

Borderline Personality Disorder

How can psychological therapies help?

Regent's Centre for Relational Studies & Psychological Wellbeing

7th Annual One-Day Conference

Saturday 6 June 2020

10:00 to 16:30

Registration from 09:30

Regent's University London

Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London NW1 4NS



Who should attend?

- › Psychotherapists, counsellors, and psychologists
- › Students of psychotherapy and psychology
- › Academics and researchers
- › Universities and FE colleges
- › Education authorities
- › Social services
- › Mental health services

Book early!

**Regent's staff, students, alumni
and RSPP professional members:**
£110 (£90 if received by 14 April 2020)

Public: £160
(£130 if received by 14 April 2020)

Non-Regent's students: £120
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Conference Programme

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| 09:30 | Registration and refreshments |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | Chairs' welcome and introduction Dr Maria Luca and Professor John Nuttall |
| 10:30 – 11:15 | <i>Keynote Speaker</i> Dr Kirsten Barnicot Psychological therapy for borderline personality disorder – what works and what doesn't? |
| 11:15 – 11:45 | <i>Refreshment break</i> |
| 11:45 – 12:30 | <i>Keynote Speaker</i> Dr Daniel Armstrong Complex decision-making in personality disorder |
| 12:30 – 1:00 | Dr Angie Cucchi Borderline personality disorders: from the developmental theory of the 'self' and mentalising to systems theory |
| 13:00 – 14:00 | <i>Networking lunch, University Refectory*</i> |
| 14:00 – 14:30 | Gerry Byrne 'Whatever you say, you say nothing.' ¹ Establishing epistemic trust in therapeutic work with parents with borderline personality disorder |
| 14:30 – 15:00 | Jessie Emilion What you see is not what you get: multiple states and dialogues in borderline presentations |
| 15:00 – 15:30 | <i>Refreshment break</i> |
| 15:30 – 16:15 | Open floor discussion and debate with Panel and Chairs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr Kirsten Barnicot• Dr Daniel Armstrong• Dr Angie Cucchi• Gerry Byrne• Jessie Emilion• Dr Maria Luca• Professor John Nuttall |
| 16:15 – 16:30 | Closing Remarks Conveners/panel discussants: Professor John Nuttall and Dr Maria Luca |

1 Whatever You Say, Say Nothing, Seamus Heaney, 1975.

* A range of hot foods, sandwiches and salads are available for purchase in the University Refectory.

** Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice**

Dr Kirsten Barnicot

Psychological therapy for borderline personality disorder – what works and what doesn't?



Kirsten Barnicot is a Research Fellow at Imperial College London and Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust. Her area of special interest is the prevention and treatment of inter-generationally transmitted psychopathology, with a particular focus on personality disorder and complex trauma and on psychological interventions in the

perinatal period. She has recently completed an NIHR postdoctoral research fellowship evaluating the interplay between post-traumatic stress disorder and borderline personality disorder, and the implications of this co-morbidity for psychological treatment. Other recent work includes an evaluation of the impact of maternal antenatal anxiety on child development, stress responsivity and epigenetics as part of the ACORN project led by Professor Paul Ramchandani. She is currently leading an evaluation of a video feedback parent-infant intervention, for parents with enduring difficulties in managing emotions and relationships, consistent with a personality disorder.

Borderline personality disorder is a serious mental health disorder associated with high levels of emotional distress and dysregulation, unstable relationships and sense of self, and impulsive self-damaging behaviours. Once considered untreatable, a growing body of evidence now exists to suggest that psychological treatments can be effective in reducing distress and promoting coping. However, effective treatment requires careful management of the relational challenges inherent to borderline personality disorder, and iatrogenesis from poorly delivered or ineffective treatment remains a real concern. Further challenges include ongoing stigma attached to the diagnosis and concerns about how to safely and effectively address patients' histories of complex trauma. This paper will review current research evidence on treatment effects, treatment mechanisms and treatment failure – with particular reference to dialectical behaviour therapy and mentalization based therapy - and will suggest directions for future research.

