating reluctance towards traditional cognitive-behavioural therapies, or for whom a more humanistic, individualized, and client-centered approach may be preferable, EFT-Y is a promising approach.

Paper 2: Emotion Focused Family Therapy (EFFT): A 12-month Follow-up Study of Dyadic Change.



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Presenter: Dillon T. Browne (University of Waterloo; Canada)

Authors: Mirisse Foroughe (Family Psychology Centre; Canada), Dillon T. Browne, PhD (University of Waterloo; Canada), Prakash Thambipillai, BA (Hons) (York University; Canada), Kristina Cordeiro, (MA Canada), Robert T. Muller, PhD (York University; Canada)

Abstract: EFFT intensives are a brief two-day intervention for caregivers of youth struggling with mental health difficulties (Foroughe et al., 2019). To date, there is limited research examining the long-term trajectories of child and caregiver functioning following the intervention. Thus, this study provides a 12-month follow-up evaluation of families who received this intervention. Caregivers (N=498) of children and youth (N=337) completed measures of caregiver self-efficacy and child mental health difficulties one week before the intervention, immediately after the intervention, and at 4, 8, and 12-month follow-ups. Piecewise latent trajectory models revealed that caregiver self-efficacy showed a large immediate increase following the intervention, $\beta = 1.61$ (1.32, 2.14), and although this effect was attenuated by 4 months, $\beta = -0.77$ (-1.31, -0.52), it did not change further by 12 months. Reductions in child mental health difficulties were observed by 4 months, $\beta = -0.54$ (-0.77, -0.37), and remained stable through the 12-month follow-up. Caregivers reporting more increases in self-efficacy also reported greater reductions in their children's symptoms at 4 ($r = -0.28$) and 12 months ($r = -0.48$). Findings suggest that the potential benefits of EFFT intensives last for up to a year and that improvements are associated with caregiver self-efficacy. Clinical implications include strengthening the evidence for a brief, transdiagnostic, emotion-focused intervention that targets caregiver self-efficacy in the service of child mental health difficulties. This intervention can be flexibly adapted as an adjunct to other treatments or it can serve as a practical and efficient option for families with waitlisted children.

Paper 3: Caregiver Maltreatment History and Treatment Response Following an Intensive Emotion Focused Family Therapy Workshop.

Presenter: Kristina Cordeiro (York University; Canada)

Authors: Kristina Cordeiro (York University; Canada), Cassandra Harmsen, MA (York University; Canada), Megan Oliver, BA; (University of Toronto; Canada), Mirisse Foroughe, PhD; (Family Psychology Centre; Canada), Robert T. Muller, PhD (York University; Canada)

Abstract: For parents with histories of intrafamilial trauma, supporting a child with mental illness can be especially challenging. Considering the focus on processing caregiver blocks (which are theoretically related to caregivers' childhood histories) in EFFT, as well as the inclusion of various trauma-informed principles and strategies to minimize the risk of re-traumatization, EFFT intensives may be helpful for caregivers with exposure to childhood maltreatment. However, concerns about the appropriateness and effectiveness of a brief, emotionally intense treatment group for at-risk families with complex histories have been raised by clinicians during training sessions. This novel study investigated the impact caregiver maltreatment history may have on treatment response following EFFT intensives. Caregivers (N = 243) completed questionnaires about their child's emotion regulation and clinical symptoms, as well as their own childhood trauma history (i.e., exposure to various forms of child maltreatment), caregiver self-efficacy, and emotion blocks prior to and immediately following treatment, and again 4-, 8- and 12-months later. Mixed effects growth curve modeling indicated that caregivers with and without



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maltreatment histories reported similar, significant gains in their child's total difficulties ($\beta = .64$, $SE = .41$, $p = .12$) and emotional negativity and lability ($\beta = .51$, $SE = .48$, $p = .29$) at 12-months post-workshop. While caregivers reporting experiences of childhood maltreatment had more emotion blocks at baseline, they showed greater improvement in caregiver emotion blocks ($\beta = 5.15$, $SE = 1.34$, $p < 0.001$) and child emotion regulation ($\beta = .90$, $SE = .18$, $p < 0.001$) than caregivers that did not endorse a history of childhood maltreatment. They also reported comparatively less, but still significant, improvement in parental self-efficacy ($\beta = -0.68$, $SE = .26$, $p < 0.01$). These findings support EFFT as an effective and robust intervention for caregivers with a history of childhood maltreatment.

