

## Addressing OCD, Trauma, and Neurodivergence in Therapy: Practical skills for client-centred therapy

Video Course  
Christiane Sanderson

Video Course  
CPD/CE credits: 6

Price: £145



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

Obsessions, ruminations, and recurrent intrusive thoughts are not only catalysts for anxiety and shame but also contribute to a gradual escalation of emotional discomfort over time. Clients grappling with these experiences often struggle to discern reality from inner fears, anticipate catastrophic events, harbour an overwhelming fear of disintegration and may even develop a profound mistrust of their therapist. Whether through conspicuous physical rituals or unseen mental loops, they engage in behaviours aimed at obtaining temporary relief.

Meanwhile, **Trauma, with its accompanying hypervigilance, elevated threat responses, and increased anxiety, can further exacerbate obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviours.** Additionally, changes in cognitive processing, common in OCD and trauma, **can manifest in neurodivergent presentations such as ADHD and ASC.** Participants at this skills-based workshop will explore the intricate connections between OCD, Trauma, and PTSD, gaining insights into the overlapping features and distinct characteristics of each condition. Additionally, the course will delve into the impact of neurodivergent processing differences on symptom presentation and therapy response.

### Exploring the Intersections: OCD, Trauma, and Neurodivergence

For psychotherapists and counsellors, addressing OCD becomes especially challenging in the presence of overlapping manifestations with trauma and neurodivergence. The challenges can intensify when clients exhibit covert manifestations such as Pure O or ROCD, where their intrusive thoughts might focus on themes of harm, relationships, sexuality and gender, religious or moral questions. **These thoughts can feel like an attack on a client's sense of self, and they are often accompanied by guilt and shame.**

This webinar delves into the nature and function of OCD, emphasizing its central role in alleviating anxiety and fear. It scrutinizes the spectrum of obsessive and intrusive thoughts, as well as compulsive behaviours, as mechanisms for neutralizing or managing unbearable obsessive thoughts. It also illuminates the interconnectedness of OCD and PTSD, highlighting shared characteristics such as recurring, persistent, involuntary, and intrusive thoughts. Using case vignettes, we will explore how repetitive behaviours are



enacted to neutralise these – such as avoidance, thought suppression or dissociation - aimed at alleviating stress and anxiety. **Participants will further gain insight into the complex interplay between obsessive-compulsive disorder, trauma, and neurodivergence, and how these factors influence therapeutic outcomes.**

### Enhancing Therapeutic Competence

It's imperative for practitioners to distinguish between OCD, trauma, and neurodivergence, and how these interact or overlap so as to craft comprehensive case formulations tailored to individual client needs. By understanding these distinctions and overlaps, therapists can implement the most effective therapeutic approaches. This involves **exploring various modalities, including Exposure and Response Prevention Therapy (ERP), Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Trauma-Focused CBT (Tf-CBT), medication, and trauma-informed therapy.** Emphasis will be placed on facilitating trauma processing and integrating principles of Trauma-Informed Practice and neurodiverse affirmative practices into therapeutic interventions.

Participants will learn practical skills for distinguishing between OCD, PTSD, and neurodivergent processing differences, enabling effective assessment and personalised therapeutic planning. Emphasis will be placed on recognising the holistic needs of clients, addressing both OCD symptoms and trauma-related symptoms to promote comprehensive healing. Through case studies and interactive discussions, participants will develop the expertise to deliver effective, client-centred care for individuals grappling with OCD, trauma, and neurodivergence.

At this webinar, we will focus on:

- **Understanding the Intricacies of OCD, Trauma, and Neurodivergence:** Gain insight into the complex interplay between obsessive-compulsive disorder, trauma, and neurodivergence, and how these factors influence therapeutic outcomes.
- **Distinguishing Between OCD, PTSD, and Neurodivergent Processing:** Develop the ability to differentiate between obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and neurodivergent processing differences, enabling tailored treatment strategies for each condition.
- **Recognizing the Holistic Needs of Clients:** Recognize the importance of addressing both OCD symptoms and trauma-related symptoms to provide comprehensive care that promotes long-term well-being.
- **Integrating Specialized Treatment Approaches:** Learn to incorporate specialized treatment modalities such as Trauma-Focused CBT and Trauma-Informed Practice into therapeutic interventions, ensuring effective symptom management and resolution.

### Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the complex interplay between obsessive-compulsive disorder, trauma, and neurodivergence, and how these factors influence therapeutic outcomes.
- Explain how to differentiate between obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and neurodivergent processing differences, enabling tailored treatment strategies for each condition.
- Discuss the importance of addressing both OCD symptoms and trauma-related symptoms to provide comprehensive care that promotes long-term well-being.
- Apply specialized treatment modalities such as Trauma-Focused CBT and Trauma-Informed Practice into therapeutic interventions, ensuring effective symptom management and resolution.

### 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.

© nscience 2024 / 2025

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

For more information on how to access webinar joining links, handouts and video recordings please visit <https://www.nscience.uk/faqs/>

Questions and requests for information: [customerservices@nscience.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@nscience.co.uk)

If you have a disability, please contact us in advance of the course so we can accommodate your needs:

[customerservices@nscience.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@nscience.co.uk)

US: +18337161044

UK/Europe:  
+44(0)2070961722

Australia:  
+1800861953



nscience UK is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. nscience UK maintains responsibility for this program and its content.