Dr Daniel Armstrong

Complex decision-making in personality disorder



Daniel Armstrong undertook his undergraduate training in the city of Liverpool before returning to his native Tyneside for postgraduate training in psychiatry. He became a member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 2008 with an accreditation in addictions psychiatry and is an elected member of the General Adult Psychiatry Faculty Executive

Committee. He embarked upon what he regarded as his greatest learning curve so far when he began his senior practice as a community psychiatrist in 2011 at Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust. He served seven years, where he developed an interest in personality and the patient-doctor roles. He served three years working with the regional specialist personality disorder team as their consultant psychiatrist. In 2018 Daniel changed role to become a consultant liaison psychiatrist, where he further developed his thinking on patient-doctor roles and iatrogenic care pathways.

An hypothesis is formulated whereby individuals with adverse childhood experiences can come to have a disrupted attachment system. Maslow's hierarchy of needs suggests a motivation for safety and it is proposed that the healthcare system can come to represent the secure base. Behaviours that lead an individual into the health care setting can thus be positively reinforced by satisfying such a dynamic need. Prescribing behaviours are examined relating to this notion. Life and death scenarios in an acute health care setting are considered. The contribution of the concept of risk to decision-makers is examined as a possible component to the propagation of unhelpful care pathways. An introduction to the notion of a 'corrupted capacity assessment' is made. Longitudinal assessments with an acknowledgment of the harms in preceding compulsory care pathways are promoted in such scenarios as well as an articulation of the clinician's anxiety. Ambivalence over the patient's perception of value to life is validated. Personal responsibility and capacity are promoted. Case examples are discussed.

Dr Angie Cucchi

Borderline personality disorders: from the developmental theory of the 'self' and mentalising to systems theory



Angie Cucchi is chartered as a counselling psychologist and a member of the British Psychological Society (BPS) and is registered as a counselling psychologist with the Health and Care Professions Council in the UK. She holds a lecturing position in psychotherapy and counselling at Regent's University London and is a visiting lecturer at

King's College London and City, University London. After completing a BSc in psychology and criminology at Middlesex University in London, Dr Cucchi worked as a project worker in a residential home for people with severe and enduring psychotic illnesses. This experience ignited her interest in the mind and she went on to complete an MSc in mental health at King's College London and a postgraduate diploma in counselling psychology at the University of East London.

She completed her doctorate in counselling psychology at City, University of London while also working in a variety of adult mental health services. Dr Cucchi won both the BPS Division of Counselling Psychology (DCoP) 2015 Research Prize and the 2015 BPS-DCoP Trainee Prize. Her research and clinical interests lie in cross-cultural issues in the phenomenology and idioms of distress, with a specific focus on eating disorders and personality disorders. Details of her published research projects to date can be found at https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Angie_Cucchi. In addition to being an academic engaged in teaching and research, Dr Cucchi has 10 years' experience working therapeutically with people in the NHS. Of these 10 years, five have been spent in a personality disorder unit, where she specialises in mentalisation-based therapy and schema therapy. In clinical practice, Dr Cucchi uses a variety of therapeutic modalities such as person-centred, psychodynamic and systemic approaches, and cognitive behavioural therapy.

In the last 50 years, the thinking around borderline personality disorder shifted from an intra-psychoanalytically-oriented relational model. The latter described the difficulties associated with this presentation as arising from a disorganisation of the 'self' structure in the context of an early care-giving relationship. The concept of inaccurate, or inconsistent 'social biofeedback parental affect mirroring' has been pivotal to explain how the characteristic failure to mentalise and the interpersonal difficulties associated with a diagnosis of BPD might develop. Nevertheless, far from being the result of a sole linear relationship, these difficulties appear linked to communicative and emotional feedback loops that have reminiscence of cybernetic principles. Furthermore, recent claims have suggested that the communication feedback

loops characteristic of the carer-child attachment style represent nothing less than the communication styles of the wider social environment in which the dyad is located. These claims have more recently prompted a further shift from mentalising to epistemic trust and epistemic vigilance, hence departing from a relational model towards a more systemic one. The difficulties associated with BPD are now suggested to be linked to a disorder of communication and social learning due to the nature of the interacting systems present in the person's life. This paper reviews this journey and the associated proposed therapist's stance in light of claims that traditional psychotherapy takes for granted epistemic trust and mentalising capacity.