Discussant: Krzysztof (Chris) Błażejowski (InRelatio Family Space; Poland)

Mini Workshop 12: Blended Emotion-Focused Therapy: Combining online self-help with regular psychotherapy

Organizer: Nele Stinckens (QIT - Quality In Treatment; Belgium)

Authors: Nele Stinckens (Quality In Treatment; Belgium)

Abstract: In this workshop, I present the online self-help tool 'Emotions as a compass', that was developed in a collaborative project of QIT, KU Leuven & Panenco and validated in a large-scale survey and in-depth focus groups of clients and therapists. This tool guides clients in different sections through the main principles of EFT theory. On the basis of informative texts, illustrative videos, testimonials, exercises and reflection tasks, they (re)discover how emotions can guide them in dealing with themselves, others and life. They learn how to train emotional awareness and to find a workable distance towards their emotions. They discover what is the difference between helping (fluid) and not-helping (stuck) emotions and how to become a tuned emotion coach for themselves. The participants of the workshop will become acquainted with online self-help tool, they are actively engaged in trying out some of the building blocks and they learn how to embed online self-help in a clinically relevant way in a psychotherapeutic process. EFT for Trauma.

Brief Paper Session 7: EFT for Trauma

Moderator: João Leal (SPTFE; Portugal)

Paper 1: Emotion-Focused Therapy and Stages of Change: A Theoretical Framework to Help Clients Victimized by Intimate Partners.

Presenter: João Leal (SPTFE; Portugal)

Authors: João Leal (SPTFE, Portugal), Carla Cunha (Universidade da Maia; Portugal), Anita Santos (Universidade da Maia, Portugal), João Salgado (Universidade da Maia; Portugal)



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Abstract: Intimate partner violence (IPV) is associated with significant negative physical and mental health outcomes (e.g., depression, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and anxiety), and revictimization risk. Although existing psychological treatments have demonstrated effectiveness in symptom reduction and preventing revictimization, there is a need to develop more tailored interventions for victimized clients that experienced prolonged exposure to abuse who often present with severe affect dysregulation, interpersonal difficulties and contextual challenges. In this presentation we discuss how Emotion-focused therapy (EFT) can be theoretically integrated in a readiness for change framework to promote safety, self-determination, and adaptive coping, according to individual needs and values. We propose that tailored tasks may help in resolving four problematic content-affective states that hinder progress in therapy (fear of change, decisional pain, overwhelming safety concerns, and long-term interpersonal injuries). We also highlight the implications for future research.

Paper 2: Emotion Focused Couple Therapy in Refugees.

Presenter: Esra Canpolat (Psychotherapy Institute; Turkey)

Authors: Esra Canpolat (Psychotherapy Institute; Istanbul; Turkey), Betül Kanat; Psychologist (Psychotherapy Institute; Istanbul; Turkey)

Abstract: Emotion-Focused Couple Therapy is an experiential, humanistic, and systemic therapy approach based on attachment theory and social neuroscience. Focusing on emotions is seen as a key transformative component in the couples therapy process. The original framework of Emotion-Focused Couples Therapy was created by suggesting that problems in the relationship can be repaired by the other partner through regulation of emotions. When considered in the context of Syrian refugee families in Turkey, it can be said that they always face multiple risk factors such as poverty, lack of legal status, fear of deportation, loss, mourning, possible trauma before and after migration, poor housing, working conditions and Covid-19 pandemic for the last 2 years and all these obstacles consume the family resources of these groups and harm the family balances. This study is aimed to test the effectiveness of Emotion-Focused Couples Therapy in order to minimize the negative effects of conditions mentioned above on the psychological well-being of Syrian refugee couples, to support their adaptation processes, to help them develop effective coping mechanisms against difficulties, and finally to increase the family resilience. The procedure was based on the 9-step instruction developed by Johnson and Greenberg (1985) and designed with 5 Syrian refugee couples (M age = 38, SD = 8.78; 5 females and 5 males) for ten weeks and each session lasted 60 minutes. There is a significant difference between the psychological well-being and family resilience pre- and post-test scores of couples participating in emotion-focused couple therapy. In all family resilience sub-dimensions (family belief systems, organizational models and communication processes), significant differences were stated. The research is valuable to plan national and regional intervention programs at the family level and to carefully consider the needs of refugees in the high-risk group in terms of intervention programs to be created in the future.

Paper 3: EFT in Pre- and Perinatal Trauma therapy.

Presenter: Max Peschek (Praxis für Körperpsychotherapie; Germany)



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Authors: Max Peschek (Praxis für Körperpsychotherapie; Germany)

Abstract: Adverse childhood experiences in our pre- and perinatal life form blueprints that usually remain unconscious but nevertheless influence our awareness, self-image, maladaptive emotions and behaviour. EFT is highly suitable to work with early shocktrauma from birth as well as with pre- and postnatal relational trauma starting as early as conception. This workshop intends to give an overview of the stages of birth and prenatal life so that participants will be able to recognize markers for pre- and perinatal trauma with their clients. The experiential part gives participants an opportunity to dip into their personal imprint of coming into this life. Max Peschek was originally trained in body-psychotherapy (IBP) before he worked for many years with two pioneers of pre- and perinatal therapy, William Emerson and Karlton Terry. He received further training in Somatic Experiencing (SE), Neuro Affective Relational Model (NARM) and Integrative Somatic Psychology (ISP) before diving into EFT and EFT couple therapy. He has a private practice in Bremen, Germany, and is currently leading trainings in pre- and perinatal traumatherapy in Austria and Belgium.

