

Gaslighting in the Spotlight

Gaslighting is everywhere, featured in movies, in TV shows, in the media and social media, in our political, social, and even personal discourse. Its visceral nature has made it a cultural phenomenon. The time has come for mental health professionals to put gaslighting in, and under, the spotlight.

Gaslighters are a special type of abuser, manipulating their victims using insidious, subtle, coercive, and deceptive techniques. What distinguishes gaslighting from other forms of abuse is that gaslighters seek to cause their victims to question their perception of reality.

In this webinar we will rely on video excerpts from the originating film *Gaslight*, as well as movies (*Girl on the Train*), series (*The Lucy Show*, *Gaslit*, *Bad Sisters*, and *48 Hours*), and documentaries of high-profile trials (*Bill Cosby and Harvey Weinstein*).

We will delve into various types of malevolent behavior via case studies to distinguish what is...and what is not... gaslighting. We will explore its origins, identify practices, and investigate who among us is prone to gaslighting and who falls prey to gaslighters. Attendees will also learn to characterize the interpersonal dynamics that operate in these abusive relationships, and the elements to an overall treatment approach. Now that gaslighting has taken center stage, its performance should get a critical review.

Target Audience

Psychologists
Therapists
Social Workers
Psychiatrists
Counselors
Nurses
Course level: Intermediate

Learning Objectives

At the end of this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Identify what is gas lighting (and what it is not).
2. Determine if your client experiences gaslighting tactics.
3. Identify the pathway used by gaslighters to control their victims.
4. Recognize the distinction between intentional and “unconscious” gaslighting, the role of confabulation, and gaslighting elements of sidestepping, displacement, and distraction.
5. Identify symptoms expressed by gaslighter victims, and treatment interventions.

Seminar Schedule

Typically begins at 1PM and ends at 4:15 Eastern time. There is one 15 minute break. However, check the webinar schedule.

Outline

Begin 1PM ET

Introduction & Definitions

Why talk about gaslighting today?

The psychological profession discovers gas lighting

Gaslighting characteristics in an intimate abusive relationship

Psychological Expertise applied to Gaslighting Categories of gas lighters

Gaslight victims are not often mentally ill

Why gaslighters gaslight?

The role of confabulation

Profiling gas lighters

Identify gaslighting’s early phase

The purpose of gaslighting

Social isolation,

Exploiting vulnerabilities, power differential,

Undermining trust in victim’s memory

Shifting blame to the victim

2:30 Break (15 min)

Treatment:

Distance and detach

Be assertive

Seek outside support

Gaslighting comes of age

A review of gaslighting tactics

An expanded definition of Gaslighting: Workplace Gaslighting,

End 4:15 PM ET

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The Presenter

Lawrence J. Raifman, Ph.D., J.D. earned his Ph.D and J.D. in clinical psychology and J.D. in law from the University of Arizona in 1981. He spent the early years of his career working as a legal associate at Piper and Marbury before becoming Director, Department of Psychology at Clifton T. Perkins Hospital Center, and the Maryland state hospital for the criminally insane. There, as Director and Co-Director of the Pre-trial forensic evaluation program, Dr. Raifman co-led a program that evaluated hundreds of defendants on issues of competence to stand trial, criminal responsibility, etc. He later became Director of Forensic Services at the Springfield State Hospital Center, a regional state hospital in Maryland. Dr. Raifman has maintained a private practice in clinical and forensic psychology throughout his career. For more than twenty years, Dr. Raifman has been an adjunct clinical assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at Johns Hopkins University. There, he has taught courses in forensics psychology. Over the years, Dr. Raifman has provided clinical supervision and training for many psychologists, and designed forensic evaluation programs. In his private practice, he has worked with families, children, teenagers, and adults, and forensic matters. He has testified in court many times as a forensic expert.

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This seminar has been reviewed and approved by Keith Hannan, Ph.D., Phil Rich, LICSW, Daphne Fatter, Ph.D., and Loreen Yearick, MSN, RN. This approval expires on March 1, 2025.

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