



Nina Madsen Sjö



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Hard-To-Reach Clients: Building Alliance and Facilitating Change

Managing Attachment, Epistemic Hypervigilance, and Shame in Psychological Assessment and Psychotherapy

Presented by: **Stephen E. Finn, Ph.D.**

February 26-27, 2025, in Copenhagen



Training and Topic Overview

Why do some clients reject new ways of thinking and maintain a high level of distrust with mental health professionals? How can we engage such clients, who often seem unreachable?

This workshop is designed to enhance participants' skills with one of the most important parts of mental health treatment: engaging clients and building alliances in the initial sessions of psychological assessment and psychotherapy. Four concepts ground the material taught in this workshop: Attachment, Epistemic Trust (ET), Epistemic Hypervigilance (EH), and Shame.

Dr. Finn will use videos from his work with clients to demonstrate how Therapeutic Assessment is uniquely designed to lower EH and build ET, allowing for clients to continue to grow and learn long after a Therapeutic Assessment process is completed. A unique part of this process is the initial development of Assessment Questions together with the client (and in some cases with the referral party) with the aim of engaging the client as well as having a common meaningful goal. The training also contains a series of focused exercises to help participants grasp and apply the concepts being taught and demonstrated. The workshop will be presented in English.

In this workshop, Dr. Finn will explain the theory of ET and EH, which asserts that many clients screen out new information from others because in the past this was necessary for their survival. Using this empathic lens, Dr. Finn will then explain how to become an "auxiliary attachment figure" for such clients, help them manage underlying shame, and thereby build Epistemic Trust and a strong working alliance.

The training is relevant for psychologists and psychiatrists (max 20%) working with either child/adolescent, or adult clients.

Goals and Objectives

At the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Define the concepts of Epistemic Trust (ET) and Epistemic Hypervigilance (EH) and explain their importance to working with hard-to-reach clients.
2. Explain the development of Assessment Questions in collaboration with clients and how it guides the assessment and intervention process
3. Explain the concepts of Mentalization and Secure Attachment and how they are related to ET and EH.



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4. List specific ways that clinicians can help clients manage underlying shame.
5. Describe the experience of Ostensive Cueing and Scaffolding from both the client and clinician perspectives.
6. Discuss how to elicit clients' curiosity in the initial session of an assessment or psychotherapy.
7. Explain the concept of relational tests and how limit setting is important for building alliance.
8. Explain how the disruption-repair process is related to building alliances in psychotherapy and psychological assessment.

The Presenter

Stephen Finn, founder of the Center for Therapeutic Assessment, Austin, Texas, USA, is a Clinical Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Texas at Austin, and Senior Researcher and Director of Training at the European Center for Therapeutic Assessment at Catholic University of Milan, Italy. He has published 90+ articles and chapters on psychological assessment, psycho-diagnosis, and other topics in clinical psychology. He is the co-author of two recent books, *Therapeutic Assessment with Adults* and *Therapeutic Assessment with Children*.

Time: February 26 at 10:00-17:00, February 27 at 9:00-16:00

Location: Vesterbrogade 20, 3.tv., Copenhagen 1620 V, Denmark

Price: DKK 4.500/ EUR 610. 10% discount is available for this 2-day training for:

- Participants who combine this training with the EMP workshop on February 28 (10% discounted price: DKK 4.050/EUR 549)
- TAI members (join: <https://www.memberleap.com/members/newmem/registration.php?orgcode=TAI>). TAI members who combine this course with the EMP workshop are offered 20% discount in total (20% discounted price: DKK 3.600/EUR 488)

Registration: Send an email to info@ninamadsensjo.dk. Please send your name, title, workplace, invoice information (including EAN or CVR number), and if you have any food allergies. There is a limited number of spaces. Participation is secured when payment has been received.

Continuing Education Credits (Forhåndsgodkendelse)

This workshop has been authorized for CE credits (Danish: Kurset er forhåndsgodkendt med 12 t.):

- Klinisk børne- og ungepsykologi (6.4.4.2.2 *Psykologiske undersøgelsesmetoder*)
- Klinisk neuropsykologi med børn og unge (7.4.4.2.3 *Udredningsprocedurer: sociale og emotionelle kompetencer*) (afventer svar)
- Pædagogisk Psykologi (8.4.4.3 *Valgfrie kurser*)
- Sundhedspsykologi med voksne (11.4.4.2.3 *Udredning*)
- Psykoterapi med børn- og unge/ voksne (12.4.4.2.1 *klinisk psykologisk undersøgelsesmetodik*)
- Psykopatologi (13.4.4.2.2 *klinisk psykologisk undersøgelsesmetodik*) (afventer svar)
- Psykotraumatologi (*Valgfri del*) (afventer svar)

Cancellation Policy

Cancellations before the January 4th, 2025 registration deadline will lead to a 90% refund, due to administrative costs. Cancellations occurring after January 4th cannot be refunded, but it will be possible to give your spot to a colleague or a person on the waiting list after agreement with the organizers. If the event is cancelled by the organizers for any reason, we will refund your fee in full.