Paper 4: Removing Emotional Wrecking After the Earthquake Trauma.

Presenter: Habibe Aykan (Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute of Turkey; Turkey)

Abstract: Self-regulation depends on having a friendly relationship with the body. Body connection must be provided in order to reveal the sensory information that is frozen or blocked due to trauma. Re-establishing the body connection that was broken in trauma experiences and awareness of body-based sensations initiate the action. The greater the awareness, the greater the possibility of controlling life. Knowing how you feel is the first step to understanding why you feel the way you do. Traumatized individuals do not feel safe in their own bodies. The bodies which are our psychic home, are also left under the debris of the psychic earthquake and the connection of the body and psyche cut off. The source of information is damaged. People's lives are dominated by fear until inner experiences change. In order for inner experiences to change, body connections must be established and body awareness must be gained. With the guidance of the inner senses of the body, man can be freed from the bondage of fear. It paves the way for regulating emotions and creating new meanings. In the acute period interventions made with individuals who were exposed to the earthquake after the great earthquake disaster that occurred in my country, a process in which the body connection was broken and intense anxiety was experienced has been witnessed. Without body connection there were some difficulties encountered in regulating emotions and performing autonomous regulation. It has been observed that the dissociation of the body as a result of the shock and freezing reaction caused by the rapidly changing lives with the earthquake, and the reconnection with the body have an important place in removing the emotional wrecking caused by the earthquake. In this theoretical paper, the processes of resolving body dissociation and re-establishing body connections of clients are discussed.

Mini Workshop 13:

Connecting with the Transcendental Core of Self through Emotion-Focused Mindfulness.



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Organizer: Jaran De Los Santos Olsen (IPR Oslo; Norway)

Authors: Jaran De Los Santos Olsen (IPR Oslo; Norway)

Abstract: This practice-oriented workshop is designed to help therapists improve their ability for authenticity, presence, and empathic listening by guiding them through meditations that connect them with their 'transcendental core.' The presenter brings more than 20 years of experience with Buddhist meditation, including six years as a Buddhist monk. He suggests that certain types of meditation can help individuals experience deeply transformational shifts in perspective, and that such awakenings correspond to Abraham Maslow's stage of self-transcendence and Carl Rogers' 'transcendental core of me.' During the workshop, participants will explore how these perspectives fit into humanistic psychotherapies, drawing on the later works of Rogers and Maslow. The main focus will be a guided meditation session where participants will be invited to relax and connect with their inner intuitive selves, accessing the unknown within themselves. By doing so, participants may discover their own knowing, loving core; an inner discovery that can lead to 'profound growth and healing'.

Symposium 8:

Exploring the Potential of Complex Psychological Networks for Emotion-Focused Therapy: Understanding Treatment Mechanisms, Therapeutic Relationship, and Patients' Meaning Systems.

Organizer: Tiago Ferreira (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto)

Authors: Tiago Ferreira (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Daniel Castro (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Filipa Ferreira (University of Maia; Portugal), Rita Rodrigues (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Sofia Araújo (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: Complex networks exhibit nontrivial topological and dynamical properties and arise from interactions between elements in a system. The study of complex networks forms an epistemological and methodological scientific paradigm that explores phenomena encoded in the topological and dynamical characteristics of these networks. In recent years, this paradigm has proven useful in addressing persistent problems in clinical psychology, such as developing accurate classifications of mental disorders, and has spurred innovations in more recent problems, like tailoring psychological treatments based on individual needs. This symposium aims to showcase the potential of complex psychological networks in the investigation of common and specific treatment mechanisms, the therapeutic relationship, and the evolution of patients' belief systems during psychotherapy. By analyzing data from a randomized controlled trial comparing cognitive-behavioral and emotion-focused therapies for depression carried out in Portugal (at ISMAI/University of Maia), we demonstrate how complex networks can help us understand these phenomena in a more comprehensive and nuanced manner. We also highlight some challenges and limitations of complex psychological network analysis and suggest directions for future research and practice.



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Presentation 1: Decentering: A Common Mechanism of Therapeutic Change in Cognitive-Behavioral and Emotion-Focused Therapies

Presenter: Filipa Ferreira (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto, Portugal)

Authors: Tiago Ferreira, Daniel Castro, Filipa Ferreira, Rita Rodrigues, Sofia Araújo (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: Decentering is a meta-cognitive process that allows individuals to observe their own thoughts as temporary, through distancing and deidentification with conscious thoughts. This construct has been studied in mindfulness based psychotherapies and has been found to mediate the benefits of mindfulness. It has also been linked with, for example, the increase in positive affect, and in the quality of function in people with chronic pain. Simultaneously, some research supports the hypothesis that decentering is not exclusive to mindfulness based psychotherapies. There is, however, a lack of investigation in decentering's implications in other models of psychotherapy like the experiential models which promote immersion through emotional arousal. This study examined decentering's role as a possible common mechanism of psychotherapeutic change. It is embedded in a comparative randomized controlled trial of Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT) and Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) for major depression. Results suggested both treatments promoted an increase in decentering but differential effects were also observed. Given the transversality of this process, this study reinforces its relevance to psychotherapy.

