

Attachment Theory in Clinical Practice Through the Lifespan Fall 2015

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Course Description

Understanding the implications of early relationships on adult functioning can assist in providing a psychotherapy in ways that can assist to repair individuals' capacity to form and maintain healthy relationships. Using attachment theory and emotional regulation theory as the foundation, this course focuses on relationship-based interventions in interpersonal practice with adults.

Course Objectives

Students will understand:

- The theoretical construct of attachment patterns
- The clinical correlates of adolescent and adult attachment organization
- How to use an understanding of the dynamics of attachment to inform clinical thinking and

Course Text

Wallin, D.J. , (2007). Attachment in psychotherapy. New York: Guilford

Available on e-links through UM:

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/umich/docDetail.action?docID=10188990>

Links to CSWE Practice Behaviors

Practice Behavior 3

- Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments
 - Distinguish, appraise and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based practice wisdom
 - Demonstrate effective oral and written communication
 - Analyze models of assessment, prevention, and intervention

Practice Behavior 4

- Engage diversity and difference in practice
 - Recognize and communicate understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life e
 - Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in wo groups

Practice Behavior 7

- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment
 - Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention and eval
 - Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment

Practice Behavior 10

- Engage, assess, intervene and evaluate...
 - Use empathy and other interpersonal skills
 - Collect, organize and interpret client data
 - Select appropriate intervention strategies

Course Requirements

November 2

Attachment Theory

Development of Attachment and Internal Working Models

Attachment Patterns

- Prep for Class One:
 - Wallin - Chapter 2 – Foundations of Attachment Theory (pp. 11 – 24)

November 9

Adult Attachment Interview

Adult Attachment Patterns

- Prep for Class Two
 - Ctools - Obegi and Berant - Chapter 2 – An Overview of Adult Attachment Theory (pp. 1

November 16

Emotion Regulation and Security

Therapist as a Safe Base

- Prep for Class Three
 - Ctools - Obegi and Berant - Chapter 3 – The Therapist as Secure Base (pp. 46 – 93)
 - Ctools - Schore and Schore - Attachment, Affect Regulation and Treatment

November 23

Application to Specific Clients

- Prep for Class Four
 - Wallin –
 - Chapter 11 – Constructing the Developmental Crucible (pp. 193 – 210)
 - Chapter 12 – The Dismissing Patient (pp. 211 – 223)
 - Chapter 13 - The Preoccupied Patient (pp. 224 – 241)

November 30

Application to Specific Clients

Role of Attachment in Supervision

- Prep for Class Five
 - Wallin - Chapter 14 – The Unresolved Patient (pp. 242 – 255)
 - Ctools - Bennett - Attachment and treatment of pathological narcissism
 - Ctools - Bettman - Attachment and treatment of adult depression

Final Paper

Assignment (applicable for students taking course for MSW degree, not CEUs)

Using a compilation of the readings, provide a detailed example of how you can apply what you read to *your* clinical work. Be specific. For example, how will you listen for attachment themes? Have you thought about any of your clients differently and if so, how? How will Attachment Theory inform your interventions? What do you expect might be easy for you to employ? What might be more difficult? Use the chapters to help elaborate your points and use specific examples from your work. You should be able to write at least two pages about application of attachment theory to your work.

Finally, end with at least a paragraph or two connecting what you learned about yourself in relation to attachment theory and the way in which you think your own relational style may impact your clinical work. Again, be specific. For example, if you assume you have a relatively autonomous state of mind regarding attachment, how do you think that will play out in your work? What benefits, specifically, may it afford you? What might be something of a limitation, if any, of having an autonomous state of mind? Due Sunday 12/13 at 11:00 p.m. through Canvas, in WORD format (NOT PDF).

I grade papers based on evidence of understanding of markers of attachment-related behavior, and ability to construct a strong therapeutic hypothesis and frame for intervention, as well as evidence of beginning level of understanding of transference and countertransference, including how your own attachment history may impact your work with clients.

Excellent papers (A papers) will show strong writing, strong clinical thinking and marked evidence of having read and integrated course materials. 'B' papers will show understanding of some concepts and at least some level of clinical thinking. Students' whose papers that do not show such evidence will be asked to meet with me and to re-write their paper. *ONLY Papers under a B- will be accepted for revision and the revised grade can only be as high as the lowest passing grade in the class.*