

Developing compassionate resilience in those who have been hurt and harmed by others: Using compassion focussed therapy to help change the emotional context of traumatised lives.

Speaker

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Biography

Dr Deborah Lee is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Head of Berkshire Traumatic Stress Service and South Central Complex Treatment Service for Veterans. She is also an honorary Senior Lecturer at University College London. She is author of the Compassionate-Mind Guide to Recovering from Trauma and PTSD: Using Compassion-Focused Therapy to Overcome Flashbacks, Shame, Guilt, and Fear (2013). New Harbinger, New York.

Dr Lee has worked in the field of trauma for 25 years and specialises in the treatment of Complex PTSD. Her particular area of clinical and research interest is in shame-based PTSD and self-criticism. She has pioneered the use of developing compassionate resilience as part of a phased based treatment approach to complex PTSD and has collaborated with Professor Paul Gilbert, the originator of compassion Focused Therapy for 20 years. She has widely contributed to the dissemination of her clinical knowledge through writing and delivering over 150 clinical workshops and talks in North America, Europe, Japan and Australia.

Abstract

Those who have been repeatedly traumatised at the hands of others have many challenges to face as they discover a life without trauma and learn how to live in a mind that can flourish. As well as characteristic symptoms of PTSD, people struggle with profound self-loathing, lack of trust, interpersonal difficulties, affect regulation and altered states of consciousness. This symptom presentation is often referred to as Complex PTSD, and this new diagnosis is now to be included in ICD-11

Effective treatments of interpersonal trauma suggest phased based approaches (Cloitre, 2010) and recent expert consensus has suggested this too is a suitable treatment of Complex PTSD (UKPTS 2015 guidelines). Yet other researchers suggest that working directly with trauma memories should not be delayed and therapists ought to make this the focus of treatment. This debate is still to be resolved by evidence and the precise ingredients of the phases are still debated.

This keynote will explore recent developments in the treatment of complex PTSD using compassionate resilience as a way to develop a compassionate narrative about trauma and work directly with trauma flashbacks, in order to create an integrated trauma narrative. Recent preliminary findings will be presented which explores the effectiveness of compassionate resilience based on the principles of compassion focused therapy (Gilbert, 2005, 2009) as part of a phased based treatment for complex PTSD.

Key references:

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