Presentation 2: Untangling the Mechanisms of Psychological Treatments: An Exploration of the Differential Impact of EFT and CBT on Psychological Distress

Presenter: Daniel Castro (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Authors: Filipa Ferreira (University of Maia; Portugal), Daniel Castro (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Rita Rodrigues (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Sofia Araújo (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Tiago Ferreira (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: Despite the efficacy of several psychological treatments for different mental disorders, they often stem from distinct theoretical frameworks that can be inconsistent or even contradictory. To better understand how these treatments may work, it has been suggested that they may share a common set of mechanisms. By using network analysis, we can identify and compare the common and differential impact of different treatments on specific symptoms. This study delves into the differential impact of EFT and CBT over a 16-session psychotherapeutic process on psychological distress. Our findings demonstrate that while both treatments showed similar effects on some symptoms, they also exhibited unique impacts on others at specific sessions. Our study sheds light on how network analysis can help elucidate the mechanisms of psychological treatments and advance personalized treatment approaches. The insights gained



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from this research may contribute to increasing the precision and efficacy of psychological interventions, leading to better patient outcomes.

Presentation 3: Exploration of the semantic dynamical processes between therapist and client during psychotherapy.

Presenter: Rita Rodrigues (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto, Portugal)

Authors: Rita Rodrigues (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Daniel Castro (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Filipa Ferreira (University of Maia; Portugal), Sofia Araújo (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Tiago Ferreira (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: Semantic networks are models that have been used in many scientific fields to reveal significant information about various topics. In the field of psychotherapy, semantic networks can be used to explore the client-therapist relationship and to study the changes that occur in the client's cognitive and emotional schemas during psychotherapy. Despite the potential of semantic networks, there has been limited research on how they might promote advances in psychotherapy. Analyzing changes in the semantic network during psychotherapy can provide insights into how therapy affects the way clients' discourse changes and how the client-therapist relationship evolves. By identifying patterns of semantic interactions that occur between client and therapist during psychotherapy, we can characterize the dynamical processes that underlie the establishment of the therapist-client relationship. This study aims to explore the client-therapist relationship through semantic networks and to highlight the potential of semantic networks in psychotherapy. We examine how the patterns of semantic interactions vary according to different therapeutic approaches and in successful and unsuccessful psychotherapeutic processes. We discuss how semantic networks might provide new understandings of the client-therapist relationship and inform the development of effective psychological interventions. By leveraging semantic networks, we can better predict treatment outcomes and improve psychological interventions.

Presentation 4: An exploration of the changes that occur in the structure and dynamics of clients' semantic network during psychotherapy.

Presenter: Sofia Araújo (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Authors: Sofia Araújo (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Daniel Castro (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Filipa Ferreira (University of Maia; Portugal), Rita Rodrigues (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal), Tiago Ferreira (University of Maia & Center for Psychology at University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: Psychotherapy involves the exploration and restructuring of a client's cognitive and emotional schemas, which are fundamental aspects of their beliefs, thoughts, and feelings about



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themselves, others, and the world. Semantic networks, which are networks of interconnected concepts and meanings, can be used to assess these schemas. By analyzing a client's speech in psychotherapy sessions, we can access their semantic networks and gain insights into their thought processes, perceptions, and experiences. It is expected that the structure of a client's semantic network will change during the psychotherapeutic process as therapy aims to change maladaptive cognitive and emotional schemas. This study focuses on examining changes in the structure and dynamics of semantic networks across different psychological treatments and outcomes. By comparing changes that occur in a client's semantic network, we can better understand the impact of various psychological treatments and how they affect clients' cognitive and emotional schemas. Furthermore, we aim to explore how semantic networks can be leveraged to predict treatment outcomes and improve psychotherapeutic interventions. Overall, this study has the potential to contribute to our understanding of how psychotherapy works and how we can improve psychological interventions by analyzing changes in semantic networks. By identifying specific patterns and dynamics within these networks, we can gain insights into clients' cognitive and emotional processes and tailor our interventions accordingly.

Mini Workshop 14:

Dialogues with the body: Working with somatization and unexplained medical symptoms

Organizer: Ciro Caro (Universidad Pontificia Comillas; Spain)

Authors: Ciro Caro (Universidad Pontificia Comillas; Spain), Alicia Jiménez (The Health and Emotions Institute; Spain)

Abstract: Upon completion of this workshop, participants will be able to: 1) formulate psychosomatic issues in EFT terms and 2) offer clients involvement in a therapeutic task to process implicit relational issues. These issues usually correspond to interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships and involve slightly different resolution processes. A process model is offered in the workshop in which the task marker, the underlying emotional processing difficulty (based on the relational knowledge that is implicit in the medical symptom), the client's processes and the therapist's operations, and a degrees of resolution scale are specified. Participants will be invited to work on themselves.