Gerry Byrne

*'Whatever you say, you say nothing.'*¹ Establishing epistemic trust in therapeutic work with parents with borderline personality disorder



Gerry Byrne is a consultant nurse and child psychotherapist. He is Head of Attachment and Perinatal Services at Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, including the Family Assessment & Safeguarding Service (FASS Oxford, Wiltshire and Bath & North East Somerset), the Infant Parent Perinatal Service (IPPS) and the ReConnect Service (Buckinghamshire). The FASS

and ReConnect services offer multidisciplinary, expert-witness assessments and NHS treatments for severe parenting problems, including child abuse and neglect (physical, sexual, psychological maltreatment, and fabricated and induced illness). Gerry is also Clinical Lead for Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy for the Trust for Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. He is the originator of the Lighthouse

Mentalisation-Based Treatment for Parents Programme, an innovative application of MBT, which aims to prevent child maltreatment by promoting sensitive caregiving in parents. He has trained clinicians in the programme in the UK, Ireland, Germany, Denmark and Australia. Gerry is an MBT trainer and supervisor for the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families and co-runs with the centre MBT basic trainings in London, Ireland, and further abroad and regularly teaches MBT skills in Ireland and the UK. He has a long-standing interest in literature and has run conferences and conversations bringing together people from the worlds of literature, art and psychotherapy/psychoanalysis. He is author of a children's picture book, *All at Sea*, published by Walker about a little boy who has bad dreams following the arrival of a new baby.

lighthouseparenting.net

Fonagy and Allison argue that secure attachment experiences do not just pave the way for the acquisition of mentalising, but that they are also key to the formation of epistemic trust – that is, an individual's willingness to consider new knowledge from another person as trustworthy, generalisable, and relevant to the self (Fonagy and Allison, 2014). The therapeutic alliance can be defined as the establishment of a secure base by the therapist for the client in the therapeutic setting. Patients with disrupted and disorganised attachment histories, and/or multiple traumas present challenges to the establishment of a therapeutic alliance, often manifesting epistemic mistrust, hypervigilance and/or outright epistemic freezing (Fonagy et al, 2018). In this way, the therapeutic setting for them is shrouded in a climate of fear and mistrust, in which *'whatever you say, you say nothing'* comes to define the patient's approach and stance to therapist and therapy. Mentalisation-based treatment (MBT), developed by Anthony Bateman and Peter Fonagy for treatment of borderline personality disorder (BPD), is explicit in seeking to establish epistemic trust in the therapeutic relationship and has as a goal its generalisation to other relationships and social connections/opportunities. MBT adaptations have shown some promising results with parents with histories of disrupted/disorganised attachments and

abuse in childhood, and who themselves have maltreated their children (Byrne et al, 2019). These parents rarely seek referral for treatment but are coerced into the therapeutic space by a court order or child protection plans – effectively, by the threat of removal of their children from their care if they do not attend. In this presentation, the challenges to and factors influencing the establishment of epistemic trust with patients with disrupted and disorganised attachment histories in a family assessment and safeguarding service offering treatment will be explored with clinical illustrations using video material.

Byrne, G., Slead, M., Midgley, N., Fearon, P., Mein, C., Bateman, A., & Fonagy, P. (2018). Lighthouse Parenting Programme: Description and pilot evaluation of mentalization-based treatment to address child maltreatment. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. doi: 10.1177/1359104518807741

Fonagy, P., & Allison, E. (2014). The role of mentalising and epistemic trust in the therapeutic relationship. *Psychotherapy*, 51, 372-380. doi: 10.1037/a0036505

Fonagy, P., Luyten, P., Campbell, C., & Allison, L. (2014, December). Epistemic trust, psychopathology and the great psychotherapy debate. [Web Article]. Retrieved from <http://www.societyforpsychotherapy.org/epistemic-trust-psychopathology-and-the-great-psychotherapy-debate>

Jessie Emilion

What you see is not what you get: multiple states and dialogues in borderline presentations



