

## Breaking the Silence: *Working with Adult Survivors of Interfamilial Sexual Abuse*

Christiane Sanderson

Video Course

CPD hours: 3 / CE credits: N/A

Price: £69



Online video access remains available for 1 year from the date you receive the video course.

While there is an enormously high occurrence of interfamilial sexual abuse across social & income groups – it remains shockingly under-reported and poorly understood – continuing to dwell in the dark, shrouded in secrecy and a veil of silence. Most families are havens of safety in providing the love, care and nurturing that is essential for the healthy growth and development of children, but some families, unfortunately are war zones in which children are terrorised by **family members who exercise power and control over them through fear, denial, distortion of reality and physical and sexual abuse, and sexual violence**. The shame and stigma of incest and sexual abuse within the family, means that most survivors remain silent about their experience as they have no voice, which prevents them from reporting or seeking support – **often leading to occurrence of delayed trauma manifestations in adulthood**.

Aimed at psychotherapists and counsellors who work with adults, this workshop – with globally acclaimed Childhood Sexual Abuse (CSA) expert Christiane Sanderson starts with the premise that most children who have experienced sexual abuse in the family normalise their experience as they have no point of reference to compare their experience. This is especially the case in sibling sexual abuse which is often normalised and minimised leading to delayed trauma in later adulthood. Given the shame and secrecy surrounding sexual abuse in the family it **frequently remains undiagnosed as an underlying cause for a range of long-term physical and mental health manifestations in adults** including:

- complex post-traumatic stress reactions
- trauma related dissociation
- eating disorders, self-harm, addiction to alcohol or drugs
- negative self-beliefs, depression
- trauma related shame, social anxiety
- compromised sexuality and suicidal ideation



This ground-breaking webinar aims to unravel the nature and dynamics of CSA within the family by biological as well as blended family members, adults as well as siblings and peers, including cousins. We will examine the factors that:

- prevent disclosure by survivors including the role of secrecy, shame, normalisation, distortion of reality, and
- the need that survivors feel to protect family members – for fear of breaking up the family or become scapegoated

These factors contribute significantly to delayed trauma manifestations in survivors.

Our aim is to equip psychotherapists and counsellors with the skills they need to:

- understand the principles of **Power Threat Meaning Framework, Trauma Informed Practice and the Phased Oriented Approach to Trauma Recovery** – and how these can be included in our repertoire of therapeutic skills that can help adult survivors of interfamilial sexual abuse
- Recognise the need for **trauma safe adjustments when using somatic interventions** such as breathing and mindfulness
- Evaluate how we need to modify grounding skills and techniques that promote **emotional self-regulation, distress tolerance and widening of the window of tolerance** – specifically when working with this client set
- We will recognise the power and control dynamics used in CSA in families such as silence, secrecy, shame, distortion of reality and denial to minimise the risk of disclosure as well as the need to protect the family
- Consider **how to develop an individualised toolbox to aid recovery – that breaks the shackles of shame and guilt**

Overall, the impact of CSA and its link to trauma and *delayed trauma reactions* will be explored alongside the principles of trauma informed practice to equip practitioners with essential skills when working with survivors, to make the link between presenting symptom and a history of CSA, while enabling them to reclaim reality in order to heal and recover from CSA in the family.

#### Learning Objectives:

- Explain the principles of **Power Threat Meaning Framework, Trauma Informed Practice and the Phased Oriented Approach to Trauma Recovery** – and how these can be included in our repertoire of therapeutic skills that can help adult survivors of interfamilial sexual abuse
- Evaluate how we need to modify grounding skills and techniques that promote **emotional self-regulation, distress tolerance and widening of the window of tolerance** – specifically when working with this client set
- Discuss **how to develop an individualised toolbox to aid recovery – that breaks the shackles of shame and guilt**

#### About the speaker

**Christiane Sanderson BSc, MSc.** is an Honorary Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Roehampton, of London with 35 years of experience working with survivors of childhood sexual abuse and sexual violence. She has delivered consultancy, continuous professional development and professional training for parents, teachers, social workers, nurses, therapists, counsellors, solicitors, the NSPCC, the Catholic Safeguarding



Advisory Committee, the Methodist Church, the Metropolitan Police Service, SOLACE, the Refugee Council, Birmingham City Council Youth Offending Team, and HMP Bronzefield.

She is the author of *Counselling Skills for Working with Shame*, *Counselling Skills for Working with Trauma: Healing from Child Sexual Abuse, Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse*, *Counselling Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse*, 3rd edition, *Counselling Survivors of Domestic Abuse*, *The Seduction of Children: Empowering Parents and Teachers to Protect Children from Child Sexual Abuse*, and *Introduction to Counselling Survivors of Interpersonal Trauma*, all published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers. She has also written *The Warrior Within: A One in Four Handbook to Aid Recovery from Sexual Violence*; *The Spirit Within: A One in Four Handbook to Aid Recovery from Religious Sexual Abuse Across All Faiths* and *Responding to Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse: A pocket guide for professionals, partners, families and friends* for the charity *One in Four* for whom she is a trustee. Her next book, *The Taboo of Sibling Sexual Abuse: Working with Adult Survivors* is out soon with *nscience publishing house*.

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**There is no known commercial support for this program**

**This course does not qualify for CE credits**

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