Brief Paper Session 8:

Transforming Emotions with Grief and Compassion

Moderator: Daniela Nogueira (UMAIA - University of Maia; Portugal)

Paper 1: The grief pandemic and how EFT can address it: the development of training manuals for the promotion of a more compassionate emotional community

Presenter: Daniela Nogueira (UMAIA - University of Maia; Portugal)



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Authors: Daniela Nogueira (University of Maia; Portugal), Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Rafael Jódar (Universidad de Comillas, Madrid, Spain), José Gamoneda (Universidad de Comillas, Madrid, Spain), AURORA@COVID19-EU team; auroracovid19eu@umaia.pt; <https://auroragriefcovid19.eu>; University of Maia; Portugal

Abstract: The AURORA@COVID19-EU project partnership specifically aims to develop training resources and good practices for treating loss and bereavement in times of COVID-19 pandemic and train formal and informal actors involved in death and dying. This strategic partnership funded by the Erasmus+ agency (2021-1-PT01-KA220-VET-000033092) involved researchers and health professionals directly involved with the bereaved, in times of the COVID-19 pandemic, from different European countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy and Denmark), integrated in support networks in their respective health systems. One of the outcomes of this project was the creation of a training manual for clinical psychologists on grief and bereavement applied to the pandemic context, with the knowledge of some team members in the practice of EFT directed to intervene with loss and bereavement. Although EFT approaches to grief and bereavement have been advanced (Sharbanee & Greenberg, 2022; Gamoneda, 2023), we present a specific, innovative proposal to address the risk factors for complicated grief disorder and specific experiences that were lived by the bereaved during the pandemic, in countries that were particularly devastated by the death toll during the several waves of COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021 (namely, Italy, Spain and Portugal). This proposal was adapted to specific bereaved clients in a particular context of the COVID pandemic and its emotions (e.g., not being able to say goodbye to the deceased or participate in the usual cultural funerary rituals). In this presentation, we will highlight specific emotional responses that may be found in COVID-related grief and bereavement, and emotional sequences that may be facilitated to support clients' change and reconstruction after loss during these challenging times.

Paper 2: Existential Need Processing Model in complicated grief and empty chair for unfinished business

Presenter: José Gamoneda (Unidad Clínica de Psicología - UNINPSI; Universidad Pontificia Comillas; Spain)

Authors: Gamoneda, José (Comillas Pontifical University (Madrid); Spain), Jódar, Rafael (Comillas Pontifical University (Madrid); Spain), Caro, Ciro (Comillas Pontifical University (Madrid); Spain)

Abstract: The main aim of this research was to study the role of existential need in the process of emotional transformation in the framework of Emotion-Focused Therapy within the issue of complicated grief in the context of the empty chair for unfinished business. For this purpose, the Task Analysis method (Greenberg, 2007) was used as a resource to hypothesise the elements of the need processing model in the therapy session and their optimal order (Discovery Phase), as well as to evaluate, refine and finally contrast the capacity of the final model for such processing to lead to therapeutic change and task resolution (Validation Phase). In the first phase, the theoretical model was refined through the viewing of videos, thus developing a rational-empirical model, in which relatively novel components were found with respect to other research (e.g., existential need of the self). Related to the second phase, a sample of 30 people experiencing complicated grief was taken, with whom 3 sessions were held in telematic format (videoconference). They were evaluated two times after the intervention (one week and two



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months after the intervention). We found that the Existential Need Processing Model in Emotion-Focused Therapy predicts change in clinical outcomes and the resolution of the empty chair. Globally, the more advanced the components are, the more consistent this prediction of clinical change is and its relationship to the resolution of the empty chair task. We have also observed a certain sequence which indicates a progressive deepening in the processing of need. Clinical implications of these findings are also discussed.

Paper 3: Emotion-Focused Mindfulness Self-Compassion Meditation - The practice of RAIN

Presenter: Niels Bagge (Institut for Emotionsfokuseret Terapi; Denmark)

Authors: Niels Bagge (Institut for Emotionsfokuseret Terapi; Denmark)

Abstract: An emotion awareness, acceptance, deepening and transformation meditation for difficult feelings. The RAIN meditation by Tara Brach, PhD is highly compliant with several EFT principles and change processes. It is useful for both client homework in relation to EFT sessions and for therapist emotional self-care. RAIN is an acronym for Recognize, Allow, Investigate and Nurture. It guides the meditator first to arrive at emotions and then to leave difficult emotions with transformation. It facilitates the three main dimensions of Emotional Productivity: 1) emotional activation, 2) emotion type and 3) manner of processing. RAIN focuses on bodily felt painful emotions and involves a deepening process from secondary to primary emotions following the pain compass. After arriving at an emotion, a phase of exploration of the emotion scheme is next, and lead into the needs behind the primary painful emotion. This opens for the nurturing step where emotional transformation with self-compassion unfolds. RAIN ends with a meditative moment of silence in loving awareness. RAIN offers an individual mindfulness self-compassion practice that facilitates emotional change processes. There is also a RAIN partner practice and several variations for specific difficult situations.