Jessie Emilion is a BACP-accredited counsellor and UKCP-registered cognitive analytic psychotherapist and supervisor. She works for South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust as a CAT Psychotherapy Lead at the Munro Centre, Guys Hospital and for CRUSE Bereavement Support as Consultant Psychotherapist and Supervisor. She has worked in the NHS

for 20 years in various capacities as a senior clinician, trainer and manager. She has a particular interest in bi-lingualism, culture, language and race and the impact of these factors on mental health, development of self and therapeutic alliance. As a trained interpreter she has extensive experience of working with refugee communities, asylum seekers and voluntary

sector organisations, both as a clinician and an interpreter. Other areas of interest are maternal mental health, including psychological issues related to fetal abnormalities, post-natal depression and repeated miscarriages. Jessie teaches on the CAT programmes in the UK, India and in Qatar. She is central to the introduction of CAT in India and has developed the model further by incorporating religious, cultural and societal values, making it adaptive, appropriate and relevant to Indian society and the Indian psyche. In her former role as the diversity lead, she developed the diversity strategy to improve access to psychological therapies within black and minority ethnic groups. She developed culturally appropriate interventions including group programmes that focused on issues of race, language and culture. Jessie also works with several media companies, including the BBC and ITV and provides psychological assessments as required.

The recently revised 2018 NICE guidelines on treatment and management of borderline personality disorder (BPD) presents several new evidence-based psychological therapies as effective treatments for patients diagnosed with BPD. The paper will describe some of the challenges we face as clinicians working with complex co-morbid presentations in a healthcare setting. It will briefly discuss the different modalities as suggested by NICE guidelines and expand on the implications of this guidance in relation to service development and constant restructuring, often acted out as an organisational procedure to avoid the harsh reality of limited resources within the NHS. The impact of this on patient care, organisational dynamics,

the need for joint up thinking and contextual formulations will be discussed using case scenarios. Clinical examples will be used to highlight that pseudo hallucinations, core thoughts, self-to-self dialogues, which trigger 'state shifts' can be understood and formulated using dialogic sequence analysis (Leiman 2004) and concepts from cognitive analytic therapy. The paper will offer some pointers as to how we as clinicians can build resilience, survive the powerful projections and counter transference reactions, recognise the importance of self-care, supervision and personal therapy in order to be effective, minimise harm and develop compassion for our patients.

Chairs/Panel Members

Dr Maria Luca

Conference Organiser/Convener/Panel Member



Dr Maria Luca is Senior Research Fellow, Reader in Psychotherapy & Counselling Psychology, Director of the Regent's Centre for Relational Studies and Psychological Wellbeing, PhD course leader and Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Psychological Therapies* at the School of Psychotherapy & Psychology, Regent's University London. Her

previous roles include Head of the School of Psychotherapy & Counselling Psychology. She worked in the NHS for 12 years and has a small private practice in London. Her current research projects include: sexual attraction and the erotic in therapy; sexual bullying among university students; the lived experience of migrants; medically unexplained symptoms and grounded theory. She appeared on Sky News (25/03/2016) discussing sexual bullying among young people. She has published widely including the books *Sexual Attraction in Therapy: Clinical Perspectives on Moving Beyond the Taboo - A Guide for Training and Practice* (2014) London: Wiley, and *The Therapeutic Frame in the Clinical Context – Integrative Perspectives* (2004) London: Routledge. She co-authored with Claire Marshall and John Nuttall her third book on integration in psychotherapy, *Integrative Theory And Practice In Psychological Therapies: New Directions* (2019) and has published several papers in peer-reviewed journals. Maria is an editorial board member for the *Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, the *European Journal for Qualitative Research in Psychotherapy*, *EC Psychology and Psychiatry*, *British Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, *Psychotherapy and Counselling Journal of Australia* and *Psychology and its Contexts*. She has been a consulting editor, article reviewer, book reviewer, book endorser and book reviews editor for peer-reviewed journals and publishers.

Professor John Nuttall

Convener/Panel Member



John Nuttall is Head of School and Professor of Integrative Psychotherapy at Regent's University London and teaches theory, skills and research methods in the field. He is a professional psychotherapist in private practice. Professor Nuttall has had an extensive career in senior management in multinational industry and commerce and is a certified management consultant and chartered marketer. He has written widely on management and psychotherapy and his special interests include psychotherapy integration, organisation theory, and the provision of counselling and psychotherapy in the community. He recently co-authored with Maria Luca and Claire Marshall a book entitled *Integrative Theory And Practice In Psychological Therapies: New Directions* (2019). He is also honorary psychotherapist and chair of the charity, West London Centre for Counselling, a major provider of therapeutic counselling in primary care.