

Working with Traumatized Teens and Young Adults: How to Get Unhooked

Traumatized adolescents struggle with self-regulation. They are dysregulated across systems--neurologically, cognitively, physically, emotionally, behaviorally, socially, and spiritually. Anxious and vigilant, and unable to trust themselves or caregivers, they may experience even loving relationships as confusing and frightening. But to learn self-soothing, they must first be able to rely upon others and discover the comfort of co-regulation. They benefit from relationships with adults that provide them with the psychological (and physical) sense of stability and containment they cannot supply themselves. To work effectively with these teens, it's crucial for adults to first foster their own capacity for self-awareness and self-regulation. It's not easy, especially when our young clients' extreme reactions—ranging from angry arousal to frozen shutting down—can trigger our own sense of helplessness, failure, dissociation, and rejection. In this webinar, you will learn about Developmental-Relational Therapy (DRT), an attachment-based model of trauma treatment. You will learn and practice mindful, empathic strategies that help teens feel more secure, connected, present, and regulated. You'll discover how to get unhooked from old enactments by exploring:

1. Specific adolescent attachment styles that interact with or trigger our own
2. The React, Reflect, and Respond approach to corrective relational experiences
3. Four M's—mirroring, mentalizing, mindfulness, and modulation—to increase connection and mood regulation
4. How to use moment-to-moment attunement—including strategies of validation, unflinching empathy, strategic self-disclosure, and the compassionate sharing of adult feelings and opinions—to bring traumatized teens back into relationships with themselves and you.

Target Audience

Psychologists Social Workers Counselors
Therapists Psychiatrists Nurses
Course level: Intermediate

Learning Objectives

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

- 1) Identify four pathways for healing the effects of attachment trauma.
- 2) Explain the developmental importance of co-regulation across intrapersonal and interpersonal systems.
- 3) Describe adult behavior that increases calm, intentional, empathic interaction.
- 4) Discuss 10 specific intervention strategies to help adolescents in both highly activated and deactivated dysregulated states.
- 5) Identify ways of reacting, reflecting, and responding to get unhooked from confusing and provocative teen behavior.

Seminar Schedule

The webinar outline is attached. See the Live Webinar page for the start and end times.

Outline

Begin 1 PM ET

Overview of Webinar

Dependency is Good—even in adolescence

Developmental-Relational Therapy

The Two-Person System: Co-Regulation before Self-Soothing

Developmental Trauma and Inaccurate Diagnosis

Attachment and Regulation in Adolescence

Break 2:30-2:45 PM ET

The Therapist's Attachment Style

Doing Your own Work

Getting Hooked to Get Unhooked

4 Ms: Mindfulness, Mirroring, Mentalizing, Modulation

Putting on the Brakes, Grounding, Breathing, Connecting

The React-Reflect-Respond Model

End 4:15 PM ET

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The Presenter

Martha B. Straus, Ph.D. is a professor in the Department of Clinical Psychology at Antioch University New England Graduate School in Keene, New Hampshire, and adjunct instructor in psychiatry at Dartmouth Medical School. Dr. Straus is an international trainer on topics related to child, adolescent, and family development, attachment, trauma, and therapy. She is the author of numerous articles and five books including, most recently, *Treating Trauma in Adolescents: Development, Attachment, and the Therapeutic Relationship*. She lives in Brattleboro, VT where she also maintains a small private practice.

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This seminar has been reviewed and approved by Keith Hannan, Ph.D., Laura Davie, LICSW, Tina Jenkins, Psy.D., and Loreen Yearick, MSN, RN. This approval expires on March 1, 2028.

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