Symposium 9:

Supervision in Emotion Focused Therapy under Research: Learning from Expert Supervisors and Supervisees' perspectives.

Organizer: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto, Portugal)

Authors: Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Ana Rodrigues (Universidade da Maia; Portugal), Pedro Lopes (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Alejandro de la Traba (Universidad de Comillas, Madrid, Spain), Rafael Jodar (Universidad de Comillas, Madrid, Spain)

Abstract: Clinical supervision has long been considered essential for the development of therapist competency in any therapeutic modality. Yet, it is highly under-researched. Despite several theoretical proposals and high adherence to supervision by many therapists in training and along their careers, few studies have been conducted on the overall outcomes and process of clinical supervision. The present symposium includes a set of studies where supervision in Emotion Focused Therapy (EFT) is highlighted and taken as the object of study, from a research



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point of view. Paper 1 presents the findings from a systematic literature review on the empirical studies published on the topic of clinical supervision in the modalities of in humanistic/existential therapies and, especially, in EFT. Paper 2 will present the findings deriving from qualitative interviews to 15 worldwide EFT Expert Trainers and Expert Supervisors (namely EFT founders, first or second-generation experts in this modality) interviewed within the EmpoweringEFT@EU project. This paper will highlight these Experts' implicit and explicit knowledge about supervision in EFT and insights in supervision methods, practices and difficulties when training new EFT therapists. Paper 3 will explore the process and experiences of supervisees undergoing supervision of their initial practice as EFT therapists. A semi-structured interview has been developed for these purposes and the preliminary qualitative data will be presented here, using a sample of Portuguese supervisees in EFT. Paper 4 is intertwined with paper 3, expanding its analysis by using a Spanish sample of supervisees undergoing their initial practice as EFT therapists. The focus on this paper will be on the use of therapy session videos as a fundamental tool for EFT supervision and exploring the negative and positive aspects of the supervisees' experiences in both individual and group formats.

Paper 1: Clinical Supervision in Humanistic, Existential, Experiential Therapies and Emotion Focused Therapy: A Systematic Review of the Empirical Literature

Presenter: Ana Rodrigues (Universidade da Maia; Portugal)

Authors: Ana Rodrigues (Universidade da Maia; Portugal), Pedro Lopes (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: Clinical supervision has been considered essential for good psychotherapy and clinical practices and respecting therapy-related ethical principles, being a foundation for continued professional development, in particular at the level of therapeutic outcomes achieved by the clients of a supervised therapist. Despite the high adherence to supervision by many therapists, few studies, have been conducted on the overall efficacy of clinical supervision. Objective: This study aims to analyze the existing literature of empirical studies found in humanistic/existential therapies and Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT). This study will contribute to provide empirical support to some of the outputs of the Empowering EFT@EU project (Erasmus+ Project No. 2020-1-PT01-KA202-078724; website: <https://emotionfocusedtherapy.eu>), which aims to foster good practices in clinical supervision in the modality of EFT. Method: We are developing a Systematic Literature Review of published empirical studies on supervision, focusing on empirical studies that, in any design, analyze and/or quantify the process or outcome of clinical supervision in these modalities (e.g. views upon the supervision process or therapy; effects on therapist skills, among other aspects). Discussion: We aim to summarize and discuss the findings by empassizing: 1) the effects of clinical supervision on the development of skills in supervisees (therapists under supervision); 2) the effects of clinical supervision on the clients (i.e. process and/or outcome variables), and, 3) the perspectives of supervisors, supervisees and supervised clients in relation to clinical supervision. Results: This study is under progress and the findings will be presented at this conference.

Paper 2: Listening to the Experts: Preliminary Results from First- and Second-Generation EFT Experts Interviewed during the EmpoweringEFT@EU Project



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Presenter: Pedro Lopes (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Authors: Pedro Lopes (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), José Pedro Lima (University of Maia; Portugal), Beatriz Viana (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: This paper will present the findings deriving from qualitative interviews to 15 worldwide EFT Expert Trainers and Expert Supervisors (recognized as founders, first or second-generation experts in the practice, supervision and research in this modality) interviewed by the EmpoweringEFT@EU project team. This research study aims to explore these Experts' implicit and explicit knowledge about supervision in EFT and systematize supervision methods, practices and difficulties when training new therapists in this modality. Results indicate a shared emphasis on the need to establish a strong supervisory alliance between supervisors and supervisees, where supervisors embody a posture of humility, respect, and a shared passion/enthusiasm for EFT, as the foundation in which other supervision/training goals can be built upon. Interviewees construed EFT as a rich, complex therapeutic model, which can be overwhelming for new therapists to delve into it and lead to specific difficulties that need to be overcome in supervision. The supervision alliance can be tested when these difficulties arise, highlighting the importance of the supervisors' ability to manage supervisees' expectations, helping supervisees deal with their clients' emotional experience, as well as their own, and balancing positive and negative feedback regarding their performance as EFT therapists.

