



ONLINE POSTGRADUATE TRAINING PROGRAM

PSYCHOTHERAPY OF THE DISORDERS OF SELF

## FROM **ESTEEM SENSITIVITY\*** TO **NARCISSISTIC PERSONALITY DISORDER**

*\*Hoffman, Powell et al (2014)*

**A One Year Certification Program 2020**

A Self, Attachment theory, Object relations and Neurobiological approach.

[disordersofself.com](http://disordersofself.com) | [mastersontraining@bigpond.com](mailto:mastersontraining@bigpond.com)

## INTRODUCTION

How does one work with those patients who present with “esteem sensitivity” or with the **more engrained** narcissistic disorder of self? Is it possible to help patients with a narcissistic personality disorder achieve a sense of real self which feels both **whole and secure**?

This one year program will provide a solid foundation for clinicians who wish to develop both understanding and expertise in this area. DSM III, IV and V approach the diagnosis of narcissistic personality disorder through a description of the patient’s symptoms and behaviour. This approach has certain strengths but one of the major limitations is the lack of developmental perspective which is essential for those clinicians who wish to develop both understanding and expertise in working with these patients.

We are indebted to the pioneering body of work developed by the late James Masterson MD, and Ralph Klein, MD, which revealed how individuals who suffer from narcissistic, borderline or schizoid “disorders of the self” struggle to experience a sense of self that feels real and whole. Their behaviours and symptoms arise from the attempt to regulate an unconscious developmental depression – an “abandonment depression”. This nonconscious depression arises from the developmental pathway of a young person who experienced insecure attachment in those early vital years of growth. Masterson, who was Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry at the Joan and Sanford Weill Medical School at Cornell University prior to his death in 2011, began his career through empirical research into acting out behaviours in adolescents with Borderline Personality Disorder. The insights gained through this research – the link between maternal unavailability, the developmental arrest and the nonconscious abandonment depression – were later extended to an understanding of those patients diagnosed as narcissistic. Masterson and Klein then elaborated the differential diagnosis of a uniquely narcissistic intrapsychic structure which masks the patient’s impaired real self.

We are also indebted to the pioneering work of Kent Hoffman, Bert Powell and Glen Cooper, whose training with Masterson in the last century profoundly influenced the development of the Circle of Security. Hoffman, Powell and Cooper integrated seminal insights gained from the Masterson/Klein body of work with the work of other major theorists in attachment theory into a model which extends these insights to include a broad range of “esteem sensitive” people whose issues involve a heightened sensitivity to criticism (“shark music”) or a perfectionism which prevents flexible behaviour.

This one year certification program will provide a foundation for clinicians to develop the skills to treat the broad range of patients whose presentations range from “the esteem sensitive” to the more engrained narcissistic personality disorder.

---

## GOALS AND STRUCTURE OF TRAINING

### GOALS

To provide trainees with a body of knowledge essential for clinical practice.

To provide trainees with the clinical skills needed for the differential diagnosis and treatment of clients with the esteem sensitivity/narcissistic personality disorder.

### STRUCTURE

The program is delivered through two sixteen week semesters, with students meeting twice a week in both semesters.

#### SEMESTER ONE

Seminar Series		50 minutes per week		16 seminars
Case conference		60 minutes per week		16 conferences

#### SEMESTER TWO

Case conference		60 minutes per week		16 conferences
Supervision		60 minutes per week		16 supervisions

### LECTURE/SEMINAR SERIES

What is a “real self”?

What is the pathway that enables the development of a sense of real self?

What do we mean by “narcissistic intrapsychic structure?”

What do we mean by “fusion”?

How does the clinician identify and differentiate between “closet narcissism” and the more “grandiose narcissistic” presentations?

How does the clinician intervene in order to help access the patient’s “real self”?

The seminars are drawn from an integration of Self (Developmental and attachment) theory, Object Relations theory and Neurobiology. Seminal writings from the work of Heinz Kohut, Otto Kernberg, Dan Stern and other major theorists will be woven into to an “object relational” understanding of narcissism, which emphasises the importance of understanding separation-individuation from an **intrapsychic** perspective **as well** as understanding how this plays out **relationally**. The neurobiological perspectives – the work of Alan Schore, Dan Siegel, Damasio and others in the field of affective neuroscience will be included in order to help students grasp the linkages between the real self, the formation of intrapsychic structure (schemas, internal working models) and how procedural memory engrains defence against an unconscious developmental depression (Masterson and Klein).

We will also be making extensive use of video recordings taken from ‘Strange situations’, a teaching tool extensively used by Hoffman et al (2014). Common behaviours observed in caregivers who are classified as esteem sensitive (‘caregiver state of mind’) include a propensity toward one mindedness, or placing pressure on the child to achieve, or the shaming of the child. Video recordings powerfully illustrate how defensive attachment styles develop in the infant as a response to the ‘caregiver state of mind’, putting the child potentially on a pathway which will lead to insecure attachment and/or a “disorder of the self”.



## REGISTRATION

### *Cost of Course*

**SEMESTER ONE 2020** \$AUS 1500.00 (includes GST)

**SEMESTER TWO** \$AUS 2000.00 (includes GST)

First name	Last name
Home address	
Telephone (office)	Telephone (mobile)
Email	
Postgraduate education	
Current employer	
Private practice (how long?)	
Training / Background / Clinical experience	