

Clinical Observations and Program Outline from an Intensive Year Long Neuropsych. /Experiential /Attachment Treatment Program for Adolescents in Melbourne, Australia

John Bergman
Russell Pratt

There has been much discussion of the impact of neuropsychological information on the treatment of sexually offending clients. AWARE is a program of the South East Centre Against Sexual Assault. AWARE is a two-year-old treatment program for 46 children who have sexually abused and are being treated in the community. The program is a 4 quadrant (phase), one year long program that is trauma focussed, neuropsychological/experiential program using a variety of strategies ranging from Neuro biofeedback, QEEGs, mindfulness techniques, intensified parent/child participation in group and so on.

This workshop will:

- a. Briefly cover the theoretical underpinnings for this way of work including Teicher, Siegel, Perry, Hughes, Cicchetti, Perls, Lesley and so on. Neuropsych/experiential /attachment based treatment is strength centered, designed to find ways to alleviate the brain's trauma distress reactivity through new brain based activity, and relationship centered on repairing attachment skills
- b. Share clinical observations of change, for example:
 - (i) Changes in measured biofeedback responses such as heart and respiratory rates,
 - (ii) Changes in kinesic awareness as base for mindfulness,
 - (iii) Qualitative changes in interactions with parent or carer that illustrate changes in attachment,
 - (v) Ability to conceptualise supporting possible changes in trauma intensity.
- c. Outline the "what" of this program. Our program is one year long, and outpatient based. Our focus is on brain mindfulness, achieving and maintaining emotional down/up regulation, as well as a narrative approach to sexual offense issues (Lesley, "good way" model), an emphasis on attachment relationship, healthy sexuality as a function of relationship, and finally adolescent boys' relationships with fathers and appropriate men.

This workshop will outline the 4-quadrant process by which this is done, with some practical demonstrations of significant sections of the early lesson plans, a segment of our sections on healthy relationships and how experiential strategies are woven as a matter of course throughout the program.

This is both a theoretical and experiential presentation.