Paper 3: "How was your path and experience in this clinical supervision process?" Exploring the Perspective of Supervisees undergoing Supervision in Emotion Focused Therapy.

Presenter: Ana Rodrigues (Universidade da Maia, Portugal)

Authors: Ana Rodrigues (Universidade da Maia; Portugal), Pedro Lopes (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal), Rafael Jodar-Anchia (Universidad de Comillas, Madrid, Spain), Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: Clinical Supervision in psychotherapy is considered to be a fundamental process for effective clinical practice, and a foundation for continuing professional development. In Emotion Focused Therapy (EFT), a humanistic and experiential, evidence-based modality, clinical supervision focuses on a reflective, relational, and ethical practice. This ongoing study aims to investigate the experience of a sample of supervisees (i.e. supervised therapists after their initial process of learning EFT - after level 3, basic supervision), in order to explore "What are the supervisee's perspectives upon the supervision process and their most helpful and least helpful experiences while being supervised in the modality of EFT?" A semi-structured interview has been developed during the EmpoweringEFT@EU project (inspired by the interview developed by Folkes-Skinner, Elliott & Wheeler 2010), and will be presented here. Preliminary data with a Portuguese sample of EFT supervisees, collected up until now, and analyzed according to



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thematic analysis guidelines demonstrated that the most helpful experiences are related to: a genuine empathic alliance between supervisor and supervisee is the basis for achieving a good supervisory alliance; the supervisor's ability to offer effective and balanced feedback, providing moments of reflection and self-evaluation in the supervisee, with the intention of promoting personal and professional growth. The study is currently under progress. The results obtained will be discussed in relation to the empirical studies addressed in the systematic literature review on supervision in humanistic, existential, experiential therapies and in EFT, in order to promote more effective clinical supervision practices in this modality.

Paper 4: Using therapy session videos in EFT Supervision: Resources and Challenges in the Spanish Community.

Presenter: Alejandro de la Traba (Universidad de Comillas, Madrid, Spain)

Authors: Alejandro de la Traba (Universidad de Comillas, Madrid, Spain), Rafael Jodar (Universidad de Comillas, Madrid, Spain), Ana Rodrigues (Universidade da Maia; Portugal), Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: The use of therapy session videos as a fundamental tool of supervision is a distinctive and essential feature in the training and accreditation of emotion-focused therapists. The present study explores the negative and positive aspects of the experience of Spanish supervised therapists, who have received supervision in both individual and group formats, and with supervisors both primary developers of the EFT model and a second generation, as well as a third generation of local supervisors. For this purpose, semi-structured interviews developed during the EmpoweringEFT@EU project, developed by Rodrigues et al. (see paper 3 in this Symposium on EFT Supervision) were conducted and analyzed. The results of the interview analysis are compared with the good practices for EFT supervision developed in the EmpoweringEFT@EU project, as well as with the results obtained in the Portuguese community (paper 3). Suggestions for EFT supervisors are derived from the results, both in relation to the construction of the alliance between supervisor and supervisee, recommendations for group supervision, suggestions about methodology and the structure of supervision.

Symposium 10:

Emotion Focused Skills Training (EFST) for parents of children in specialized mental health care in Norway: Clinical experience and current research.

Organizer: Linda Severinsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)

Authors: Linda Severinsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway), Yngve Kolltveit (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway), Rune Zahl-Olsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway).

Abstract: In this symposium, we will give four presentations on our recent and current work on emotion focused skills training for parents (EFST) in a specialized mental health care clinic in



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southern Norway. EFST is a parent guidance intervention with the aim to alleviate mental health difficulties by guiding parents to assist their children in recognizing and cope with their emotions and emotional struggles. EFST was originally introduced as Emotion-Focused Family Therapy and has been further developed as a short-term parental skills training program (EFST). EFST is an increasingly applied therapeutic intervention in the specialized mental health care clinics for children and adolescent in Norway. One example is the Department of Child and Adolescent Mental Health at Sorlandet Hospital (Abup) in Southern Norway, which has offered EFST to hundreds of families during 2021 and 2022. Prior studies examining the effects of EFST in community settings have demonstrated promising results, both when provided as a two-day caregiver workshop and as a two-day workshop followed by individual parental guidance sessions. To our knowledge, the effect of EFST and the mechanisms of change, have not been thoroughly investigated in clients with more severe mental health problems and documented mental illnesses, such as those generally treated in Norwegian outpatient clinics for child and adolescent mental health. This was the starting point for three research projects that will be presented in this symposium.

Paper 1: Clinical Experience working with Emotion Focused Skills Training (EFST) in specialized mental Health care.

