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Moments of Meeting and the Social Construction of Trauma

ABSTRACT

“Truth makes little sense and has no real impact if it is merely a collection of abstract ideas. Truth that is living experience, on the other hand, is challenging, threatening, and transforming. The first kind of truth consists of information collected and added, from a safe distance, to our mental inventory. The second kind involves risking our familiar and coherent interpretation of the world—it is an act of surrender, of complete and embodied cognition that is seeing, feeling, intuiting, and comprehending all at once. Living truth leads us ever more deeply into the unknown territory of what our life is.”

- Reginald Ray

Children and youth “on the edge” often come from backgrounds in which they have experienced profound trauma. In the US, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network has developed 12 Core Concepts for Understanding Traumatic Responses in Children and Families. These concepts offer practitioners and those they work with a shared vocabulary for engaging in discourse about traumatic events.

This workshop will introduce participants to these core concepts, and will acquaint them with the Meditative Dialogue process (Lord, 2007), a mindfulness practice that I have developed for use in the classroom, and in individual, family and group psychotherapy sessions to encourage “radical presence” (McNamee, 2015), curiosity, openness, acceptance, compassion and a deepening of the

dialogues that we engage in. Meditative Dialogue encourages moments of meeting which intensify and speed up change processes as we are moved to take risks and venture into the unknown.

Participants will be able to engage in the Meditative Dialogue process as they discuss cutting edge issues that are of current importance to them.

References

Lord, S. (2007).). Meditative dialogue: A tool for engaging students in collaborative learning processes. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 29(4), 334-337.

McNamee, S. (2015). Radical presence: Alternatives to the therapeutic state. *European Journal of Psychotherapy and Counseling*, 17(4), 1-11.

Ray, Reginald. (2002). *Indestructible truth: The living spirituality of Tibetan Buddhism*. Boston, Ma.: Shambala Publishers.