Presenter: Linda Severinsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)

Authors: Linda Severinsen, Rune Zahl-Olsen and Yngve Kolltveit

Abstract: Parents play a key role in alleviating mental health problems in children and adolescents. Parental emotion awareness, emotion regulation, and response to their children's emotions and their capacity to coach or guide children in how to recognize, understand, and regulate emotions, play a central role in the development of mental health in children. When working with children with mental health issues there are situations where the children themselves are not motivated or able to participate in therapy. There are also times where clinicians evaluates that helping the child first and foremost can and should be done by guiding and assisting the people closest to the children - the parents or caretakers. In ABUP Kristiansand (Department of mental health for children and adolescent) we have gained significant clinical experience on working with children's mental health struggles through EFST. In this presentation, we will describe and demonstrate the usage of EFST in a specialized mental health setting and how this intervention can be relevant in the work with parents of children with moderate to severe mental health issues.

Paper 2: Emotion-Focused Skills Training (EFST) for Parents with Anxious Children: A Pilot Study.

Presenter: Rune Zahl-Olsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)

Authors: Rune Zahl-Olsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)



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Abstract: Anxiety problems are prevalent among children and teenagers. There are effective therapies; however, meta-analyses reveal that 40% of children continue to experience substantial symptoms following therapy. There is a demand for alternative treatment methods. The effectiveness of emotion-focused parental interventions in addressing children's internalizing challenges has been demonstrated, but no research has studied remission. In the pilot study presented here, we investigated whether Emotion Focused Skills Training (EFST) was linked with diagnostic remission in anxious children. A specialized mental health clinic in Norway recruited nine children ages 8 to 14 who were diagnosed with anxiety. Each child's parents participated in a two-day EFST training followed by five weekly one-hour sessions. Using the Spence Children's Anxiety Scale and the Anxiety Disorders Interview Schedule, pre- and post-treatment diagnosis and severity were assessed using a multi-informant approach. 33% no longer had anxiety after therapy. In addition, 66% of patients achieved remission from their primary anxiety diagnosis, while 89% achieved remission from at least one anxiety diagnosis.

Paper 3: Effectiveness of Emotion Focused Skills Training for Parents: Presenting a Randomized Controlled Trial in Specialist Mental Health Care.

Presenter: Linda Severinsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)

Authors: Linda Severinsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)

Abstract: Background: Emotion-Focused Skills Training (EFST) is a newly developed manualized skill training program for parents to strengthen emotional bonds between parents and children and improve mental health outcomes in children. Results from several preliminary trials indicate that EFST can be quite effective, but more rigorous methods are needed to affirm the evidence of the program. The primary objective of the present Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) is to compare the effectiveness of EFST to treatment as usual (TAU) in a Norwegian outpatient clinic for child and adolescent mental health. Method: We are currently recruiting 120 patients that are randomly assigned to either EFST or TAU. The main outcome measure is the semi-structured diagnostic interview Schedule for Affective Disorders and Schizophrenia, present and lifetime version (K-SADS-PL). The secondary outcome measure is the DSM-IV version of the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) administered at pretreatment as well as 3, 6, and 12 months after the intervention. To examine the efficacy question, effect sizes and reliable change for each of the treatment arms will be assessed as well as symptom differences between the conditions. In this presentation, the RCT project will be presented along with preliminary results.

Paper 4: The mechanisms of change: How does Emotion Focused Skills Training (EFST) cause change?

Presenter: Yngve Kolltveit (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)

Authors: Linda Severinsen (Department of child and adolescent mental health (Abup) Sorlandet Hospital; Norway)



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Abstract: This presentation will introduce you to an ongoing mixed method study investigating the mechanisms of change related to EFST in specialized mental health care. The primary aim of the study is to provide gained knowledge and possibilities for improvements of Emotion Focused Skills Training for parents (EFST). With the findings from this study, we hope clinicians will: be able to better understand how the parental guidance intervention works and for whom it is most suited, be better able to tailor the intervention and become more responsive to the clients. Family-based interventions are recognized as effective for a wide range of mental health problems in children. However, knowledge of what works for whom and how, is scarce. To answer the questions of how an intervention works and for whom there seems to be a wide agreement of the necessity to study the small steps in therapy. In the study we will: a) investigate what mechanisms of EFST are identified as productive processes in the treatment trajectories, b) construct a causal model of change and c) investigate to what degree the identified causal model of change predicts good treatment outcomes. The study uses a mixed method design, including in-depth interviews, analysis of video material as well as statistical analysis. The study and reflections on the process will be presented in this presentation.

Closing Plenary: How has EFT grown and changed, remaining true to its roots?

Presenters: Rhonda Goldman; Serine Warwar and Carla Cunha

Authors: Rhonda Goldman (The Chicago School of Professional Psychology & Emotion-Focused Therapy Institute; USA); Serine Warwar (Centre for Psychology and Emotional Health; Greenberg Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy; York University Emotion-Focused Therapy Clinic; Canada); and Carla Cunha (University of Maia & CPUP - Center of Psychology of University of Porto; Portugal)

Abstract: This will be the final, closing plenary of the conference. It will provide an overview of the current status of EFT. We will discuss how EFT has adapted to a changing world while remaining true to its roots. We will highlight emerging themes - many of which were showcased at this conference. We will provide some remarks regarding the future and developments on the EFT horizon.



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